



Crowborough Runners –July 2026 Update

The AGM Edition

Well “what a scorcher” is probably an understatement for the weather in the month of July. The heat was relentless but this didn’t stop our members turning up for events in the calendar, as you will see. With the temperature in excess of 31 degrees, the decision was taken to cancel a couple of track sessions, which is never a decision that is taken lightly. What was encouraging though was the number turning up for the Monday and Tuesday night track sessions, despite the heat, with numbers attending seeming to increase on a weekly basis.

However, I digress and there is a lot to get through.

Club Events

5th July 2026 - Bewl 15 and 5 Mile



If you are a runner, the circuit around Bewl Water is particularly worthwhile. Surprisingly completely man-made and capable of holding 31 million gallons of water, it is set in stunning countryside. I know that, as I once had the pleasure of viewing it whilst travelling across it via a zip-wire. I may well have told you this before, but it was once voted by readers of Runners World as the 6th best race in the UK, which is a definite pat-on-the-back for Wadhurst Runners.

The Bewl 15 is an annual event and has featured in the Sussex Grand Prix series for many years, and is highly popular with runners from local running clubs as well as further afield.

For those that haven’t run it before, a substantial trail-running challenge is what it is, with a mixture of paths, woodland and undulating countryside rather than a flat lakeside promenade.

It starts and finishes in Wadhurst and commences by descending to the path around Bewl Water, which means the finish is via, from I have been reliably informed, is pretty punishing up-hill climb.

Amongst the 396 on the start line this year on what was really hot day were 5 of our clubs members.

Leading the Crows home in 5th place, and by doing, securing 1st place in his age category was Nick Harvey.

There was also some very creditable running by the other members that took part, with the full results being as follows:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
5	Nick Harvey	1:38:40
20	Mark Redfrern	1:51:18
24	James Bryant	1:52:10
60	Maurizio Di Santo	2:02:40
166	Sarah Cooper	2:29:01

As it is not in the Sussex Grand Prix series, the 5 mile race perhaps doesn't get the exposure of that of its big brother. Nevertheless, it is a race that is highly recommended. This is why it saw Richard Grinham and Pearl Manser from the Club on this year's start line, with Pearl coming home in 0:50:53 and securing for herself 1st place in her age category, and Richard finishing in 0:49:15.



As you can see, Nick was missing when this picture was taken, presumed running home.

Oh, and I nearly forgot to mention that Nick, Mark and James secured 1st place Male Team.



Great running by everybody that day.

8th July 2026 – Annual General Meeting



The Club's AGM has become one of the social highlights of the year and following the success of last year's, the Club's AGM was held at Crowborough Rugby Club.

I, and the rest of the committee, were delighted to see that well over 50 of the Club's members had taken the time and had been tempted to hear what the Club had been up over the past year, as well as enjoy a catch up with fellow members over the delights of barbeque.

With reports by the various Club members having been circulated prior the meeting the meeting finished promptly at 8:00 pm, with the highlight of the evening being the Club awards. There was inevitably a number of issues raised for consideration by the Committee and following these being discussed at the Club Committee's next meeting a comprehensive response will be sent to all members.

The occasion was also to thank Sarah Hilliard for her many years of service as Club Treasurer and Meg Atwood who is stepping down as Social Secretary to spend time enjoying the many pleasures of motherhood. Joining the committee were Scott Werner as Club Treasurer and John Crockford as Social Secretary.

As I mentioned previously, the highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Club awards by Eileen Welch, the Club's Captain. The many worthy winners were:



Chris Russell - 1st place Club Championship
(Male) and Vet3 (Male)



Mary Nightingale – 1st place Club
Championship (Lady)



Will Isted – 2nd place Club Championship (Male), Senior (Male) and Most Improved Runner



Pearl Manser – 2nd place Club Championship (Lady) and Vet 3 (Lady)



Zach Drake – 3rd place Club Championship (Male) and Vet 1 (Male)



Claire Styles – 3rd place Club Championship (Lady) and Vet 2 (Lady)



Gordon Berry – Vet 2(Male)



Christy Styles – Senior Lady



Bryan Tapsell – Vet 4 (Male)



Heather Stevens – Vet 1 (Lady)



Jayne Meyers – Most Improved Runner (Lady)



