



May 2018

Issue 344



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Editorial

This issue contains a lot of Green Belt Relay stuff, what with it being quite a big deal for us Stragglers. We have reflections from both Peter Kennedy – Race Director, and our own team captains Helen and Malcolm. We can't thank them enough for the massive effort they put in, so we'll probably do it again elsewhere in this issue.

As I compile this Stragmag I've been reading through the huge amount of social media reaction. This on top of the fantastic atmosphere at the finish and this is an event which continues to shine the most positive of lights on our club. We come away from Welsh Castles with a great impression of Les Croupiers, and I'm certain those leaving the Hawker Centre will have felt exactly the same about us.

Attention now switches to Welsh Castles and the Summer Grand Prix takes centre stage throughout June and July. There are the usual mid-week relays too, including our own Rothwell Relay for which the date is now agreed – Thursday August 2nd.

See the fixture guide at the end of this issue.

Thank you to all contributors this month and to Dave for assisting in putting this together.

Deadline for June contributions is Friday 22nd.

Simon Webb Stragmag@stragglers.org



Stragglers News

The masterpiece of planning and coordination that is the Green Belt Relay saw a record field of fifty teams circumnavigate 220 miles of unspoiled Greater London grassland. Notable individual performances from Stragglers include stage records for Sarah Winter, Crispin Allen & Ramona Thevenet. Our vets' and ladies' teams secured second place in their respective categories. Many thanks to race director, Peter Kennedy, his army of volunteers and to Malcolm & Helen for organising the three Stragglers teams. More on GBR follows in this issue.

If shorter relays are your thing, then Parkland returns on Wednesday 13th June. It's a 7pm start in Richmond Park, with men's teams of 4 running a 2.5-mile leg each, while women's teams are 3. Email [Simon Brazil](#) if you would like to run, ideally by Friday June 1st. It will be free to run, as the club will be paying the entry fee.

The Stragglers Summer Grand Prix has got off to a flying start with 101 Stragglers (yes, you did read the right!) taking on the Nonsuch Parkrun in a mob match vs Sutton Runners, a race which also formed our own 5K Championships. This was followed up with 46 Stragglers tackling the Ranelagh Richmond Half Marathon, also a competition for our own Half Marathon Championships. Full list of winners later in this issue.

Reminder about this year's club AGM. It takes place on Thursday July 5th at the Hawker Centre. It's a 9pm start and we encourage all members to attend.

StraggTri announce they are continuing to pool swim at Kingfisher pool through the summer. We are also open water swimming at Shepperton lake - both on Wednesday evenings.

- Shepperton 6pm until about 7pm
- Kingfisher 8.30pm until 9.30pm

And finally, an update from the April issue headed 'Hottest London Marathon on Record Melts Straggler Race Chip'.

It was a surprise to some of us watching on the day of London Marathon to see Matt Coakes fly past at halfway, as from the race app it looked as if he'd dropped out after 5km. Mystery solved for the

high temperature led to his race chip failing. Only after showing photos of his time to race organisers was his time of 2:42:14 made official, and an impressive time in those conditions it certainly is.



GBR: From Race Director Peter Kennedy

The 22nd GBR saw a record field of 50 teams, hot sunny weather, clear roads, and great running. Stragglers had some great results for teams and individuals - we came 2nd in the Vets and Women's events, while Sarah Winter, Jackie Balfour (competing for BMF), Ramona Thevenet, and Crispin Allen all broke stage records.

Prizes were as follows:

1st overall & 1st men's team: Serpentine
2nd overall & 1st mixed team: Thames Hare & Hounds
3rd overall & 2nd mixed team: Stock Exchange
4th overall & 2nd men's team: Ranelagh Harriers
1st women's team: Serpentine
2nd women's team: Stragglers
1st vets team: London Front Runners
2nd vets team: Stragglers
The Toilet Seat: Burgess Hill

Well done also to Clapham Pioneers who came 6th on their first attempt at the race, and Shaef Shifters who were 7th.

We had 23 stage records, including 5 people who broke records on both their legs: Jacky Balfour, Sarah Winter, Matt Jones, Gary Neville, and Ben Reynolds. The other record winners were Jeff Cunningham, Fiona Slevin-Brown, Ramona Thevenet, Johnny Suttle, Becky Hall, Crispin Allen, Karen Ellison, Natasha Sheel, Max Harrison-Tosatto, Claire Morris, Simon Barrett, Christine Kennedy, and Victoria Barthelmess.

