



*July 2018*

*Issue 346*



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## *Editorial*

Since the previous issue of Stragmag, the 2018 AGM has been held. Among the issues covered was an overview of the previous year's team successes, presented by out-going men's and ladies' captains Malcolm and Helen Davies. How to follow them has been a regular topic of conversation throughout the club since they announced their intention to step down from these roles, and this is because of the massive impact they have had. Participation was a key goal during their tenure, and anyone who has attended a cross-country fixture or Summer Grand Prix race will be able to confirm, they have achieved their ambition way beyond any of our expectations. We are now being noticed by other clubs because of our high turn outs, who knows, this may attract runners looking for a change to consider joining that mass of yellow?

With the end of the Summer race season after the Wimbledon 5k in August, comes the beginning of the new team management structure, as outlined both at the AGM and in the June Stragmag. Simon Brazil and Kev Best are your new team managers, supported by a number of others. Helen and Malcolm have raised the bar considerably during their time as captains – and no Straggler likes it to be difficult to reach the bar – and we're very optimistic about the coming season. At the end of this issue you can find as complete a winter fixtures list as we're able to give you right now. Please note the 2018/2019 Surrey League XC dates.

The new committee has held its first meeting and we're excited about the year ahead with this team in place. The July AGM saw some long-serving members stand down from the committee and their contribution has been significant and the new committee looks forward to building on this.

Please see in the news section the date for the Stragglers Awards evening, with details of venue still being finalised. Also, River Relay will be on us sooner than we think, and Race Director Peter Wedderburn is looking for around 25 helpers. This is yet another Stragglers event which is flourishing.

Finally, the Junior Handicap, now Stragglers and Ranelagh Running Group, marked 15 years of summer races this month and we've reflections on this milestone occasion.

The August deadline is Friday 24th. Thank you to all contributors and to Dave Griffiths for doing his thing to make this issue look good.

Deadline for June contributions is Friday 22nd.

Simon Webb [Stragmag@stragglers.org](mailto:Stragmag@stragglers.org)



## *Stragglers News – including Summer Grand Prix Successes*

July began with the new addition to our Summer Grand Prix, Claygate 5 miles. The following weekend in sweltering conditions for a Saturday afternoon, 39 Stragglers completed the Elmore 7 Miles. Sarah Winter and Liz Killip picked up first-place prizes in their age categories of F35 and F55 respectively.

We picked up further prizes at the Elmbridge 10k. Our ladies finished second behind Guildford and ahead of third placed Ranelagh – the team was made up of Sarah Winter, Sophie Biggs, Heidi Russenberger and Helen Davies

It was the same top 3 for the men's team prizes, but a different order as Guildford secured the double, Ranelagh second and Stragglers third, ahead of fourth place 26.2. The men's team was Rob Wilcox, Jim Lurkins, Matt Coakes, Richard Baggot, Paul Bowden and Donovan Duffy.

Exciting news on the Surrey Road League front, the men are now fifth with one fixture to go at Wimbledon. We are one point behind South London Harriers but equally Guildford and Godalming or Sutton Runners could catch us, so it's all down to the 5K now. See details [here](#).

The ladies are doing even better and are now second behind Guildford & Godalming and having moved ahead of Clapham Chasers and Ranelagh in the last fixture at Elmbridge. See details [here](#).

We've got a strong turn-out at SW19 with room for more, so all to play for.... This fixture will also be the decider in the Stragglers Summer Grand Prix which is equally tight. As Andy Ronksley would say in Stramail, 'bring it on'!

Finally for July, a quite brilliant turn-out of 91 Stragglers lined up for the Wedding Day 7k. In 2018 the race sold out two weeks in advance, which is brilliant considering how just a few years ago there were murmurings about the long-term future of this great event.

We secured the men's team prize with Tim Haughian who finished third overall, Rob Wilcox, Jim Lurkins and Kieran Desmond completing the scoring four. Kieran also won the junior prize, not for the first time.

First F45 was won by Helen Davies and first F55 was Patricia Ronksley. Lastly, as they bow out as men's and ladies' captains, Malcolm and Helen came second in the couples competition.

Both the summer and winter seasons will be celebrated at the 2018 Stragglers Awards. An announcement of the full details is due soon, but the date is already confirmed as Saturday September 15th, so look out for Stragmail and social media updates.



## *Straggler Success at European Triathlon Championships*

Three Stragglers represented Great Britain at the European Standard Distance\* Triathlon Championships held in Tartu, Estonia on 22 July.



