

The Serpentines

Serpies in Lanzarote March 1999

by Ruth Jackson

Ed. Note: Barrie Laverick is currently taking reservations for next year's trip. Please see announcement next page.

Every year for about the past six years a bunch of Serpies and friends have made an annual trip to Club La Santa, the sports resort in Lanzarote, thanks to the excellent organisation of Barrie Laverick and Eve Wilson. We go at the beginning of March, which often coincides with London Marathon Training Week and the Robin Brew Triathlon Camp, so the resort is always fully booked and if you're into celebrity spotting this is the place to go!

The number of Serpies going has increased every year (about fifty-five of us in 1999) as more people get to hear about it. And for most people, once they've been they almost certainly want to go again. There is something happening practically all day, whether you prefer to relax by the pool, do some serious training, dance the night away or learn some new sport. Practically every sport you can think of is available, with top notch equipment, often with coaching and it's all included in the price, and if you're there to run, there are half marathons, 10ks, triathlons etc. every day. And if you just want to sit in the sun, you'll probably find a handful of Serpies sipping drinks by the pool. There are
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**Volunteers needed to marshal the New
Year's Day 10k**
See page 5

Welcome to two new Serpies

by Sue McGinlay

Sue and Maggie (see her New Serpies page in this issue) have been following our new members closely and helping to make them feel welcome, particularly those with limited prior running experience. In this column, each quarter, Sue will introduce our new members.

Anna moved from Newcastle to South Kensington and joined Serpentine Running Club for social running (we do a lot of that, Anna!), training and because she has seen Serpies at races. (A good reason for wearing club colours in every race, even if it's not a team event.) Her favourite distance is half marathons and she ran 1.57.20 in her first race. Anna runs at 8 minute pace for 10K races, 9-minute miles for half marathons. She is interested in road racing and maybe cross-country. Anna is 22 and a student, doing teacher training. Look out for Anna on Saturday mornings.

Djenan lives in Kensington and before that in Lebanon and Argentina. She joined Serpentine Running Club to make her running more exciting (we can promise you a lot of excitement, Djenan – wait till you run the

handicap!) and to be able to set goals. Djenan runs in Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park regularly and joined us for the social training - she would like to find a training partner. Djenan is taking Spanish lessons and is about to start learning to paint on porcelain. It just goes to show how talented many Serpies are. How about a club trip to Spain?

WOMEN'S CROSS-COUNTRY

by Jan Farmer and
Beate Vogt
(team co-Captains)

The cross-country season runs from October to March and provides a good opportunity to alleviate the potential boredom of road racing. The women's races are generally short - in the 3-5 mile range, and the terrain and going varies. Some courses are very flat - for example Wormwood Scrubs, which is dead flat and a stretch for anyone to describe as an interesting course, while some are hilly, for example Parliament Fields on Hampstead Heath. The going can be quite firm at the start of the season but sometimes gets quite wet and muddy. This is all part of the challenge as you have to concentrate hard on each foot placement and can make up ground on other competitors by making better decisions as you go round the course. Spikes are essential for most courses once the ground gets really wet but studs can be a good option on some courses (Richmond Park for example). One advantage of the races being fairly short is that if you are marathon training, you can race on Saturday for a bit of fun and speedwork and still get in a long Sunday run.

We are in one league - 5 Saturday afternoon fixtures over 5 months, and we also run in a number of one-off championship events, all also on Saturday afternoons. Most of the championships require us to pre-enter a team and for some (but by no means all) there are eligibility criteria, such as you have to live in Middlesex, or you have to have been a first-claim club member for at least year. The Metropolitan League does not require pre-entry, although we would like to know if you will run a particular fixture. The general rule is that the first three or four runners home score for the
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Inaugural Newsletter

This is the inaugural issue of Quarterly Newsletter of the Serpentine Running Club. As most of you know, there is a weekly newsletter prepared by John Walker which is distributed on Saturday mornings at the Seymour Leisure Centre. This quarterly letter is being mailed to the home of every member of the club and is targeted at all those who are not able to pick up John's newsletter and possibly those who maintain their membership but have lost touch with the regular activities of the club or maybe only participate in one regular activity. The club has been changing recently with many new members bringing new ideas and injecting new energy into old activities: we have a new web page (see later in this newsletter), attendance at Wednesday night runs is way up, this year's trip to Davos looks to be regular club trip in the future, this newsletter, and so on. We want to reach everyone and give them the information they need to get the most out of their club, and maybe even reignite the enthusiasm of a few inactive members.

Because this newsletter is new, we are still looking for innovative ideas for articles or regular columns. If you have any ideas, comments or would like to help, please contact me.

Arthur Garrison

arthur.garrison@bt.com
0171 730 3362

Flat 19, 1 Royal Avenue
London, SW3 4QD

HELP NEEDED

Harrow Marathon

7th November 1999

For several years, Serpentine RC has been invaluable in assisting with the Harrow Marathon and Half-marathon, and our help is needed again this year. We need as many marshalls as possible, to be in place from 8.30am to 1pm.

Pick-ups can be arranged from the station, and *refreshments will be provided afterwards in a pub in Harrow*. As anyone who has marshalled in previous years will tell you, it can be good fun, and it's your opportunity to give something back to your sport (this used to be the club Marathon championship race).

If you think you can help, or you want more details, please call:

Bob Davidson
0181 930 0516

or

Ruth Jackson
0181 965 8724 (h)
07931 266 240 (m)

HELP NEEDED

continued from previous page
club team at any particular event but we can usually enter as many people as wish to take part. The club generally pays the race entry fees for these events.

Separate to this there is a Sunday cross-country league, open to men and women, which takes place on Sunday mornings. A list of known fixtures to date is included. For Saturday fixtures, if you have not already done so, please speak to either of us if you wish to be entered, or if you would like to know more.

John Walker says, "get wet, muddy and be happy!"

(John is the men's team captain)

The Cross Country season is now upon us. This is an opportunity to do what you always wanted to do as a child but were never allowed to do: get wet, muddy and be happy.

As you can see from the X-C fixture list (see p4), we are competing in two leagues and various championship races throughout the season. Both

leagues are open to all so come along and give it a go.

The Championship races have eligibility criteria, but in all cases, teams will be entered and details will be notified in due course on the web site and in the weekly newsletter. If you don't have internet access and don't regularly get the Saturday newsletters, get in touch with any of the team captains who will keep you informed.

If you haven't tried cross country since school, be sure you have plenty of laundry detergent at home and come along and give it a go. You will definitely enjoy it.

Contributions For This Newsletter?

If you have articles or announcements you'd like to see in this newsletter, send them before December 10 for the January issue to the editor (see front page). Soft copy strongly preferred. If you must send hard copy, it should be in conventional 12 point font, no italics and simple formatting or tables

Ron's Post Alpine Report 31 July, 1999

by Ron (cowbell ringer) Hagell

When we arrived at Davos-Dorf (a German word meaning tiny village) it was as if nothing had changed since last year; even the same people were at the desk in the Fluela Hotel. We went on a quick jog around the lake and sort of remembered the tight chest feeling one gets at altitude. We tried to think about other things and hit the pool and sauna - great! Such strange stuff comes out of the body from the London air - surprise-surprise! But all the food and wine and beer was just as we remembered: all great! Next day, Friday, the huge gang started the chaos - which one could hear various people asking throughout the 4 day stint (in German), "Who are all those loud English people?" or "Not them again?". We met at the registration hall and discovered that the organizer still had not credited the money from Beate's sister to our teams so no one could register. It seems that no one could quite believe that the CHF's (Swiss Franks) sent from the local bank in Laukerbad could possibly be for all these strange English people. It was soon sorted with a few well placed German words.

We picked-up our well stocked goodie bags complete with very nice bum-bags and lots of German hand-outs that I'm sure everyone enjoyed reading. Then most bought these great blue T-shirts that I am sure we will see lots of around the club this year - ain't

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Serpentine Social Events

by Ruth Jackson

Ed. note: Ruth Jackson, the social coordinator plans or helps other members plan activities for the running club. In this column she will report on past activities and tell you about upcoming events. But we'd also like to report on events of importance to members that might not have been planned as club events. An important accomplishment, perhaps? a new baby? Do you have an upcoming event that to which you'd like to invite other Serpies? A cycling trip? Travel? Let Ruth know.

Over the last year, the club seems to have been quite active in terms of social events, with several people taking the initiative and organising things.

John Walker organised a very popular Christmas dinner after the Thursday night track session at 'Galanga' in Battersea, attended by about 40 people. Bob and Shirley Watkins hosted a pancake paarlauf party in February for the Tuesday night Hill Sprinters.

In March we had a "well, we didn't have one at Christmas, so let's do it now" party at The International Students House in Great Portland Street. About 65 people came, including James Godber and Wendy Wood, and several who were there said it was one of the best club parties on record. 'The Checkmates', the band

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SERPES ON TOUR **Club La Santa 2000**

Barrie has made enquiries for next year and found that the London Marathon training week is already fully booked. Sports Tours have suggested that we go on the following dates instead:

| | | |
|-------|-------|---------|
| March | 9-16 | 7 days |
| March | 9-20 | 11 days |
| March | 13-20 | 7 days. |

The cost will be approx. £330 for 7 days, or £410 for 11 days, (prices based on 3 people sharing a single apartment).

If you want to go, it is important that you ring Barrie Laverick as soon as possible (these places will go very quickly):

0181 942 6253 (home)
07771 704 177 (mobile).

Tuesday Nights at Sudbury Court

by Ruth Jackson

Many of the runners who meet at Sudbury Court Sports Club, Wembley, on Tuesday evenings have been associated with Serpentine for over 15 years. Until a couple of years ago we used to meet at Vale Farm Leisure Centre, which is why we're still sometimes referred to as 'Vale Farmers'. Over the years a gap has opened up between the Sudbury Court and Central London groups, mainly because of the distance. Some people have allowed their Serpentine membership to lapse, but there are still about 10-15 Sudbury Court people who are Serpentine regulars. Recently it was discovered that it would be possible for the Sudbury Court group to establish itself as a running club, affiliated to B.A.F., at no extra cost to its members (we were already paying

for use of the showers and social facilities at Sudbury Court). So we now have a separate Sudbury Court Running Club.

We meet at 7.15pm for a social run of just less than 2 miles, then split up to do various distances and speeds. There are about 30 of us in total, but on an average Tuesday night about 15 of us turn out. In the summer months we have a 3k handicap race, organised by Ken Lynn, the originator of the Hyde Park handicap system. After our runs we adjourn to the bar run by a very friendly couple, who live on-site. Also based at Sudbury Court there are netball, rugby, cricket, darts, and football teams, but on a Tuesday night we often have exclusive use of the facilities. It is possible to use the club on other nights too (and some of us do).

If any Serpies want to join us at Sudbury Court, they can do so, either by paying £1 for use of the showers on

an occasional basis, by joining Sudbury Court Sports Club as a social member for £16, or by joining Sudbury Court Running Club as a second claim club for £20.

Sudbury Court Sports and Social Club is on East Lane, 5 mins. walk from North Wembley station (Bakerloo tube or Euston-Watford BR line) or 10 mins walk from Sudbury Town station (Piccadilly line).

Are you creative?

Design a logo or masthead for The Serpentes

Submit your ideas to the editor or any committee member. If your design is chosen you will be rewarded with.... ..well, we'll use it!

Serpentine Running Club

Party of the Century

Saturday 4 December 7.30pm

Reception: St Andrew's Hall

Venue: Overseas House, Park Place, St James's Street London, SW1 1LR.

Dinner / dance: Hall of India

Salmon or veggie option.

Music by the Checkmates

Tickets £30, available from Ruth Jackson, or any Committee Member.

Book now.

Last date for reservations 19 November.

Nearest tube: Green Park.

London To Brighton – The Hard Way!

(An autobiographical tale of an ultra marathon run)

by Nick Slade

Preparation ForThe Race

Once you have decided to take on such a challenge, you immediately start to encounter all kinds of obstacles you have to negotiate. The London to Brighton has strict qualification procedure – with only those who are most likely to finish being allowed to run. You must have run a Marathon in the previous year in less than 4 hours, or one of the other designated qualification races within an applicable time. In early November 1998, I ran the Harrow Marathon in a comfortable 3:51, thus achieving the standard . The next problem I had to negotiate was the training schedule – asking around I heard that the normal routine involved up to 70 miles of running a week or more! With a busy lifestyle, and two kids, this was going to be impossible, so I used my experience to date to form a much easier to achieve schedule. Instead of the standard once a week long run (20 miles plus), the norm for all long distance runners, I decided to make it once a month – either a marathon, or equivalent. The fear of the Marathon soon faded as it became routine, and the body was also having time to recover between long runs. Once a week I ran at least 12 miles to maintain stamina, and also ran a couple of 10km runs every week (normally from work to home or during lunchtime). In addition to this I was still doing my Tuesday Night Hill Sessions. The total mileage was not high, (from

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Cross Country Fixtures 1999/2000

| DATE | EVENT | LOCATION | COMMENTS |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| Sat, 16 October | Metropolitan League | Welwyn Garden City | Ladies 4k, Men's 8k plus younger age groups - start 2pm |
| Sun, 17 October | Sunday League | Cheshunt | Ladies 6k, Men's 9k start 10.30am |
| Sat, 6 November | Metropolitan League | Horsenden Hill, Perivale | as for 16 October |
| Sun, 14 November | Sunday League | Trent Park | as for 17 October |
| Sat, 27 November | London Championships | Parliament Hill | Eligibility criteria apply; teams need to be pre-registered |
| Sat, 4 December | Ellis & Dysart Cups | Richmond Park | |
| Sat, 4 December | Metropolitan League | Wormwood Scrubs | CARE - 1:30pm start |
| Sun, 5 December | Sunday League | Alexandra Palace | as for 17 October |
| Sat, 8 January | Middlesex Championships | Ruislip | Eligibility criteria apply; teams need to be pre-registered |
| Sat, 15 January | Metropolitan League | Claybury, Woodford | Care - 1.30pm start |
| Sun, 23 January | Sunday League | Welwyn Garden City | as for 17 October |
| Sun, 29 January | Southern Counties Championships | Parliament Hill | Ladies & Men's teams to be selected |
| Sat, 5 February | Middlesex Veterans Championships | Ruislip | Eligibility criteria apply; teams need to be pre-registered |
| Sat. mid February | North of the Thames Championships | tba | date to be confirmed |
| Sat, 19 February | Metropolitan League | Ruislip | as for 16 October - 2pm start |
| Sun, 20 February | Sunday League | Royston Heath, Herts. | as for 17 October |
| Sat, 26 February | National Championships | Stowe, Bucks | Ladies & Men's teams to be selected |
| Sat, 4 March | Southern Counties Veterans Championships | RAF Halton | |

Metropolitan League: Please note that the junior race starts at 2pm (1.30pm for the December and January fixtures). This is followed by a combined race for the U15 boys, U17 men and the Senior Women. Then follows the Senior Men's race. The later races do not have a fixed start time but depend on the completion of the previous race. Please arrive early as you will need to collect a race number before the start.