Serpentine have now won a total of 231 GBR stages - 103 men, and 128 women. Next is Ranelagh with 97, Dulwich with 68, Chasers

with 63 and Stragglers with 62. Hugh Torry added another win to his all-time lead with 15 wins in total going back to 2007. Andrew Reeves is still in second place with 13 (this is the first GBR since 2010 where Andrew hasn't won at least one stage and his first was in 2004!). Simon Barrett now has 11 stage wins in total. James Gillanders has kept up his record of winning a stage every year since 2012. Jeff Cunningham has 6 wins going right back to 2008, while Matt Jones has been winning them since 2005.

GBR legend Ange Norris just got pipped to the post by double stage winner Jackie Balfour in the women's race, so unusually goes home without adding to her total, while six-time stage winner Marie Synott-Wells was first supervet in stages 5 and 22.

Thanks to

- Timekeepers Pat and Alan Short, Merran and Jim Sell, Bob and Jane Wheller, Andrew Wallace, Norma Morris, David Griffiths, Roy Reeder, Mike Mabin and Keith Haworth.
- Course markers Alan and Liz Pemberton, Peter Wedderburn, Chrissie Glew, Phil Davies, Mark Pattinson, John Greaves, and Rob Teer and the Thurrock Nomads
- First aid drivers Tim Wood, Sarah Boyle, Liz Sharma, and to first aiders Jason and Asa from Event Medical Solutions
- Alan Mawdsley for doing all the permissions and course prep, Allan Barrie for the results service, Evan Bond for the graphics, Roy Reeder for t-shirt procurement
- David Clarke CBE, our race adjudicator, who also marked and marshalled a lot of the course
- All team captains and teams for the massive amount of marshalling and water stations, and to local volunteer John Nall from Cheshunt for the water station on stage 9.
- My wife, Professor Alex Cutting, who runs our finances, entries, all sorts of logistics, and drives the race control car.

The race is thriving and gaining a fanatical fanbase, and Stragglers have been deluged with warm messages of thanks from all teams. This is a unique race which we can all be really proud of.

Some further stories and reflections added from social media:

At the end of day 1 there was exciting competition to be found where ever you chose to look.

Serpentine were just 8 mins ahead of Thames H&H overall. Thames were leading the Mixed competition with Stock Exchange next. Serpentine leading the women with Stragglers next, and Front Runners leading the vets over Stragglers. Plenty of teams in the mix for prizes!

Among the 500+ runners was one over from New York for the weekend just to run. He met two other people in JFK, one of whom was going to the Royal Wedding and another to the FA Cup Final, and he just said he was "running 220 miles around London". We gave him a special trophy!

We had two blind runners this year - Stragglers legend Simon Webb (author of "Running Blind"), and new to the race Martin Sigsworth from Queen's Park Harriers, who decided to tackle one of our mountain stages.

Congratulations to both and to their guides. I've guided Simon before and have a habit of forgetting to tell him about speed bumps, branches etc., and indeed of exaggerating some of the hazards ahead (Simon, I have to confess now, there are no snakepits in the Bushy Parkrun).

Next year I plan to ask clubs to clean up a stage, armed with a bin bag, a staple remover, an ice scraper, and some water. You will be able to do this either by a trail runner/bike, or in the days after the race. We still leave too much debris around the course and it's something we collectively need to address.

Phil Davies did a brilliant job as trail runner for stage 18, and some are only sawdusted - I'd like to get to the point where we clean up pretty much straight away.

Peter Kennedy (additional content from Simon Webb)



Stragglers Green Belt Relay Odyssey 2018

For many runners, this writer included, the Stragglers Greenbelt Relay weekend is the highlight of the racing calendar. 220 miles around London in a single weekend with teams of 11 completing the 22 stages. Each team member covers two of those stages, ranging from the relatively benign sections of road and path to the rather 'hilly' trail sections. This race is not for everyone. Some don't like running on two days, prefer road racing, or are put off by the degree of navigation required en-route. For others, however, it is a true running Odyssey but substituting Ulysses and his journey home after the fall of Troy, with a team of Stragglers racing from Hampton Court Palace to the Hawker Centre, via Essex!

