



June 2017

Issue 333



Stragglers after the Mob Match vs Ranelagh



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Editorial

The busiest month of Stragglers that I can remember in the, almost, 9 years that I've been in this fine club has seen seven races take place. Four from our summer road league and three relays, the highlights being a 40-strong contingent heading to Wales and 143 standing on the start line at Bushy parkrun as we defeated local rivals Ranelagh in our annual mob match. I'm often reminded that Stragmag is something of a lengthy read, and this month is especially so in order to do everyone's efforts justice – in particular, the organisers of our various teams (men, ladies, juniors and open) Malcolm and Helen Davies (for their continued tireless work), plus Alan Mawdsley, Simon Brazil, Katherine Curtis-Tyler, Jim Desmond and John Parry. Great stuff all, and to every one of you who has been a part of what is turning out to be an excellent summer in yellow.

Elsewhere, for those who like their races – and race reports – a little longer, we've three Ultra reports, including a guest piece from former Straggler Hannah Storm who recently completed Comrades in South Africa.

July is a little quieter, with a mere three events in the summer road league. There is also our AGM, with a number of new recruits to the committee. Special recognition and thanks to those stepping down - Carys Mills, Peter Wedderburn, Mark Thomas and Richard Steeden.

The July issue will actually come out in early August to allow for coverage of the Wedding Day 7k, but we have a submission deadline of Thursday July 27th for any items you wish to send.

Simon Webb
Stragmag@stragglers.org



Simon Webb

Stragglers News - Club AGM

A note about the AGM – to be held at the Hawker Centre on Thursday July 6th, 9pm start.

The following nominations have been received for the new committee which will be voted on at the AGM on Thursday 6th July

- Chair - Kevin Price
- Treasurer - Phil Hall
- Secretary - Simon Brazil
- Membership Secretary - Julie Holmes
- Committee Member (Communications) - Andrew Ronksley
- Committee Member (Web Administrator) - Alan Mawdsley
- Committee Member - Simon Webb

Other members of the current committee are standing again and are unopposed.

Phil Davies - Club Captain

Malcolm Davies - Men's Captain

Helen Davies - Ladies Captain

Roy Reeder - Social Secretary

Anne Wood - committee member (Little Feet representative)

Barbara Crowe - committee member (Strag Tri representative)

We would encourage as many club members as possible to attend as it is an opportunity for you to meet committee members and to comment on any issues raised on the night.

Welsh Castles Relay

The Stragglers were once again privileged to be able to field two teams in the 2017 Welsh Castles Relay race held on 10/11th June 2017. With demand for places from clubs exceeding supply, the race organisers had reiterated a number of strict requirements, including the ability to run 9 minute miles in hilly terrain (i.e. most of the stages!). In complying with this, one of the objectives was to see if we could field 2 complete teams again and improve the showing of this year's teams compared to recent years.



The 40-strong squad were composed of a veteran's mixed team and an open mixed team and lined up against 65 of some of the best club teams in England, Wales and intriguingly, Spain! By the end of two days running, the results showed that it was 'job done' with the vets team finishing 36th overall, the highest we have finished in 3 years, in a time of 24:53:05 and the open team finishing 45th in a cumulative time of 25:32:15. This compared with the cumulative times from 2016 of 26:39:12 (40th place) recorded by the open men's team and 28:51:52 (59th place) recorded by the ladies team.

There were many excellent performances across the two days and we could easily list everyone individually, but some headlines are:

Stragglers stage records were broken by Sarah Winter, Sonia Bandeira, Hilary Davies, Jacky Balfour and Richard Baggott. The hero award however goes to Nick Goodchild who, despite being injured, stepped in for a late running team member (our only logistic mix up of the weekend) to register in place of our missing vet and set off in his place. Unfortunately, Nick's calf gave up a couple of miles down the road but at least meant that we recorded a cut-off time and avoided further time penalties. For the Vets team this was a 'what if' moment with that team narrowly missing out on 3rd place vets place overall.

Sarah Winter's Stragglers stage record was so close to a lady's stage win too. Also running a mountain stage and in wet and windy conditions, she opened up an impressive lead over a Les Croupiers runner, but the 'home' club athlete's fight back resulted in a thrilling battle to the finish.

In his race report for the website – this article is an extended version of which – Vets Team captain Malcolm Davies modestly avoided mentioning that he was the highest placed finisher for the Stragglers across two days of competition. Sure, you beat who you race, but this is still a point worthy of note. We should also flag up two debutant performances, Rob Wilcox achieving a brilliant 13th place on the tough stage 10 (half marathon distance on a mountain leg) and Jim Lurkins, also running one of the mountain stages opening day 2, also finished 13th. As you'll read later Roy Reeder's 12th place on leg 4 earned him a mention in Athletics Weekly.



Respect is always due to those who step up for the Drivers leg. It may have been dry by this point but the strong wind isn't exactly what you'd ask for. Chris Coates – another debutant, so nothing like chucking them in at the deep end – edged out Stuart Hambling (more on Chris' running later in this issue).

There were a couple of close battles between the two Straggler teams. On leg 2 Helen Davies and Karen Levene were separated by a mere 32 seconds, and on the second stage on day 2, the



contest was almost as close. With a West London football bet resting on it, Nick Brown held off the challenge from Simons Webb and Brazil (by 44 seconds) and in doing so ensuring the Brentford supporting duo had the humiliation of being seen in public with a Queens Park Rangers towel!

