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Editorial

With this month's issue bringing the final race of the summer road series and the beginning in September of cross-country training, here does (whether we like it or not) mark the changing of the seasons.

Read on for news on our awards evening which returns on Friday October 6th, the club XC championship on Sunday October 8th and check the future races section at the back for all the details on the XC fixtures for October to December.

Thank you to all contributors to this issue and to Dave Griffiths for helping put this together.

September deadline will be Friday 22nd.

Simon Webb
Stragmag@stragglers.org



Simon Webb

Stragglers News

It's a news-heavy issue this month.

River Relay is Sunday 3rd September. Over 70 teams are entered so it promises to be another fantastic day.

Simon Brazil could still need runners – sadly someone often pulls out last minute – so if you're available make yourself known to him – simon.brazil@kingston.gov.uk.

Alternatively, Peter Wedderburn probably needs some extra helpers so give him a shout if you can do that.

Or, just turn up at the Hawker Centre around 11:30 onwards on Sunday to watch the teams come in - we've a BBQ available.

StraggTri return to pool sessions in September but now on WEDNESDAY evenings, 8:30 to 9:30. If you want to improve your swimming or doing a triathlon is on your bucket list, come along for Triathlon England trained coached sessions. Look at the [StraggTri page](#) on the Stragglers website for more info.

Please consider volunteering at Cabbage Patch 10 – it's back and sold out already!

Sunday October 15th is the date and the Stragglers will once again be providing marshals for this hugely respected race. Offer your services to Keith keithhaworth@aol.com.



Game, Set and Match for Wimbledon Stragglers



The Stragglers brought the curtain down on the 2017 road season with a fine turn out at the Wimbledon 5K dash which also doubled as the Surrey County 5K Championships. On numbers it was ‘game set and match’ to the team in yellow with 32 Stragglers making up over 15% of the field in a highly competitive Surrey club show-down run in glorious sunshine on Sunday 13th August. The race started and finished on the running track at the Hercules Wimbledon club HQ in Wimbledon Park, before a rather hilly loop on the roads past the All England Lawn Tennis Club and then back into the park for a final blast onto the track.



For the ladies, Sarah Winter led the way completing the course in 19:15. Sarah was being put under pressure by a strong field behind her with Heidi Russenberger finishing 10 seconds behind and Sophie Biggs making up the top 3 in 20:07. This performance narrowly missed out on the race team

prize (by all of 6 seconds). However, in the individual medals there was plenty to boast about. Firstly, for the Surrey eligible athletes there was a gold award for Dee Smale as the first Surrey F55, silver for Sarah Winter in the F35 and bronze for Sue Hall in the F45, such was the strength of our team. Sarah, Heidi and Sue also picked up the bronze County team prize. Arguably the result of the day though was Liz Killip (whilst suffering from living on the ‘wrong’ side of the Thames! and therefore not eligible for Surrey) but who won the race overall F55 prize. This had initially been erroneously awarded to an F35... but the record has now been put straight, well done Liz!

The men had an equally strong showing with Robert Wilcox, Jim Lurkins and Jonathan Ormerod the 1,2 and 3 all managing to record sub 18 minute times on the challenging course. Again, there was another very strong team behind them with several medals being grabbed by the men with both Roy Reeder and David Brewin picking up bronze for the M50 and M60 categories respectively.

The race activities were brought to an end with Ranelagh sportingly presenting the team prize to The Stragglers ladies for their performance at the Wedding Day 7K, run a few weeks previously. The prize had originally been awarded to Ranelagh (in error), but on gun time the 3 ladies in the form of Heidi Russenberger, Liz Killip and Sonia Banderia had won on the day and to be presented with the trophy by Ranelagh was a very satisfying end to the mornings work.



Malcom Davies



Surrey Road League: The Results Are In!

The Wimbledon 5K Dash marked not only the end of the Stragglers Road Series but also the finale of the club's Surrey Road League Campaign. We competed against 34 other clubs across 7 races nominated by the league. In each race, the finishing positions of our top 3 runners were aggregated, and our best 5 team scores from the 7 races made up our final overall total score. This score determined our final league positions.

