



Crowborough Runners – June 2026 Update

The Better Late Than Never Edition

Greg Anderson, author, motivational speaker, and wellness advocate is attributed as saying

“Find joy in the journey and not just in the destination”

Well, there is plenty of evidence that once again this sentiment was embraced by our members during the month of June with some extraordinary achievements that I am sure were tinged with the sheer joy of the feeling of freedom that our sport brings with it. Not only this, but actively enjoying the company and the sharing with others of their running journey, with the Club welcoming more new members, numbers at our track sessions continuing to grow, and the social runs on a Wednesday doing likewise.

Yes, the month was bathed in sunshine, but with one notable exception.

Too hot for some?

No way, I hear you say with the out-of-the-ordinarily climatic conditions in no way dissuading our members from competing in many of the events the month had to offer, both close to home and a little further afield.

A real mixed bag, I have to say, but in my book there is nothing like something a little different to get the juices flowing.

And before I get carried away, a huge thank you, as always, for your contributions.

6th June 2026 – South Downs Way Relay



So, you are in bed. It's 3 a.m. It's raining outside and the thought strikes you that you are due to run along the South Downs in a few hours. Oh, and you are wide awake and it's not a nightmare. And it wasn't going to be the case that someone will be saying we are pulling my leg.

Well that's how it was for this year's race.

The race last year was called off because of bad weather and the risk of storms. Surely, lightning couldn't strike in the same place two years in a row?

Okay, there was no lightning, but just about everything else was thrown at the competitors. Conditions described afterwards by Jonathan Cawthra, the Race Director, as the worse he had known them since becoming involved in 1996.

Still, this didn't dissuade the team from Crowborough Runners boarding their minibus and being chauffeured by Kevin Battell to Beachy Head at "sparrows" that day for the start.

Whilst not part of the team, I can tell you first-hand what the conditions were like. I had taken a quick shower that morning before setting off to marshal at the Bo-Peep carpark, but, to be honest, it was a waste of time. The Boo-Peep carpark is quite exposed so I was soon dripping wet quite soon after arriving, as was my companion Roger Stone. Compared to what the competitors had to endure, this was nothing.

Nevertheless, the team were on a mission, as was obvious when I saw John Everest appear on the horizon to complete Leg 2, which was from Exceat to Bo-Peep. The rest of the team looked equally excited about completing the race as they waited for him anxiously.

Well, I take my hat off to them all. Namely,

- Eileen Welch – Team Captain
- Olatz Ruiz-Smith
- Pete Woodward
- Jon Everest
- Matt McCarthy
- Mike Woodrow

The team completed the race in 14:07:27, which in those conditions I would like to suggest is pretty amazing.

The Club, as it has been lucky enough to do for many years, will be entering a team in the 2027 event. If you are interested, and you think you will be able to contribute to the team completing the course in 14 hours, I will be sending out an invitation in the autumn.

I can't guarantee the weather but I can guarantee a day you will remember.





A moment to cherish

7th June 2026 - Weald Challenge Half



The Weald Challenge Half Marathon is held each June and is organised by Uckfield Runners, who took over the event in 2024.

Although the distance is slightly longer than a half marathon, the course is almost entirely off-road, following sections of the Wealdway and Vanguard Way, taking in woodland paths, grassy fields, farm tracks, stiles, you name it. The challenge bit comes in as the route is undulating, with continual hills and uneven footing to cope with along the way.

Many runners, so I am told, describe it as a race that's more about enjoying the countryside, scenic views, experiencing the excellent organisation and relaxed atmosphere, which has earned the race a loyal following. Whilst for others, and our members amongst them, it meant business, as you will see later.

I have to admit it is not a race I was familiar with, although relatively on my doorstep. It is with thanks to Nick Harvey who wrote to me and simply said, "I ran the Weald Challenge". What he also told me was he won, numero uno, his first, first place. Now, if like me, you have been following his progress over the months you will have seen he has been so close to the front of the pack on many occasions. Narrowly beaten into 4th in last year's Beachy Head marathon is an example. I therefore knew it was just a matter of time and I was absolutely delighted when I received his email to say he had secured 1st place, but as the old saying goes "where there's a weald there's a way".