What was gratifying was having so many first timers and new members taking part in this event, as well as many returning customers – Nick Brown for example making his first Welsh Castles appearance in over a decade. The enjoyment enhanced by the excellent accommodation, food and bar (with some fine local ales on offer!) at the Dragon hotel in Montgomery. Keeping up with the name of the weekend the town also offered a ruined castle which many of the early arrivers on Friday afternoon visited by way of a pre-race walk (or climb given the steepness of the hill) and delaying use of the already mentioned bar. This was the first



time the entire team have been able to stay in one place to enjoy some serious team bonding over a few beers! This was topped off by a surprise visit of the town crier of Montgomery who had even composed a ditty to welcome The Stragglers to Montgomery!

Malcolm Davies/Simon Webb



Summer Road Series

Two 10ks, one 10-miler and a 5k battle with Ranelagh, there's a lot to cover this month!

Dorking 10

First up was Dorking 10 – a race which included the Surrey 10 Mile Championships, and the Stragglers' own championships at this distance, the first time we've held such an event.

The men were led home by club newcomer Matt Coakes, with a stunning 59:45, not bad for someone making their 10-mile race debut on a rather hilly course! Matt also took the club M40 prize. Second and third place for Stragglers men (and the club M50 award) were fought out by Dean Morley and Malcolm Davies, with Dean coming out on top in 64:39 and Malcolm 20 seconds behind. Donovan Duffy and Gareth Pritchard fought out a similarly close battle for second and third Straggler M40 with Donovan prevailing in that contest. Ollie Bowers edged out Chris Coates for the Straggler senior man award.

Another highlight for the men though was Phil Davies picking up an overall race M60 second place award, and in addition scooping a Surrey County M60 Silver award.

As usual though, the ladies were not to be outdone. Liz Killip was the first Straggler lady over the line in 68:42, 8th lady in the race overall and picking up the race F50 silver award. Liz was followed over the line by Dee Smale in 72:43. Juliet Cleghorn was in third place for the Stragglers picking up the club F45 award, in 76:22. Kate Suttle took the senior lady club award, and Nicole Hambling F35. To cap it all off, the ladies also picked up the ladies' race team silver award with Liz, Dee, Juliet and Helen Davies making up that quartet. See later in this issue for a personal view of this event in the race reports section of StragMag.

To round off the day, Leigh Collins opted for the Dorking 'Not quite 10' race and this proved to be equally successful, with Leigh picking up the second lady award.

After a break for Welsh Castles and the Parkland Relay, it was back to road league action on a swelteringly hot Sunday morning for the Ranelagh 10k. Perhaps not surprisingly, not everyone who had entered was willing to take on the 25+ degree heat, but another strong showing in yellow saw 48 Stragglers competing.

Phil Davies continued his excellent season, picking up a Surrey County M60 Bronze, with Juliet Cleghorn securing the Surrey W45 gold.

In the race awards the Stragglers had a hat-trick of third places, Kev Best for M60, Juliet Cleghorn with her second W45 award and Pam Whitter for W55.

Six days later it was a new addition to the summer series schedule, albeit a long-standing fixture in the Stragglers calendar – our annual mob match with Ranelagh Harriers, this year at Bushy parkrun. Having been on the wrong end of some narrow defeats against Ranelagh in recent years, Stragglers acquired the South West London bragging rights. In truth, it was ‘no contest’, as an astounding 143 Stragglers from all sections of the club turned up to ‘face off’ against the 70 Ranelagh runners. The start was a ‘sea of yellow’ with the largest cheer of the day reserved for the club making up more than 10% of the field.

Under the rules of the match the 70 Ranelagh runners then counted against the scores of the first 70 Stragglers (less 3). The result of this proved to be equally one-sided. Whilst Ranelagh were able to field 3 very quick runners, after that it was Stragglers who dominated – showing that we can match them for speed, something which hasn’t always been the case in this event.

Overall the combined scores of the teams (with the lower winning) was 3610 points to Stragglers with Ranelagh trailing in at 6546, a comprehensive victory for Stragglers, whichever way you look at it.

Ranelagh having graciously accepted defeat then accompanied Stragglers down for a post-run coffee and social at the Hampton Court Tiltyard café for further post-race gloating, analysis and debriefing! The full results can be found on the [Ranelagh website](#).

Stragglers 5K Championships

The mob match also included the Stragglers own 5K championships. The men's competition was won by Matt Coakes in 17:20 (who also took the M40 award), followed 2 seconds later by Rob Wilcox to win the senior men's award. Roy Reeder produced a sub-18 min run to win the M50 category with an excellent 82.67% age grading, with Kev Best storming home in 20.56 to win the M60 award. The M70 winner of the day by a registered Straggler was Derek Blackmore.

In the lady's competition Alexandra Cianciara won the senior lady award. The L35 award went to Sonia Bandeira in a time of 20.37 and Sue Hall (amazingly making her parkrun debut) bagging the L45 award in a time of 20.34. The L65 award was won by (another very popular winner) Merran Sell. The headlines though were once again grabbed by Liz Killip winning the L55 award and overall winner in a time of 19.45 with an astounding age grading of 91.65%.



Stragglers Club 10k Race Report

And finally, for June, it was our own Club 10k. '94 of us made up the field, an impressive turn out compared to recent years. Conditions were good for racing too with many taking the opportunity to improve of their performances from the Ranelagh 10K earlier in the month.

Thanks must also go to the 25 or so (another record?) marshals who guided us around the course.

Results overleaf. See the website for the various category winners.