As you would expect with such an epic there are many challenges to overcome, the first one being able to field three complete teams, in our case men, ladies and vets. This year we really were jinxed by illness and injury forcing many withdrawals along the way. The week leading up to the race resembled the end of the Trojan wars, with three more runners dropping out due to injury (the final one on Friday lunchtime, before the Saturday start!). At this point it looked like we had run out of options and the Ladies team would have become the 'Straggler ladies and Phil Davies Team'. With less than 12 hours to go, Emily Cartwright came to the rescue, following an urgent Twitter and Facebook appeal. The issue though, was that Emily needed a dog minder for her new puppy 'Nutmeg'. So, a deal was struck, it was 'walkies' for Phil, and our ladies team was complete again.

At 8:30 on Saturday morning, at a gloriously sunny Hampton Court Palace the race was underway with the first 12.9 miles to Staines ahead of the runners (with a record 50 teams on the start line). The Stragglers would be handing over to Simon Brazil, Phil Tauwhare and Laura Bowden respectively who were tackling a new section of the course around Windsor, necessitated by Royal events over the other side of the river. (Both Simon and Laura can now claim to have set Straggler records). This stage completed without incident, the race was well underway with temperatures beginning to rise significantly.

Stage 3 having been tackled, the baton was then passed on to the Stragglers completing stage 4 from Marlow (a grade 10 stage on account of having to run across half the Chilterns!) Rob Wilcox, Martin Vivian and Helen Davies took this one on. All three had excellent races, in particular Rob who recorded 3rd place overall in the race (and then repeating the feat the next day, running from Box Hill!) a great achievement. Stage 5, another Grade 10 and the longest on the course at 13.5 miles saw a very good performance from Oli Bowers, but this was overshadowed by Sarah Winter finishing 16 and setting an L35 record for that stage and narrowly missing out on being first lady. With the Chipperfield stage safely negotiated, the St Albans (stage 7) saw Richard Carter pull out a great performance for the Vets finishing 7th on that leg. Crispin Allen managed to go one better at Letty Green with a 5th place finish for the Vets closely pursued by Richard Baggott for the Men.

By the time Dobbs Weir (stage 9) was underway, temperatures were mercifully starting to drop as the runners headed for the shade at High Beach. Stage 10 then took runners through the cool of Epping Forest before arriving at Toot Hill and a great favourite of the Stragglers, the Green Man pub! Leg 11 to Blackmore in Essex marks the final stage of Day one and the chance for a drink and a debrief.

By this halfway point the men were sitting in 14th position overall in the race. The Vets were in ninth place, having opened up a significant gap on the Elmbridge Grey Hares and the British Airways Veterans (insert your own joke here about the Stragglers Vets really flying!). The Ladies for their part were also second in their category but had an ever so slender lead of 15 minutes over Ranelagh Ladies going into Day Two, with everything to play for.

Stage 12 from Blackmore starts at the rather unsociable time of 8 AM on Sunday with Simon Webb and Brazil having joked that they might as well have not bothered to go to bed. Even less daunted was Crispin Allen, running the next leg, who managed to better his performance from the Saturday finishing second overall in the race and setting a Vet course record into the bargain and only missing out on winning the stage by 11 seconds. Cranham (Stage 14) is the race towards the River Thames and the QE2 bridge, and was particularly keenly contested by the Stragglers. Roy Reeder finishing ninth missed out on the M50 record by a couple of seconds. Helen Davies can count herself even more unlucky, finishing third lady behind Jackie Balfour running for BMF and Ange Norris of

Dulwich Runners with only seven seconds separating all three runners. Remarkably all of these runners breaking the L45 record for that stage by over 3 minutes.

Once across the Thames it was the ladies leading the way. Sarah Winter managed to better her Saturday run by finishing eighth overall and 'doing the double' by setting another L35 stage record. Next up was the infamous Lullingstone Park stage 16 (13.3 miles of hills). For the ladies Maddie Garner had a particularly good run, commendable as she knew what she was letting herself in for (having done it last year). Another special mention goes to Peter Wedderburn running for the men who, having been drafted in at the last minute, had drawn the short straw with this leg!

By this stage we were back in Surrey with the start of the next leg in Tatsfield. Whilst Oli Bowers and Malcolm Davies were battling it out, it was left to Ramona Thevenet to grab the headlines with a L55 record on this stage (and a mention in Athletics Weekly!). Next up was Merstham, another particularly tough stage involving running up Box Hill! Stage 19 runs down the hill but then straight up the North Downs on the other side! There were three particularly good performances here - the aforementioned Rob Wilcox, Jim Desmond for the vets and Juli Greenwood for the ladies all recording good finishing positions. It's all downhill from there, on stage 20 with Richard Carter finishing an overall 7th place and then Andy Howarth and Emily Cartwright battling it out to finish in 26th and 28th position respectively.

