



My London Marathon

BY CHRIS MURRIN

After months of training in the cold winter weather and a weeks worth of nerves churning up my stomach, the day had finally arrived. The London Marathon!

I was awake very early in anticipation of the race ahead thinking about whether I would get there on time; where the lorry would be to put my belongings on as well as if I would find Lucy and Phil before the start. However everything was great and went without a hitch.

At the start Line the thirty second silence for the lives lost in the Boston Marathon was incredible, thousands of people all stood silently to show their respect and rightly so. Then at last the time had come. The race had begun. Phil and I walked together to the start line with the crowds of runners around us. We shook hands, wished each other luck and once we crossed the line we were off, dodging fellow runners and trying to get my pace set at a comfortable speed.

The spectators were amazing! I heard my name called over and over giving me the energy and encouragement I needed to keep me going, making the first sixteen miles fly by.

By mile twenty four my legs began to get heavy when I heard someone shout "Go on Chris I believe in you" spurring me on to Buckingham Palace where I turned the corner and saw the finish line. I had made it and I felt quite overwhelmed as I crossed the finish with my arms in the air! 3 hours 39 minutes and 47 seconds, raising a fantastic £1033 for Hospice Care in memory of a dear friend who lost her fight to Cancer earlier this year.

People had told me about the London Marathon and what an experience it would be and they were right. It was phenomenal!

The Chairman

NIK WHALLEY

Whatever we are doing at the moment, we must be getting something right. Last Wednesday over 30 Strugglers ran in the relays at Braunton with good results, including wins for the senior ladies and male vets. As impressive as the results were, I think we should be equally proud of the commitment and involvement of club members from across the spectrum of ages and abilities, both those taking part and the supporters [no mention of Squires ;-)]. Closer to home – Claire led a group of about 15 people from the Pip Centre to make sure that those that weren't able to make the relays didn't miss out. In total, that's around 50 Strugglers out and about on club night.

Pub Quiz

18th May - Coaching Inn. To raise money for the North Devon Hospice as a combined effort for those doing the North Devon Half/Marathon. £5 per person, teams of up to 6 people. **Book your table now** - speak to Julie Colman - 07766 913 724 or juliecolman78@gmail.com

Race Results

London Marathon
 LUCY GOODMAN 3:27:40
 MCHRIS MURRIN 3:39:47
 PHIL PENNINGTON 4:11:08

Endurance Life Marathon
 JIM GOULD 6:28

Endurance Life 10k
 JON HIBBERD 1:46

Coaching Corner - Richard's top tip

It can sometimes be hard to find the motivation to run, particularly when it's cold and wet. I find that by setting targets I feel more inclined to get out there, so enter a race so you have something to aim for or just try to beat a PB on a favourite route. Rewards are good too, I sometimes allow myself a full English breakfast after a good run, you should probably choose something more healthy but you get the idea.

If you have something to say that would interest other members and would like to write an article then please speak to Julie Colman or Richard Connett or email us at the address below.

The deadline for the next issue is **Friday 31st May**.

I Remember ...

BY ANDREW JONES

The first of an occasional series looking back at the good old days. (I've been with the club 14 years, so straddle the gap between the real oldies – Sue, John, Richard and the recent growth of the club).

When I first joined the strugglers (Alison Ford said to me over the phone 'we are not very good' just in case I was the winner of the 1998 London Marathon. I wasn't), we changed at Graham Cripps' annexe – the dentist in Cooks Cross. Upstairs and a bit of squash. Eventually, Graham needed his annexe back and we decamped to a dump – who remember the St Johns HQ on Hugh Squier? Cold, depressing and uncomfortable in every way. We soon managed to get permission to use Amory House (long before its update) and we were there for some time – probably a year to 18 months. A great improvement over St Johns, but still not really right for the club. Then, to the PIP Centre, I suppose a good five years ago or more. Its interesting that this has been the place from which the club has grown so much. Its central, brilliant parking and somehow a much better atmosphere than any of the other places. But...one day, we'll have our own premise. Why not?