Sunday League: The ladies' race begins at 10.30am and is followed by the men's race which starts at 11.15am

The Club makes no charge to competitors for any of the above events and unless indicated otherwise, there is no need to enter in advance. Even if 'team pre-registration' is required, it is almost always the case that you will be able to compete if you want to; however, entries need to be submitted about six weeks before the event. So please keep in touch and let us know in good time if you want to run so that we can enter you.

Look out for further information about the races (hopefully including a location map) in the Weekly Newsletter.

Apart from that, all you need do is turn up with your Serpentine vest and enjoy your run. For further information, contact any team captain.

New Year's Day 10K

Volunteers needed

The NPFA will not be co-sponsoring the NYD10K next year. It is now OUR race and it is solely our responsibility to keep up its good reputation, but this means we need even more people to help on the day

Please help!

The committee says: "A frown shall be upon he who runs without also providing a volunteer!"

The race starts at 11:00 am, so help would not be required before 10:00. Volunteers might just be rewarded with a little mulled wine, mince pies and, of course, coffee, and we will adjourn to the pub afterwards. Please contact Hilary Walker 0171 589 5342 or hilary.walker@virgin.net

Committee Meeting Report From 31st August 1999

by David Lipscomb

News/Captains' Reports:

- Karim Chebouki has recently won Sri Chinmoy Grand Prix;
- Neither track & field team were relegated;
- Ladies won Burnham Beeches Team Prize;
- Hilary and Jan finished 1st and 2nd ladies in Two Bridges Race;
- "Serpies" converged on Davos to take part in 4 different races;
- Elinor Rest was 2nd lady in Jog Shop Jog.

Topics for Discussion:

The Sunday Cross Country League has been cancelled by the organisers due to a lack of support in general (i.e. not specifically by Serpentine); concerns were raised that other Cross Country Leagues would not cater for all levels of Club Athletes. It was felt that the Metropolitan League could cater for all levels (subsequent to the Committee Meeting a list of Sunday Cross Country Dates has appeared). Also we may be eligible to enter Surrey League.

Ros presented to the Committee ideas of 3 types of leaflets to attract/inform new members, in addition to those we are attracting from the club website. The 3 leaflets comprise:

- a basic leaflet which could be handed out at races, and left at libraries etc.
- an initial enquiry leaflet

- a new members pack containing more detailed information.

New Year's Day 10K: Hilary said that she would be attending a meeting within a fortnight of this committee meeting; before attending this meeting, she wanted to know whether as a club we could marshal and organise this event. A debate took place which included the fact that we will not be allowed to accept entries on the day; it was decided we should ask at forthcoming sessions to find out whether marshalling is feasible.

Numbers attending Tuesday nights at Holland Park have been dwindling mainly due to the lack of changing facilities. It was agreed that Nick should be thanked for the good job he has done over the years. The Hill Sprint Challenge will continue until Christmas, but sessions on other Tuesday nights are no longer occurring. The position regarding Tuesday night sessions will be reviewed in the interim with the possibility of Derek Turner taking an additional session.

Club gear: strong demand for winter clothing. Paul has made enquiries with Fastrax. We discussed options for various designs and materials. Paul will check prices, finalise design, advertise and then pre-order.

Internet Chat: agreed that the club does not want to become split into those with access to internet and those without; a summary of information will be published in the newsletter.

Forthcoming Events:

Millennium party: Ruth advised that the Christmas Party had been booked for the 4th December 1999 at the Overseas House. Tickets will be available shortly and the event will also be advertised in the newsletter.

Round Norfolk Relay: 18th & 19th September 1999 - the club will be entering a team in this event for the first time; the event is a baton relay which continues through the night.

The Next 2 Committee Meetings will be held on the 11th October 1999 and then the 15th November 1999.

Do you know a member who has moved recently?

If you know of anyone whose address is likely to be listed wrong in the club records and will therefore not be receiving this newsletter, please help them and the club by letting Ros Young know. Also, let us know if your email address has changed.

How the Serpentine handicap works

by Ros Young

The first Serpentine handicap was first run in August, 1982, over a course comprising two laps of the Serpentine Lake in Hyde Park. The original course was measured at 4.12 miles, and following a minor realignment of the paths in 1998 it was re-measured at 6,565 metres (or 4.08 miles). Since January 1984 the race has only been cancelled once.

The basic idea is for all runners to finish at the same time, (42 minutes after the watch has been started!), and, after the first (scratch) run, start times are adjusted accordingly. Awards are given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each race, but the main trophies and awards are for the annual Tom Hogshead series. Here, total points scored (position plus bonus) from the best eight out of a possible 12 races are aggregated, and the highest scoring first claim member wins.

The race is open only to club members, although non-members may do scratch run before deciding to join.

So, how does it work?

The basic handicap start time is a runner's best time from his or her last six runs, and subtracted from 42 minutes and rounded up or down to the nearest 15 second start interval. The bells and whistles are:

New runner loading

After a scratch run, a new runner's handicap is weighted for the first 6 runs, as follows

| Race no | % Loading |
|---------|-----------|
| 1 | 10 |
| 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 2 |
| 6 | 1 |

The loading is applied to the handicap time. So, for example, if your best time was 32 minutes, your handicap without loading would be 10 minutes and, if this was your first race after a scratch run, your handicap would be loaded up 10% to 11 minutes. The reasoning is that a new runner improves significantly in the first few months of running, without undue effort. These loadings are designed to prevent someone who is going through this natural process from coming too

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Important Dates For All Club Members

See Back Page

Handicap Results (Last 6 races on record for those who have run at least one race in 1999)

| | | Last Six Times (from 2 October 1999) | | | | | | | Personal Best | | | | |
|---------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| Name | Last Run | Time | L-1time | L-2time | L-3time | L-4time | L-5time | Best | Time | Date | Age-graded | Bdate | Races |
| Jacky Booth | 06/02/1999 | 40.44 | 39.05 | 39.06 | 40.21 | 44.39 | 0.00 | 39.05 | 39.05 | 05/12/1998 | 39.24 | 19/06/1957 | 5 |
| Alan James | 03/07/1999 | 39.18 | 38.45 | 40.59 | 38.15 | 39.12 | 41.35 | 38.15 | 38.15 | 03/04/1999 | | 25/06/1960 | 9 |
| Beverly James | 03/07/1999 | 36.59 | 39.22 | 38.31 | 38.56 | 37.30 | 38.00 | 36.59 | 36.59 | 03/07/1999 | 37.17 | 04/08/1959 | 9 |
| Keith Morris | 02/10/1999 | 37.04 | 37.49 | 36.58 | 37.05 | 36.58 | 38.09 | 36.58 | 36.17 | 03/10/1998 | 36.38 | 10/06/1938 | 44 |
| Michelle Teasdale | 05/06/1999 | 36.03 | 37.09 | 39.05 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 36.03 | 36.03 | 05/06/1999 | | 20/10/1976 | 3 |
| Cathy Gerahty | 03/04/1999 | 35.15 | 35.23 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 35.15 | 35.15 | 03/04/1999 | | 27/10/1966 | 2 |
| Bev Thomas | 02/10/1999 | 38.06 | 39.01 | 36.35 | 37.32 | 35.52 | 35.12 | 35.12 | 33.48 | 06/06/1987 | 37.40 | 10/04/1945 | 63 |
| Zuzu Rabouhi | 07/08/1999 | 36.03 | 36.25 | 35.05 | 35.23 | 35.29 | 36.39 | 35.05 | 35.05 | 04/07/1998 | 35.23 | 04/04/1953 | 8 |
| Graham Johnson | 04/09/1999 | 39.37 | 40.53 | 34.54 | 35.24 | 37.10 | 38.25 | 34.54 | 31.09 | 01/06/1991 | 33.12 | 27/02/1945 | 59 |
| Joyce Goody | 05/06/1999 | 35.25 | 34.43 | 34.54 | 34.55 | 35.39 | 35.26 | 34.43 | 27.51 | 04/06/1983 | 32.56 | 12/10/1933 | 84 |
| Sue McGinlay | 03/07/1999 | 35.48 | 34.34 | 34.41 | 34.39 | 35.15 | 35.04 | 34.34 | 32.30 | 04/11/1995 | 33.43 | 02/09/1947 | 44 |
| John Sextone | 02/10/1999 | 34.15 | 36.08 | 32.59 | 35.21 | 33.40 | 32.41 | 32.41 | 30.08 | 06/04/1991 | 32.47 | 15/07/1935 | 65 |
| Robert Myers | 07/08/1999 | 32.40 | 33.21 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 32.40 | 27.17 | 04/01/1986 | 30.11 | 29/04/1950 | 2 |
| Louise Chantler | 06/02/1999 | 32.56 | 32.34 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 32.34 | 32.34 | 07/11/1998 | | 10/01/1973 | 2 |
| Zahra Shadlou | 01/05/1999 | 35.14 | 34.20 | 33.50 | 34.40 | 32.25 | 32.30 | 32.25 | 31.29 | 03/08/1996 | 32.41 | 14/08/1946 | 15 |
| Corinne Howes | 01/05/1999 | 32.06 | 32.28 | 32.59 | 35.20 | 37.37 | 36.36 | 32.06 | 32.06 | 01/05/1999 | 32.06 | 18/10/1950 | 6 |
| Lindsey Brooks | 02/10/1999 | 34.43 | 34.28 | 32.02 | 33.41 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 32.02 | 32.02 | 03/07/1999 | | 17/03/1965 | 4 |
| Maggie Moran | 02/10/1999 | 31.44 | 32.41 | 32.25 | 31.48 | 31.46 | 33.22 | 31.44 | 30.14 | 03/08/1996 | 31.03 | 09/05/1950 | 18 |
| Ruth Jackson | 02/10/1999 | 35.32 | 33.59 | 33.57 | 31.20 | 33.04 | 31.10 | 31.10 | 29.54 | 04/10/1997 | | 19/03/1966 | 16 |
| Chris McNeill | 02/10/1999 | 33.11 | 34.23 | 30.48 | 31.47 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30.48 | 30.48 | 05/06/1999 | | 31/12/1970 | 5 |
| Marianne Morris | 04/09/1999 | 32.52 | 32.09 | 30.42 | 31.32 | 31.51 | 32.03 | 30.42 | 30.42 | 03/07/1999 | 30.42 | 30/03/1950 | 59 |
| Liz Nicholson | 04/09/1999 | 31.23 | 30.52 | 30.51 | 31.31 | 31.45 | 30.42 | 30.42 | 30.09 | 03/04/1999 | 30.23 | 20/06/1958 | 14 |
| Chris Stagg | 02/10/1999 | 31.36 | 30.31 | 31.17 | 31.58 | 31.31 | 32.02 | 30.31 | 27.13 | 07/09/1991 | 29.00 | 04/09/1945 | 79 |
| David Lipscomb | 02/10/1999 | 30.29 | 31.07 | 31.11 | 34.28 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 30.29 | 30.29 | 02/10/1999 | | 01/04/1964 | 4 |
| Keith Evans | 04/09/1999 | 31.24 | 30.51 | 30.27 | 30.29 | 32.50 | 33.43 | 30.27 | 26.44 | 05/12/1986 | 29.53 | 08/06/1938 | 59 |
| Tony Leppard | 07/08/1999 | 32.00 | 30.25 | 30.54 | 33.20 | 30.39 | 31.13 | 30.25 | 30.12 | 02/08/1997 | 30.48 | 20/11/1936 | 13 |
| Ros Young | 04/09/1999 | 30.22 | 31.21 | 31.29 | 30.42 | 30.19 | 31.05 | 30.19 | 26.34 | 04/09/1993 | 28.07 | 15/03/1944 | 60 |
| Rita Mehta | 03/07/1999 | 33.23 | 31.15 | 32.39 | 33.20 | 30.14 | 32.39 | 30.14 | 29.28 | 02/07/1988 | 32.28 | 26/11/1946 | 39 |
| Matthew Fraser-Moat | 02/01/1999 | 42.16 | 32.49 | 35.00 | 35.46 | 30.54 | 30.11 | 30.11 | 29.03 | 06/04/1991 | | 13/06/1963 | 44 |
| Gabrielle Street | 04/09/1999 | 34.20 | 30.53 | 29.58 | 30.54 | 31.21 | 31.26 | 29.58 | 29.46 | 05/10/1996 | | 29/06/1969 | 16 |
| Bob Davidson | 02/10/1999 | 31.28 | 30.39 | 31.10 | 31.14 | 33.48 | 29.57 | 29.57 | 25.41 | 06/07/1985 | 29.41 | 30/07/1931 | 90 |
| Desmond Hampton | 02/10/1999 | 31.07 | 31.07 | 30.55 | 30.45 | 30.43 | 29.50 | 29.50 | 28.41 | 02/07/1994 | 30.13 | 31/08/1940 | 33 |
| David Street | 04/09/1999 | 32.09 | 31.03 | 31.05 | 32.07 | 31.10 | 29.48 | 29.48 | 29.40 | 06/12/1997 | | 08/08/1964 | 14 |
| Jan Farmer | 04/09/1999 | 30.32 | 29.55 | 30.20 | 30.47 | 29.43 | 31.01 | 29.43 | 28.23 | 02/01/1993 | 30.08 | 30/06/1951 | 60 |
| Katie Williams | 03/07/1999 | 29.40 | 30.42 | 33.10 | 35.45 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 29.40 | 29.40 | 03/07/1999 | | 24/12/1970 | 4 |
| Oliver Gallay | 04/09/1999 | 30.20 | 30.04 | 29.11 | 30.32 | 33.41 | 31.55 | 29.11 | 29.11 | 01/05/1999 | | 23/07/1961 | 6 |
| Caroline Yarnell | 03/07/1999 | 29.09 | 30.13 | 30.31 | 32.27 | 30.31 | 32.06 | 29.09 | 28.52 | 02/09/1995 | | 31/03/1960 | 18 |
| Grethe Petersen | 04/09/1999 | 30.23 | 29.08 | 29.19 | 30.12 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 29.08 | 29.08 | 07/08/1999 | | 26/10/1967 | 4 |
| James Stratford | 02/10/1999 | 29.07 | 29.34 | 29.33 | 29.12 | 29.13 | 29.13 | 29.07 | 25.30 | 02/09/1989 | | 08/11/1959 | 95 |
| Ken Kwok | 05/06/1999 | 31.14 | 30.34 | 32.28 | 30.40 | 31.39 | 29.07 | 29.07 | 29.07 | 04/07/1998 | 29.23 | 25/03/1940 | 45 |
| Manuel Moreno | 06/03/1999 | 29.06 | 29.45 | 30.20 | 32.06 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 29.06 | 29.06 | 03/10/1998 | 29.20 | 08/02/1945 | 4 |
| Peter Torre | 04/09/1999 | 30.34 | 28.59 | 29.20 | 29.33 | 30.14 | 35.29 | 28.59 | 28.11 | 05/07/1997 | 28.41 | 28/12/1941 | 26 |
| Sally McKay | 07/08/1999 | 29.17 | 28.52 | 30.11 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 28.52 | 28.52 | 05/06/1999 | | 04/04/1969 | 3 |
| Susan Mills | 06/02/1999 | 30.33 | 30.57 | 30.45 | 33.07 | 28.43 | 31.24 | 28.43 | 28.24 | 07/08/1993 | | 29/03/1965 | 15 |