There was also an individual competition organised by age categories for everyone completing at least 5 of the 7 races. The races making up the Road league were:

- Richmond Half-Marathon Sunday 30th April
- Sutton 10km Sunday 7th May
- Dorking 10 miles Sunday 4th June
- Richmond 10km Sunday 18th June
- Elmore 7 miles Saturday 15th July
- Elmbridge 10km Sunday 23rd July
- Wimbledon 5km Sunday 13th August

In all 7 races, the support from The Stragglers was magnificent with 266 individual appearances reflecting the increased participation in the club, not only at the traditionally well supported races like the Richmond and Elmbridge 10Ks but also the likes of Elmore and Dorking races.

So how did the Stragglers do?

Ladies

The ladies continued their upward momentum following their cross-country promotion to Division 1 with a very strong showing with a

final 4th place position (moving up from 10th last year). A mere 6 points ultimately separated them from the very top spot won by Ranelagh. A review of the season shows that the ladies picked up their best points total at the Richmond Half, Sutton 10K, Dorking 10 Mile and Elmbridge 10K, but saved their best until last with a maximum 35 points scored in an exciting finish at Wimbledon helping to consolidate their league position.

In the individual competition three Stragglers featured having completed 5 races, Kate Suttle in the senior lady category and the ever-present Sabine Duffy in the F35 category and Helen Davies in the F45 respectively.

Men

The upward trajectory of the club was not just confined to the ladies, with the men now also 'starting to punch their weight'. A final position of 7th was achieved by the men, improving significantly on their finishing position of 12th in the previous year. For the men the Sutton 10K, Dorking 10 Mile, Richmond 10K were all 'happy hunting grounds', but the Elmore 7 and Elmbridge 10K were where we scored our highest points. Like the ladies, the men were able to enjoy the end of the season looking down on a veritable 'who's who' of Surrey running clubs (and 26.2!).

In the individual awards, there was also plenty to talk about with both Dan Greenslade and Martin Vivian featuring in the M40 category and the Malcolm's (Davies & Fletcher!) finishing 4th and 8th in the M50 competition. The best result, however, was left to the M60 category with Phil Davies picking up the Surrey League silver medal for his fine form over the season.

Thank you to everyone who ran over the season and supported such a great team performance and here's to next year!

Malcolm Davies



Summer Road League Winners

Alongside the Surrey League was our own, hotly contested, Stragglers summer league. Ten events made up the competition with the mob match against Ranelagh (did we tell you we won that?) plus Wedding Day and the Stragglers 10k added to the seven Surrey Road League events.

There was great competition across all categories and some very tight results, with the winners as follows:

Ladies

Kate Suttle: Senior Lady

Nicole Hambling: F35

Sue Hall: F45

Liz Killip: F55

Liz Killip: Overall

Men

Rob Wilcox: Senior Man

Chris Walmsley: M40

Roy Reeder: M50

Phil Davies: M60

Rob Wilcox: Overall Winner

The Davies household is evidently the place where heroes are made, since Malcolm and Helen won the hero prizes – awarded to the person who completes all or the most of races throughout the competition.

A link to the full results can be found [here](#) - have a look to see where you finished and for further analysis of the season....

Stragglers Awards Evening

It's time for The Stragglers Annual Awards Evening.

Friday 6th October from 7:30 onwards at The Canbury Arms in Kingston will be an opportunity to catch up with your fellow Stragglers and to celebrate our award winners.

Prizes will be presented to:

- last season's cross-country champions
- the winners of this summer's hotly contested road championships
- the winners of the 2017 10K rankings
- the overall winners of the annual 5K handicap competition
- and the male and female winners of the Kev Best's best improvers award (a closely guarded secret, even the men's and ladies captains don't know who the winners are !)

For those of you who came along last year, it is in the Garden Room again, but we have booked the whole space this time in anticipation of another great turn out. For those new to The Canbury Arms, it is close to the centre of Kingston, here is a link to the website.