The penultimate stage is Ripley to Walton Bridge led home by Martin Vivian in 13th place. The final leg is the one that everyone wants, Walton Bridge to the waiting crowds and adulation at the Hawker centre. The honour of taking this leg fell to Dan Greenslade finishing in 9th place, Rob Greenwood for the men and Laura Bowden for the ladies.



Whilst everyone recovered, there was an anxious wait to get the final results after two days racing. For the men a final position of 17th was confirmed in a cumulative time of 1 day, 4 hours and 31 minutes, a good result. The Vets had confirmed a 10th place overall of 1 day, 2 hours and 38 minutes, putting the Vets into second place in their category and grabbing

the runners up prize. Last, but not least, the Ladies found they had finished 35th overall in 1 day, 6 hours and 29 minutes. This result had put them 49 minutes in front of Ranelagh Ladies and confirmed their second place overall in the ladies' competition, a cue for celebrations all round!

Thank you to everyone involved, the Straggler volunteers, marshals, course markers, timekeepers and of course Peter Kennedy and Alex Cutting and the organising committee for making it a brilliant weekend for the club.

A special thank you to the 33 Straggler runners who did the club proud as follows:

Vet's Team	Men's Team	Ladies' Team
Dan Greenslade	Simon Webb	Juli Greenwood
Simon Brazil	Phil Tauwhare	Laura Bowden
Jim Desmond	Rob Greenwood	Lindsay Doy
Martin Vivian	Rob Wilcox	Helen Davies
Malcolm Davies	Oli Bowers	Sarah Winter
Kevin Price	Fraser Wigley	Emily Cartwright
Richard Carter	Andy Howarth	Ramona Thevenet
Crispin Allen	Richard Baggott	Mary Hyde
Stephen Penpraze	Peter Wedderburn	Julie Holmes
Roy Reeder	Neil Carrington	Maddie Garner
Mark Pattinson	Richard Patient	Julie Haworth

Malcolm Davies

Summer Grand Prix and Club Championships

The final cross-country fixture of the season was called off due to the Beast from the East, and so it was lucky for those who felt they had been short-changed that the beginning of the Summer Grand Prix made up for this. The Nonsuch parkrun course was right up the muddy trail of those who enjoy the dirty stuff over the winter, but the conditions didn't put off a huge Straggler turn out in our debut mob match with Sutton Runners.



101 Straggs were on the startline in a field of over 700, a record for this particular parkrun. The mob was a convincing victory for Straggs, with Sutton fielding 33.

It was also our 5k championships and despite the tricky under-foot conditions, there were a number of hugely impressive performances.

Men overall winner: Thomas Ziegel

Senior Men: Thomas Ziegel

M40: Andy Hoseason

M50: Roy Reeder

M60: David Brewin

M70: Michael Garner

M80: Les Brown

Ladies overall winner: Helen Davies

Senior Ladies: Heidi Russenberger

F35: Juliana Greenwood

F45: Helen Davies

F55: Liz Killip

F65: Sally Boulton

F75: Joy Bell

It's fantastic to see some new names picking up awards, and the range in age categories is something we can be very pleased with.

Despite coming second by a bit, Sutton are apparently keen to repeat the day in 2019.

Move forward one week and the cold, wet and mud were replaced with dry and warm weather for the first road-based fixture of the summer season.

Ranelagh Half Marathon saw 46 Stragglers line up.

Our Stragglers Half-Marathon Champions for 2018 are:

Men: Overall winner: Jonathan Ormerod

Senior Men: Jonathan Ormerod

M40: Donovan Duffy

M50: Malcolm Davies

M60: David Brewin

Ladies: Overall winner: Phyllis Flynn

Senior Ladies: Maddie Garner

F35: Sonia Bandeira

F45: Helen Davies

F55: Phyllis Flynn

F65 Sally Boulton



Straggler award winners at the Hawker Centre after our recent Grand Prix events

June is a packed month with four fixtures in the calendar – Dorking 10 which is also our 10-mile Championships, Ranelagh's 10k, our own 10k and the away mob match with Ranelagh at Crane parkrun. Last year's mob saw one of the summer highlights as Stragglers swamped Bushy parkrun with yellow. Can we do the same at Crane?

June dates:

Sun 3: Dorking 10 – Stragglers 10-mile championships

Sun 17: Ranelagh Richmond 10k – enter soon as this race fills up

Thu 21: Stragglers 10k Championships – Hawker Centre: enter on the night

Sat 30: Mob match v Ranelagh at Crane parkrun – just turn up, and don't forget your barcode!