| Name | Last Run | Last Six Times (from 2 October 1999) | | | | | | | Personal Best | | | Bdate | Races |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| | | Time | L-1time | L-2time | L-3time | L-4time | L-5time | Best | Time | Date | Age-graded | | |
| Sue-Ellen Horrocks | 03/07/1999 | 33.01 | 29.15 | 28.26 | 28.57 | 29.46 | 32.43 | 28.26 | 28.26 | 01/05/1999 | | 13/10/1968 | 6 |
| Jane Calderbank | 02/10/1999 | 28.24 | 29.17 | 28.57 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 28.24 | 28.24 | 02/10/1999 | | 24/06/1979 | 3 |
| Baiju McCubbins | 02/10/1999 | 28.16 | 29.03 | 28.56 | 28.47 | 30.26 | 28.30 | 28.16 | 28.16 | 02/10/1999 | | 13/01/1960 | 17 |
| Phillip Cuypers | 02/10/1999 | 28.01 | 29.10 | 29.11 | 29.20 | 28.35 | 30.13 | 28.01 | 27.01 | 06/04/1996 | 27.48 | 26/06/1956 | 30 |
| Natasha Hrstich | 04/09/1999 | 28.07 | 27.58 | 29.01 | 29.10 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 27.58 | 27.58 | 07/08/1999 | | 17/05/1975 | 4 |
| Hilary Walker | 02/10/1999 | 27.32 | 27.38 | 27.44 | 28.02 | 27.47 | 27.59 | 27.32 | 25.55 | 07/12/1991 | 27.28 | 09/11/1953 | 87 |
| Pat Kearsay | 04/09/1999 | 27.40 | 27.48 | 27.30 | 27.37 | 27.34 | 28.59 | 27.30 | 27.30 | 05/06/1999 | | 12/12/1962 | 17 |
| Jeff Prestridge | 01/05/1999 | 26.57 | 28.17 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 26.57 | 26.57 | 01/05/1999 | 26.57 | 08/04/1959 | 2 |
| Richard Smith | 04/09/1999 | 26.52 | 27.33 | 27.33 | 27.56 | 28.20 | 29.12 | 26.52 | 23.58 | 03/11/1990 | 25.34 | 06/01/1953 | 46 |
| Derek Turner | 02/10/1999 | 29.28 | 30.23 | 30.58 | 32.30 | 26.42 | 26.40 | 26.40 | 23.08 | 07/02/1987 | 25.18 | 26/04/1952 | 44 |
| Malcolm French | 04/09/1999 | 29.35 | 28.29 | 28.05 | 27.30 | 26.33 | 26.59 | 26.33 | 25.22 | 07/10/1989 | 27.07 | 30/11/1954 | 39 |
| Eric Williams | 07/08/1999 | 26.19 | 27.16 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 26.19 | 26.19 | 07/08/1999 | | 24/11/1973 | 2 |
| Martin Wiggins | 03/07/1999 | 26.54 | 26.33 | 26.18 | 27.51 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 26.18 | 26.18 | 04/07/1998 | | 30/10/1962 | 4 |
| Gary Hymns | 02/01/1999 | 28.58 | 28.01 | 26.47 | 26.12 | 27.36 | 26.15 | 26.12 | 22.06 | 04/06/1988 | 23.17 | 27/05/1957 | 45 |
| Eamonn Richardson | 02/10/1999 | 27.55 | 26.55 | 27.21 | 26.56 | 26.00 | 26.40 | 26.00 | 23.57 | 02/05/1987 | 24.53 | 17/01/1959 | 114 |
| David Hoatson | 07/08/1999 | 26.00 | 27.27 | 27.26 | 26.42 | 26.26 | 26.33 | 26.00 | 26.00 | 07/08/1999 | 26.00 | 08/01/1959 | 8 |
| Simon Ludlum | 01/05/1999 | 27.09 | 27.39 | 25.59 | 26.31 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 25.59 | 25.59 | 05/07/1997 | | 16/03/1963 | 4 |
| Phillip McCubbins | 02/10/1999 | 26.06 | 26.22 | 26.32 | 25.56 | 27.03 | 26.12 | 25.56 | 25.56 | 01/05/1999 | 25.55 | 10/10/1958 | 11 |
| Ian Hall | 02/01/1999 | 26.53 | 27.11 | 26.26 | 26.08 | 25.47 | 25.39 | 25.39 | 25.08 | 04/10/1997 | 25.30 | 29/10/1952 | 33 |
| Dave Mackenzie | 02/10/1999 | 25.42 | 25.38 | 25.48 | 25.55 | 26.03 | 26.19 | 25.38 | 24.45 | 03/09/1994 | 25.43 | 31/08/1949 | 21 |
| Steve Edwards | 04/09/1999 | 25.35 | 25.49 | 26.17 | 27.03 | 25.58 | 25.47 | 25.35 | 25.35 | 03/04/1999 | 25.35 | 30/01/1957 | 6 |
| Michael Carden | 04/09/1999 | 26.25 | 28.03 | 27.47 | 26.51 | 25.34 | 27.38 | 25.34 | 24.53 | 10/10/1992 | 26.02 | 05/05/1958 | 17 |
| Rachel Mackenzie | 03/04/1999 | 26.06 | 26.18 | 25.43 | 25.34 | 26.28 | 26.30 | 25.34 | 25.34 | 04/05/1996 | | 26/02/1961 | 7 |
| Phill Harris | 02/10/1999 | 25.33 | 25.42 | 25.56 | 25.29 | 26.52 | 26.57 | 25.29 | 23.45 | 10/10/1992 | | 12/09/1960 | 112 |
| Jean-Luc Hoesz | 02/10/1999 | 26.34 | 25.49 | 25.23 | 25.40 | 28.25 | 27.22 | 25.23 | 24.54 | 06/06/1998 | 25.04 | 03/11/1957 | 15 |
| Pete Warren | 04/09/1999 | 26.24 | 26.18 | 26.32 | 25.20 | 26.25 | 26.14 | 25.20 | 24.36 | 05/07/1997 | 25.02 | 12/12/1939 | 11 |
| Christian Morris | 03/07/1999 | 25.13 | 27.56 | 25.42 | 26.22 | 25.57 | 26.06 | 25.13 | 24.55 | 03/10/1998 | | 15/07/1982 | 15 |
| Charles Doxat | 04/09/1999 | 25.44 | 26.15 | 25.47 | 26.15 | 26.07 | 25.12 | 25.12 | 24.15 | 04/11/1995 | 25.05 | 03/04/1942 | 24 |
| Richard Long | 04/09/1999 | 25.57 | 25.38 | 25.48 | 25.52 | 25.43 | 25.08 | 25.08 | 23.45 | 06/04/1991 | 25.22 | 28/09/1951 | 41 |
| John Jarvis | 07/08/1999 | 26.20 | 25.07 | 25.58 | 26.15 | 25.40 | 25.27 | 25.07 | 24.47 | 01/07/1995 | 25.36 | 02/10/1944 | 15 |
| Soon Han Choi | 02/01/1999 | 26.36 | 25.06 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 25.06 | 25.06 | 06/06/1998 | | 26/07/1964 | 2 |
| Arthur Garrison | 07/08/1999 | 25.50 | 25.02 | 25.05 | 27.56 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 25.02 | 25.02 | 03/07/1999 | 25.02 | 10/02/1955 | 4 |
| Chris Jordan | 02/10/1999 | 25.45 | 24.55 | 25.07 | 27.00 | 26.43 | 29.11 | 24.55 | 24.55 | 05/06/1999 | | 12/05/1980 | 7 |
| Ganesh Ramchandran | 07/08/1999 | 24.42 | 24.50 | 25.16 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 24.42 | 24.42 | 07/08/1999 | | 12/10/1967 | 3 |
| Sami Mohammed | 02/10/1999 | 24.38 | 24.34 | 24.46 | 24.29 | 24.30 | 24.54 | 24.29 | 23.59 | 02/04/1994 | | 06/07/1967 | 33 |
| Owen Barder | 07/08/1999 | 25.44 | 25.24 | 24.29 | 25.32 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 24.29 | 24.29 | 03/04/1999 | | 20/02/1967 | 4 |
| David Drury | 02/10/1999 | 24.24 | 24.25 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 24.24 | 24.24 | 02/10/1999 | | 21/10/1972 | 2 |
| Timo Teinila | 02/10/1999 | 24.28 | 24.20 | 24.41 | 24.49 | 24.38 | 24.48 | 24.20 | 23.49 | 03/02/1996 | 24.29 | 13/05/1959 | 10 |
| Terry Nicholson | 05/06/1999 | 27.33 | 25.25 | 25.31 | 24.10 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 24.10 | 24.10 | 06/07/1996 | 24.42 | 10/10/1953 | 5 |
| Derek Paterson | 03/07/1999 | 25.59 | 26.21 | 24.21 | 24.07 | 24.12 | 25.15 | 24.07 | 22.30 | 07/10/1989 | 24.12 | 02/03/1951 | 66 |
| John Hudspith | 02/10/1999 | 25.14 | 24.19 | 24.27 | 23.57 | 23.54 | 25.34 | 23.54 | 22.45 | 06/01/1990 | | 16/04/1960 | 65 |
| Oleg Meshkov | 01/05/1999 | 23.24 | 23.36 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 23.24 | 23.24 | 01/05/1999 | | 13/10/1959 | 2 |
| Geoffrey Lee | 02/10/1999 | 23.13 | 23.28 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 23.13 | 23.13 | 02/10/1999 | | 23/03/1970 | 2 |
| John Walker | 03/07/1999 | 26.41 | 26.39 | 23.23 | 23.49 | 22.53 | 23.25 | 22.53 | 22.00 | 02/02/1985 | 24.42 | 01/03/1944 | 44 |
| Leighton Grist | 05/06/1999 | 23.14 | 23.24 | 22.48 | 23.02 | 22.56 | 22.38 | 22.38 | 21.53 | 01/10/1988 | 22.54 | 03/06/1958 | 54 |

high in the finishing order, ahead of those who are training hard. It doesn't always work: Jacky Booth won her second race in September, 1998, having improved from 44.49 to 40.21!

