



Crowborough Runners

Club Update June 2025

As always, a big thank you to those that have shared their stories and experiences and competed in the name of Crowborough Runners.

Well, with the end of June, we seemed to have turned a corner, with the evenings starting to get shorter. The weather during the month was a little iffy, not to say unpredictable, to say the least. However, whether it was sweltering in the heat, or getting drenched in the pouring rain, members were out doing what they love best. It has been a month of continued successes for the Club and a further increase in members as our fame spreads, but also one with some disappointment, particularly in one respect, as well as one tinged with some sadness.

Events

7th June 2025 - South Downs Way Relay



I was very much hoping to give you the lowdown on this year's event. I knew the Crows who had been selected to run had been out practicing their legs, in more senses than one, and everything was set. The only unknown was the weather, which refused to play ball, with conditions akin to Armageddon being forecast for the day the event was due to take place. It was for this reason the organisers took the difficult decision to defer the race to another date in June. A big disappointment for all concerned, although I must say I did enjoy the lay-in.

15th June 2025 - Heathfield Midsummer 10k



The Heathfield Midsummer 10k is the 6th race of the Sussex Grand Prix series.

For those that have not run it before, the race starts at the Rugby Club and finishes at the Rugby Club and in between you take in many of the country lanes between Heathfield and Waldron. I should point out, as you find out when running the race, Waldron is at a lower elevation than the start. This means that after a while you to start to realise that the joy of running so far downhill will eventually turn into the pain of climbing back up again. Nevertheless, this did not deter 345 runners completing the course, amongst which were 7 plucky Crows grateful for the hill training that Crowborough offers. The best turnout for a SGP race this year.

A very well organised event as always with some great running by The Crows, who were as follows:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Ladies		
170	Eileen Welch	0:55:24
Men		
16	Ollie Welch	0:38:29
17	Will Isted	0:38:34
23	Will Hyde	0:39:41
89	Chris Russell	0:47:14
242	Paul Wells	1:03:05
282	Ron Cutbill	1:07:42

Good running everybody and that man was at it again with Chris Russell coming 2nd in his age category.

22nd June 2025 – Battersea Park 10k



The 22nd June 2025 saw a mob of Crows off to the big city to chase the sun in Battersea Park.

Previously known as Battersea Fields, it used to be a favourite place for fighting duels, so ideal for fighting it out with a crowd of highly competitive runners.

As you can see, a very popular race with 694 runners seeking honours, with Crowborough Runners again being appropriately represented.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Ladies		
575	Sharon Wheeler	1:07:54
664	Domonique Welbury	1:24:38
Men		
16	Ollie Welch	0:37:01
20	Will Isted	0:37:33
360	Kevin Battell	0:56:29
482	John Tighe	1:02:39
523	James Welbury	1:05:00

Despite it being a very hot day, Will secured a personal PB and James a 1st in his age category.



25th June 2025 – Tonbridge AC Midsummer Relays



The 25th June 2025 saw Penshurst Place host 134 teams from 27 Kent and Sussex clubs competing in the second Tonbridge AC Midsummer Relay Race on a warm, dry evening. The popular relay was a huge success with runners completing an undulating 4km route.

This was the 2nd relay event entered by the Crows this year.

The A team finished in 14th (of 50) in 0:50:57 with individual times being as follows:

0:15:08 Ollie Welch

0:20:05 Eileen Welch

0:15:43 Pete Noon

The B team were 32nd in 0:57:23 with individual times being as follows:

0:17:52 Chris Russell

0:21:16 Lou Knapp

0:18:14 Byron Thomas

The event gave a fun buzz to the evening and it is definitely an event to be revisited in future.



26th June 2025 – South Downs Relay – The Replay

This was the revised date set for the South Downs Way Relay. This time the temperatures were forecast to soar. Unfortunately, it was not to be for the Crows this year with several of the original team not being able to make the revised date and it being too short a timescale to familiarise substitutes. Nevertheless, the day saw two intrepid Crows rise at birdsong and set off to the wasteland know as Bo Peep carpark in time for the first runner to appear. Not an easy task. With the landscape wrapped in a thick mist, the next three hours saw runners literally materialise one by one heading for the change-over point.

The good news is we know we have a place in next year's event.

Members Corner

New and Returning Members

It was a warm welcome on board to:

Josh Sharp
Eleanor Matthews
Viki Benwell

8th June 2025 - Staplehurst 10k

The Staplehurst 10k supports the Staplehurst Community Events Group and has grown to become one of the most popular 10km races in Kent. It is one of the county's fastest courses with genuine PB potential. The course is rural, using the wide, fast and virtually flat country lanes outside the village, and this year saw 2 Crows amongst the 112 that entered.