Posn	EntrantNo	FirstName	LastName	Cat	FinishTime	Age %
1	251	Robert	Wilcox	Senior Men	00:35:51	75.24
2	221	Chris	Walmsley	Vet Men 40-44	00:36:37	77.76
3	228	Oliver	Garner	Senior Men	00:36:56	73.02
4	225	Freysen	Maritz	Vet Men 40-44	00:37:07	76.17
5	274	Oliver	Bowers	Senior Men	00:37:22	72.19
6	271	Roy	Reeder	Vet Men 50-54	00:37:41	80.35
7	257	Crispin	Allen	Vet Men 45-49	00:38:23	77.05
8	264	Donovan	Duffy	Vet Men 40-44	00:38:30	72.9
9	222	Richard	Carter	Vet Men 40-44	00:38:43	72.48
10	238	Bryan	Searle	Vet Men 50-54	00:39:23	77.53
11	282	Jon	Booth	NDB	00:40:15	0
12	295	Gareth	Pritchard	Vet Men 45-49	00:40:23	72.66
13	261	Malcolm	Fletcher	Vet Men 55-59	00:40:24	79.59
14	281	Ray	Kingdon	Vet Men 55-59	00:40:36	78.49
15	260	Richard	Baggott	Senior Men	00:40:42	66.26
16	286	Simon	Macson	Senior Men	00:41:02	65.74
17	258	Clause	Wagner	NDB	00:41:03	0
18	283	Martin	Vivian	Vet Men 45-49	00:41:15	71.14
19	201	Liz	Killip	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:41:19	87.27
20	299	Nick	Brown	Vet Men 50-54	00:41:35	73.43
21	239	Steve	Smith	Vet Men 55-59	00:41:54	76.75
22	237	Sonia	Bandeira	Vet Ladies 40-44	00:41:55	75.08
23	243	Tim	Leak	Vet Men 45-49	00:42:06	69.69
24	292	Antony	Maxwell	Vet Men 50-54	00:42:21	70.91

25	224	Kevin	Best	Vet Men 65-69	00:42:37	80.79
26	263	Ian	Callander	Vet Men 55-59	00:43:08	75.24
27	245	Kevin	Price	Vet Men 50-54	00:43:39	70.53
28	244	Simon	Webb	Senior Men	00:43:39	62.52
29	294	Carl	Moran	Vet Men 50-54	00:43:46	70.34
30	269	Dee	Smale	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:43:50	83.12
31	262	Neil	Carrington	Vet Men 45-49	00:43:56	65.79
32	280	Stephen	Penpraze	Vet Men 45-49	00:44:03	66.61
33	273	David	Suttle	Senior Men	00:44:20	60.84
34	270	Kate	Suttle	Senior Ladies	00:44:24	67.38
35	250	Philip	Tauwhare	Vet Men 50-54	00:44:24	69.34
36	211	Helen	Davies	Vet Ladies 45-49	00:44:54	73.77
37	284	Alan	Mawdsley	Vet Men 65-69	00:44:57	78.32
38	298	Carys	Mills	Vet Ladies 50-54	00:45:08	75.38
39	207	Brigid	Hibberd	Vet Ladies 50-54	00:45:57	76.19
40	259	Ramona	Thevenet	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:46:07	79.02
41	266	Jonathan	Parry	Vet Men 40-44	00:46:14	61.14
42	288	Tim	Collins	Senior Men	00:46:19	58.5
43	209	Nicole	Hambling	Vet Ladies 40-44	00:46:22	69.02
44	240	Peter	Colwill	Vet Men 55-59	00:46:40	69.54
45	203	Juliana	Greenwood	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:46:49	64.57
46	287	Laura	Bowden	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:47:08	64.13
47	255	Joby	Thomas	Vet Men 45-49	00:47:15	62.1

48	249	Alexander	Sell	Vet Men 40-44	00:47:26	59.16
49	246	Dave	Griffiths	Vet Men 60-64	00:47:45	71.38
50	297	Carl	Pretorius	Vet Men 40-44	00:47:52	58.22
51	217	Julie	Haworth	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:47:54	77.68
52	276	Daniel	Lill	Vet Men 40-44	00:48:10	59.12
53	291	Becky	Thurtell	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:48:23	74.53
54	206	Andrew	Ronksley	Vet Men 55-59	00:48:47	65.33
55	202	Jon	Forster	Vet Men 50-54	00:49:04	61.22
56	235	Niamh	Finlay	Vet Ladies 50-54	00:49:48	69.62
57	212	Peter	Wedderburn	Vet Men 65-69	00:49:59	69.65
58	289	Izabel	Grindal	Vet Ladies 50-54	00:50:09	70.49
59	226	Julie	Garner	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:50:45	71.06
60	242	John	Greaves	Vet Men 55-59	00:50:54	63.17
61	218	Patricia	Ronksley	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:51:35	70.64
62	278	Robert	Hill	Vet Men 55-59	00:51:43	61.07
63	213	Rob	Crawford	Vet Men 40-44	00:51:52	55.31
64	279	Karen	Mayo	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:51:59	58.62
65	267	Charlotte	Freer	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:53:01	56.58
66	219	Alexandra	Cianciara	Senior Ladies	00:53:04	56.38
67	227	Michael	Garner	Vet Men 70+	00:53:20	68.32
68	208	Helen	Brett	Vet Ladies 60-64	00:53:28	70.34