Jacky Balfour (V55-59), Julie Haworth (V60-64) and Chrissie Glew (V65-69) were flying the Stragglers flag and they came away with performances to be proud. Jacky came 11th in her age group, Julie 6th and Chrissie bagged a coveted silver medal for her efforts.

On the same weekend, Helene Hill competed in the Triathlon England National Aquathlon Championships in Peterborough where she also

came away with a silver medal in the 65-69 age group. The event involved a 750m swim and 5k run.

\*Standard distance triathlon involves a 1500m swim, 40k bike and 10k run – it's the distance you see the Brownlees doing at the Olympics.

Helene Hill

## *2018 Stragglers AGM*

At the recent club AGM our chair Kevin Price outlined both the past year's achievements, and our objectives for the coming twelve months. You can read them below:

- **Club overview**

Main objectives for the past year were to build on the main successes of our club which are:

- i. Participation in our races and club events

- ii. To promote the camaraderie and social side of the club
- iii. To deliver our popular and quality main club races (Wedding Day; Green Belt Relay; River Relay) to the very best standard

Recruitment of younger members – this is an ongoing process. We have active Junior sections and sessions which have been run by Jim Desmond & Merran Sell. Jim is stepping down from his role this summer and I am pleased to announce that Heidi Jensen has agreed to take on leadership of our Junior section. The Junior Handicap continues to thrive under Merran's leadership and in partnership with Ranelagh.

Membership:

### **Clubbuzz/Re-registration Process**

- In the run up to the start of the new membership year, we conducted the member re-registration process in the Clubbuzz system for the first time. This involved asking members to check and update their personal information and confirm that they wished to renew their membership.
- The benefits of the re-registration process are that we now have more accurate/up-to-date information on our members which makes administration of the club simpler and helps ensure we are compliant with the new government data protection regulations.
- We would like to thank our members for completing the process this year and would encourage and appreciate a positive/timely respond to this requirement on an annual basis.

### **Membership Numbers**

- Our membership remains at a healthy 537 registered members (494 adults, 38 juniors, 3 life members and 2 dogs).
- We receive a steady stream of applications enquiries and in the last three months have registered/welcomed 39 new members.

### **Payment of club/EA subscription fees**

- Thanks to all members who have paid their fees for this year. We'd appreciate it if those who have yet to do so could make payment as soon as possible. (Around a third have yet to settle their account).

- Please be advised that if you have requested EA registration this cannot be completed for you until you've paid.
- Whilst on the subject ideally we'd like members to pay by DD as once set up it's easier all round.
- Integration and connecting constituent parts of the club

**Website and Communications** – re-launch of Stragmail as a regular two-weekly newsletter. Stragmag remains a popular read for many of our members and we are using Social Media more and more to enhance our communications

Impact on and awareness from the local community

Overall:

- Our club is thriving and offers something for all our members from a friendly social community to competitive racing at a national level
- We have a week-round programme of training and activity sessions and I would like to thank all our group leaders for their inspiration and leadership. This includes Anne Wood (Little Feet), Merran Sell (Thames Ditton Group and Junior Handicap), Barbara Crow (Stragtri), Ray Cockle (Straglists), Jim Desmond (Juniors), Duncan Gaskell (Speedwork), Ian Callendar (5k Handicap), Phil Davies (Thursday night session), our Head Coach Kev Best and all of his STG team and all our run leaders who happily support training sessions week in and week out;
- I would also like to thank those who manage our high-profile club races: Peter Wedderburn (River Relay), Peter Kennedy (GBR) and Keith Haworth, Mark Thomas, Linda Pyle (Wedding Day). Also Simon Brazil who is active and busy behind the scenes for most of the club races, including the Cabbage patch 10.
- I would also like to thank Simon Webb for his sterling work as our Comms Manager and to Andrew Ronksley for creating our Stragmail prose;
- We have two people acting behind the scenes in what most people would regard as permanent part-time jobs, but these of course are unpaid: Alan Mawdsley our web manager and Julie Holmes our Membership secretary who keep the wheels of our club constantly turning;
- Finally, I would like to thank Helen Davies and Malcolm Davies, our tireless Team Captains for their amazing leadership of our teams over the past two years.

