

Tring Runner

January 2008

Club Runs:
Every Wednesday
7:30 pm Running from Tring Cricket Club

Main Forthcoming Events

Sunday Jan 6th – Herts Cross Country Championships.

Saturday Jan 12th – Chiltern League CC - Slough

Thursday Jan 17th – Tring Brewery Trip
More details in newsletter

Saturday Jan 19th – Box Hill Fell Race
The first of the 2008 off road championships.
Near Dorking, Surrey.
7.5 miles with 1700ft ascent. **(race full)**

Sunday Jan 20th – Fred Hughes 10 mile road race – St. Albans.
This also incorporated the Herts Vets 10 mile championships

Sunday Feb 3rd – Watford half marathon.
This also incorporated the Herts Vets half marathon championships

Saturday Feb 9th – Chiltern League CC – Wing (The last one of the season)

Sunday Feb 17th – Hardwick X-Stream
The 2nd of the 2008 off road championships.
Near Aylesbury. About 6 miles, muddy

Sunday Mar 2nd - Berkhamsted half Marathon

More events on page 4

Newsletter contributions to **Peter Hamson** by
Wednesday 30th January please.
Email: phamson@caci.co.uk

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And much more

A Happy New Year to you all.

And so I reached the end of my second year as newsletter editor. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed articles over the last year. The newsletter seems to get bigger and bigger every month. I hope you have found time to read them. There are a wide variety of articles from the serious to the humorous; from fell running to road running. Recently we have been fortunate enough to have our very own agony aunt, Marge Droops, who is back this month.

For me 2007 was a most enjoyable year. My highlights were completing the Tour Du Mont Blanc, albeit over two years and completing the LDWA 100 mile event after failing to finish in 2006. Out of the 'club' events the Beachy Head Marathon is always my favourite.

There have been some excellent performances throughout the year by club members; two, which I think, deserve special mention are Sam Williamson and Kirsty Barnett's extremely good runs in the London Marathon.

Club Championships

The off-road championship events were finally completed at Cliveden and we now have two new champions – Alan Whelan and Mandy Bonthron. See later in this newsletter for the full result. The on road championship results will be announced next month once all the results are in.

Peter Hamson

VISIT OUR WEB SITE

<http://www.tringrunningclub.org.uk>

Race Results

All road race results published here will count towards the club championships.

Chiltern League Cross Country – Luton – Men

(See comments later in newsletter about Luton XC results)

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Kevin Harding	10	39:28	
Ross Langley	14	40:01	
Steve Long	25	42:12	
Alan Whelan	32	43:30	
Rob Brown	39	44:38	
Trevor Lark	41	44:44	
John Manning	44	45:16	
Jonathan Smith	55	48:00	
David Heron	80	54:46	
Nigel Lacey	83	56:11	

Chiltern League Cross Country – Luton – Ladies

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Alison Harding	13	26:24	
Mandy Bonthron	25	28:14	
Anna Scarth	34	30:59	
Jane Porteous	36	31:33	

Chiltern League Cross Country – Luton – Girl's U15 race

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Bryony Harding	15		

Princes Risborough 10K (July)

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Kim Reed		51:29	
Geoff Dennis		54:13	
Jane Porteous		55:07	
Beth Dennis		56:59	

The women made a team and were placed 6th .

Marlow half Marathon (November)

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Kim Reed		2:01:18	
Frances Mills		2:12:59	

Chicks Chase 5K (2nd in series) (July)

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Gill Heron		26:30	

Chicks Chase 5K (3rd in series) (August)

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Gill Heron		25:29	

Bearbrook 10K club handicap

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
David Heron		49:55	
Gill Heron		53:40	

Cliveden Cross Country

<i>Runner</i>	<i>Posn</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>PB</i>
Nigel Bunn	6	41:02	
Simon Barnett	21	44:29	
Alan Whelan	25	45:01	
Ross Langley	38	46:32	
Trevor Lark	57	47:57	
Colin Rees	108	50:59	
Michaela Colwell	113	51:15	
Sarah Hill	152	53:28	
Kirsty Barnett	186	54:56	
David Heron	273	59:37	
Bob Ford	299	1:00:46	
Geoff Dennis	334	1:02:49	
Kim Reed	377	1:05:16	
Nikki Burgess	404	1:07:14	
Gill Heron	456	1:12:30	
Mike Gaunt	475	1:15:07	
Pam Burley	491	1:21:51	

Alan writes: After the early filling of the race I half expected to be attending Cliveden with just a few other Club members. As it happened there were 16 of us made the trip to what has to be one of the nicest ways to finish off the year. For once it was not cold and the course was the best I have seen it in recent years.