Place loading

Anyone who places 1st, 2nd, or 3rd is receives a loading in accordance with the following table:

| | |
|-----|-------|
| 1st | 1.00% |
| 2nd | 0.50% |
| 3rd | 0.25% |

These loadings are aggregated, so that after one win and one 2nd place in any one year, a runner will be receiving a loading of 1.50%. The reasoning for this to make it harder for these runners to keep placing, and to spread the opportunities for placing 1st, 2nd or 3rd around a bit. The place loading for each runner is reset to zero at the end of each calendar year. Again, it doesn't always work: witness the performance of Keith Morris during 1998. By the end of the year, Keith's loading was 2.5%: he was still scoring well, and thoroughly deserved his trophy win.

Points scoring

Points are used to determine a runner's placement in the Tom Hogshead Series and are awarded in two categories: position and bonus. Position points start at 20 for a win, 19 for second, down to the minimum which everyone scores for completing a race. Bonus points depend on how close a runner gets to his or her pb: 100% (ie, equalling or improving a pb, OR an age-graded pb) scores 12; over 99% scores 11, and so on, down to 90%, which scores 2.

In January 1998, the discount which rewarded the number of races run, effectively a negative percentage loading on the handicap, was discontinued. The table for this had evolved over the years, and to an extent, compensated for the ageing profile of the race participants. The variation in number of races run was substantial: Alan Woodward, at 65+ had done almost 160, whereas Eamonn Richardson and Phill Harris, still (then) under 40, were approaching 100 races. Age-graded tables had by then become available, and the 5 K road factors are now used to age-grade pbs, to allow older runners, (those over 40), to score more bonus points, and to compensate for a natural reduction over time in position points.

In January 1999, there was one further change, which was to treat those returning after a very long absence from the race (more than 7 years) as new runners: previously, after their first run, they were handicapped on the best of their last six runs, regardless of how long it had

been since their last handicap race. In addition, to keep start lists manageable at registration for the races, start times (i.e. handicaps) are available only those who have run within the last 12 months. Anyone else has to run scratch, because no start time is immediately available (however, in subsequent races, their handicap will be based on their last six races as usual).

There is no right or wrong way of calculating handicaps. There is scope to change things at the start of each year but the effects of any changes have to be carefully considered first. The handicap is a Serpentine tradition, and all participants do have to perceive the results as fair. By encouraging newer, faster runners, you may discourage long-standing or slower runners. The larger the number of participants, the smaller the percentage of runners scoring position points.... and so on. The objective is the fairest balance.

For next year, there will be at least one significant change, which will be to treat age graded pbs in the same way as actual pbs, for the purpose of calculating bonus points. At the moment, an age-graded pb does not adjust the "target", as does an actual pb, and this is inconsistent. There would still be time to consider other suggestions for adjustments to the system: thus far, attempts to solicit comment have been met with...silence!!

Ed. note: Do you know who has run the most handicaps? Who holds the course record and what it is? All will be revealed as Ros digs through her archives in next quarter's newsletter.

Sunday In The Park - With Ron?

by Ron Hagell

Sunday runs around Richmond Park have been popular from time-to-time, depending on the race calendar. These are a great way to build up your mileage. The path around the perimeter is a little under 7.5 miles and we do one or two laps.

We do these runs mainly in the run up to the London Marathon and then sporadically throughout the rest of the year, depending on interest. At present, I have no long races scheduled for the near future and so will not be going out to Richmond Park as often. But if we have someone who is preparing for something and wants company from time to time, we could continue to do these runs.

When we do go, we meet at 9:00 am sharp in the car park next to Pembroke Lodge, near Richmond Gate. There are toilets and refreshments on site and water

fountains on the route. Travel by train from Waterloo or take the District Line, or you may be able to get a lift from central London from one of the other runners

If you want to help organise this give me a call on 0498 698 309, and keep this in mind for the London Marathon.

The Seven Sisters Marathon 1998

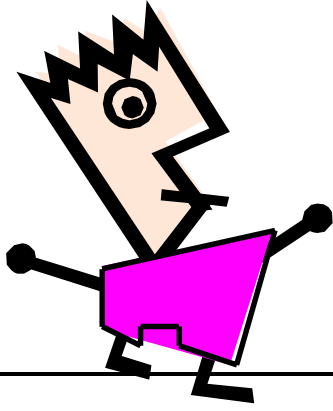
by Derek Turner, our Eastbourne correspondent

Ed. note: The Seven Sisters Marathon is coming up on the 30th of October. Derek arranges club entries each year. Entries are now closed, although he is maintaining a waiting list. Here is his report from last year. If after reading this (!) you'd like to run next year's, let him know before the June/July timeframe.

In the past few years, I have managed only a maximum of six or seven weeks training before the recurrence of an old calf injury forces me to stop running. It therefore came as an unexpected surprise that with three weeks to 'The Seven Sisters, and after seven weeks of training I found that I was still out there running, albeit at a rather modest pace.

In order to cope with work and other commitments, I had altered my training from running in the evenings to morning running. As the days shortened the mornings got gloomier and darker. On the darker mornings I began to modify my route, and entered the forest and park land at a later stage. However each morning there was the same dilemma: "should I go through the woods? or should I stick to the boring but safer roads?" Often I was to be found jogging along through the dimly lit woods, barely able to see the path. One morning I said to myself (purely to test that I was not going too fast, by showing I was capable of holding a conversation, and not because I was going mad!) "It's pretty dark this morning - I wonder if I should go along this path beside the lake?" I heard myself reply "yeah, pas de problem, I know the path like the back of my hand, and with any luck I will catch a heron fishing". Without a moments' hesitation, I was off down the path. Twenty metres later, I was heading towards the moon, yelling a few expletives on the way. In between that morning and the last time I had run that route, a tree had grown a three inch thick root across the track. I was forced to limp home with a sprained ankle, and a promise that in future I will behave sensibly (Rita said "fat chance of that ever happening!").

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New Series

“How far did I go last night?”

The question we are always asked by runners new to Serpentine Running Club is “How far did we run?”

Most club sessions provide runs around the perimeter paths of London parks. So here are the distances you ran!

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Two Parks | 4.31 miles |
| <i>Kensington Gdns & Hyde Park combined</i> | |
| Four Parks | 7.4 miles |
| <i>Two parks, plus Green Park & St James' Park</i> | |
| Richmond Park | 7.23 miles |
| Handicap Race | 4.12 miles |

Want to build up strength and stamina?

If you didn't already know it, Serpentine organises not just road-running, but cross-country and track and field too. The cross-country season has just started and there are races organised throughout the season that cater for **all** standards. Additional spin-offs are the variety it will introduce into your running schedule and the strength and stamina you will build.

Running in the Dark ● ●

Your own safety and that of other club members should be paramount. Now that dark evenings (and dark mornings) are upon us, remember - don't run on your own, carry a personal alarm and above all, wear clothes that you can be seen in by road users.

Select the right gear

Paul Ingram sells Serpentine running kit – highly recommended and you **must** have a club vest or tee shirt for racing. For other gear, go to Run & Become, Palmer Street, present your membership card and get 10% off most kit and shoes.

Races for new runners

Below are races that are well organised, local and recommended for new runners. See Runners World or Today's Runner for further details.

5K

Serpentine last Friday of each Month

5-Mile

Battersea Sri Chinmoy 5
16 October &
4 December

10K

Battersea Sri Chinmoy
13 November

10-Mile

Epson 10
21 November
Tadworth 10
9 January 2000

1/2-Marathon

Harrow Kodak
7 November 1999

Maggie Moran

What Is The 100 Club?

by Ian Hall

When I first became a member of Serpentine RC, I sometimes noticed references to the 100 Club in the newsletter. Since it seemed to consist of people who were household names in the Club, mainly but not exclusively for their running reputations, this seemed to be a part of the Club that was only open to a few select people and would remain one of those elite bodies that one would occasionally speculate about, like Toc H and the Masons.

However all can now be revealed. The 100 Club is open to everyone whether you have been around for ten days or ten years. It costs one pound a week (the price of a lottery ticket) to be a member and this gives you the chance of winning in the monthly draw which takes place every Saturday after the Handicap. There are four prizes of £10, two of £25, one of £50, and a star prize of £100. This gives you an approximately 1 in 12 chance of winning something every month (much better than the lottery) and over the long term should get 55% of your money back (definitely better than the lottery). And of course you may get a cheque for £100 from Kathy through your door when it's not even Christmas.

The reason behind it is, of course, to raise funds for the Club, which is why, if you like running with Serpentine and want a boost on Handicap Day after you've come 10th once again, why not send your cheque, payable to 'Serpentine 100 Club' to Kathy Crilley, Flat 11, 10 Bramham Gardens, London SW5 0 JK. Not a funny handshake in sight. What a disappointment!

Wednesday Nights Get Bigger And Better!

by Grethe Peterson
and Kathleen Broekhof

The weekly Wednesday night run with the Serpentine has changed only slightly over the past year. It has always been a social time, with a few runners flocking to the Windsor Castle pub, around the corner from Seymour Leisure Centre, for some Thai food and beer. However, this has now become a ritual! The winter saw an influx of new members training for the London Marathon together, not only on Wednesdays but Saturday and Sunday too. These members continued running after the marathon, and participated in races and relays. Much of the race choosing and planning for these events takes place on Wednesday nights in the upstairs room at the pub where it is not unusual to have two or three people on mobiles enquiring about train schedules and the like. This leads to a series of

| Serpentine 100 Club | | September 1999 Draw |
|-------------------------|--------|---------------------|
| PRI ZE | NUMBER | LUCKY PERSON |
| 1 st £100.00 | 65 | Sally Mckay |
| 2 nd £50.00 | 62 | Cathy Geraghty |
| 3 rd £25.00 | 77 | Brenda Green |
| 4 th £25.00 | 59 | Eamonn Richardson |
| 5 th £10.00 | 91 | Richard Long |
| 6 th £10.00 | | Mollie Ravenscroft |
| 7 th £10.00 | 70 | Alan James |
| 8 th £10.00 | | Manuel Moreno |

We currently have a number of vacancies for members in the 100 Club. If the number of members drops any lower we will have to give careful consideration as to how the draw will operate in the future. At the moment we are still making money for the club and eight people a month are winning between £10 and £100, but obviously this might have to change. If you do not have a number please consider contacting me to become a member, - it only costs £1 a week! If you are already a member do you know of anyone who isn't and who might be persuaded to join? Failing that, would you like a second (or third) number?

Kathy Crilley

emails over the next few days, for setting up the time to meet on the specified day! It is not all play as there have been times when Serpies are put to work stuffing envelopes for the Women's Captains!

As the year has progressed, the Wednesday night tradition has not changed much, aside from getting even more popular. The number of members going to the pub has increased tremendously, to the point where there are twenty-five to thirty members, some who miss the run, but come strictly to catch up on the happenings. A revamp of the website in June also helped to bring in many new members, who are welcomed by the existing members, and enjoy both the competitive and social aspects of the club. For beginners, of course, you don't have to be a fast runner: there are people of all paces. Many have commented on how convenient Wednesday nights are - meeting at 7pm is easy to do after work and not only is it enjoyable to run with the group, but also to chat to them, and get to know them better afterwards at the pub!

Round Norfolk Relay 18-19 September 1999

by Maggie Moran

This year was the first time Serpentine had entered this race. So what is it all about? It's a continuous relay that has been run for the last thirteen years and this year saw a record entry of 26 teams. Seventeen stages loop the county of Norfolk that, before this weekend, had largely been thought to be flat.

Stage 1: King's Lynn to Hunstanton, 15.18m

Sepenta Doni, place 11, time 1:44:04

Saturday morning we all met at the King's Lynn Leisure Centre. The Serpie team was going off in the first batch at 9.30 am. Hilary was due to ride shot gun for the first 6 legs and she duly caught up with Ros and Greta et al who had come up by train. As Serpie Chairman and Runner Chaperone, she had felt that she should dress (up) accordingly. For her pains, her fetching kit of matching lycra shorts and top with Serpie vest and Serpie cap under helmet earned her the description of "an overweight jockey" from Ros. Complete success - OTT Serpie dress sense.

However, serious riding was ahead. First off was Sepanta who had asked whether there were any hills as she didn't like them. Hilary, quite blithely, said no, there aren't many in Norfolk. How wrong she was. Her 15 mile leg was strewn with hills - even in the last mile into Hunstanton where she finished a magnificent 3rd overall from the 9.30 am starters.

Stage 2: Hunstanton to Burnham, 11.05m

Richard Holloway, place 9, time 1:13:26

Some of those travelling up from London on the Saturday morning, joined the race at this point, including yours truly, just in time to see Richard finish a grand ninth for Serpentine. Initially I had the feeling I had joined a party had way through, which of course I had. Perhaps I'll join the

continued on page 17

Davos

continued from page 2

they great? Beate and I set off on a hunt for her lost childhood on the Shatzalp Bahn (a lift to the top of a nearby mountain) and had a nice trek back down to the village.

Later we all met at the Pasta do - sad affair in a dusty tent with not enough to eat and some very strange performers. Everyone was concerned about the logistics for the races and after a bit of sorting-out we all felt sort of OK about the next day's events. There was some doubt about the runners for the last leg since there was only a small separately handed-out paper which said that a bus would leave the Sport Centrum 'starting at 11:30 or 'from' 11:30. The German version said the same but we all guessed it meant the same as last year when there was a shuttle bus leaving every half-hour.

Early the next day we all yelled and shouted for Hilary, Jan and Beate as they set off and yet again as they ran passed us through the village. Ian and David Street joined me at the hotel for some eats and then we decided we had time to take the train and cheer on our team. Off to Filisur on the little "Thomas-the-tank-Engine" train where on-board a German told me that the last and only team bus for the third leg left at 11:30 from Davos. Too late for us since it was already past 10:30 and we were on a train in the opposite direction!!!! I tried not to look upset and thought we might have to do some fancy talking to get the Serpies to the last leg. We put Ian on the train back just in case he might be late and decided to stay a while longer.