## **The club's vision and aspirations over the coming 12 months**

Continue to promote our club philosophy:

- i. Participation in our races and club events
- ii. Promote the camaraderie and social side of the club
- iii. Deliver high-standard, well supported and enjoyable club races (Wedding Day; Green Belt Relay; River Relay), also CP10 and our club championship races

Maintain our level of club membership and appeal to new members from our community

To build on the club's reputation both locally and nationally

To continue to support and encourage the different constituent parts of our club and to celebrate them as a whole to reflect the breadth of interest and activities in the club

To promote the calendar of team events and to strive for individual and club success in the various race categories

Club archivist (and maybe a statistician), to help share and promote the heritage of our club

Kevin Price



## *River Relay: Call for Teams and Race Support*

The River Relay is a Stragglers organised event taking place this year on September 9th. It is a 5-stage relay beginning at Boveney, near Windsor, and following the Thames to the Hawker Centre. We are expecting to get a large number of Stragglers teams taking part and if you would like to run, Simon Brazil and Jon Parry are once again organising the Straggler teams.

If you are not running your help at the event would be much appreciated. Race Director Peter Wedderburn is looking for people to fulfil the following roles:

- At the Start (Boveney, near Windsor). To help with registering runners and getting the race under way. Also, a rear bike or two would be handy to follow the race. The race starts at 09.00 and registration is from 08.00.
- At the changeover points as timekeepers.
- Marshals at a few tricky navigation points along the way.
- At the finish (The Hawker Centre) to set up ready for runners and teams.

The race has grown a lot in recent years. We had 82 teams last year with over 400 runners taking part in total. We anticipate that this year's event will be a similar size. For this reason, we need to up our game in terms of organisation. If you are able to help in any capacity please contact [peter@kbcspcialevents.com](mailto:peter@kbcspcialevents.com), or call on 07736 853128.

Peter Wedderburn



## *Stragglers and Ranelagh Junior Running Group Celebrates 15 Years*

The Stragglers and Ranelagh Running Group, initially known as the Junior Handicap, started 15 years ago. The previous year I (Merran) was running the Combe Hill School Relay and a runner from Serpentine asked me where I got all my supporters from. I didn't know what he was talking about, but he pointed out that for each lap as we went back into the Combe Hill Estate, a group of Stragglers' children would cheer me on. On reflection I realised that as a club we didn't do anything for these young people and after discussing it with Mark Thomas, who set up the Stragglers Handicap Race, he agreed to set up a programme for the younger members. The first year we had 12 runners and for our Anniversary Event we had, including parents who ran a leg in the relay, 123 runners!

The main comment would be that, even if it is a bit chaotic at times, all the children are happy and smiling and seem to be enjoying the races. As are the adults who encourage all the participants. The camaraderie is really great to see before and during the race which makes it all worthwhile, as well as helping the Minis (2-5 years) and Juniors (5-15) gain a sense of achievement.

We decided that rather than me writing about this year's event it would be appropriate for a couple of Junior members to write a piece for the Stragmag. Sam Rushby is a Ranelagh member and Kiara Donovan is a Straggler member so this will give us a balanced view from the two of them.

*Kiara Duffy, 7 years old, member of the Stragglers:*

On the 12th of July, we did a special 15th Anniversary relay. It was special because for the Junior handicap race, we usually just do a nice run with other people but this time we were put in different teams. In each team was one adult and two children. I was the last runner in my team. The team that won got a plate as a prize, the second and third teams got a medal. My team came about 25th. When you finished the relay, you would get a bag and a voucher for the Bbq. My dad and my sister participated at the race as well, my sister is 3 and did the mini race. My mum didn't run but helped in the finish area.

Running is a lot of fun. If you don't like running yet try the Junior Handicap. It's so much fun for the kids on 6 Thursdays throughout summer.

*And from Sam Rushby:*

We had a different kind of handicap race - instead of having our usual race where minis run 500m and the juniors run 2km, we had a relay with 42 teams of 3. The teams were randomly put together to mix everyone and encourage you meet new people! To make it fair, there were 2 children and 1 adult on every team, and in my team I was the only Ranelagh Harriers runner. Because my mum is a coach I was there early and I am very glad about that because it was very chaotic when more people arrived!

Then came the race!!!! Firstly, before the race started we all came together for the briefing and to meet our team mates. The first person in the team received their baton, and the second and third person waited in their 'holding pen' ready for the transition. The first people who were racing stood up at the start line with their baton then the whistle blew. Everybody went off and after we had done two laps we passed the baton to our teammates who would then go speeding past and do their two laps. We all finished as a lovely breeze was slowly coming by, it was glorious weather and a beautiful evening.