The week before I had aggravated an injury I have been trying to get over since Coombe Hill back in June - so much for speed work! Having eaten too much (a common complaint on the day) and done zero training for a week I went to Cliveden with a mindset of just getting round and not making my injury any worse. For the first 2 miles I had to be content to see Nigel, Simon and Luke disappear into the distance. After that I started to pick up the pace and by the end was actually racing. I could see Simon but had no real time to catch him.

Nigel had a really good run and got 1st V40 (sorry I missed the award ceremony).

Cyprus International 4 day challenge

Just as Tring ladies were sheltering at the start of the cross country, Kirsty and I were recovering in between the third and fourth races of the Cyprus 4 day challenge. In fact it was a bit like a Chiltern league match in Cyprus, with Bearbrook, MK and Maidenhead vests all present. We travelled with 2:09 Events - all very smooth from start to finish. The races were varied - both in distance, terrain, ascent and descent and the beer was cold at 9.30am after the last race! The winners from Switzerland and Norway won themselves a free holiday next year to defend their titles. Weather was just warm enough to sunbathe and swim in the sea - but still too hot for racing. All in all - highly recommended, with the last 5 finishers having an overall time of over 6 hours, in case you are interested!

Day 1 - 6km time trial at 10 second intervals

Simon 19th 22.27	Kirsty 119th (11th lady) 26.45
First Man 19.05	First lady 23.25

Day 2 - 11km uphill race - first three km flat then 500 metre climb on a jeep track

Simon 16th 58.45	Kirsty 84th (8th lady) 1:08.58
First Man 48.05	First lady 1:00.18

Day 3 - Trail half marathon - 300 metres of ascent to 10km and then 500 metres of descent to sea level

Simon 16th 1:31.28	Kirsty 79th (6th lady) 1:47.16
First Man 1:18.05	First lady 1:37.17

Day 4 - 10km road race around Paphos

Simon 15th 39.34	Kirsty 81st (9th lady) 45.37
First Man 33.47	First lady 41.38

Overall

Simon 16th 3:32.14	Kirsty 79th (7th lady) 4:08.36
First Man 2:59.02	First lady 3:42.38

Simon Barnett

Mince Pie Run

Many thanks to Tracey and Jim Sinton for again hosting this pre-Christmas event. It was an excellent event – a run to work up an appetite followed by plenty of mulled wine, loads of food.

Christmas Hash

Also, Thanks to Tony Ruberry, Colin and Tom Griffin for organising and laying the Christmas Hash. Another excellent event although unfortunately not particularly well attended. Perhaps it was just the wrong time of the year.

More events

Sunday Mar 2nd - Wendover gap LDWA Marathon - Prestwood Village Hall (This is not a race but a good day out. A good introduction to Long Distance Walker's Association events)

Sunday Mar 9th - Herts Veterans Cross Country Championships. (More details on page 4)

Thursday March 20th to Monday March 24th
Easter Lake District Trip – see Tony Ruberry

Sunday Mar 30th Edale Skyline Fell Race. One of the more popular fell races for TRC.
<http://www.dpfr.org.uk/>

Sunday 13th April – London Marathon followed by Annual Prize Giving in the evening

Midsummer Fun Run

The eighth Midsummer Fun Run will be held on 18th June 2008

Ridgeway Race

The Ridgeway Race will be held on it's traditional date of the second Sunday in October which is Sunday 12th October.

Herts Vets Cross Country Championships

It's too late for the Herts Cross Country Champs but there is still time to enter the Vets Cross Country Champs. These will be held on March 9 at Letchworth. We stand a good chance of winning this, I think. Put it in your diary (unless you're under 40 or 35 for ladies). More details when they become available. Alan Whelan has got his name down and Michael Burgess also sounded keen. (Not sure I'll even make the team.)

Rick Ansell

Annual Brewery Trip

Our annual trip to Tring Brewery is booked for Thursday 17th January. The format will be the same as previous years, namely:

- 1) We meet at the brewery at 7.30pm. It is located just off Akeman Street (on the right hand side as you approach the museum).
- 2) We drink, we tour the brewery, we eat fish and chips, we drink some more.
- 3) Cost is £15 each including drinks and food.
- 4) Please let Richard White know if you would like to come

For those of you who wish to do some homework, see website address below.