69	275	Stephanie	Atkinson	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:53:30	57.87
70	290	Tom	Bucke	Vet Men 50- 54	00:53:45	56.81
71	220	Gareth	Rees	Vet Men 50- 54	00:55:14	55.27
72	285	Richard	Ball	NDB	00:55:25	0
73	232	Mary	Hyde	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:55:43	55.12
74	236	Breda	McGree	Vet Ladies 55-59	00:55:43	66.08
75	253	Helen	Nance	Vet Ladies 60-64	00:57:19	68.72
76	241	Steven	Benge	Vet Men 65- 69	00:57:39	61.06
77	223	Richard	Garner	Vet Men 45- 49	00:57:57	50.64
78	247	James	Sell	Vet Men 70+	00:59:11	65.72
79	265	Sabine	Duffy	Vet Ladies 35-39	00:59:19	52.19
80	230	Graham	Mortimer	Vet Men 70+	00:59:20	61.4
81	248	Merran	Sell	Vet Ladies 70+	00:59:39	73.52
82	254	Francesca	Thomas	Vet Ladies 50-54	01:00:09	56.57
83	216	Diane	O'Donoghue	Vet Ladies 50-54	01:00:45	56.54
84	293	Hubert	Cibis	Vet Men 60- 64	01:02:30	52.91
85	233	Claire	Morrissey	Vet Ladies 40-44	01:03:22	50.49
86	234	Robert	Falconer	Vet Men 50- 54	01:03:23	48.98
87	252	Dave	Kelly	Vet Men 60- 64	01:03:41	51.93
88	277	Keith	Haworth	Vet Men 65- 69	01:04:49	55.57
89	231	Glynda	Mortimer	Vet Ladies 70+	01:11:43	60.24
90	210	Jacqueline	Rich	Vet Ladies 50-54	01:12:09	48.99

91	256	Donald	Bell	Vet Men 70+	01:15:27	52.33
92	205	Ann	Coward	Vet Ladies 70+	01:18:35	54.17
93	204	Carol	Dickinson	Vet Ladies 50-54	01:18:35	43.7
94	296	Les	Brown	Vet Men 70+	01:41:01	40.94



Summer Road League –Future Races

July sees one more 10k at Elmbridge (Sunday 23rd), plus two unusual race distances. Elmore 7 miles starts and finishes at a country fair, the Chipstead Flower Show near Banstead on a Saturday afternoon (15th July 2pm). Your race entry fee gives you free entry to the country fair. The race starts inside the fair, and as you go off for a 7-mile run on picturesque country lanes the country fair is in full swing. So, it's an opportunity to bring family members and friends who can check out the stalls while you're running. Finishing the race back inside the fair, there are numerous refreshment stalls and so a perfect opportunity for a Stragglers post-

run social. Then on the last Friday in July (28th) it's the return of the ever-popular Wedding Day 7k. Race HQ is the Hampton Hill Cricket Club in Bushy Park, with a bar and BBQ after, this is always an excellent Friday night race and is Straggler organised too – enter [here](#).

Malcom Davies/Simon Webb



Junior Update: Watford Open Meeting and Parkland Relay

Watford Open Meeting

It was perfect conditions for a brilliant evening of 1500m racing, and all 5 juniors who raced in Stragglers colours took full advantage with each running a PB time. There were PB's too for the 2 juniors who are second-claim Stragglers, and so everyone left the track happy in the knowledge that they ran great races.

Here's a photo of Harriet & Sophie racing:



Spencer Bateman (U15B)	4:37
Declan Connolly * (U15B)	4:41
Ollie Emmet * (U13B)	4:45
Poppy Jensen (U15G)	5:19
Maisie Jensen (U13G)	5:19
Harriet Wiltshire (U13G)	5:39
Sophie Desmond (U13G)	5:42

* 2nd-claim Straggler

Special mention to:

- Spencer ran the perfect tactical race to take a very well-deserved win with a remarkable 12 second improvement on his best previous time.
- Ollie (formerly of this parish but now running for Walton AC) – this is very fast running as shown by the fact that his time ranks nationally top-20 this year in a very keenly contested category.
- Maisie for lowering Straggler U13G record by 5 secs, with thanks & credit to sister Poppy who was in the same race which made significant contribution to the fast pace that the girls maintained throughout.
- Harriet & Sophie on running this distance on the track for the 1st time, and recording times that are very competitive for Year 6 girls – with the best news was that both enjoyed the experience and are keen to repeat.

Full results [HERE](#)



Parkland Relays

The juniors always love running this great event as Richmond Park on a summer evening is such a fantastic venue, and also because it is one of the few times in the year when they get to race against adults.

Our junior teams this year were of a younger age-profile than in recent years being made up mostly of 12 & 13 year olds, but they did fantastic winning their categories and finishing well up in their respective fields of 55 Men's and 43 Women's teams – see below for details. There were exceptionally good performances by everyone, and the boys team certainly had the measure of us dads and so well done to them.

Stragglers Girls - 13th Overall Female team

Maisie Jensen: 19:09

Poppy Jensen: 19:50

Lucy Hoseason: 21:51

Stragglers Boys - 27th Overall Male team

Spencer Bateman: 17:30

Ben Dibley: 16:55

Chris Hardy: 19:45

Ethan Russell: 19:07

Full provisional results [HERE](#)

Jim Desmond



The Ridge Challenge Ultra. Friday May 26th 2017

When I first noticed this race being advertised last year, I couldn't help myself being drawn to it. I mean, what couldn't you like about it? An Ultra race across the scenic countryside of Northern and Southern Ireland touching on mountainous regions and the Atlantic

coastline. I was sold, paid my money to get a starting line place and then set about organising the logistics of getting there, running 112 miles and getting back. Not easy when you've never been there and have no idea what to expect. Needless to say, as all travellers know, once you've set out, let the adventure begin!