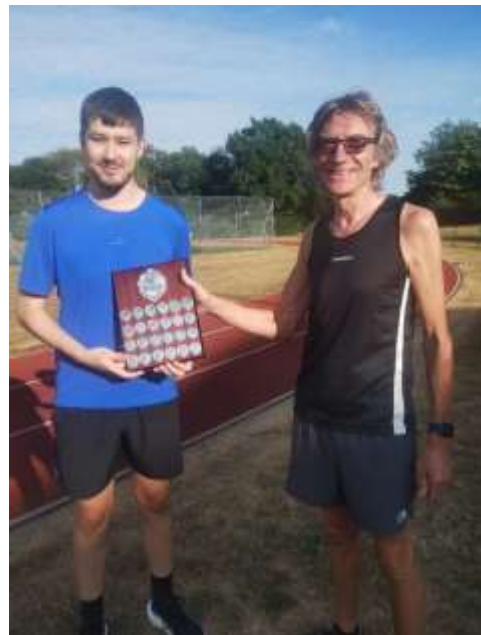
Sarah Hilliard – Services to the Club



Sharon Wheeler – Captain's Cup



Christy Styles - Cross Country Champion
(Lady)



Matt McCarthy – Cross Country
Champion (Male)

15th July 2026 – Phoenix 10k



You all know that the Phoenix 10k is the flagship event of Brighton Phoenix Run Club. What you might not know is that the club and its ethos were the brain child one of the leading lights of the running world in the 1980's. Steve Overt, who set five world records in his day, and coach Matt Paterson decided to establish their own club based on a very different philosophy of athlete development, with the focus being on athletes having more freedom to develop in their own way, which was a philosophy that eventually become known as "inclusive excellence." A philosophy that has produced many international athletes over the years since.

The Phoenix 10k remains a highly popular event but for some to compete in this year's event was bit of tough decision to make. It was a question of stay at home in the hope of seeing "football coming home" or forego the agony, brave a hot night and have a fast and flat run along Hove seafront. Then get home just in time to join in the celebration of "football coming home"?

For 8 of the Club's members it was no contest and a there was great turnout by the Club.

As it was, success for the English football team was not to be. However, there was success on the night for two of the Club members. In particular Byron Thomas who secured himself a PB and Bryan Tapsell, on this occasion swapping trails for the flat, coming 2nd in his age category. Nevertheless, great running by all.

The full results were as follows:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
102	Peter Noon	0:41:25
151	Byron Thomas (PB)	0:44:43
156	Alan Dean	0:44:56
197	Chris Russell	00:48:33
231	Sarah Cooper	0:55:11
244	Bryan Tapsell (2 nd)	0:52:01
292	Lisa Herbert	0:56:56
331	Ron Cutbill	1:03:14
342	Charlotte Mathers	1:15:01
343	Shirley Matthews	1:15:14



29th July 2026 – Pub Run



This month's Pub Run was one with a difference.

There had been high hopes of Crowborough having its own parkrun. This was to be based in Walshes Park and a lot of the spadework on behalf of the Town Council had been done by member Craig Chapman, by identifying a course, measuring it out and everything. Unfortunately, much to the surprise and disappointment of everyone involved, what was proposed was unexpectedly disallowed. The reasons why are still unclear but it is thought to be due to the status of the park. However, this does not mean the idea of a parkrun for the town is dead and the Town Council are actively pursuing how this can come to pass.

To test out the intended course, it had been agreed to incorporate it in the monthly Pub Run, this month starting and finishing at the Wheatsheaf in Mount Pleasant.

With the added bonus of the test run in Walshes Park, the event was well attended.

I know I speak for everyone that was there that we all enjoyed what was a 2-lap undulating course and our appreciation very much goes Craig for getting there early and setting up the course.

An excellent precursor to a lively rest of the evening at the Wheatsheaf.

Members Corner

New and Returning Members

It's a warm welcome from all of us to

- Lee Tomlinson
- Theo Kemp
- Emese Piper

4th July 2026 - Jurassic Coast Mighty Hike



MacMillan Cancer Support is a charity that is close to hearts of many of us, with so many of us having someone near or dear, or that we know, having been blessed with the incredible services they provide. One of their many fundraising events is there Mighty Hike series. The one said to be the most picturesque, is one that allows you to explore the World Heritage site of the Jurassic Coast that runs from Exmouth in East Devon to Studland Bay in Dorset.

The hike starts in Wareham and you wend your way to Swanage, which is where you wave bye-bye to the half- marathoners before continuing on, going past Old Harry's Rocks to Studland, where to turn inland and finish where you started near Corfe Castle.

Swapping their running shoes for walking boots this year were Sarah Hilliard and ex-member Maggi Bradgate, with Sarah so far raising nearly £800 for this worthy cause. If you haven't done so and would like to, you can still donate by going to [Will you donate to Sarah's Mighty Hike 2026 Fundraiser Page?](#)

Going It Alone

The Mid-Kent 5 mile race that took place this year on 12th July 2026 celebrated its 18th year and there to join the celebrations and enjoy a predominantly flat course through country lanes was Pearl Manser.