<http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk/home.html>

Richard White

Marathon Training

With Christmas once again behind us it is time to start the Tring RC Marathon Training Programme which is built up around the London. However for those rejected from London there are a host of other spring road marathons which will welcome your entry eg:

2nd March - Wendover Gap & Barcelona
16th March - Rome
6th April - Bungay & Taunton & Connemara
13th April - Rotterdam
27th April - Shakespeare
4th May - Neolithic
11th May - Halstead & Isle of Wight
18th May - Windermere

The Club has over the years built up a pretty good track record of runners finishing London in the 3 to 5 hour range. Our programme for Sunday mornings is similar to last year. It incorporates the local road races and links in easily with those published in more detail by the running magazines. From personal experience nothing messes up a marathon programme more easily than injury. In particular trying to “run through” minor injury or infection. The importance of crossing the start line injury free can not be over emphasised. If something has gone wrong allow time for recovery, take a week or two off rather than risk aggravating the problem and ruining a whole season.

For many years Mike Blake has done a fantastic job as back up and motivator for the Tring Marathoners. He has kindly agreed to do so again this year. John Boielle will be providing a post run cup of tea, we will take it in turns to bring the biscuits. Whenever there is a local race this has been incorporated into the programme – suggest you enter in plenty of time as Fred Hughes and Watford are always oversubscribed with no entry on the day.

The idea behind Sunday Morning Club Runs is that everyone can take part. One way or the other we will make sure the front runners are watered every 3-4 miles and then meet up with the back markers so that nobody will be left struggling out there on their own. Each run will be planned so that there is a cut back point for those who prefer to run shorter than the designated distance.

Key to a successful Marathon is pace judgment. We plan to have 2 main groups one running at 9 - 10 min pace the other at 7 - 8 min pace. The second group is to set off at a time after the first which depends on the distance eg 15 min afterwards for a 10 mile run and up to 30 min after for a 20 mile run.

The meeting place for these runs will be **83 Dundale Road, Tring (Tel 01442 822575)** at 8.30 am. Even if you are not yet a member of Tring RC or planning a full marathon come along to join the fun. See you there - the more the merrier!

<i>Date</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Event</i>
6-Jan	10	Club Run
13-Jan	12	Club Run
20-Jan	10	St Albans – Fred Hughes Road Race
27-Jan	15	Club Run or Gade Valley Harriers Training run * see below
3-Feb	13.1	Watford ½ Marathon
10-Feb	15	Club Run
17-Feb	17	Club Run
24-Feb	19	Club Run or Gade Valley Training Run
2-Mar	13.1	Berko ½ Marathon
9-Mar	20	Club Run
16-Mar	21	Club Run or Gade Valley Training Run
23-Mar	23	Club Run Easter Sunday
30-Mar	15	Club Run – Summer Time clocks forward!
6-Apr	10	Club Run
13-Apr	26.2	London Marathon

* Gade Valley Harriers organise very popular training runs each year taking in the routes of the Berko Half (in reverse) and the old Hemel 10. These are well marshalled, with plentiful tea and cakes afterwards, not races but you are told your finish time by the marshals at the end of the route. See their website for more details -

<http://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/>

Mike Gaunt

New awards for Off-road Championships 2008

At the last AGM there was a discussion on whether the off-road championships should be age-graded in the same way that the road championships are. It was agreed this would be decided at the next committee meeting. The committee have now decided that the existing off road championship rules will remain the same for the overall winner but there will be additional awards for the first man over 50 and the first lady over 45. It is hoped this will encourage older runners to run the off road championship races.

The current rules are that there are eight races designated as off road championship races. (Next year there will be nine as the Dunstable 20 will be included). All races are local apart from the Beachy Head Marathon which is always well supported by the club. In each race the first Tring RC runner of each sex scores 25 points, the second 24 points and so on.

Additional rules for the men's over 50 and lady's over 45 awards are:-

- Your age is taken on Jan 1st of each year.
- If the overall winner is over 50 (or 45) then they will receive the overall winner's award and the over 50 (45) award will go to the second over 50 (45).