Anyway we saw Beate in her finish area and were also able to see most of the other Serpies through that part of the race. Ros showed up and said she wanted to go back with us to the last leg but then got on a train for Bergun. I thought, well, I hope she knows what she is doing. But after David, Tim and I arrived at Davos we discovered the awful truth. The translator of the

information had thought that 'starts at' and 'from' meant 'this is the only bloody bus of the day so you'd better get your ass on it'.

So of course we met Leigh and Ian at the city bus stop along with a Mexican and a few other very worried runners. We decided to take action and stormed the organizers' office yelling in my broken German about half the international team members needing to get to Durboden, the site of the last team changeover point. A man with a radio started to say no dice when a German woman and the Mexican showed up with the same story. The man then made a few calls and then said that a blue bus would be in the parking lot in 5 minutes to take us up the mountain. Scramble-scramble back to the bus stop to announce the new ride arrangements and everyone followed us to the pick-up point including Paul who had appeared. We all (except Paul -no room) packed into the mini-van with 'Medien' (Press) written on it for a nice quick ride to our starting point - except for Ros??? Later while relaxing on the terrace waiting for our runners, Ros appeared out of her own mini-van which she had commandeered in much the same manner as us. So the Serpies all finally got to the top and then we waited. . .

The mini-vans had been so efficient that we got to see all the leaders, but we did get a bit cold waiting for the others. Hillary looked great steaming through as did all the Ethiopians and other stars and then Phil (our marathoner) pulled in and asked us to help him change socks. We helped him over the cattle fence and onto the ground and started to help him get his shoes off - me on the left leg and David Street on the right. Suddenly both David and Phil leaped skyward and yelled '#@%&*~' at the same moment. It seems that the fence was electric and David had backed into it while holding Phil's foot - of course Phil was very wet so he took the force of the shock - fortunately he was also on the ground and, most

importantly, I was not touching him at the time. This might have improved Phil's last 'leg' since he was very loose after the experience, who knows?

We then set in to wait for the teams and there was much speculation over who we might see first. It turned out that, as we expected, Mike, Owen and Dave were all close together. But after getting Dave some water, as I was returning to the viewing site, I was shocked to see Grethe (my partner) steaming over the little bridge toward the changeover point with me not yet out of my warmups (or I should say Owen's warmups which fit like a tent - having left mine down the mountain). I did a strip faster than Blaze Star just in time for a goodbye kiss and I blasted off down the mountain. I was so pleased to be running, I even jumped up to ring the cow bells hanging over the trail. The spectators didn't seem to get it that I had just started to run, whereas all the others were on their last Kms of 78 and 42. I felt like saying, "don't cheer for me, it's these people who've done all the work today."

My finish was OK, but despite passing several other teams, there was one guy about 100M in front of me who I just couldn't catch. He kept slowing down - less than 50M at one point- then he would look over his shoulder and see me with my team sash and take off again. Once on the flat he took off for good and I never saw him again, but 1:03 for 14.5 Km was not so bad for an old guy - so I was very happy as was everyone else at the finish. We got to yell and support every Serpie at the line and just added to the mystery of those loud British people. Of course Hilary and Jan were most impressive with Hilary finishing 7th lady and first in her age group (78KM over two Alpine passes - come on, get real!) Particularly impressive was Leigh who was speeding around the stadium to finish her very first race ever. Grethe was voted MVP for her heroic over the peaks run and then the marathon picture session with Richard (Katie's

WINTER CLOTHES FROM SERPENTINE

I am arranging with Fastrax the club purchase of winter sweatshirts and running leggings. Prices will be good. First orders have already gone, however I will periodically reorder as I accumulate orders (with payment).

Sweatshirts: 50/50 polyester cotton fleece/raglan sleeves. Black with club identification in yellow on chest. Please indicate size with order: S(36), M(38), L(40/42), XL(44), XXL(46).

Price: £14, except XXL, £15.50

Lightweight Bottoms: With stirrups, elasticated tie cord waist, piping both side seams. Black with club identification in yellow down right thigh. Please indicate size with order: XS, S, M, L, XL.

Price £17

Hand me orders (with cheques to Serpentine Running Club, or of course cash) or post to me at 36 Ceylon Road, London W14 0PY.

Paul Ingram (Kitmaster)

Beau) at the controls of 57 cameras. And despite the aches and pains, some of us did some very crazy dancing until - well, late. Don't look at the pictures. Until next year...

Serpentine Results

60km Relay Team Event. (winners: SRS/Pro Sportler in 4.04 - phew! 78 teams finished)

- London (Ian Priddle, Michal Carden, Oleg Meshkov), 45th, 6:22
 - Allez Serpie (Franziska v. Lewinski, Dave Hoatson, Tim Hodgkinson), 57th, 6:43
 - Serpie Alpiners (Margeret Moran, Owen Barder, Ros Young), 58th, 6:47
 - Serpie Snails (Kathleen Broekhof, Grethe Petersen, Ron Hagell), 60th, 6:50
 - Serpentine (Gabrielle Street, Baiju McCubbins, David Street), 70th, 7:00
 - SEXYLIKRAKITTEN (Katy Williams, Sue-Ellen Horrocks, Leigh Kenney), 72nd, 7:12
- (Note.....you will have to do better next year, only the all-male London team managed to collectively run faster than the Chairman's single-handed (footed?) time for that 60km section of the 78km race - 6.26!!)

30 Km – Landwasser Race Ladies

- 64th /183 Beate Vogt 2:52 22nd / 60 in 40-49 Category

42Km - Mountain Marathon - Men

- 310th /712 Phillip McCubbins 5:08 97th /230 in 40-49 Category

78Km - The Full Ultra Mountain Marathon – Ladies

- 7th /83 Hilary Walker 8.11 1st /27 in 40-49 Category
- 32nd /83 Jan Farmer 9.22 12th /27 in 40-49 Category

22 Serpies ran.....
all finished!

**For a list of
committee members,
their phone
numbers and email
addresses, see
back page**

Social

continued from page 2
for which Serpie member Arthur Garrison plays drums, performed for us and was very well received. If you want to hear 'The Checkmates' again, they can be found at the Windmill on Clapham Common on the first Monday

of each month (with a new repertoire), and you can be sure you will find a group of Serpies there as well. We hope to have them play for us again at this year's Christmas party.

Peter Torre organised a successful 'Meal of the Month' at 'La Spighetta' an Italian restaurant near Baker Street, which was attended by about 20 people in July. Peter also arranged a 10 pin bowling night on 19th September, so thanks to Peter for your efforts.

In July a small group of Serpies trekked to Hampstead Heath to enjoy 'A Night at the Opera' at Kenwood open air concerts. Each person brought something along for a picnic.

In September, after the last handicap of the year at Sudbury Court, Bev Thomas arranged for the customary dinner at the Red Lantern in Harrow, and it was attended by about 30 people.

Other regular and ongoing social events include the last Wednesday of the month Cheese and Wine, and of course after every run you can always be sure to find somebody going to the pub (particularly on Wednesday evenings where we have over twenty going for Thai food!)

Watch this space for future events in the pipeline. Possibilities that have been suggested include a river or canal boat trip next summer, although these seem to be quite expensive. We have been asked to provide marshal support, as we usually do, at this year's Harrow Marathon. All volunteers will be rewarded with food in a local hostelry afterwards (see the advert elsewhere in this newsletter)

The big event of the year (nay, the century!) will be on the 4th December, details of which you'll find elsewhere in this newsletter. I strongly recommend you buy your tickets early to avoid disappointment. We anticipate about 100 guests. The proposed menu is:

Carrot and Ginger Soup

*Steamed Salmon with
Avocado Hollandaise Sauce*
or

Vegetarian alternative

*Selection of seasonal
vegetables*

*Orange and strawberries
laced with Grand Marnier
in a tuille basket,
Coffee and Mints*

If you have any special dietary needs, let the person you are buying the ticket from know and we will try to arrange an alternative. The vegetarian

alternative is negotiable - tell us what you want!

If anyone has suggestions for other events, I'd love to hear your ideas. Or maybe you'd like to organise something yourself? Please feel free - it's your club!

**What are you doing
on New Year's Day
at 10:00?
Turn to page 5 to find out the
correct answer**

Lanzarote

continued from page 1

also good facilities for families, with a number of 'Green Team' (La Santa's version of Butlin's Red Coats) allocated to children's activities.

Accommodation is in a compact complex of small apartments. Barrie matches people up, typically three to an apartment. There's a supermarket, laundry, several bars and restaurants.

There is also lots to see away from Club La Santa: Lanzarote is a volcanic island, so it looks a bit like the surface of the moon, and there are natural caves you can visit.

Ask anybody who's been, they'll probably have more stories to tell, but these are some of the highlights that stick in my memory from this year:

- Frank Horwill and Bob Davidson's rendition of 'Green grow the Rushes Ho', an old scout song.
- Keith Morris, slightly inebriated and his face covered in chocolate cake, saying "what chocolate cake? I haven't had any yet! I'll have some though", and having another piece just to prove it.
- Charlotte Morris singing 'Amazing Grace' to a packed audience at the talent show.
- the mile race at the end of the week: everyone from the group joins in for this one no matter what their ability, and Frank Horwill (group coach) decides what your handicap should be, I forget who actually won this year. Was it Roy Webber?
- Ronaldo Da Costa (Marathon World Record Holder) kept staring at Sami Mohamed and eventually went up to him and said "Brazil?" Sami replied "No, Ethiopia." After that Ronaldo introduced Sami to others as "my friend from Ethiopia."
- Ian Hall and Sarah Newton got drenched by a freak ten foot wave when standing on a beach path.
- John Harris set an all-time record for the half marathon, being the only person in his age group ever to have completed it.

- One day a few of us cycled to 'Timanfaya' or 'Fire Mountain', where we see meat being roasted over the heat from the volcano, and took a coach tour of the volcano - through, over and under the lava fields and the crater (it last erupted about 150 years ago). For me this tour was a most incredible experience, like riding a roller-coaster on an alien planet.
- Terry Nicholson (a.k.a. the Duracell Bunny) managed to do it again: doing all the activities going, out dancing till the wee small hours and still managing to finish every race in a very respectable time.
- Sami entered the Beginners Windsurfing competition and a group of us went to cheer him on. But without even dipping his toe in the water, he won by default as he was the only contestant.
- Arthur and Nick debating incessantly whether the endless fields of razor sharp chunks of lava arrived there by flowing or falling out of the sky.

Anyway that's just a small part of the story, but if you ask anyone else who been there, I'm sure they'll be recommending that you to try it for yourself.

Brighton

continued from page 3

30 up to 45 miles per week), certainly nowhere near the recommended, but it was manageable on a long-term basis. I walked a lot too, 20-25 miles a week which I used as extra training – this was easy to add to my weekly load as I often walk some of the way to work anyway – time on the feet is very important, as many 'in the know' have said. I compensated for the low mileage by making every mile count – training mentally as well as physically.

Well the test of this training routine came at the London Marathon, I found I was strong enough on the last 6 miles that I was able to maintain my pace right to the end without any problems – achieving a 22 minute personal best in the process.

The Big Day

I had to get up at 4:00am on the Morning, adrenaline was overflowing and I was treated to some aromatherapy the night before to calm the nerves and allow me to sleep. I had stayed over at fellow Serpentine, Beate and Ron's place as the start was too far from my own home in Harrow. Breakfast that morning consisted of a double Bacon Sandwich which is now my traditional pre-marathon breakfast (apologies to vegetarians out there), the bread was

thick, however, to give me some more high-energy carbohydrates. Breakfast is so important, and every seasoned runner has there own quirks in this department.

Beate took me to the pre-race registration, and made sure I was all set. At pre-registration you not only have to pick up your race number, but also sign in your assigned support vehicle which in this case was a couple of pedal bikes ridden by my good friends Ruth Jackson and Arthur Garrison (may I say before I get on to the story of the race itself – they were the best support crew I could have had!). You also have to make sure that any food and drinks you need on the race are placed in the appropriate box, so that they can be transported to drink stations along the route. I had made up special drink/food parcels wrapped up in club colours of red with two yellow hoops, to aid identification during the race (another sad crazy quirk of mine)!. The parcels themselves each contained a carton of Ribena, a bar of food (mars bar or energy bar or cereal bar) plus a high energy 'squeezy' – this is a tube of a nasty substance that has the consistency of wallpaper paste and tastes worse! However it does work. I had arranged for one of these parcels every 5 miles, plus additional water, which I could get en-route.

Well, that was it at pre-registration. A short walk then followed (one mile) to Big Ben for the start.

The Start And The Early Stages

The start was a bit of a rush to say the least. I arrived at Big Ben with only 2 minutes to spare, and I had not fully stripped down to my running kit. It was cold, so I had kept a few layers on – these were removed with some haste and dumped on the footpath for my support crew to sort out. I looked around and saw a few familiar faces (Owen, Grethe, Ros, Paul (Ingram), Beate (back after kicking Ron out of bed) and Ron – there may have been others, but I could not tell) then the chimes of Big Ben started and we all went silent. On the first 'bong' of seven we were off to tremendous cheers, from both supporters and runners. We all galloped across Westminster Bridge at a fair old rate, perhaps a little carried away at times. Adrenaline surging we headed south to our personal dates with destiny on the road to Brighton.