Simon Webb



Call for Committee Members

Every year at the club's AGM (this year it is on 5 July) the club's Committee is elected by Straggler members. The majority of Committee members take on a specific role for the club, but we're also very keen to bring new faces to the group who have a general interest in the success of the club but no specific area of expertise. Being a committee member is a great way of helping our club to prosper and to get to know many of our members.

This year, we will be looking to appoint new Men's and Ladies Captains so we are particularly keen to hear from anybody who races for the club and who would like to get more involved in team organisation.

Currently the committee meet every six weeks – in a pub if that helps convince you – with meetings lasting around 2 hours. Anyone interested in finding out more, please contact one of chair@stragglers.org or secretary@stragglers.org. You're also welcome to speak to other members too.

Prudential Ride London 100 - Volunteers Required

*Feeding Hub at Hampton Court – Sunday 29th
July 2018*

The club has been asked to provide personnel to help man the feeding hub at Hampton Court for this year's Prudential Ride



London100 on Sunday 29th July 2018. Volunteers will be required to report for duty at approximately 06:00 hrs (TBC) and you will be stood down at 13:00 hrs.

Duties will include

- Setting up the food tables with gels, bars, bananas or whatever supplies the PRL organisation have arranged for this year.
- Filling cyclists' water bottles using large jugs supplied from water taps set up between the refreshment stations.
- Distributing food and drink to riders.
- Giving assistance with directions to toilets, mechanics, relay race changeover points, first aid etc.
- Breaking down the set-up at the end of the morning.

In previous years volunteers have received a T-shirt, cap, water bottle, bag and lunch as well as a pin badge. Volunteers do not need to be members of the Stragglers; they can be other members of your family, friends or neighbours.

In addition to this, dependent on the number of volunteers we can provide, The Stragglers will receive between 1 and 4 guaranteed places for 2019 and a donation to the club. Also, for those who are keen to ride in the 2019 event, if you have volunteered at the feed station and you have applied to enter the 2019 event but have been rejected and you are a member of The Stragglers running club, you

will be eligible to apply for the guaranteed places in the draw the club will hold in February 2019.

If you would like to volunteer and have not done so already, please contact Sue Cockle suecockle@ntlworld.com with your details

Sue Cockle



Beating Bushy's Bounds - a pub crawl with a difference!

Friday 22 June 2018



The footpath through Bushy Park named Cobbler's Way records Timothy Bennet's campaign in 1754 for free access through the park between Hampton Wick and Hampton. This, and other paths, had effectively been closed in 1734 when the 2nd Earl of Halifax had enclosed the park within a wall.

Each year, Stragglers meet to raise a glass to Timothy Bennet. Starting from the Swan pub in Hampton Wick, roughly where Timothy Bennet had his business, we run through Bushy Park stopping at various pubs in Hampton Hill, Hampton and Hampton Court before returning to the White Hart in Hampton Wick just before last orders.

The itinerary is as follows:

- 1) The Swan, Hampton Wick - assemble from 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

- 2) Bloated Mallard, Hampton Hill - arrive around 8pm
- 3) The Star, Hampton Hill - 8.30pm
- 4) Jolly Coopers, Hampton - 9pm
- 5) The Mute Swan, Hampton Court - 9.50pm
- 6) White Hart, Hampton Wick - 10.40pm

Roy Reeder





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Future Races

We hope you weren't planning to do anything else over the next couple of months as we have a race everywhere you look.

June

- Sun 3: Dorking 10
- Fri 8/Sun 10: Welsh Castles Relay
- Wed 13: Parkland Relay – Richmond Park
- Thu 14: SRJRG – Russell School, Petersham
- Sun 17: Ranelagh Richmond 10k
- Thu 21: Stragglers 10k Championships – Hawker Centre
- Tue 26: Imber Court Relay
- Thu 28: SRJRG – hosted by Ranelagh
- Sat 30: Mob match v Ranelagh – Crane parkrun

July

- Sun 8: Claygate 5 (miles)
- Thu 12: SRJRG – Hawker Centre – 15th anniversary event
- Sat 14: Elmore 7 (miles)
- Sun 22: Elmbridge 10k
- Fri 27: Wedding Day 7k

August

- Thu 2nd: Rothwell Relay
- Sun 12: Wimbledon 5k
- Thu 30: SRJRG – Hawker Centre