Road Championships 2008

In the road race championships you must complete at least four races over three of the following distances:- 5K, 5 miles, 10K, 10 miles, half and full marathon. For each race you receive a percentage score based on your finishing time and age. The theory is that to receive a score of 100% you would need to equal the world best time for your age. Although world best times are only recorded for five year age bands these times are interpolated to give times for each year. The average percentage for your best four races is then taken. Currently the world best times used for the calculations are out of date and it is hoped to update the base times with the latest available data for the 2008 season.

Luton Cross Country results

Well, you might have run the Luton Cross Country but did you actually run the correct course or were you guilty of cutting corners. If so, perhaps you should have been disqualified.

David Heron writes: Not only did the faster guys cut a corner at the end, but as you come out the menage area and off road to path at corner of conifers, you should take a sharp right along the perimeter of field and left turn at end towards trees, whereas everyone I could see in front of me on both laps took the diagonal across field (which I think is also a rugby pitch) – there's got to be a 20 to 30 metre difference each lap. It was marked correctly with tape and white boundary flags but not a marshal in sight. So the questions are:

- Did the lead runners take the shortcut and everyone follow?
- If so, does that really make me third?
- Why aren't more people disqualified in races for not following the rules / regulations? (oh, I forgot my Tring vest, so I 'm out now as well).

I seem to recall this has happened at the back of the field here before (don't suppose any regulars know what the back of field is like!)

Rob Brown writes: Have we been here before on this course? The senior route was put back to 2 big laps, and towards the end of the last lap as I was blindly following those ahead, I realised that we were 10-15 yards inside the course, and continued so despite me trying to revert to the white flags that had disappeared into the gloom - a lost cause. There were no marshals in this area so the results are dodgy - or is it my excuse for why John Manning is getting ever closer to me so that I am looking over my shoulder...

Off-road Championships 2007

We now have two new off-road champions for 2007. In the Lady's event, congratulations to

Mandy Bonthrone

For completing six out of eight of the events to finish ahead of Alison and Michaela.

In the Men's event

Alan Whelan

completed seven of the eight events to finish with a commanding lead. Nigel Bunn moved into 2nd place on the last event, just pipping John Manning by one point.

<i>Lady's Results</i>	Box Hill	Hard wick	Ald bury	Combe Hill	Beachy Head	Herbert's Hole	Brenda Barlow	Clive den	Total	Position
Mandy Bonthrone	23		23	24	22	24	23		139	1
Alison Harding	25	25	24	25	25				124	=2
Michaela Colwell			25		24	25	25	25	124	=2
Kim Reed					17	17	19	22	75	4
Sarah Hill		24			23			24	71	5
Kirsty Barnett	24				22		24	23	70	
Janet Reeve						18			18	
Edda Aitchison						23	22		55	
Frances Mills					19	12	16		47	
Maria Cook						22			22	
Gill Heron						15		20	35	
Elise Aitchison						21	15		36	
Liz Daniel			22			19	18		59	
Beth Dennis						13			13	
Adrienne Gardiner					18				18	
Sarah Hunter					20				20	
Jane Porteous					16	20	21		57	
Helle Hennings						15	18		33	
Pam Burley						12	14	19	45	
Sarah Dennis						14			14	
Nikki Burgess								21	21	
Emma Davis							20		20	
Cathy Court			21			16	17		54	

<i>Men's Results</i>	Box Hill	Hardwick	Aldbury	Combe Hill	Beachy Head	Herbert's Hole	Brenda Barlow	Cliveden	Total	Position
Alan Whelan	22	23	22	25		24	25	23	164	1
Nigel Bunn	25	25	24					25	99	2
John Manning	17	20	18		23		20		98	3
Simon Barnett	20				25		22	24	91	4
Tony Ruberry	18		20		22	21			81	5
Ross Langley						25	23	22	70	
Sam Williamson	24	24	21						69	
Rick Ansell	21	22				23			66	
Brian Layton	16	19				18	9		62	
Steve Long	23								23	
Clive Cohen		21		21			18		60	
Michael Burgess	19				24				43	
Paul Cowan			17				16		33	
Peter Hamson	15				19		15		49	
David Heron	14				18			19	51	
Kevin Harding			25						25	
Trevor Lark				23		22		21	66	
Geoff Dennis					15	16		17	48	
Mike Gaunt						14	5	16	35	
Chris Egan			23	24					47	
Rob Brown			19	22			21		62	
Luke Delderfield							24		24	
Nigel Kippax					16		14		30	
Kevin Buckingham						15	7		22	
Peter Alford		18							18	
Callum Bon throne				20		19			39	
Jon Court					21		19		40	
Jonathan Smith					20		17		37	
John Harrison			15						15	
Nigel Lacey					13	17	12		42	
Richard White			16						16	
David Sawyer							10		10	
Bob Ford					17		13	18	48	
Maurice Bond							11		11	
Colin Rees								20	20	
Michael Lamb							8		8	
Tony Hill					14		6		20	
Adrian Lee			17						17	

Ask Marge

New Year Greetings my little pickled walnuts!