Past the Oval we went, through Brixton and on to the first time check at the 5-mile point in Streatham where Kathy Crilley was waiting to give us more support and a drink if necessary. 41 minutes was a little on the fast side for my liking so I slowed the pace down to a more pedestrian 9 minutes a

mile, which I kept up with ease through Croydon (10 miles) passed a cheerful Joyce Smith? (12 miles) and onto Farthing Down (15 miles). At Farthing I had my first 'walk' – this was part of the plan, as there was a very long steep hill up onto the North Downs. There were also plenty of bushes here for unscheduled pit stops!

The North Downs And On To Redhill

The small country lanes on the North Downs were a world apart from the busy London roads. At this point you really begin to feel you have got somewhere. I still felt strong and was well inside the cut off time (the cut off is based on an average of 11 minutes per mile – if you are slower than this

continued on next page

Virtual Running at www.serpentine.org.uk

Have a look at the revamped Serpentine Running Club website at www.serpentine.org.uk. The website carries loads of information for members and non-members, ranging from results of the club handicap and the Last Friday 5km to a comprehensive race diary for the months ahead. It now has minutes of the Committee meetings. For the anoraks amongst us, it includes useful links to other sites on the internet, and an Excel training log

We want to go on developing the website to make it a resource for everyone. If you have any material that you think would be useful, please give it to Owen Barder, preferably by email (webmaster@serpentine.org.uk) or by fax (0171 839 9044).

Email discussion forum

We've also set up an email discussion forum. This is for general discussion between club members about anything from social events to forthcoming events, and for information about changes to the website. It is free to use.

To join the discussion forum, send a blank email to: Serpentine-subscribe@onelist.com. Alternatively, you can join the list using the WWW - follow the link on the Serpentine website. To unsubscribe send a blank email to Serpentine-unsubscribe@onelist.com.

the marshals will pull you out of the race). My support crew were taking lots of photos, so that I could have something to remember it with, and other support crews for other runners were also cheering us along (I saw a lot of Paul and Ros, so I assumed Jan was not too far behind). The race with a field of only 120 or so, was rapidly thinning out – occasionally I would meet another runner and chat, but most of the time everybody was running at different paces so long conversations were impossible – by the end simple grunts of acknowledgement sufficed as runners got increasingly tired.

The road off the downs was a cruel experience – very steep downhill are not easy at the best of times, but with 20 miles in the tank, it's all together harder. Across the M25 we went and it was still only 10 in the morning. A flat stretch through Mersham and on to Redhill then ensued. I jokingly asked, whilst passing Redhill Station, whether there was a good train service to Brighton! I was then told that I would probably get there quicker if I continued my run. My joking was rudely interrupted by a big hill going out of the town. I had to walk this – though my excuse was 'I'm only taking in the view!' - This was an excuse I was to use quite often later!

Half Way – Then The Slog!

Half way is at 27 miles, the target was to get there before mid-day, and I actually arrived there at 11:15. This was a little quick still, so I slowed down a little to consolidate my position. The legs were getting a little tired now, so a little rest or two would not harm. 'Resting' basically is the technical term for 'power walking'. My knees could take a rest, but I was still progressing, though at a more sedate pace. I made the decision (well my legs did anyway) to 'rest' going up any hill and to run all flat and moderate downhill – steep downhill were luckily few and far between.

I had mentally prepared myself for the stretch between 25 and 40 miles – this part I called the 'Slog' as it is probably the most difficult section – get through it and your close enough to the finish to get home on willpower alone (hopefully). I got 'Passed by Jan Farmer' at 30 miles – she looked as fresh as when she had started – and raced away up the road – I had no such aspirations to follow suit. My other two teammates were well ahead. Hillary Walker was now leading the ladies race and would later go on to win and John Jarvis was more than a couple of miles ahead. Jan herself went on to be third lady.

The 'ultra' part of the race was upon me now – another few miles and a few 'rests' later I went thought the

CLUB VESTS AND T - SHIRTS

For conformity or comfort I will be happy to sell vests and T- shirts in Club colours to any member. Contact me by telephone, mail or email (not always read daily I fear) at any of the following:

0171 371 1130

36 Ceylon road, London W14 0PY
ingrampaul@hotmail.com

T-shirts are Unisex in small, medium, large or extra-large, and cost £8. For vests specify man's or woman's. Men's are in 34", 36", 38", 40", 42" and 44". Women's are from 32" to 38". All are priced at £15.

If you want your order mailed to you please add 50p to your cheque for post and packing.

Paul Ingram

lovely villages of Balcombe (35 miles) and Cuckfield (38 miles). It was here that I had my first, and thankfully only real injury problem.

Knee Surgery

Going through Cuckfield, after overtaking a couple of runners, I noticed that my left knee was feeling the strain. I decided to try and walk off the injury, but when I restarted my run, the knee really began to hurt. I was beginning to have doubts, and with only 16 miles to go. I had about 4 hours left in which to get to Brighton, so I did not have to go flat out. So very gingerly I slowly jogged to the Village of Ansty (40 miles) where my support crew were waiting. Apart from my legs, the rest of me felt fine – the sun had warmed up considerably and I was really enjoying the day.

At Ansty, Ruth hastily bandaged up the offending knee, and I was off again – the bandage did offer some support, and it was noticeably easier. I even overtook one or two of those who passed me during my stop. The weather held good until the town of Hassocks (45 miles), when the clouds noticeably descended upon us. We were optimistic we would be lucky and avoid the worst, as it was only 9 miles to go. However in the distance the Mighty South Downs lay in wait – and with it the Ditchling Beacon Pass.

Ditchling !

We were all (the runners that is) looking forward to the ascent of Ditchling Beacon. It meant that we could all have a walk and not feel guilty about it (even Hilary walked!) . The tiny roads leading us to it were so inviting, and wonderfully scenic, that we almost forgot we were racing.

On reaching the bottom of the hill, the heavens unfortunately opened – gentle at first, but rapidly gaining in strength. The wind picked up too, making life for the cyclists very uncomfortable – probably harder for them than it was for me (I had no

sympathy though!). The rains abated for a while when we got to the top, but one again resumed play (horizontal this time, with a little hail too) a short distance up the road. I was damned if this was going to stop me now though – 6 miles left and nearly 2 hours to do it in. The view at this point was amazing – and I could see the Sea at last!!

The Finish

I was cold and wet and 5 miles from a shower (a warm indoor one that is!) . When the rain eventually stopped, I put on a warm change of kit and gloves (that's what the support bikes are for!), and tore off towards Brighton. I had a second wind and chased down the gentle slope into Brighton. Unfortunately, another uphill section 3 miles from home stopped that. Another 'rest' to the top of the hill (was passed by a couple of runners whom I'd passed earlier), and then the 2 mile downhill into Brighton.

I caught up with another runner a half mile from home, and followed him until I finally caught sight of the finish sign 200 metres ahead. With a final burst of energy (where it came from is anybody's guess!) I passed that runner and entered the finishing straight. Unfortunately, a small slope from the road to the finishing straight set off a reaction in my calf, causing it to cramp. I must have looked quite a sight, still travelling at some rate on tip-toes. Thankfully it went within a few strides and I resumed my power finish – punching the air as I crossed the line - I had wanted to touch the finish sign but I barely got off the ground – no strength for silly things like that!

I'd finished in a very respectable 9 hours 21 minutes and 44 seconds, and now it was time to celebrate!!!!

After The Fat Lady Sang!

Well, it didn't take long for my legs to shut up shop. Within 5 minutes of stopping, my legs stiffened and, although I was still overjoyed at

finishing, I was not in a position to dance about. The changing facilities and post race reception were a mile walk away, which now seemed like 10. I eventually got home at about 10 in the evening – a tired but elated man. The following day I rested, but on the Tuesday I was fit enough to take my Hill Group Session without any real problems.

I have learnt a lot from this race, and would recommend it to others to try – though only if you have run quite a few marathons first. As I have found out, the training need not be overwhelming, and the reward is quite an experience. Can't wait till next years race!

Want to come too?

***For a listing of
important club
dates, see the last
page***

Seven Sisters

continued from page 8

The sprained ankle curtailed my training. The last long run never took place. So I knew that I was only going to be looking to get around 'The Seven Sisters'. However stupidity once more took over my brain: "well I once could do the event in about seven and a half minute miling. I may be about a stone and a half over-weight. If I was fit this would add on about 10% of time, so allowing for my level of fitness, it should be possible to maintain nine to nine and a half minute miling pace". With this in mind, I made arrangements to meet Rita after the event in the Pilot Pub at about 1.30 p.m. (for some strange reason Rita once more emitted her prophetic remark: "fat chance of that ever happening!")

The days leading up to the marathon were pretty atrocious: rain, rain and more rain, with floods in some places. The news items were showing the rescue of people and animals, and were peppered with remarks about worse weather to come at the weekend. The forecast was particularly bad for the South coast, with predicted gales and heavy rain for the Saturday of the marathon. However, on the morning of the event it was grey, but not rainy and with no wind. Michael Fish had, I thought, been over-cautious.

At the start, I was surprised by the lack of Serpies about. I did however bump into Mike Payne, and Jean-Luc, and we wished each other well. I

decided that both Jean-Luc and Mike would probably be going a bit faster than me, as I had come to my senses and was thinking: "if I could see someone like Keith (Evans), I would be able to go along with them, have a decent chat and put the world to rights, whilst enjoying the scenery". However I found no more Serpies before the start. Though Rita informed me later that Ruth, Sami and Arthur had decided to give the rest of the field a sporting chances by letting them have a two to three minute start.

At two minutes to nine a gentle rain started to fall.....at nine am promptly, the hooter sounded.....ten seconds past nine, the first of the runners was blooded in a tumble in front of me.

The joggers start was my preferred way of commencing the marathon. Slowly I got off to a jog and was amazed to discover that within a few hundred metres, I was towards the front of the jogging pack. "Hang on", I said to myself, "we have to be careful and not go too quickly". However pacing and timing, I estimated that I was doing 9 minute miling. There was much to muse over in the first uphill mile. Running on the turf was soft and springy. The second of these adjectives though was the most appropriate, as whenever you put any weight on the ground, out spurted gallons of water as if from a squeezed sponge. On crossing the minor road at about the mile point we entered a hedged track, the camber was from left to right, which is the direction that many runners involuntarily took, some with grace and others flapping like windmills. The pack was suddenly struck with mad cow disease - everyone had lost control of their co-ordination. Feet went one way; bodies seemed to go the other. The running of course was made all the more difficult by the avoiding of the human obstacles that now littered the way. Also to increase the agony a highlander stood at the far end of the track, squeezing loud noises out of a sheepskin. Yours truly was happy when we emerged onto the more open and stonier track.

Although the running surface had improved, the same could not be said for the weather. What had started as gentle drizzle, was now steady rain. Gradually the superb views over the edge of the scarp face diminished, and soon we runners were staring at a wall of grey misty cloud. The track we were running along was awash with water. Most runners were trying to keep out of the water as much as possible, by side-stepping the worst puddles. Unfortunately, the sprained ankle that I had made this too strenuous for me. The firmness of the ground, and that it was only sloping gradually up, did

however mean that despite the shoes being filled with whitish grey gritty water, I was able to maintain a good pace.

Just prior to the 4 mile mark, we commenced the first of the downhills. The beginning was not too bad, with soft turf under the feet. However, it soon turned muddy, and foot-holds became treacherous. Mud clung to the best of shoes, the grip got worse and individuals were seen to be doing some amazing skids, leaving marks a few metres long. The surface of the track then underwent another of its transformations, and changed to polished chalk over which was running a stream. On hitting the chalk many runners were seen to do just that. Most however were able to proceed imitating novice skaters. The track continued like this until we got into Jevington.

Prior to Jevington, I encountered Mike Payne again. Although he had stopped briefly, I was aware that I should not have even been seeing his heels today. Never mind, it was good to have company for a while and we went through Jevington chattering away. The route out of Jevington went between two buildings, into a lane between fields. I was busy reminiscing with Mike about characters from Serpentine's ancient history, when the track suddenly plunged into a foot deep mud bath! Not able to tiptoe daintily around the pond I went in, circumnavigating the hippos and hogs en route. Emerging at the other side I was coated from foot to waist in brown mud. I was still talking as I continued on. It was not until another runner enquired whether I needed medical attention that I realised that Mike was no longer running beside me!

The climb out of Jevington is relatively steep. I found that it was easier to run through the rivulet, coming down a rut in the path, than to go on the slippery chalk. This, of course, meant that I was able to wash off some of the acquired mud, the disadvantage being that I was still carrying shoes full of water. At the top of the slope was the dark and forbidding forest. Even here under the pouring rain was a Marshall, who tried to sell us the fishing rights for the track we were going along!. This track was as suggested in full spate, and had also recently had the mud churned up by the action of forestry vehicles. Again it was the usual sliding slipping of competitors.

continues on next page

Welsh Castles 2000

has been moved up one week to

3,4 June

Mark your diaries

The turn off to the foot path was swiftly reached as we were on another downhill stretch, a misnomer: it should have been called bottom path. As soon as I placed one foot on the path I was away sliding out of control towards an overhanging branch. In avoiding being decapitated, I fell backwards, and was soon tobogganing down the slope out of control. I managed to come to a halt by scything over two fellow participants. The rest of my descent was gingerly done, by running in the thick undergrowth at the side of the path. It was so good to arrive at the bottom of the slope, even if it meant that there was another formidable climb to negotiate.

Whilst climbing up the slope, the mist lifted sufficiently to enable me to look across the valley and see the beautiful autumnal colours of the trees on the far side. This proved to be a fleeting moment, as the rain then came down heavier. At the top of the incline we emerged from the forest onto downland. The earth, although not too difficult to run on, was saturated with water and where one treaded up sprung a fountain. Occasionally the cloud base would rise for a few moments and from the combs below rose water vapour, (just like what you see on telly of mist rising from the jungle canopy). Well, enough of the descriptive narrative we are not yet a third of the way home.