Strugglers 25th Anniversary Questionnaire: Summary Results

NIK WHALLEY

The highlights:

1. The main reason most people come to club is general fitness and socialising.
2. Relaxation and stress relief feature highly in responses for why we run.
3. Most people run 2-3 times per week and are 'training' for distances of 10k to half marathon.
4. We should arrange more trail runs, social runs and additional club sessions in future.
5. Several people suggested more focused and/or specific training sessions covering a wider range of topics, as well as 'one to one' or small group training for specific events.
6. Fortunately a good number of people are willing to volunteer their time to help organise and lead these activities.
7. From those that responded, most were available on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons, although there was a reasonable spread of availability throughout the rest of the week.

A slightly longer summary of the responses/findings will be available on the website and Facebook (I'll print hardcopy for those with better things to do than surf the internet).

We are currently working out how best to deliver on as many of these as possible. However, it must be said that through the hard work and dedication of many of you quite a few of the specific suggestions put forward have already been acted on or are in the pipeline.

... so, watch this space!

Race Report

BRAUNTON RELAYS

The first relays of the season and a fantastic turnout from the Strugglers. In all nine teams were entered and already the Vet 40 Men and Senior Ladies lead their categories.

Despite missing the start gun through absolutely no fault of his own, Nigel ran a blinding first leg to put the Vet 40 Men in a good position. A strong team performance from Mike, Jack and Steve saw them finish 20 seconds ahead of their main rivals Bideford.

The Senior ladies is not normally a contended category for the strugglers but the team made up of Polly Goodman, Daisy Adams and Tina McCracken managed to hold off Bideford by nearly a minute and take the lead in the first leg!

Well done to all the strugglers that took part. Unfortunately, there's not enough space to mention you all but a special mention to Ross, Jack and Geoff, three of the graduates from the beginners group earlier in the year who all had fantastic runs in their first relay outing! Roll on South Molton on the 15th

Race Report

THREE BRIDGES RUN

Sunday 28th April saw the inaugural running of the Three Bridges Run. Designed to replace the Bridge Run as our monthly club handicap run. From next month the plan is to run this race on a Wednesday evening. There was a good turn out with many people setting their times for the route. In order to cater for people wanting to run different distances there are options to cut out sections so everyone should be able to enjoy the run. Thanks to Jan as well as Julie and Jack for doing the timing and to Simon, Chris and Lucy for organising the route.

Upcoming Fixtures

3rd May	Torrington Round the tree.
5th May	Hartland H'breaker
12th May	Black Death run
12th May	Bideford 10k
15th May	Relays - South Molton

An interview with ...

ANDREW JONES

1. How/why did you start running?

At university...let it slip....took it up again in 1994

2. How old were you when you started running?

In 1994....47

3. Your pre race fuel?

Don't eat in the two hours beforehand. Can't run on a full stomach

4. Recovery food/drink?

Water and then something with chocolate

5. Any pre race superstitions?

Not really...though I do notice that I like to wear the same things for half marathons...

6. Make of running shoe?

At the moment...Brooks

7. Favourite race – and why?

My job stops me from doing much competitive running but the Cheddar half marathon is/was on a Saturday and this remains my 'best' – partly because it is a nice run and partly because I did my best time (1hr 29) there. I think I ran the half there five times in all.

8. Sporting idol?

Ron Hill or people such as Charlie Spedding, marathon heroes of the 1980s

9. Recurring injuries?

I've been very lucky here, but notice now that the knees are creaking a bit. Just old age I hope!

10. Running aspirations?

Like Richard, simply to keep going. I can't imagine life without it

11. Any other sports/activities?

I enjoy lots as a spectator but no to do (now)

12. Why do you run?

Part enjoyment, part a semi-spiritual thing. Most runners know of the feel the way in which running clears the mind

13. Best running achievement?

I remember my first 10k with the club in 1999, dipping under 43 minutes against Minehead on the Sandyway to Simonsbath route. I was pleased with that. Such a shame we no longer run against Minehead and no longer run that particular route. Best 10k at Bideford (41.39) – that pleased!

14. Closest club rival?

I've never thought of any of you as rivals. I have always been happy 'just to keep up'.

15. Favourite biscuit?

Im a sucker for pink wafers.

16. Best excuse for not running?

Its got now to be age – which is a bit pathetic.

17. Who do you nominate for next months interview?

High time we had a woman. But I leave the choice open..... [Editor chooses - Eve]