I hope you are all recovering from the customary annual force-feed by getting in plenty of running to work off those extra pounds. Here in Upper Armwobble we had a truly festive time. Oooh yes a word of warning, my chum Pat, ate so much that she keeled over and snuffed it. Headfirst into the bread sauce. Luckily she had a donor card so we didn't let her go to waste, her name isn't Pat A D'Foygra for nothing. The only thing was we ran out of toast and had to use coasters. Heyho.



Another cautionary tale my little sweetmeats. Remember what I said last time about regular ear-waxing to avoid unnecessary embarrassment? Well obviously I hadn't reached far enough with the cotton bud. In a moment of rash foolishness, I had entered the Flora London Marathon and the reply was sitting on my doormat. My old pal Basil from Bearbrook, who had dropped by for a quick one, popped his large stiff Johnny Walker on my antique genuine reproduction chest, wiped the cheesy Wotsit crumbs from the corner of his mouth, and opened up my letter for me. "It's from Flora - Marge, you're in" he shouted. "Tuh" I snorted "Of course I know Flora is margarine. Anyway, it's not the "I can't believe it's not butter London

Marathon", that would be just plain stupid.

Anyway cherubs, onto your New Year dilemmas.

Dear Marge

I am a hash newbie, and I want to join in on the hashes in 2008 but I am an advocate of "Just Say No". However, my fellow running friends tell me that partaking of recreational drugs during these events is quite normal and sometimes essential if David Heron is participating or if Mike Gaunt is laying it. Have I got my facts right?

Gullible of Tring

Dear GoT

Oh absolutely. Btw it's On On, not No No.

Dear Marge

I am due to go on a winter mountain run and need a suitable partner, as it's going to be very rocky, icy and slippery. Can you recommend anyone?

Foolhardy of Tring

Dear FoT

Certainly. Just drop Nigel Pickaxe a line, he is ideal.

Dear Marge

I want to spend some of the winter evenings doing interval training. Where would be a good place for me to run, say 400m intervals?

Fartlekker of Berko

Dear FoB

Lapland of course!

Dear Marge

I need to get out and do some winter training but my neck gets very cold. What can I do?

Chilly of Tring

Dear CoT

Take Anna Scarf with you. She'll hang around and help you out. If you ask her nicely she might go on ahead as well.

Dear Marge

I have always admired your dress sense. How do you keep so stylish, yet warm in the winter?

Admirer of Berko

Dear AoB

I wear the same clothes and stay in by the fire.

Dear Marge

Whenever I'm in the bar people keep telling me I'm round. I'm doing a lot of running and think I'm fairly trim. What's going on?

Puzzled of Berko

Dear PoB

Nincompoop! Think about where you are. People are telling you to get the drinks in. Anyway tubbybuttocks, get one in for me whilst you're there, mine's a Blue Nun, and make it a warm one.

Dear Marge

I feel my racing is becoming a little boring. I seem to do the same old races every year, with the same boring people. What can you suggest for 2008?

Tedious of Tring

Dear ToT

Try the Guildford 4 or the Birmingham 6.

...and from my email postbag we have Problem of the Month

Dear Marge

I would like to take part in one of these "cross country" races because I hear that I won't be accepted as a "proper" runner by those nice people at the club until I have "got my feet dirty". But I don't want to get my feet or any other part of me dirty and from what I hear there is a lot of dirt involved! This cross-country running sounds like so much fun but if I get any nasty mud on my nice clean running kit I will be heartbroken. I would so much appreciate any advice you can give me.