As a reward for taking part, we all received an orange commemorative bag and stayed for a barbeque and drink at the Hawker Centre where the awards ceremony took place. It was a lot of fun and everyone enjoyed taking part in the 15th Anniversary run for Stragglers and Ranelagh.

Merran, Simon, Sue, Mike, Helen, Bert, Colin and Maia



## Race to the King Ultra



Two intrepid/crazy Stragglers took on the Race to the King Ultra 53.5 miles on the 23rd June. Carl Pretorius was completing his 1st attempt at anything beyond 26.2miles but had put in a lot of training in the preceding weeks, which paid off on the day as he came away with 34th position. He says 'It was quite an experience, and I must say I've seen enough hills for a while'. (Total elevation is 5,600ft). He reports that he will be quite content with a potter around good old flat Bushy Park for the next few weeks! He had two wrong turns

and the added mileage wasn't exactly what he had hoped for when setting out for 53.5 miles, and finished on 54.9miles and he felt he could've saved some time on the pit stops (there weren't any drive thru MacDonald's on route) but overall was pretty happy with the day.

The more experienced Straggler Ultra Marathon runner Matt Coakes was also undertaking the race fresh from his 2:40 London Marathon this year. Matt nearly won the whole thing completing the 53.5 miles non-stop in 7:43:58 and finishing second by seven minutes from the eventual winner (a fairly fine margin over this kind of distance). We wonder how you celebrate after that, presumably by lying down in a darkened room! Matt has however, recovered remarkably quickly and has recently been in action for the Straggs at the Elmore 7 and Elmbridge 10k.



Congratulations to both on this epic run.

Malcolm Davies



# *La Transléonarde*



This was my second visit to the Marathon du Finistere and this year the weather played a big part.

The course runs along the north coast of Brittany, from Plouescat in the east to Guissény in the west, passing through Brignogan, where we spend our holidays, and the beautiful restored village of Ménéham. It mixes road sections with the coastal footpath and you are rarely out of sight of the sea. The race is part of a series of French marathons called the Challenge de la Convivialité, which includes the Médoc and the Cognac

marathons, so it was no surprise to find beer and cider available along the way.

Unlike the better known marathons, La Transléonarde is really a local affair, more like a village festival spread out along 42km. In one village, a woman was playing an accordion and singing in her garden. Local people marshal and staff the water stations and many people provided additional water stations outside their houses, which was very welcome given the weather. Some welcome shade was provided at the cider station in Tréfleze, by stretching the biggest Breton flag in the world over the road.

This year there were 382 finishers from a field of 420 and the dropout rate was probably due to the conditions. Unusually for north Brittany, it was very warm from the start and it just got hotter and hotter. I've never drunk so much water during a race and I was grateful for every drop. The man with the hosepipe at Brignogan was particularly welcome!

The course can be split into 2 parts: the first 26km begin with a gentle downhill start (careful not to go off too fast!) and are on fairly level, even surfaces. The first hill comes at around 26km and signals the start of the rolling section often on coastal footpaths. There is little chance to establish a rhythm with all the ups and downs. Finally, kilometre 42 is a long climb through the village of Guissény, before the right turn and the red carpet to the finish. By the time I finished (4 hours 2 mins), the temperature in the village, granite buildings in full sunshine, had reached 27 degrees!



The atmosphere is friendly and the organisation is very smooth. There were buses laid on to allow people to park at one end of the course and get back to their cars afterwards. There was plenty of water and food along the way and beer at the end. There were bagpipes, accordions and chants de marins to entertain the runners. The medal is a work of art and the president of the organising committee greeted each finisher personally and thanked us for coming. What could be better?



Martin Nance



# *Straggler Running Groups: Guidance for Leaders and Runners*

The Stragglers have a number of runners who have completed the England Athletics Leadership in Running Fitness Course. Where possible groups will be led by one of these runners. Currently it is not possible to guarantee this and we are continuing to encourage volunteers to lead groups. If there are regular leaders who have not completed the course, we would like to encourage them to consider doing so. It's one day, on a weekend, is enjoyable and rewarding, a great opportunity to develop your own running and, importantly, the cost of which will be covered by the club. Please speak to Kevin Price, Phil Davies or Kev Best if interested.

Below are a few points for both run leaders and those taking part in group runs to consider. This is so runners know what they can reasonably expect from their group leader, and leaders can be confident runners will support them.