This is about the race and so I'll begin where the race begins at a little village, namely Gortin, 8 miles out of Omagh. There the seven runners, all male, who had decided, like me, to take on this incredible challenge assembled. Tom had flown over from America, Jivee, from the Phillipines and now living in Belfast, myself and

Alan J from England and Barry, Pat and Alan from Ireland made up the entire field of runners for this, the first ever Ridge challenge. Having spent the night in a dormitory at the community centre in Gortin, we awoke to the thought of what we were about to undertake. Not much chatter as everyone started preparing kit and eating a bit of breakfast. The weather Gods had prepared us a baking hot day with temperatures reaching 26 deg C. This was too hot and proved to be the toughest part of day1.

10:00 AM and we were given the off by Sammy and Adrian, the two brothers that organise Atlas running events and were to be fantastic with the logistical task of getting water to everyone as the field slowly split into faster and slower runners. Heading out of Gortin, we followed a road that circled around the Sperrin mountains and through the Glen forest park, eventually climbing a 420m peak known as Bessy Bell. The path continued back down and then along a road that kept itself on the edge of the Sperrins. Undulating all the way as it took in several climbs 195m, 198m, 220m and 160m before reaching Killen. It was around 8hrs and 30 miles into the race. I had taken fluids on board for most of the time, but now with empty flasks, feeling nauseous from the heat and having eaten nothing in the way of solids I began to want an aid station. My feet as well, had been suffering along the roads in trail shoes. It had been so hot the tarmac had melted and the heat had come through my shoes burning my feet.



Finally making it to Kiilleter, the first aid station, 36 miles in. It was now 7.30pm. Myself and Alan J had stuck together for 9 1/2 hrs. We had been lost a couple of times but with maps and GPS we were not too far away from the right route once we knew we were astray. This stop lasted 45 minutes as we both took on hot food and tea whilst sorting out the flasks and replenishing our kit for the night. Fresh socks were

my priority after dressing my feet in various hot spots with blister plasters.

Daylight was going to be around till 11pm and it was now a priority to get going and try and make Kelly's Bridge before dark. This is the border crossing from North to South Ireland. Feeling fresh again we set off heading out on a very long undulating road. It seemed endless and as night fell it became a realisation that the border crossing was going to be done in the dark.



It was 1140pm when we crossed the border. Nothing spectacular other than the spooky, eerie sound and movement of giant wind turbines all around us. Heading along a forest trail through Ardnamona and into Donegal, we missed an

important right turn which would have put us on the road up to Lough Eske. Having missed this turn, thinking we were still on the right road, and failing to check maps, we found ourselves about 4 miles away from the turning.

It was about 3am Saturday. Feeling totally spent we decided to figure out what we should do.

As we were close to a major road, Alan had figured that, if we scaled the fence and climbed up onto this road, we could then run along to a roundabout, go right for another mile, we would then find our road on the left.

As it was, we were running along the N15 at 3 am ducking into undergrowth every time a car came, for fear of being picked up by

the Garda and being cast into a cell for the night. Alan had a luminous green jacket on and so he really did have to dive for cover several times. It bought some light relief to our adventure as we laughed like naughty schoolboys disobeying headmaster's instructions.

Eventually we were back on track. This road, now following the Bluestack Way, would take us past the beautiful Lough Eske. Daylight was with us again and it was a sight for sore eyes as we made our way on a climb that eventually saw us hitting the Bluestack mountains. The weather had changed. It had become humid. The air was moist, wet even. A climb of over 500m eventually got us to the top of the Bluestack range. This had been arduous going. The path was rocky and uneven and had taken a lot out of both of us. Finally, at the top we found a clearing amongst some old bagged up fir trees. Using the bags as a resting station I flopped down. Within seconds any exposed area of skin was being devoured by thousands of mozzies!! I had a small gap between an anklet sock and a calf pad. On both legs I became red raw for days. Behind the knees as well. The itching and scratching became intense and unbearable.

The way back down was arduous and took us over very boggy, uneven ground. By now the heavens had opened and it was pouring hard. This would keep up for several hours. Alan and myself had both decided that getting to Glenties, the second aid station, would be our final task before pulling out. By now my feet were in agony as I had painful blistering that prevented running. Along with the bites I decided I'd had enough. Improperly prepared for such a monstrous task I would have to quit and lick my wounds.

This one had beaten me at mile 60, 22hours in. Alan was in the same way. Later we knew that only 3 competitors had made it to Glenties. One decided to quit there whilst, with only two leaving Glenties for the final section to Bunglass, they finished in 47 hrs and 20 mins. It turned out to be nearer 125 miles instead of the given 112 miles.

Around 6 miles from the finish was the largest climb of the race, 600m of climb on legs that had been going for over 40 hrs.

I don't feel angry or disappointed that I never reached the end. On the day, I gave it my best shot, which sadly, wasn't good enough. The new friends, the adventure and the stunning views made this so

worthwhile. I would gladly do it all again. Next time I'll know what's coming.

Peter Colwill



Mid Week Relays: Parkland, Imber Court and a Straggler birthday Celebration

Parkland Relay

The Thames Hare and Hounds Parkland Relay in Richmond Park has been part of the Straggler running diary for many a year and is growing in popularity. Almost 100 teams lined up at the start for this year's race, including 9 Straggler teams. The men's teams were organised by Simon Brazil, ladies by Katherine Curtis-Tyler (both vice captains to Malcolm and Helen) and the juniors and a 'dads' team by Jim Desmond.