That's not forgetting some great running by the other members taking part.

Huge congratulations to you all.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
1	Nick Harvey	1:31:41
12	Harvey Dyson	1:46:24
41	Hannah Slater	1:59:34
84	Stephen Sedgewick	2:09:50
93	Janie Perry	2:11:29
156	Alistair Lee	2:24:51
169	John Crockford	2:27:25
252	Alexander Gusak	2:49:47

14th June 2026 – Heathfield Midsummer 10k



Races on the Sussex Grand Prix series were a little thin on the ground in the month but the Heathfield Midsummer 10k kept up the momentum.

This was, I'm afraid to say, my only outing in June and an old favourite of mine, and one of the longest established road races, with the race first being held in 1985, making last year its 40th anniversary. It's also a chance to explore the quiet country lanes around Cross in Hand and Waldron, and enjoy 500 feet of ascend along the way, making it considerably hillier than a typical road 10K (something not to be missed I can assure you). Another reason for its longevity is its strong community atmosphere.

It was also, for our Club members, the last chance to squeeze in another 10k before the Club Championship deadline.

I was delighted to be joined by 6 of my fellow Club members on what was a lovely sunny day, if a tad on the hot side for a 10k.

Brilliant running by all, which included Chris Russell who secured a 1st in his age category, meaning he is well placed to pick another age award at the end of the season.

The results were as follows:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
91	Chris Russell	0:48:05
159	Sarah Cooper	0:53:59
160	Claire Styles	0:54:01
218	Pearl Manser	0:59:22
267	Yasmin Jenkins-Khan	1:05:13
273	Ron Cutbill	1:05:44
314	Bob Archer	1:13:19



17th June 2026- Crow and Gate Pub Run



Organised by Tim Probert, the 2nd in this summer's season of Pub Runs started and finished at the Crow and Gate on the outskirts of the town. With the luxury of jaunt on the forest thrown in, with free parking, it was opportunity too good to miss by many.

It was a perfect evening for a run.

Not wishing to face the disappointment of popping up to Kingstanding car park for a Mr Whippy and finding the van wasn't there, us easy pacers took a shorter route lead by Sarah Hilliard. The others taking part did not and still managed to get the drinks in before us.

As always, there was a lively atmosphere after the run and chance to catch up with fellow members
An enjoyable evening was had by all, and we are all very much looking forward to the next one.



21st June 2026 – Hawkhurst 10k



The Hawkhurst 10k is possibly a little less challenging than the race the previous week, some would say, and the 2 lap course comprises quiet country roads, with orchards, footpaths and trails through the High Weald countryside thrown in for good measure.

One of its biggest attractions though is its welcoming village atmosphere and strong community focus, with the event being organised in partnership with local organisations, to raise money for projects that benefit the village.

There is also a 5k race.

On the day, member Pearl Manser represented to Club in the 10k coming home in 1:06:38, with Jenny Ewart and Lori Tricker competing in the 5k finishing in 0:33:26 and 0:34:34 respectively. Great running ladies.

24th June 2026 – Tonbridge AC Midsummer Relays



It was bit of a scorcher, but despite the unprecedented June heatwave, a record number of 151 teams from 33 Kent and Sussex clubs competed in the third Tonbridge AC Midsummer

Relay Race, and we were amongst them. A hugely success event in the past, this year proved no exception. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all.

The course is an undulating 4km and thankfully the shade provided around the scenic course and run-through water sprinklers kept spirits high.