Clean-and-want-to-stay-that-way of Tring

Dear CAWTSTWoT

Well, my little Persil pal, this absolutely is cross-country season (btw try to use the XC abbreviation, you will sound cool and it takes less time to type on a mobile phone) and I can understand that you want to join in with your pals and have lots of dirty fun. And you are so right, you will not be accepted as a proper runner unless you have lots of that nasty mud all over your kit. It's an OCD nightmare! However, Marge has the solution so listen up my little whitewashed friend.

Firstly, with XC running, there are lots of bushes. Most handy. I'll come onto this in a moment.

Secondly, Nige Lacey is the XC men's captain. He is one clean and tidy dude. Have you seen the way he lovingly handles his y-fronts? And have you noticed his large, well stuffed bag? The one he brings to all XC races completely full of kit?

OK, here's what you need to do:

Step 1: Offer yourself up to run for the XC Team. You will be slapped on the back and you are halfway to becoming an XC runner!

Step 2: Arrive at the race in your nice clean kit.

Step 3: Nige always goes to hand in the running numbers to the official. Use this time to rummage in his bag and remove his clean kit. Hide behind a bush and put this on over yours. Take off your shoes and put on Nige's spare pair. Stuff the ends with socks if they are too big (Nige's ancestor was a yeti).

Step 4: Line up with the others and run the race getting as dirty as you like. What fun!

Step 5: Finish the race, receive slaps on back and hearty congratulations from team members. You are now a true XC runner! Hide behind bush, remove dirty kit, look proudly down at your nice clean kit, sneak back and place dirty kit back in Nige's bag.

Step 6: Nige will complain about his kit being dirty and wonder why. Say "oh yeah" and mention the cheeky little fox you saw dragging stuff out of his bag and how helpful you were in chasing the red furry rascal and replacing the items. Nige's gratitude will be overwhelming. Shrug and say it was nothing.

Marge's Slightly Later Than Planned Seasonal Glossary

Stollen cake: Seasonal sweet item purchased from Dodgy Geezer in Pub

Quality Street: A better than usual Corrie episode

Turkey: A bit like a Turk

Queen's Speech: Our monarch's favourite fruit

Ginger wine: Rick is not happy

Auld Lang Syne: An ancient building contractors notice

Marzipan: Your mother's saucepan she purchased on the web

Burns Night: Guy Fawkes Night

Santa's Sack: Yup, that's right...



“Thanks Marge. By the way you just get more gorgeous every day, let's share a cigar later. Now then, now then what do we have here guys and gals? Well Forrest Chump, let me fix your fix. Easy really. As you get older, your memory and mental faculties will become, let's say, less sharp and in your case, this is a benefit. Find a Good Friend (has to be younger than you) and ask them to remind you when you have run your 26 or whatever mile warm up. This Good Friend will advise that your warm up is complete before you have even started and will compliment you on your endurance and stamina! So, the mere fact that you have been told that you have warmed up will give you your “fix”. The same logic can apply to races. Ensure this friend is proficient in Photoshop, Microsoft Word and Excel in order to falsify photos and race results. By the time you have read this you will have forgotten what the question was so I have taken the liberty of publishing your problem in the next TRC Newsletter in order to Find you a Good Friend. So guys and gals, do please apply to ask_marge@yahoo.co.uk and I will advise on how to best go about this important task, and at that point, will reveal his/her identity. A

“Jim fixed it for me” badge is in the offing for our ailing member and a “Jim fixed it for my decrepit mate” badge for the Good Friend, so don't be shy. How's about that then?”

Remember, Marge is here to help. Do email her on ask_marge@yahoo.co.uk for confidential advice with that personal touch.

Calderdale Way Relay, 9th December

Snow greeted the early arrivals in Calderdale on Saturday. We hit it at the high point of the M62 just before turning off for Halifax. Brian and John were earlier arriving and found snow at the start of their recce – high on the moor and exposed to the icy wind. Perhaps Rick, Luke and Nigel saw less because they started later and ran out of light - they needed torches to finish in fact. At our accommodation near Blackshaw Head we tucked into hot drinks and a huge cake made by Ross's girlfriend Zoe. It was just the thing after a cold afternoon on the moors.

For food this year, three of us brought a course each and we had a delicious group meal in the accommodation before trooping across to the pub to sample some of the local brew. The landlord was selling Bridestones beers, brewed close by at Blackshaw Head - Bottleneck Bride and Beastly Bride were being served that evening.

Sunday weather was quite benign – mostly clear with the odd shower, and not particularly cold – for Yorkshire. However the rain during the previous days and weeks had made the ground very heavy. This would not be a fast year.