To book your place, it's £15 per person, this covers the hire of the room and a buffet meal. Contact Helen (helendavies@blueyonder.co.uk) or Malcolm Davies (malcolmdavies@blueyonder.co.uk) to reserve your place (the pub has asked us to let them know about any allergies or dietary requirements).



Important Info re Stragglers 5k Handicap

The next in the quarterly series takes place on Thursday September 7th – one week later than originally advertised, so as not to clash with the final evening of the Junior Running Group.

To lighten the workload for those volunteering on the night, we're automating the time-keeping and will be using parkrun barcodes. As this is not an actual parkrun you need to register your barcode by filling out our online registration form – ideally by September 1st – we're using the same method as parkrun but for a different event. To do this, go [here](#).

I've never done parkrun, can I still run?

Yes, but you need to register at www.parkrun.com, then use the barcode number you're given to register for the handicap.



Sierra-Zinal: Stragglers Take to the Mountains

On 14th August Stragglers were represented in one of the jewels of the European Mountain Racing season - Sierra-Zinal in Switzerland. I raced the full event with former club Chairman Andrew Lane, and my 16-year-old son Kieran took on the U20 event.

Sierra-Zinal is the oldest of the great mountain races (this year was the 44th staging), and it is locally referred to as "la course des cinq 4000", which relates to the 5 peaks of over 4000m that the surround the route. The full course is 31k long (juniors run the final 19k), but it includes 2,200m of climb and 1,100m of descent over very challenging terrain. I found it hard to relate to these numbers on height gain/loss in advance, and the only way I could make sense is that the peak of Snowdon that many of ran around last October is by contrast a tiddler at 1,084m, and the height gained when walking the route to the top from Llanberis is a mere 714m (because you're starting at 370m rather than at sea level).



On the day that we ran it the clear blue skies made the scenery absolutely stunning with the snow-capped mountain peaks glistening in the light, but these conditions brought high temperatures making it somewhat hard going. The organisation however was faultless (as you would expect from the Swiss), and the well-stocked 7 feed stations on the route made helped tremendously.

The field was very international, with the British challenge headed by Robbie Simpson who had finished 3rd in 2015 & 2nd in 2016 - alas for Robbie it was runner-up again this year behind the Spanish legend Kilian Jornet who won the race for a remarkable 5th time. It is telling of the status of Sierre-Zinal that Robbie declined his place in the World Athletics Championship Marathon in London (secured through being second British finisher in April's London Marathon this year) to take part in this mountain event.



In total, there were approx. 3,600 competitors, and we were all very pleased but tired with our results.

646th Jim Desmond - 4:31:26 - 53rd VM50

665th Andrew Lane - 4:33:14 - 10th VM60

35th Kieran Desmond - 1:57:39 (Junior Race)

I'm heading back over next year with Kieran, and we're confident of improving our performance as this is a course that you learn a lot about through running it and so we'll be better prepared for the 2018 event. If anyone is interested in knowing more about it or how to compete in it then please don't hesitate to ask.

The event homepage is [here](#).

Full results [here](#).

Jim Desmond



Cross-Country Training

The end of the summer road series can only mean one thing, the start of the cross-country season!

Following last year's huge increase in Straggler cross-country participation, we are looking to build on this further this coming autumn. In support of this, Kevin Best who has a wealth of experience running cross-country, is organising four Saturday morning training sessions in September:

- Saturday 9th September
- Saturday 16th September
- Saturday 23rd September
- Saturday 30th September

These are aimed at everyone, including those completely new to cross-country and those who have run many cross-country races before, and is open to all abilities.

The sessions will include:

- A warm up and post run stretch
- Discussions on clothing
- Advice on footwear (trail shoes, studs, spikes etc)
- Tips on how to deal with running up and down hills
- How to deal with different conditions under foot
- Hill work
- Relays

We will meet in Richmond Park at Pembroke Lodge carpark at 10am.