Ladies first - In recruiting emails, I billed this as a 'lovely local summer evening event'. It was - and so much more. Our six ladies made up two vets teams, with runners doing 2.8 miles each on the circular course at Pen Ponds. But with temperatures near 80 degrees, and a final hill longer than anyone knew or remembered, the experience turned out less village fete, and more Marathon des Sables... Brigid captioned her photo below 'sun setting on the pain'



But of course, as ever, Strag ladies - Becky Thurtell, Sioned Morgan and Julie Garner - rose to the occasion, with Sarah Kinsella, Sarah Winter and Brigid Hibberd making fourth ladies vets: go Stragglers! Sarah's children's excitement at seeing their mum race topped only by spotting the runner in a giant plastic t-rex suit.

My excitement was topped only by Carol Dickinson and Julie Papworth popping out from behind a tree with a table (yes really) of cold Pimms and prosecco: how thoughtful of Brigid to have been born on 14 June – so church fete atmosphere restored after all – at least if you don't count celebrations in the pub after. (Katherine Curtis Tyler)

The Senior men's dream team consisting of the two Ollie's - Bowers and Garner were joined by Rob Wilcox and Jim Lurkins (taking time out from his Wedding preparations), who ran a blistering race finishing in 11th place overall. The Vet's team also put on a great show the two Malcolm's - pb Davies (as he is now called) and Fletcher were joined by Crispin and Roy. They finished in an excellent 20th place.

Jim Desmond and his junior 'stable' of runners were also in Town. They have a track record of out-performing their seniors and this year was no exception! The junior boys - Spencer Bateman, Ben

Dibley, Chris Hardy and Ethan Russell were of course 1st in their age category. The Junior Girls - Maisie Jensen, Poppy Jensen and Lucy Hoseason - matched their male counterparts by also finishing in 1st position!

Jim also put together a 'Dad's team - he was joined by Andrew Hoseason, Mark Bateman and Grant Russell to finish in a very creditable 32nd place.

Jim was accompanied by Simon Webb running a pb for the course. Simon was joined by Jon Parry and late call ups Andrew Ronksley and Peter Wedderburn (thanks guys) to finish in 45th place. In a close finale in 44th place Tim Leak ran a storming last leg to complete the Straggler vets team of Michael Trott, Tim Wood and Alan Mawdsley. In this summer of great Straggler team performances, this was another great evening. (Simon Brazil)

Imber Court Relay

The following Tuesday eleven Straggler teams turned out for the Imber Court Relay (35 teams total), formerly Horton Park, organised by the good people over at 26.2RRC.

More ladies team success as Stragglers Hawker Ladies 1 (Sarah Consellor, Ramona Thevenet, Nicole Booth and Sarah Winter) took the Vets prize in a time of 42:45. Sarah Winter took the individual prize for this category.

Stragglers Hawker 1 for the men (Crispin Allen, Roy Reeder, Oli Bowers and Richard Baggot) were 4th overall. The best place Gigs Hill Green Straggler team finished in 7th place. Results from the night can be found [here](#).



The Ultimate Human Race: An Ex-Pat Straggler's Comrades Story

Many readers will remember Hannah Storm who for a few years would be part of Straggler teams at Welsh Castles and the Round Norfolk Relay. Now living in the New Forest with husband Terry (they met through Stragglers), she has written the following for us about her recent trip to South Africa to take on 'the ultimate human race'.

I first heard about the Comrades marathon in 2011, many miles from its home in South Africa. I was in Bushy Park at parkrun when I spotted another runner wearing the same Paris marathon t-shirt as me. As we posed for a photo, he mentioned I should check out a 'little run' he was involved with if I ever came to South Africa. It wasn't until later that I realised to my acute embarrassment that this was Bruce Fordyce, the record nine-times winner of The Comrades, as it's known in South Africa.

Fast forward to 2017 and to celebrate my 40th birthday, I decided to enter the world's oldest and biggest participation ultra-marathon, a race so popular South African television screens the whole day live and so challenging that thousands fail to finish within its 12 hour cut-off.

Known as the Ultimate Human race, its route alters slightly each year and it alternates between an 'up run' from Durban, and a 'down run' that starts in Pietermaritzburg.

In the dark before the 5.30 am start, I stood with runners from 60 nations, listening to the rousing words of the old mining song Shoshozola, then Chariots of Fire and finally the sound of a cock crowing, a recording of a runner called Max Trimborn who many years ago made the sound to calm his nerves.

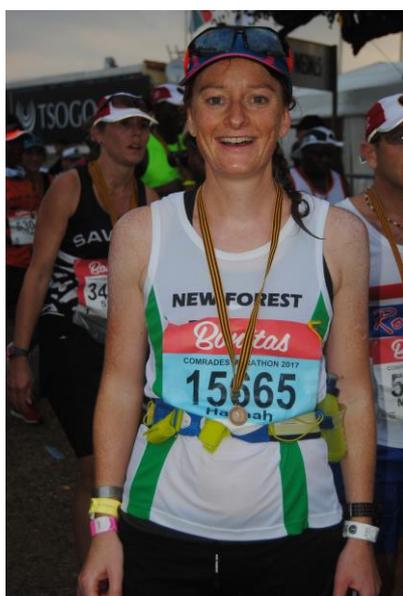
If only I could find something comparable to calm my nerves, I thought, as we set off, a rainbow ribbon of runners as far as the eye could see.