Leg 1 – Superstars Kevin and Nigel ran well, placing a superb 10th. This was the highest ever leg and race placing for any team going back through the history of the team. Nigel arrived looking very frightening indeed, his face splattered with mud from a slip at a gate. At the start there was some confusion because the organisers were unable to open a gate and the runners had to climb a bank into the car park to get out of the rugby club.



Spot two number 23s in the gloom



Leg 2 finish is in sight

Leg 2 – This leg does not suffer much from wet ground because there is a significant proportion on made-up tracks and roads. Ross and me had envisaged losing 5 or more places after Kevin and Nigel's strong start, and were delighted to actually make one up, and record a fast time as well. We placed 8th for leg and took the team up to 9th overall. The records set in the previous leg had been broken already!

In order not to detract from Kevin and Nigel's performance it has to be said the competition on leg 1 is somewhat fiercer than on leg 2. However, our team had many strong runners this year and so it was that Ross and I ended up placing well on leg 2.

Leg 3 – Kirsty and Alison found themselves setting out somewhat higher up the field than they are used to, but put in a stomping performance, held on to a top 20 race position, and increased the lead over MK! Despite the soft going they took almost exactly the same time as Kirsty and Mandy took last year, being just 2 seconds slower this time – that's consistency for you. In better conditions they would no doubt have been a minute or two faster.

Leg 4 – After their late and somewhat arduous recce the day before, Rick and Luke were looking forward to seeing where they were running! Leg 4 has a tough climb right at the end, the kind of thing

that is Rick's running bread and butter, but hard for Luke who is more used to the gentle slopes of the Chilterns. However, both held out well and managed a good time, maintaining the team's top 20 position and setting the next pair off with every possibility of beating the final cut-off time.



Uphill finish at Blackshaw Head...



...and an uphill finish at Wainstalls

Leg 5 – Brian's injury held out over the recce but stiffened up overnight. He was hoping for 75 minutes nevertheless, a few minutes down on his usual 70. It was John's task to keep Brian going and help bring the team into the Shelf changeover before 2pm! It was one of those Shelf moments – 2pm approaches and no sign of the incoming runners; people start clustering for the massed start. We had been so sure of beating the Shelf cut off this year but now it looked in doubt. At 1:55, the chaps arrived! Brian's injury had tightened up a lot, but he'd kept going with John's encouragement and they did the business of handing over.



John pulls an ailing Brian into Shelf



Record Breakers!

Leg 6 – This year the organisers removed a section from the seemingly ever-changing leg, allowing a shortcut down a road towards the end that took 0.8 miles off the leg. We hoped for a fast time, and what we got was a super-fast time. I was buying a new pair of shoes at the traders when the chaps arrived, not expected for another 5 minutes or so! They flew round in 75, against a predicted 82 minutes and made up a couple of places too. Simon had slipped and gashed his knee on the canal tow path near the end as they caught the scent of the finish, but lived to race another day.

The outcome

Tring RC had a great day. Three new club leg records were set for leg times, and new records were set for highest leg position and highest overall team position. We didn't quite beat the 7 hour barrier: with Brian not injured, and the ground less heavy it may have been on. Maybe next year!

Our eventual race position was 25, another new high, and our time of 7:10:32 was a new club record over the course. 8 team records this year! Despite the ground conditions it was a fast year, helped by new blood Luke, Ross and John, and by the perseverance of the old hands.

The race against Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes were threatening great things again this year, they had their strongest ever team out and in fact had entered two teams. Their predicted completion time was within 5 minutes of ours. Unfortunately the wheels came off on leg 4 when one of their runners twisted an ankle. He bravely soldiered on to the hand over, but the MK challenge had evaporated. Next year they will be looking to break our run of wins (three years now) – the competition continues.

Race statistics

Leg	1	2	3	4	5	6
Runners	Kevin Nigel	Ross Steve	Kirsty Alison	Luke Rick	John Brian	Alan Simon
Leg time	1:15:12	1:05:28	0:50:49	1:22:57	1:20:46	1:15:20
Runners' leg position	10	8	62	33	86	24
Total race time	1:15:12	2:20:40	3:11:29	4:34:26	5:55:12	7:10:32
Team race position	10	9	16	19	27	25

Team records

Now we have done 3 events as a club, it's time to set out the records.