Down slippery slopes in pouring rain, we recklessly headed into Jevington. (yes, that sleepy town where bank staff once could go to the pub whilst leaving the mornings takings in the back of an open top sports car!). The run along side the river was particularly hazardous and slimy. After blinking and exiting the metropolis, we were once more faced with a long tedious climb in the rain. Reaching the check point at 12 miles was supposed to be a relief as it was down hill for the next 4½ miles. There has to be a catch though. Because of the weather the track was muddy. This was no ordinary mud but super mud. No matter what you did, the mud clung to the shoes. Due to the accumulation of dirt I started out a pigmy and ended a Titan.

The approach to Littlington was by the now customary slippery banks of a river. The sounds of a brass band occasionally overcoming the noise of the wind and rain did much to lift the spirits. This year I did not feel like lifting mine with a pint of Guinness, as I had done in a previous year. I did stop, however, for a cup of refreshing coffee, and gave my apologies to those serving for not availing myself of a sandwich or two from the mountains piled high upon the sagging tables. Leaving a village in these parts has the obligatory climb.

Onwards down slippery slope, then up, painfully, a path with steps. Then gradually down a track, to be greeted by the wailing of bagpipes. Despite the rain, there was a piper at 18½ miles blasting out mournful laments. I was surprised that the rain didn't get down his pipes, or perhaps that explains the noise it was making. A sign said that the lifts were out of order (I do not lie), so I was forced to walk up the stairs. Over the wall and then a jog down across a field. Running down the field was fine, although I did notice the usual spring appearing where ever I placed my feet. Suddenly I was shocked to see grey clouds beyond my feet. Then bang! I crashed to the ground, landing on my back. Shaken but not stirred, I got to my feet gasping for breath. Then a voice was laughingly heard to say "Tsar yous zalright?".....it was Jean Luc.

**Did you know that...
The club handicap in January has
been moved back to January 8th,
2000?**

I jogged on with Jean-Luc thinking that I should have not been in front of him, particularly at this stage of the event (we have now reached the nineteen mile mark). When all of a sudden the legs slowed, the engine stuttered, and the fuel gauge started to warn that it was nearing empty (damn! I should have taken a sandwich or two). I indicated to Jean Luc that he should go on and I reduced my efforts to a slow jog /walk This takes us to the start of the Seven Sisters Cliffs.

As I began to walk the first of the sisters, the rain became worse It came heavier and was now travelling almost horizontally. To prevent myself getting too cold, I put on the waterproof trousers that I had in the bum bag. Onwards I trudged, up and down the hills which seemed to go on like a giant rollercoaster. I was being passed by numerous runners when I became aware that I was catching someone, in the distance, up ahead. They were walking slowly, and had to be helped over the styles. I thought that this person must be in a bad way and noticed that they were wearing a space blanket. When I reached this person it turned out to be Jean-Luc. "I thinkz I've dislocated my shoulder", he explained. He had taken a tumble and unfortunately not been as lucky as most of us. He insisted that I go on and that he would be able to get to the next check point where he would retire.

On leaving Jean-Luc, I trudge painfully up and down the remaining Seven Sisters. The rain was streaming down and everywhere was awash. The wind was getting strong .

On reaching the check point at Birling Gap, I made a beeline for the refreshment tent. Here I took on board two cups of coffee and 2 mini mars bars. I was fortunate as I understand that shortly after I left the checkpoint the refreshments tent was carried away by the gale. Having got through the Seven Sisters there was a mere 3½ miles remaining, unfortunately 2 miles of which contained 260 metres of climb including that to Beachy Head. Whilst walking along I squeezed my hands and noticed that water was coming out of my gloves. So I then walked on squeezing each fist with each pace, amazed by the water pouring out. The other source of amusement was to put out my arm and see if it disappeared into the mist and driving rain (once I had passed Beachy Head they diverted the course from this section as the coast guards considered it too dangerous).

After Beachy Head it was all down hill. The usual water slide. No mishaps for me but a few others were seen to take a tumble in the dying stages. Collected my medal, showered off (which was less of a trickle than the rain had been all day), had a swim, and headed to the Pilot. No other Serpies were there, but I established a bridge head at a table got supplies and waited for the reinforcements to arrive. Gradually the Serpentine runners arrived with their own story of heroism and woe. This was interrupted by the trips to the bar and dash to the organiser's office to see if they knew what had happened to Jean -Luc who had failed to make the reunion. A nice mellow afternoon was spent at the pub. However, none of my enquiries produced any information on Jean - Luc. Eventually I left the Pub at 6 p.m., after being there since 2 p.m. I made one last enquiry and met the organiser who took time and effort to find out that Jean-Luc was in the casualty department of the local hospital.

I, with difficulty (due to stiff legs), walked the two miles to the hotel where we were staying. Then, with Rita, went to see Jean-Luc at the hospital. We discovered Jean-Luc in what seemed a temporary ward. Along side Jean-Luc were about 6 other runners with broken limbs, who had taken tumbles and injured themselves. After seeing J-L collected by his wife, Rita and myself went to continue our celebrations.

This honestly was an exceptional year. It was the worst conditions that the event has ever taken place in. Normally it is an event during which you can enjoy the spectacular scenery. It is usually a demanding but rewarding experience. Saying that I for one enjoyed the day. Hope to see you there this year!

This is your conscience speaking...

Have you called Bob or Ruth to
volunteer to help with the Harrow
Marathon?

Norfolk

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crowd who came up Friday evening if I can stand the traffic jam queuing to get out of London. I might even get to see in person the Italian waiter described by one Serpie as a dead ringer for Victor Meldrew.

Stage 3: Burnham to Wells, 5.83m

Leigh Kenney, place 23, time 0:57:05

Well I didn't see her run, but I know she was grinning and happy when I saw her afterwards. But when isn't she!

Stage 4: Wells to Cloy Next the Sea, 10.76m

Katy Williams, place 24, time 1:31:09

At about 1:00 pm and sporting plait ribbons in club colours Katy, full of bubbly chatter as usual, could see Leigh coming down the hill ready to paw the baton. Panic! Her memory flicked back to school when she used to run in the relay. "How do I hold the baton, what happens if I drop it, is it heavy?" Leigh obviously had a good run, she had a huge smile on her face as she passed the baton. A huge Serpie cheer went up and Katy was on her way. She was very excited about this race for a number of reasons. First, she had recently moved to Norfolk and was missing her friends in the club and secondly was really excited about taking part in the Round Norfolk Relay.

However, as she came to her first turn, a quick glance over her shoulder showed no Hilary (cycle support). Right or left? Left or right? She didn't know which way to go. A quick memory flashback to her instructions (and a bit of a gamble) she chose left and a few minutes later could hear Hilary behind her. Katy admitted she was very nervous with Hilary cycling beside her. She had the uttermost respect for Hilary and she knew Hilary worked hard in all she has achieved. She had fears that Hilary might think she wasn't working hard enough and she'd be pushing her and making her work harder. So Hilary cycles up to and she says "well, you obviously knew where you are going" and Katy replied confidently that yes, of course, she had read her instructions. Phew that was lucky! The first mile marker

showed she was running way too fast, having completed the first mile in under 7 minutes. It's amazing what a little peer pressure can do to a runner! Beep, beep the rest of the Serpie crew were passing in their cars yelling and hooting their good luck going ahead to feed her water. The sun was shining and it was relatively warm but every now and then the wind pushing against her, never behind. (*Nor for any of us, Katy*). The roads were quite windy which, in a way, was a good thing as she couldn't see the hills that were coming up. At the top of one of the hills, there was a lovely village pub serving hot food. She was beginning to feel quite hungry and a pint of Stella wouldn't have gone amiss. She asked Hilary if they could stop for a swift one and was promptly told no! Farther on (and taking water trying to imagine that it was lager) she spotted another sign: "Boat cruise to see the seals." She felt like a tourist and, in auto-pilot, didn't notice that she was running (can understand that?) and asked Hilary, "can we go?" NO! This wasn't fair so, when signs for ice cream and fudge appeared, she kept silent. Every now and then, to bring her back to reality, a passing car would give them a beep and a bunch of Serpies would be waiting to feed her water.

The last mile was excellent. She put all her reserves in that fast stretch but couldn't see the finish until the final point. She kept running the curves of the road until the last one where there was a cluster of red and yellow shirts and a huge Serpie cheer went up. Feeling proud to be a Serpie, she lengthened her stride and saw an eager Grethe waiting, hand outstretched to take the faithful baton (which she didn't drop once!). Her time was just over 1 hr 30min and she thoroughly enjoyed the race and the support from everyone. Katy adds "For those who were slightly hesitant about running this race, don't be. It is an excellent fun weekend with everybody in high spirits. The supporter's make the race just as much as the runners do. Next year come and join in the fun. I will."

Stage 5: Cley to Cromer, 10.09m

Grethe Petersen, place 17, time 1:19:14

Whoever told you Norfolk was flat was lying Grethe. Ah! You know that now do you? Still, you were looking very strong when you passed me. Remember the table full of Serpies outside the pub, raising their glasses to you? We were with you in spirit! The most difficult bit for Hilary, accompanying on the bike, was negotiating Cromer, trying to protect and shout directions at the runner

through the Saturday afternoon traffic, whilst trying to stop getting mown down herself!

Stage 6: Cromer to Mundesley, 5.89m

Chris McNeill, place 20, time 0:50:20

As this was Chris's first Serpie race, Beate had kindly given her the shortest leg; the most straightforward route (just one straight road all the way); and a civilised time of day (4.00 pm).

Having spent the last nine months in Holland, Chris thought she had done some ideal training for Norfolk. Ha! Imagine her shock to find more than one gentle incline en-route. Getting a bit of height was no bad thing though, as she had a magnificent view out to sea on more than one occasion, and the uphill provided some shelter from the wind.

The Norfolk countryside was very pretty and, with the stage going through three small villages, it was all very typical of the area - flints in the walls of houses and Norman churches.

Hilary supported on the bike, with good water stations provided by the Serpie support wagon. After taking the baton from Grethe in Cromer, Chris was pleased to pass it on to me when she reached Maundesley, so she could return to the trailer park (via the pub) to shower and change.

Plenty of pasta, kindly prepared by Sally and Ros, set her up for the nightshift supporting Jean-Luc, Kathleen and Ros on legs 11, 12 and 13 in the car. This was harder work than the run earlier in the day, but they managed to keep each other awake and have some fun despite the time of night.

Stage 7: Mundesley to Lessingham, 9.95m

Maggie Moran, place 22, time 1:23:49

Running with a baton is great! I'm sure it makes you go faster. It must be something to do with the OMO effect (thanks, Andy Blackford) There was another novelty for me and that was having a cyclist at my side. Now there's something I could get used to, as long as they behave like Owen Barder - calls out the miles, doesn't natter too much, shuts up when I'm having a hard time and hands out the water bottle to perfectly synchronise with my right, outstretched hand - what a team.

Have you ever contemplated mugging for a bag of chips? No? Well don't sound so shocked. If you had run past the groups tucking into bags of fish and chips at the seaside while cheering you on, you too may have come close. *And they were runners!* how could they be so cruel?

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Race Diary

(See also timetable for cross country events and handicaps).

Below is a list of races which Serpie members are known to be doing, or which have been popular with club members in the past. Of course there are lots more races and wherever you go, you're likely to find some Serpies. Check the running press for other races (i.e. 'Today's Runner', 'Runner's World' or 'Athletics Weekly').