As the light rose we climbed higher and higher, reaching the first of the so-called Big Five hills: Cowies, Fields, Botha, Inchanga and Polly Shortt's. I'd studied them online, but nothing could have prepared me for them or other aspects of the race: the heat, the

sheer numbers of runners and supporters, the humanity that humbled me at every stage of the day.

At around 55 kilometres, I was starting to struggle, when I passed the Enthembeni school. It supports children who are disabled and visually impaired. Some of them are albino, which is regarded in some parts of African culture as meaning they are cursed. It cut me to the core to see these beautiful and brave children cheering us on as we tackled physical hardship for just one day, when they had it for a lifetime. Behind my sunglasses, my eyes welled with tears, and I reached my hand out to high-five one child after another. I thought of my own two children, and had to stop myself pulling out my phone and listening to my little boy's words from a video, resist reading my daughter's letter in which she wrote, 'When the going gets tough, Mummy keeps going'.

Leaving behind the moment but not the memories, from there it was never a question of if I would finish but when. And finally, the finish line did come into view, shortly after we scaled the last of the Big Five – Polly Shortts, which, with its unassuming name, would be better suited to a nursery rhyme than an ultra.



But finish I did. I stumbled into the international area, where friends I'd met on the plane and on the road greeted me like they'd known me forever.

Minutes later, I was in the medical tent, where I received almost three litres of fluid through a drip and had treatment for the most horrendous cramp. When I staggered out of this fabulous facility hours later, two fellow Comrades were waiting to travel with me back to Durban – a true testament to the spirit of Comrades.



The following day, proudly wearing my tiny precious medal, I hobbled up the steps of a restaurant on Durban's beach and to a party hosted by 'Mr Paris' himself. Posing for another photo, he grinned recalling the last time we'd met, thereby securing hero status in my mind.

His journey from Comrades to parkrun had led to him setting up parkrun South Africa. In fact, the day before Comrades, I'd jogged the North Beach parkrun in Durban, the biggest in the world. My own journey had brought me from parkrun to Comrades.

Of the 17031 people who started this year's Comrades, 13852 finished under 12 hours, each with a different story. Mine was a life-enhancing experience, where I plumbed depths and scaled mountains I'd never realised existed and where I met extraordinary people who - at a time when there is so much that is bleak in the world - helped reaffirm my belief in the power of the human spirit; that spirit embodied by Comrades.

Hannah Storm



Dorking 10 Miles Road Race

The first thing to know is that this race starts and finishes in the village of Brockham, a few miles to the East of Dorking. This is a great venue for a race as the local rugby club fields provide limitless free parking on the grass beside the multitude of rugby pitches on the unimaginatively-named 'Big Field' and has a large club room and changing rooms for the race HQ. The race start was on the village green with ancient church, shop and pub and glorious views to the North downs and Box Hill.

There were quite a few hundred runners gathered on the green when the President of the local club gave us the countdown, and we were off, charging up the road through the village. I managed to quickly get my sprint start under control and down to my target 7:30 pace. We were soon out of the village and into the countryside proper. The roads were not closed but there was only the occasional car trying to get past the runners at this time on a Sunday morning.

After a flat start, the road started to become more of a gentle roller coaster with some short steep hills which I usually ease off on and then hope to catch up with the people who overtook me on the downhill sections. The route does a small loop of a few miles to re-join the outbound path we had taken earlier out of the village so we knew the lie of the land ahead. This time we kept heading south and followed a much larger loop along the country roads of Surrey. The route was well marshalled and Kevin Best kept appearing to cheer us on as he walked around parts of the course. By mile four I was well into my stride and jostling with people, overtaking and then getting overtaken back! At this point my pace slacked off a bit, as my legs started to feel the lack of recent training. At mile seven though your mind starts to think, 'not far now' and picked up the pace back to my target and overtook quite a few people. As we approached the village and the finish at the rugby club I could hear the Tannoy and upped the pace further to a full-on sprint at the finish to beat off the racers just behind me.

A brilliant start to a Sunday morning - I shall be signing up for next year's race as soon as entries open, see you there?

Phil Tauwhare



Thames Path 100

About 8 months ago I attempted to sign up for Centurion Running's Thames Path 100 - a 100-mile race along the Thames from Richmond to Oxford. At the time, there were no spaces available, and so I was popped on to a waiting list and six months later (having forgotten all about this) I had the joy of being told I had a place and only 8 weeks to make the start line...Game On!

So...on Saturday 29th April, with only 8 weeks of training that maxed out at a 23 mile after work run, there I was outside Richmond Town Hall toeing the start line for my first ever 100-mile Ultra. The gun went off at 10am sharp on what was a brisk but sunny morning. The first leg was an 11-mile trot down to the first aid station at Walton. This was great for me knowing the area well and I was able to set off at a reasonable 9:30 min/mile pace with an aim of getting to Oxford in 20 hours.



After a flying visit to the first aid station I was on my way to the next stop at 22 miles. Disaster started to strike at the 12-mile mark as an unexpected knee injury started to flare up. The pain came and went and I was able to comfortably carry my previous pace through to the marathon point in a time of 4 hours 30 – great going and comfortably inside target. After a stop

at Runnymede, the knee pain came back with a vengeance and by mile 28 I had to break into a strategy of walking for a quarter of a mile and then running a quarter mile. By mile 51, all hope of a sub-20 was out of the window as I hobbled in to the halfway point at about 8pm to top up on food, get in to night gear and have my girlfriend and fellow Straggler Abby pace me for the next 13 miles. I love running under head-torch and Abby and I were able to make decent time through to Reading and on to Tilehurst where Abby left to get some sleep (it's ok for some) and to then meet me again later on in the run. I had now been hobbling for about 35 miles but, despite the knee, was still going strong.