Leg	1	2	3	4	5	6
Best leg time	1:15:12	1:05:28	0:50:47	1:20:23	1:09:50	1:15:20
By	Kevin Nigel	Ross Steve	Kirsty Mandy	Simon Steve	Mark Brian	Alan Simon
Year	2007	2007	2006	2005	2006	2007
Best leg position*	10	8	53	30	45	See note
*same year unless noted	Best leg 6 leg position: 16 th by Michael / Rick in 2005 and by Michael / Alan in 2006.					
Fastest total race time	7:10:32	2007				
Highest finishing position	25	2007				
Highest race position	9	Leg 2 / 2007				
Highest leg position	8	Leg 2 / 2007				

Next Year

For selection next year I'm going to keep it open as long as possible, until after the Herbert's Hole race at least, then select based on current form. I'll also mix up the legs a bit for those who have done the same one several times. There will still need to be some consideration of relative speed and leg lengths, but I'll try and keep the running interesting. It was suggested that runners (or pairs) could make bids for the leg(s) they want to run, lowest bid winning the leg – but the runners would need to match their bid time! Could be fun.



“Flying” down the last descent on leg 2

Steve Long

Calderdale Way Relay 9/12/07 - Alan Whelan's view

Calderdale has always been a highlight of my race calendar. I not only get a weekend away with like minded fellows but the event lasts all weekend.

It is a 6 leg 50M relay around Halifax - run in pairs and mainly off road. We have several challenges:

- a) beating our arch rivals Milton Keynes (who entered 2 teams this year)
- b) beating the last leg mass start
- c) trying to beat 7 hours total time

For the last 3 years we have run as Tring - before that we ran as a joint Tring/MK team - hence the good natured rivalry.

We normally set off early Saturday and aim to get to Halifax by lunchtime. The logistics of getting to the start of your leg - running several miles and then being collected again are quite challenging. John Manning, Brian Layton, Kevin Buckingham and I travelled together this year and had to get to the start of Leg 5 for around 14:00. I could then drive to start of Leg 6 (end of leg 5) and leave the car for the others to collect - then they come and pick me up. Easy you say. But to complicate matters we had to meet Simon and Kirsty allowing for Kirsty to get to start of leg 3 to recce with Alison.

To complicate matters even further it was freezing and absolutely throwing it down.

The recce seemed to go ok with myself trying to remember Leg 6 route from the race last year. We got collected at the end (being somewhat wetter than when we started) and headed off for the accommodation.

Overnight is spent in a rather nice bunk house - with a pub about 200m from the front door.

Race day dawned a little better than the Saturday and we headed for the 8am start. Kevin and Nigel headed off into the morning gloom and having done that leg 2 years earlier I did not envy them. We then drove to the next leg start and waited for the runners to come in. Leg 1 is always very competitive as it is the only leg you truly know where you came when you finished. Nigel and Kevin set a blistering pace and handed over to Steve and Ross.

They had one of the more 'Fell' legs that took in Stoodley pike and has a nasty hill towards the end. I got a great picture of them descending through the woods towards the finish and they did an excellent time handing over to Kirsty and Alison.

Leg 3 is a gradual climb that seems to go on forever and whilst I did not see them at the end I know the last bit of the leg is a real killer. They had a very credible run and handed over to Rick and Luke.

Again I did not see them start but Luke had a baptism of fire by being paired with Rick who just seems to glide over the 'rough stuff'. They handed over to John and Brian.

Leg 5 is very complicated with lots of turns that you have to remember if you do not want to waste time map reading. Brian has done this leg lots of times. The pressure for leg 5 is to beat the 14:00 mass start for leg 6 - it is always tight with this year being no exception. Needless to say they had beat the cut off and Simon and I raced away to start leg 6.

The recce paid dividends for the map reading but having the miles in your legs from the day before is not recommended. Simon was the stronger on the day but I was just thankful my leg held together and we finished running rather than me hobbling.

Milton Keynes had a terrible leg somewhere along the way and we easily beat both their teams. Simon and I did not know this as we waited with them at the start of Leg 6 and I was a little worried as they looked fit and had not reced the day before.

In the end several new leg records were made this year, we maintain our record over MK but we are yet to beat the elusive 7 hour mark (coming in at 7:10:32). We were a very credible 25th out of 120 teams.

Thanks to Steve for organising much of the event and I am sure we will be back next year.

Alan Whelan