The sessions will be up to 2 hours, and there will be an opportunity for the all-important coffee and cake afterwards! Kev has asked you to bring warm and wet weather gear to these sessions. There will be a short break mid-session so feel free to bring any refreshments to keep your energy levels up.

Any questions about the sessions, do get in touch with Kevin (kevb52@yahoo.co.uk). If you would like advice now on footwear for cross-country, do drop Kevin an email or chat to him at Thursday (Hawker Centre) or Sunday (Bushy Park) training.



Stragglers XC Championships

Back due to popular demand, Sunday 8th October kicks off the cross-country season for The Stragglers with the now annual club Cross-Country Championship race.

The course on Ham Lands is flat and mainly on grassy tracks following an attractive route towards Ham House. It is suitable for everyone, even those of you who may never have run cross-country before, or not for a long time.

This year, the men and ladies will run the same course, and is 5.6 miles. So really this is like the summer club 10K, but a bit shorter, and just happens to be on grass!

There are now race shields for the first man and lady over the line, and there are awards for the first senior man, M40, M45, M50, M55, M60, M65, M70 and senior lady, F35, F40, F45, F50, F55, F60, F65.

Registration will be on the day at the Hawker Centre from 9:45am onwards. We will all walk down to the start a few minutes before kick-off at 10:30am. After the race, we will reconvene in the Hawker Centre for an opportunity for post run refreshments, presentations and socialising.



Stragglers in Athletics Weekly: Who's in print this month?

The last month has been a bit quieter for appearances due to the lull in the race season, but still some notable mentions for our fellow Stragglers.

Self-Transcendence 5km, Battersea Park (July 17th)

M55 2nd Laurence Duffy (18:14)

Elmbridge 10k (July 23rd)

Men's Team: 3rd Stragglers (6 to score)

Ladies: 9th Sarah Winter (39:07)

W45 2nd Sue Hall (42:41)

Self-Transcendence 5km, Battersea Park (August 7th)

M55 3rd Laurence Duffy (18:35)

Wimbledon Dash 5km (August 13th)

W40 Sarah Winter (19:15)

W45 Sophie Biggs (20:07)

W50 Brigid Hibberd (22:59)

W55 Liz Killip (20:16), Dee Smale (21:33)

Helen Davies



GOODGYM is Coming to Kingston

GOODGYM are coming to Kingston and are looking for a leader. This is a paid, part-time role that can be done alongside a full-time job. What's needed is a passion for running and a desire to help others.

To find out more on the position, GOODGYM and how to apply visit this page on Guardian jobs:

<https://jobs.theguardian.com/job/6415067/run-leader-trainer-for-goodgym/>

Closing date is September 3rd

Future Races

September

- Sun 3: River Relay (teams organised by Simon Brazil and Katherine Curtis Tyler)
- Thu 7: Stragglers Quarterly Handicap – Hawker Centre
- Sun 24: Southern Road Relays – Crystal Palace

October

- Sun 8: Club Cross-Country Championships, Hamlands
- Sat 14: Surrey Cross-Country League (men – Wimbledon Common, Ladies – Reigate)
- Sat 21: Surrey Masters Cross-Country Championships, Richmond Park

November

- Sat 4: Priory Cross-Country Relays, Reigate
- Sat 11: Surrey Cross-Country League (men – Epsom, Ladies – Nonsuch Park, Sutton)
- Sat 25: South of the Thames Cross-Country 5 mile – venue tbd

December

Sat 2: Surrey XC League (men only - Roundshaw, Wallington)

Sat 16: South of the Thames Cross-Country Championships - venue tbd

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.sportssystem.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>

A few Stragglers (including Malcolm and Helen Daveis and SimonWebb) have entered the Gosport Half Marathon on Sunday November 19th. A well organised club event which the Stragglers used to enter many years ago so if you're looking for a race which is a bit different from the usual ones we do, this is one to consider.

Alternatively, and the same day, some Stragglers are considering the [Hertfordshire Half](#) at Knebworth House.

Do consider writing about these or any others for futures Stragmags.