Pearl writes:

"I was the sole Crow at the mid-Kent 5 miler and ran my fastest time since 2022, so thank you coaches"



You look well pleased with yourself Pearl, and rightly so.

A Family Affair

The Hailsham Community Runs are one of the fastest growing running events in the county. Having had to be postponed from 17th May due too road works, the event incorporates distances ranging from 1 mile to 10k. So, something for everyone of all ages, which is no doubt what encouraged the Noble family to take part. So, why Pearl was strutting her stuff in Staplehurst, Naomi the rest of the gang where rung the streets of Hailsham, with Naomi knocking out the 10k in 1:02:19.



Well done to you all.

Also Going It Alone



To me, there is nothing like the buzz of a mass participation event around the streets of the Capital. Iconic landmarks, DJs to help power you up and cheering crowds to support you along the way.

On such an event is the Saucony 10k that took place this year also on 12th July.

There representing the Club was Zach Drake knocking it out in 0:40:05



Great running Zach.

A bit last minute

Battersea Park has a particular memory for me as it was there that I was tempted out of retirement to run a 5k there in 2015. Obviously something not recorded in the annals of Battersea Park but the park has a rich history of holding running events of various distances.

It was there that a half-marathon took place on 18th July and it was due to the generosity of a fellow member who had had to pull out that member Tim Probert was there.

Tim writes:

“I have to say it was delight to run such a flat course. Compared to running around Crowborough, it almost felt like cheating.”



My sentiments entirely.

Going North of the Border

“Be part of something special. The City of Aberdeen Half Marathon is an inaugural event, welcoming 2,000 runners to the start line for the very first edition of Europe’s coolest summer Half Marathon.

Run 13.1 miles through the heart of Aberdeen, enjoying refreshing coastal air, scenic city and riverside views, and an electric race-day atmosphere. With a limited field and a fast, welcoming course, it’s the perfect race for first-time half marathoners and experienced runners alike.

From Duthie Park the route will take you along Riverside Drive, over Bridge of Dee and along the South Deeside Road, returning via the Milltimber Bridge and Deeside Way.”

Sound tempting?

Well it did to one of our members on a girly weekend away. This is why her friend went off to do some retail therapy, Shirley Matthews took on the Hydrasun Aberdeen half marathon also on the 18th July 2026. Whilst saying she hadn't done a lot of preparation, she still managed a finish time of 2:42:22.

Way to go Shirley



Meanwhile, in Northern Tuscany

There representing the Club in the Attraverso Le Mura was Andrea Battelli.

Andrea writes:

The race was in the town of MASSA in northern Tuscany.

The race was called: Attraverso Le Mura (Going through the town walls).

It is an evening event with a starting time of 21:15 because of the very high air temperature.

Also this year, it was very hot. It was 32 degrees at 9 pm just before race start.

The race is a 5 lap course and it's a hilly course. Some really fast world class elite runners take part every year.

This year there were some really quick Kenyans which stormed to sub 30 minutes finishing times, which is quite impressive considering the hilly nature of the course. In last year edition, the current European Road Marathon Champion Iliass Aouani was also in the starting line.

Anyway, my chip finishing time was 38'34". My general position was 49th and I managed to finish in 2nd place for my category VETM.

The podium reward consisted of a beautiful hand painted plate and a goody bag which contained a bottle of bubbly, some local food delicacies, a hand towel with the race logo and a pair of running shorts.



I have to say that sounds a lot better than my packet of wet-wipes after the Eastbourne Half.

Not a flat one by any means

The 26th July saw the running of the Will Page 10k in the village of Newick.

The race was first held in 1993, as part of a fundraising programme for the village's sports pavilion. It was named the Will Page 10K in memory of Will Page, a popular local sportsman and runner who had passed away 1993. He had been involved in the local running community as well as Newick's other sporting activities, so naming the race after him gave it a strong connection with the village.

There representing the Club were Sam Hyde, Alistair Lee and Yasmin Jenkins-Khan who completed the course in 0:49:51, 0:50:48 and 1:03:32 respectively.

Alistair Writes

“We were hoping for cooler weather for the Newick 10k on 26th July and thankfully it was, although it was still very humid. The course was hilly, with some long downhill sections at the start that lure you into quick early pacing, but they were interspersed by short ups to keep things in check. We had been told about a horrible hill at the end, which was there so no surprise, but still tough. Someone even snapped a photo of me that ended up on the Newick Talk Facebook page, which was a fun surprise.