A few more aid stations came and went, the temperature dropped and before I knew it the time was 4:30am; I was sat in a chair shivering with a hot cup of tomato soup; most importantly I was 78 miles in with only 22 to go. As I went to stand up...I couldn't – my knee had totally seized up and I couldn't stand. It took about 5 minutes to get to my feet. I started to waddle down the road thinking I was going to have to pull out. Eventually I got moving again, albeit very slowly. After a few more moments like this I had managed to hobble my way to mile 88 (by which time I had seen an amazing sunrise over the Oxfordshire countryside) where Abby was there to guide me through a few more miles. At this point I was hobbling along at 22 mins per mile with one knee gaffer-taped to the extreme and twice the size of the other – but with no intention of



quitting. After about 103 miles (because who doesn't need three bonus miles?) the finish line at Oxford University grounds appeared, the ordeal was over. I'd hated about 75% of the race and had gone to places physically and mentally I never imagined. But, actually, in hindsight, I loved it! I'd ticked a 100-mile race off the bucket list, done it with an injury for the last 88 miles, got to do it surrounded by great scenery, ran with great people (a huge thanks to Abby for her support) and I would definitely recommend any of the Centurion Running events to all Stragglers. The best bit, you don't even

need to train that much, as I'd say the race was probably 90% mental and 10% physical – that's a joke by the way, for anybody looking to do a 100-mile race please put in more than 8 weeks of training! Would I do it again?...If you asked me on the 30th April, absolutely not. Two weeks later and I was a maybe. Ask me again at the start of cross country season...

Chris Coates

Stragglers in Athletics Weekly

Our high standard of performances is resulting in recognition by a number of Stragglers being mentioned in the UK's leading running magazine, Athletics Weekly! Here is who has been featured in June. Once again, our vet ladies shone, but Roy Reeder sneaked in an appearance this month. Impressive to see Juliet Cleghorn listed 3 times, and Ramona Thevenet 4 times! Well done all.

June 1st.

Vitality London 10,000 (May 29th)

Women: 51st Sarah Winter 38:54

W50 Juliet Cleghorn 42:34

W55 Dee Smale 43:37

June 8th

Dorking 10 mile (June 4th)

W50 Juliet Cleghorn 73:31

W55 Liz Killip 68:42, Dee Smale 72:43

June 15th

Welsh Castles Relay (June 10/11th)

Stage 4: Maentwrog to Harlech (9.5 miles)

M50 Roy Reeder 60:01

Marathon Windows Tour of Epsom & Ewell (June 5-9th)

Race 1: Nescot, Ewell (3.87 miles multi-terrain) (June 5th)

W55 Ramona Thevenet 30:46

Race 2: Nonsuch Park, Ewell (3.7 miles) (June 6th)

W55 Ramona Thevenet 28:27

Race 3: Hogsmill, Epsom (3.7 miles multi-terrain) (June 7th)

W55 Ramona Thevenet 31:35

Race 4: Jane Prince Time Trial, Nonsuch Park, Ewell (2.63 miles multi-terrain) (June 8th)

W55 Ramona Thevenet 20:06

Race 5: George Cosens Handicap, Nescot, Ewell (3.25 miles multi-terrain) (June 9th)

W55 Ramona Thevenet 29:32

June 22nd

Ranelagh Harriers 10km (June 18th)

W50 Juliet Cleghorn 42:31

If you spot yourself or another Straggler receiving media coverage do let us know so we can promote their fame! Email stragmag@stragglers.org.



Future Races

This list is divided into club priority events and a few other suggestions of local-ish races you might like to consider.

Club Organised/Priority Events

July

- Thu 13: Junior Running Group – Stragglers hosted
- Sat 15: Elmore 7 (Summer Road League race 7)
- Thu 20: Rothwell Relay – Hawker Centre
- Sun 23: Elmbridge 10k (Summer Road League race 8)
- Fri 28: Wedding Day 7k – Bushy Park (Summer Road League race 9)

August

- Sun 13: Wimbledon 5k (Summer Road League final race)
- Thu 24: Club quarterly handicap – Hawker Centre
- Thu 31st: Junior Running Group – Stragglers hosted

September

- Sun 3: River Relay (teams organised by Simon Brazil and Katherine Curtis-Tiler)
- Sun 24: Southern Road Relays – Crystal Palace

Other races

Peter Wedderburn and Roy Reeder are offering Straggler discounts in their half marathons this autumn. Both popular local races which a number of people from the club enjoy.

- The Royal Borough of Kingston Half Marathon, October 1st
08.30 start, Kingston Ancient marketplace. Stragglers discount £5. Enter the code StragRBK17
<http://www.sportsystems.co.uk/ss/event/TheRoyalBoroughofKingstonHalfMarathon20172>

- October 29th, River Thames Half Marathon. There's £5 off for Stragglers until 31 August. Enter the discount code "STRAGG" at the Sport Systems store.
- <http://www.sportssystem.co.uk/ss/event/RiverThamesHalfMarathon20172>
- Peter is also offering, for The Harry Hawkes 10 on July 16th (09.30 start at Giggs Hill Green Thames Ditton a Stragglers discount of £3. Enter the code StraggHH17
<http://www.sportssystem.co.uk/ss/event/HarryHawkes10201623>

July

- Wed 5: Wimbledon Trail Race
- Sun 9: Clayate Country 5
- Sun 16: Harry Hawks 10 – Thames Ditton
- Sun 30: Ride London 100