In the future, we'd like to add members' comments about races to this table. Please share your experiences with us (send to the editor, i.e. Arthur)

| Distance | Race / venue | Description | Start time / entry fee for Serpie members | Contact Address (for advance entries) |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Sun October 24 th | | | | |
| 10km | Ronhill Surrey Classic 10k, Nonsuch Park, Epsom | | 10am £3.50/£4 on day, payable to LARA. | LARA, PO Box 33, Belper, Derby., DE56 4HZ |
| 10km (&2km) | Kings Canvey Island 10k Kings Holiday Park, Canvey Island | Road, fast, scenic, flat, two laps. Slow runners welcome. | 10.30am £6/£8 on day, payable to British Heart Foundation. | Ian Ward, Manderley, 81 Gaze Hill Ave., Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4SJ |
| Sat October 30 th | | | | |
| Marathon | Seven Sisters Marathon, Beachy Head, Eastbourne. | Off-road, hilly, scenic. Slow runners/ walkers welcome | 9am £8 (entries now closed for this year) | Serpentine entries organised by Derek Turner |
| Sun October 31 st | | | | |
| Half-marathon | Bracknell and District Samaritans half-marathon, ICL Southern Industrial Estate, Bracknell. | Road, flat, mainly rural, two laps. Slow runners welcome. | 10am. £7.50/£9 on day, payable to Bracknell Samaritans. | Roger Mitchell, 5 Honeysuckle Close, Crowthorne, Berks.,RG45 6TR. |
| 9 miles | Ricky Road Run 9, Chorleywood Working Mens Club, Rickmansworth. | Road, scenic, one lap. Slow runners welcome. | 10.30am. £7/£8 on day, payable to Ricky Road Run Charity. | Ricky Road Run, PO box 93, Rickmansworth, Herts., WD3 1FR |
| 4km | Kensington Women's Fun Run, 11chester Place, Holland Park | Park, flat. Slow runners welcome. | 11am. £3.00 | L. Jensen, RBK&C Sports Development, Canalside Activity Centre, Canal Close, London W10 5AY |
| 3mile and 5 mile. | Nike Bridges Run, Battersea Park Track | Park, flat. | 8.30am. Free, entries on day only | Human Race Events (0181 399 3579) |
| Sun November 7 th | | | | |
| Marathon and half-marathon | Kodak Harrow Marathon/ ½ marathon, Kodak ports Ground, Harrow View, Harrow. | Road, town, changing facilities, undulating, Marathon is two laps. | Marathon £9/£11 on day, ½ marathon £7/ £9 on day, payable to Harrow Charity Marathon | Mary Swindles, PO Box 299, Harrow, Middx., HA3 0TX. |
| Sun November 14 th | | | | |
| 10km | Ronhill Surrey Classic 10k, Village centre, Oxshott. | | 10am £3.50/£4 on day, payable to LARA. | LARA, PO Box 33, Belper, Derby., DE56 4HZ |

| Distance | Race / venue | Description | Start time / entry fee for Serpie members | Contact Address (for advance entries) |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Sun November 21 st | | | | |
| 5 mile | Hatch End 5, Hatch End, Harrow, Middx. | Road, flat, town, two laps. | 2pm. £5.50/£6 on day, payable to Harrow AC. | Dennis Orme, 12 Warden Ave., Harrow, Middx., HA2 9LW. |
| 10 mile | Bournemouth10, Bournemouth Pier Approach | Road, flat, scenic, two laps. Slow runners welcome. | 11am. £5/ £6 on day, payable to Bournemouth AC. | Call Sami Mohammed (Serpie member) who will coordinate entries (tel: 0870 904 5460) |
| Sun November 28 th | | | | |
| 3mile and 5 mile. | Nike Bridges Run, Battersea Park Track | Park, flat. | 8.30am. Free, entries on day only | Human Race Events (0181 399 3579) |
| Sat December 4 th | | | | |
| 5 mile | Sri Chinmoy 5, Central Avenue West, Battersea Park. | Park, flat, five laps Slow runners welcome | 8.30am £4/ £4.50 on day, payable to Sri Chinmoy AC | Run and Become, 42, Palmer Street, Victoria, London SW1H 0PH (0171 222 1314) |
| Sun December 5 th | | | | |
| Luton Marathon & 3 stage relay. | Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Northwell Drive, Luton | Road, rural, town, three laps 5 hour time limit | 10am £10/ £12 on day, payable to Luton Marathon. | Luton Marathon, Wigmore Hall, Eaton Green Road, Luton, Beds., LU2 9JB. Serpentine will enter teams for relay - contact Beate or Jan to take part. |
| Sun December 12 th | | | | |
| 9 mile | Hog's Back 9, Loseley Farm, Guildford | Road, rural, town, hilly. | 9.30am | Hog's Back 9, PO Box 121, Guildford, GU1 3NE. |
| Sun December 26 th | | | | |
| 3mile and 5 mile. | Nike Bridges Run, Battersea Park Track | Park, flat. | 8.30am. Free, entries on day only | Human Race Events (0181 399 3579) |
| Sun January 1 st | | | | |
| 10km | Serpentine NYD 10K, Hyde Park <i>(marshalls/ helpers needed)</i> | Park, flat, 3laps | 11am | Contact Hilary to help |
| Sun January 30 th | | | | |
| 8 <i>country</i> miles | Tough Guy, Tettenhall Horse Sanctuary, Old Perton, nr. Wolverhampton | Cross country, obstacle course. | 11am £38 before 31/12/99, £50 thereafter £150 on day, payable to Tough Guy TV Ltd. | Mr. Mouse Farm for Unfortunates, Jenny Walker Lane, Old Perton, nr. Wolverhampton WV6 7HB. www.toughguy.co.uk Contact Ruth Jackson for more details or team entries |

Norfolk

Continued from page 17

Stage 8: Lessingham to Winterton on Sea, 10.62m

Sami Mohammed, place 4, time 1.09.27

Despite the rest of the country having gales, we were treated kindly with sunshine and not a drop of rain.

However, I had had enough of running into a fairly forceful wind for the best part of nine miles and I was glad to hand the baton on, to the ever-smiling Sami. I cadged a lift back to the start of stage 7 with Beate, covering the route. I had just run. It never ceases to amaze me just how far the routes look when you drive them. I would have thought it would be the other way around but, no.

Every time I find myself amazed at just how far ten miles (or whatever) is.

Stage 9: Winterton to Great Yarmouth, 8.58m

Sue Ellen Horrocks, place 18th, time 1:09:31

That illiotibial band whatsit seems to be better then, Sue Ellen?

continued on next page

Stage 10: Great Yarmouth to**Geldeston, 14.52m**

Franziska Lewinski, place 20, time 1:55:00

Franziska thought the Norfolk relay was great fun and an amazing experience to run through the night with a biker who provided drinks and squeezies whenever needed. Apparently Owen also provided entertainment but details weren't included in the note she sent me. Should we book him for the Christmas party?

Stage 11: Geldeston to Scole, 19.81m

Jean Luc Hoesz, place 25, time 2:58.48

Running at night can be pretty tough going, but an old hamstring injury took its toll on Jean Luc. Not the happiest run he has had, but he bravely finished his stage. Still, the Hoesz family had a fun weekend in Norfolk and the children loved staying in the trailer. Runners with young families - take note - *next time, come and bring the family for a weekend.*

Stage 12: Scole to Thetford, 17.77m

Kathleen Healy, place 26, time 2:56:23

With the Dublin marathon coming up, the need for long runs induced (American) Kathleen to take on one of the longer stages. She found the last few miles pretty tough, but this was the middle of the night. Many of our runners found their times tended to slip with night running. Kathleen's adventure didn't start with her stage however. Along with (Canadian) Kathleen, she came up to Norfolk by train that afternoon. They had been instructed to take a taxi to the trailer park at Wells. However the driver took them to the wrong trailer park and Hilary and Beate got a plaintive phone call for help. Like knights in shining armour they were on their way. However Hilary and Beate were on the A149 but K2's were on the A148. They might never have met but for another phone call which left them with a dark assignation at a church gateway outside Sheringham. Spooky stuff.

Stage 13: Thetford to Feltwell, 13.98m

Ros Young, place 26, time 2:01:07

Chip eaters note, I too can be cruel. There I was, dawn breaking, with my passenger and next runner Dave, waiting in the chilly air for Ros to finish her stage. And what was I doing? Eating. . Hot egg and bacon buttie with brown sauce. Ah yes!

Unfortunately it looked like the last thing Ros wanted to see when she finished her stage. I thought she was going to be sick.

Stage 14: Feltwell to Southery, 7.7m

David Lipscomb, place 19, time 1:01:32

Getting up at 3.50 am to get Dave to his stage has its compensations. Tiptoeing around trying to get dressed with the minimum noise, I heard an almighty crash as our Ladies Captain knocked half a dozen beer bottles over. Now, I know us Serpies like a drink or two. In fact, it has been said, we are a running club with a drinking problem, but beer at that time in the morning? I'll never let her forget it. (Beate's explanation was that she was getting up to make me a cup of coffee and knocked empty bottles over while trying to do this in the dark). Umm.

Despite intensive baton changing practice in King's Lynn car park - Dave nearly fluffs the change over - and we thought England had overcome this problem. Starting too fast meant much suffering, but Dave's time was good. (He was probably trying to get away from me, as I had blasted him for his navigating skills. "How far is it to Feltwell Dave?" "About a page.")

Stage 15 Southery to Downham Market, 6.76m

Kathleen Broekhof, place 23, time 0:58:19

An early start for Kathleen and Sally driven by Beate from the trailer park at some unearthly hour. (On review that last sentence could be read two ways). At least they were given an extra hour in bed after an update by mobile from me. (How did we used to manage on relays without mobiles?). At least the sun was well up when she started. A good time from Kathleen from a run largely on a busy main road,

Stage 16: Downham Market to Smeeth, 12.36m

Sally MacKay, place 22, time 1:40:49

Running gets considerably more lonely now, as most of the caravan have hiked it back to King's Lynn to the Lynnsport Centre to be there for the finish. They missed some pretty countryside and our Sal' had a great run that she thoroughly enjoyed. Sally's contribution to the Relay included chef duty the previous night at our trailer, preparing a pasta dinner that was heartily scoffed in due Serple fashion. Our thanks go also to Bev who had done the food shopping - we'll definitely rope her in again, beer and a delicious Chianti Classico went in her trolley! She knows her customers.

Stage 17: Smooth to King's Lynn, 15.06m

Hilary Walker, place 18, time 1:43:02
Stage Record (LV)

Having 'volunteered to run, navigate or support on a bike, Hilary found herself doing all three! She came up to Kings Lynn the evening before and spent a very enjoyable evening looking round the fascinating old bits of the town.

Bev drove Hilary from the trailer park to the start. (I never knew we had so many shepherds in the club). A long wait, sustained by coffee from the thermos, but spent cheering on runners from other teams, brought the realisation that the dubious honour of the wooden spoon was well and truly Serpentine's and that was before Hilary's race even started.

She set off into the wind accompanied by Richard giving helpful mile splits, (though she wasn't sure whether she wanted them as it showed that the head wind was winning - even though the terrain was very flat, there was no shelter from the wind until we got to the outskirts of King's Lynn). But there was continual encouragement. She had tried to learn and memorise the rather tortuous route but needn't have done so, as Richard was a very competent navigator.

So it was on into King's Lynn, with full support from a couple of cars which meant she didn't feel alone, but by then she was. The presentations were due at 11.00am, but Hilary was still nine miles from the end. She duly came into the finish at the track just after midday to full support from the Serpentine crowd and our old friend John Barrow ex-Straggler and one of the organisers of the race. Well done the Serpentine Team - we completed the event in style. Though we won the Wooden Spoon, we ran 195 miles without dropping the baton (more than some of our international relay teams have done!). Also, in the Senior Ladies category, thirteen new stage records were set with Serpentine runners claiming four of them. Hilary Walker also set a stage record in the Lady Veteran category. Out of seventeen runners, our team had no less than fourteen women. Beate sums up our performance well: "We can be happy to have completed such a hard course in only a minute a mile slower than most male competitor's over such a tough course. We will be back next year with a promise that we will not retain the Wooden Spoon.

I sadly missed the finale as I was driving around King's Lynn with one runner trying to find the petrol station

where she had left her car. One Shell station looks much like another, or was it an Esso? Don't ask!

Most of us then retired to a pub for a late lunch before the long trek home. Having, in the last two days, driven 460-odd miles (and some of them were very odd indeed), I was nearly failing asleep at the wheel. Slugs of coffee at the

service station perked me up until I could crawl into my own bed desperate for a good nights sleep. Last thought? When's the next relay?

Thanks from all the team to:

- Beate for organising *everything*,
- Bike supporters - Richard, Owen and Hilary,
- All other supporters,

- Bev for shopping,
- Sally for cooking,
- Everyone who contributed to this article (especially Hilary),
- Anyone I've forgotten.

*Note the date of next year's race: 16/17
September 2000*

| COMMITTEE MEMBERS | | |
|---|--|---|
| Honorary Secretary Ros Young M: 0589 158 211 H: 0171-267 4686 W: 0181-832 2517 | Chairman Hilary Walker W: 0171 972 5122/35 fax hwalker@doh.gov.uk H: 0171 589 5342 hilary.walker@virgin.net | Honorary Treasurer Ian Hall W: 0171 251 0781 0171 792 1234 H: 0171 739 81 01 |
| Co-Ladies' Captain Jan Farmer W: 0171 258 6665 H: 0171 371 1130 F: 0171 258 6384 janet.farmer@dfait- maeci.gc.ca | Co-Ladies' Captain Beate Vogt W: 0171 495 8584 H: 0171 828 4935 F: 0171 495 8589 bvogt@magnaconsulting. com | Men's Captain John Walker H: 0181 543 2633 M: 07881 654 722 W: 0181 649 3077 F: 0181 649 3190 |
| Phil Harris H: 0171 370 3034 | Paul Ingram H: 0171 371 1130 | Ruth Jackson M: 07931 266 240 H: 0181 965 8724 |
| David Lopscomb W: 0171 707 5090 H: 01923 448 852 | Sarah Newton H: 0181 986 5010 | Derek Turner H: 0181 527 4159 |

| Important Club Dates | |
|---|---|
| Immediately | Barrie Laverick needs to know if you are interested in Club La Santa, Lanzarote in March of next year - see article and announcement later in this newsletter |
| Various | Cross Country Fixtures - See table later in this newsletter |
| 7 November 1999 | Marshals needed for Harrow Marathon. Contact Ruth Jackson or Bob Davidson (see ad in this newsletter) |
| 4 December 1999 | Party of the Century Overseas House, Park Place, St. James's Street |
| 1 January 2000 | New Year's Day 10K - Helpers needed. Contact Hillary |
| 8 January 2000 | Club Handicap (is deferred a week) |
| And don't forget, regular club events... | |
| Tuesday night 'Hill Sprint Challenge' first Tuesday of the month until the end of the year | |
| Tuesday night runs Sudbury Court Sports Club, North Wembley (7.15pm) | |
| Wednesday night runs Seymour Leisure Centre (7:00pm) & Speaker's Corner | |
| Wine and Cheese after run on last Wednesday of month | |
| Thursday night track session Paddington Rec (7.00pm) - warm up in advance | |
| Saturday morning social runs Seymour Leisure Centre & Speaker's Corner (about 10:15), except on handicap days. | |
| Handicap first Saturday of each month at the Serpentine Lido, Hyde Park (9:00) | |
| Last Friday of the Month 5K Serpentine Lido, Hyde Park (12:00) | |