I ran my best 10k yet and came away with a PB, and Yasmin hit her goal too, despite the climbs. A tough route, a good day, and results we're both proud of.”



Rat Race 100

100 Miles, No Sleep, Questionable Life Choices

Yes, she's been at it again.



Lisa writes

“At 0800 on Saturday morning 25th July 2026, while many sensible people were enjoying a leisurely coffee, I set off from Edinburgh on the Rat Race Castle to Castle Ultra. The objective sounded simple enough: run 100 miles to Glamis Castle.

One hundred miles. A good round number.

The Planning Phase

Being me, you won't be surprised to know that I approached this with project methodology precision:

- Detailed route plan downloaded as a GPX file (never used because I cannot read a map)
- Food station strategy (fell apart at 20 hours when I could not eat another gel without retching)
- Pacing schedule (smashed it)
- Contingency plans – thank you, AI, at 01h00 in the morning
- Discussions with Copilot about calories that lasted longer than some board meetings

At one point I had spreadsheets, feeding schedules, estimated arrival times and fuel calculations that made it look like we were preparing to launch a satellite rather than send a middle-aged woman jogging across Scotland.

The Reality Phase

What actually happened was 33 hours and 18 minutes of moving forward while continuously asking myself: *"Whose idea was this?"*

The route stretched for 166.5km across Scotland with over 2,000 metres of climbing.

The first few hours felt great.

The next few hours felt fine.

The next twenty-five hours became a fascinating study in sleep deprivation and poor decision-making.

The Night Shift

Running through the night is a unique experience. At around 0200 you begin questioning your life choices.

At around 0400 you start negotiating with inanimate objects.

By sunrise, every sheep looks like it has useful advice and every hill appears to have been personally designed to offend you.

Somewhere in the darkness I became convinced that the next food station was only "just around the corner". It never was.

The Food Stations

The food stations became the highlights of my social calendar.

Never has a paper cup of lukewarm soup received so much gratitude.

Every arrival was accompanied by the same process:

1. Eat everything.
2. Refill everything.
3. Wonder how far it is to the next checkpoint.
4. Regret asking.
5. Shuffle off into the Scottish wilderness.

The carefully calculated nutrition strategy and pacing plan largely survived, although by Sunday morning my body was running on equal parts determination, Huel and stubbornness.

The Finish

After 33 hours, 18 minutes and far more conversations with myself than I'd care to admit, Glamis Castle finally appeared. I had fallen into a few bushes in the last few miles as I closed my eyes 'for just a second' while by now, walking.

There are moments during an ultra where you feel strong, moments where you feel broken, and moments where you're not entirely certain what day it is. And you hallucinate

Crossing the line was definitely in the broken category.

Lessons Learned

- Copilot can help build a surprisingly effective ultra-marathon plan.
- Scotland is bigger than it looks on a map.

- Food stations are magical places with magical people called VOLUNTEERS. I deeply love all of them angels!
- Sleep is apparently optional.
- Humans are capable of much more than they think.
- It is entirely possible to cover 100 miles on foot and still spend the following week walking like you've just discovered legs for the first time.

Would I do it again? Ask me after I've caught up on the sleep I missed between Saturday morning and Sunday evening.

And yes, before anyone asks, the spreadsheets were absolutely worth it.



The Skye's the limit



Regressing back to June for a moment, it was on the 13th June that member James Welbury, former Club Chairman John Tighe and former Club Secretary Domonique Welbury were on the Isle of Skye.

The Isle of Skye, although in the Inner Hebrides, is connected to mainland by a bridge and it one of Scotland's most spectacular islands, famous for its dramatic mountains, rugged coastline, waterfalls and distinctive rock formations.

The reason they were there was to take part in 10k. This takes place on the same day as the Skye half marathon with participants being given, rather uniquely I think, a bus ride to the halfway point of the half marathon to get to the start line.

The route of the 10k takes you along a single track closed road with the route having been designed to showcase Skye's raw natural beauty.

Great running by all.



I also need to mention that James and Co continued their journey through his Parkrun alphabet on the 13th July, this time joined by Sharon Wheeler and Kevin Battell from the Club.



Club Matters

ESSCCL

Just to say that the 2026/27 will soon be upon us and to let you know that the only confirmed date at the moment is 11th Snape Wood. Others are expected to be announced shortly and I am hoping to let you know more in the August Update, together with a retrospective on 2025/26 season.

The fee for all six races remains at an incredible £12 and invitations to sign up will be going out in September.

Well, not surprisingly, that's from me.

I am expecting August to be a busy month as well, so keep your contributions coming.

Bob