## Before the Run:

Where possible a short warm up should be completed – consisting of mobility exercises such as take place on a Thursday evening;

Start times of runs will be clearly advertised and those wishing to join should arrive in time – you are welcome to contact the group leader to inform them you are running late, but waiting will be at the discretion of the group leader;

Groups should be kept to manageable sizes. Where groups are more than 10 runners, another experienced runner should volunteer to support the group leader.

## Leaders will where possible:

Ensure runs are achievable for all in the group;

Make sure the distance and pace is explained to all runners before the start, and where changes need to be made, the leader will consult with the group to ensure needs are met;

Nobody will be left behind – the needs of the slowest runner will always be considered, with faster runners doubling back where necessary;

When regrouping, slower runners should be given time to recover if required;

Carry a mobile phone, or make sure someone in the group has one;

Check on everyone in the group to ensure they are able to keep with the advertised pace and distance;

Note the number of runners at the start and finish and at any regrouping points;

Ensure that a runner taken ill or injured is suitably supported and where necessary, accompanied back to the start, and make sure any incidents are reported.

Runners must:

Where high-vis clothing on dark evenings;

Carry some form of ID/emergency contact details and bring appropriate medication if required;

Inform the run leader of any injury or illness concerns;

Ensure the run leader is informed if you are leaving the group at any point;

If requested, wait/loop back to support slower runners;

Warn other runners around you of potential hazards;

Support each other and ensure nobody is left behind.

Where sessions are advertised as fast or tempo, there is flexibility in some of these guidelines, such as for doubling back, however this will be clearly outlined by whoever is leading the session so that all runners know the expectation of the group.

Simon Webb/Kev Best



## *Winter Race Schedule: XC Fixtures and Relays*

Usually at the end of each issue of Stragmag we list the fixtures for the next three months; however, for this issue we present your full winter of running. In just over two months' time the cross-country season will begin – yeah think about that as you boil in the current hot weather.

The priority fixtures for 2018/2019 have been agreed and can be revealed below. We're awaiting a couple of confirmations and so this is our best guess at what the coming months of Straggler racing will look like. Along with each date and location is the person in the club who is leading on the organisation. The post-Helen and Malcolm era – which appears to still involve Malcolm – has a larger pool of people taking responsibility for teams and entries, in order to share the workload as we continue to raise our ambitions as a club.

The men's team is managed by Simon Brazil, supported by Donovan Duffy. Kev Best is the ladies team manager with Helene Hill – one contact point has been listed for men and ladies on this list with email addresses at the end.

### **September:**

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>: River Relay – Simon Brazil/Jon Parry

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>: Club XC Championships, Hamlands – all enter on the day

### **October:**

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>: Ladies Surrey League XC Race 1, Wimbledon Common – Helene Hill

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>: Mens Surrey League XC race 1, Richmond Park – Simon Brazil

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>: Surrey Masters XC, Richmond Park – Malcolm Davies

### **November:**

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>: Priory Relays, Reigate – Jon Parry/Maddie Garner

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>: Ladies Surrey League Fixture 2, Nonsuch Park – Helene Hill

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>: TTBC Men's Surrey League fixture 2 (one of two possible dates for this)

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>: London XC Championships, Parliament Hill – Donovan Duffy/Maddie Garner

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>: South of the Thames 5 miles, venue TBC – Jon Parry/Helene Hill

**December:**

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>: second option for mens Surrey League fixture 2

Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup>: Southern Masters XC Championships, venue TBC – Malcolm Davies

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>: South of the Thames 7.5 Miles, Beckenham – Jon Parry/Helene Hill

**January 2019:**

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>: Middlesex XC Championships, Perivale – Simon Brazil/Helene Hill

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>: Surrey XC Championships, Lloyd Park – Simon Brazil/Helene Hill

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>: Ladies Surrey League Fixture 3, Coulsdon – Helene Hill

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>: Men's Surrey League Fixture 3, Mitcham – Simon Brazil

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup>: Southern XC Championships, venue TBC – Simon Brazil/Helene Hill

**February:**

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>: Ladies' Surrey League Fixture 4, Richmond Park – Helene Hill

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>: Men's Surrey League Fixture 4, Croydon – Simon Brazil

Saturday 23: National XC, Harewood House Leeds – Simon Webb

We also expect the Ellis and Dysart XC fixture to be on the first weekend of March.

Team contacts:

Simon Brazil – [simonbrazil@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:simonbrazil@hotmail.co.uk)

Helene Hill – [Helene.hill@btinternet.com](mailto:Helene.hill@btinternet.com)