Navigating the country lanes were:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
80	John Tighe	0:59:55
83	James Welbury	1:00:59

And as you can see James took his missus along who knocked a very respectable 0:36:39 in the 5k race.



South Downs Way 100 mile race - 14-15 June

You wait years for an ultra-runner to come along and before you know it we have two amongst the membership, Namely Colin Tricker and Niall Smith, who both took part in the Centurion SDW 100 mile race.

The race is a 100-mile foot race taking in the entire South Downs Way trail. Along the way you can take in stunning views of rolling hills, ancient forts, picturesque villages and expansive views of Southern England, but don't take too long admiring the view as the race has a 30 hour cut-off. Oh, I almost forgot to mention the 12,700 foot elevation.

We are lucky in so far as Colin and Niall have been willing to share their experience of the event.

Colin writes



"The race started at 5.30am in Winchester and finished with a lap of the athletics track in Eastbourne on Sunday morning.

I completed the course in 20 hours and 39 mins, finished at 2:09 am on Sunday morning in 63rd position (out of a field of 405 finishers) and 18th in my VM40 age category.

I was fortunate to have the support of three other Crows. Namely my wife Lori, who acted as support and drove back and forth the length of the race ensuring that I had all the essential food and running gear I needed. From 50 miles, participants could have the assistance of a pacer and so Zach Drake paced from mile 55-65. Lorna Buckwell took the last leg from around 87 miles running through the night from Firle Beacon to the finish.

The last section of the race was tough with my legs starting to protest but I pushed on through the pain and had a strong finish."



Niall writes



“Well, what a race that was! Completing my first 100-mile ultra, the South Downs Way 100, was an experience that will look back on for the rest of my life - an achievement I'll never forget. It was tough, undoubtedly, but all the training and practice truly paid off.

The race kicked off smoothly; I focused on a slow and steady pace, knowing hydration and fuelling would be paramount in the early warmth. A minor foot pain developed around 20km, but meeting my incredible crew, Olatz and Ollie (my Pacer), at 72km was a turning point. They sorted me out with a change of clothes and re-fuel, and switching to road shoes miraculously made the foot pain vanish.

From there, despite the persistent heat, their support at various crew points kept my spirits high and broke up the long stretches.

The middle and later sections of the race tested my limits. From 87km, my legs started to feel the fatigue, and while I still had time on my race plan, the going got tougher. The stretch from 105km to 123km was long and mentally demanding, especially after hitting Housedean Farm with a stomach issue. As night fell, from 123km to 147km, it became brutal. For periods running was almost impossible, and the long climbs took a massive toll. I even started to become delirious, feeling like I was falling asleep while walking and running! A brief, precious 5-minute nap at Firle Beacon helped though.

Arriving at Alfriston, I decided against another sleep and instead, launched into one final push to the end. Running was tricky, and even the daylight, which I hoped would bring a burst of energy, didn't materialise. It became a pure mental battle of getting to the finish line by any means necessary. I managed to run some sections again which felt great. The downhill into Eastbourne absolutely destroyed my legs, but knowing that the flat road at the bottom led straight to the finish line spurred me on. I pushed through, crossing that finish line in what felt like the hardest, but undeniably the best, thing I've ever done. I absolutely loved it, and I'll definitely be back again next year!



Club Matters

A Fond Goodbye



As they say, you know when the time is right.

June saw Maggi Bradgate bow out of the Club's coaching team after many years of service on a Monday evening. Her humour, her sense of fun that made track sessions so enjoyable and her willingness to pass on her knowledge and experience to others will be much missed, including by other members of the coaching team.

A sad occasion and there was no doubt a few tears were shed. However, there is still a good chance that you will still see Maggi around at Club events as she is staying on as a member.

A big thank you from all of us.



Now where did I put those old trainers?

We've all got them.

Running trainers that are a little past their best. Not one's you want to run in anymore but would do someone else a good turn. The thing is, where do you take them.

Many of the major races have a shoe recycling facility but on these occasions you have probably got your mind on other things. Well, here is the answer. James Welbury has found out that on the Club's behalf that you can send them to London Marathon Events who will find them a new home. The address is:

London Marathon Events
190 Great Dover Street
London
SE1 4YB

Dates for your Diary

- 16th July 2025 - Phoenix 10k
- 20th July 2025 – Timed Mile
- 10th August 2025 - Henfield Half Marathon
- 24th August 2025 – Run, Brunch and Pool Party
- 28th September - Hellingly 10k

Well that wraps it up for another month.

Let me know what you have been doing.

All contributions gratefully received.

Looking forward to running with you some time soon.

Bob