The Club entered three teams who all did remarkably well. Namely:

Crowborough Runners Team A (Male) placed 15 in a combined time of 0:46:23, with individual times being

Peter Noon	0:15:52
Mark Redfern	0:15:38
James Rafferty	0:14:52

Crowborough Runners Team A (Mixed) placed 57 in a combined time of 0:53:50 with individual times being

Mike Woodrow	0:16:34
Sioni Williams-Fraser	0:19:24
Byron Thomas	0:17:51

Crowborough Runners Team B (Mixed) placed 101 in a combined time of 1:01:18 with individual times being

Craig Chapman	0:16:21
John Crockford	0:22:02
Victoria Hosegood	0:22:54

Great running guys



Members Corner

New and Returning Members

A very warm welcome from us all to:

Jane Parish
Rebecca Colbran
Liz Crockford
Catherine Mann
Simon Faiers
Phillipa Bulya
Craig Chapman
Lee Noble
Ella Ayden

Frankie Goes To Brighton

So tell me, who can resist a trip to the buzzing metropolis that is Brighton where there is the promise of an extremely flat and fast course along the seafront.

If it sounds appealing you might like to know that the route heads out along Madeira Drive for a flat first mile before heading out onto the promenade. From here the 5k returns to the finish. The 10 mile, however, continues down the promenade until it reaches Kingsway car park. It then loops back around the gardens and at the peace statue the route repeats a 2nd larger lap of the gardens out to Hove Lagoon, before returning to start the journey back along the promenade to whence you came.

Representing the Club on the day were Will Isted in the 10k who came home 0:35:23 and in doing so securing himself 3rd place and Frankie Tolhurst in the 10 miler who finished in 1:23:27, sporting her Club vest for the first time.



Couch to 5k

It was an itch I had been wanting scratch for a wee while and finally decided to just get on with it. I knew that some of the local running clubs ran very successful Couch to 5k programmes and I'd mentioned the idea to a few members who thought it was a good idea. Taking a dive into the deep end I secured agreed from the Club committee for a trial programme in February of this year and by various means managed to recruit a number of willing volunteers which enabled the programme to start at the 13th April.

I am happy to say all made steady progress and we went from "running for 2 mins seems like a long time" to "I've just run 5k" on the 5th June 2026.

I have to say, it was my pleasure coaching such a lovely bunch of runners and huge congratulations once again to:

- Liz Crockford
- Carol Turner
- Catherine Mann
- Rebecca Colbran
- Lisa Richardson
- Jasmine Richardson
- Sarah Holcombe



Coast to Coast 2026 – 6 Days, 246 Kilometres and a Lot of Weather



Lisa Herbert reports:

“The first week of June, I took on the Coast to Coast trail as part of my preparation for an ultra in July. Over six running days (plus one rest day), I covered 246 km, climbed over 7,100 metres and spent more than 47 hours on my feet.

What I hadn't appreciated beforehand was just how lovely the scenery is and how much I'd love being out there – even the physical challenge was worth it.

1 (St Bees to Rosthwaite) – False Confidence

41.12km with 1201m elevation and took 7h41m

The adventure began in glorious sunshine. The weather was perfect, the scenery spectacular and everything felt surprisingly comfortable. Covering 41 km with 1,200 m of climbing, I settled into the journey and started to think perhaps this wouldn't be as tough as I had imagined.

Then, with less than 6 km to go, the route threw in a sizeable mountain climb. It was a sharp reminder that on the Coast to Coast, you're never finished until you're actually finished.

Day 2 (Rosthwaite to Bampton) – The Mountains Fight Back

Day two was the monster stage: *47 km and 2,222 m of climbing.*

It was also one of the toughest days I have ever experienced on the trails. For nearly 12 hours I endured relentless rain, while the wind on the exposed mountain tops became genuinely intimidating. Visibility disappeared at times and the gusts were strong enough to make me question whether continuing was sensible.

This was the first time I've ever seriously considered whether I might need to hunker down in my emergency bivvy bag. Thankfully good kit, experience and stubbornness got me through, but it was a stark reminder that the mountains always have the final say.

Day 3 (Bampton to Kirby Stephen) – The Weather Gods Laugh

39.66km with 879m elevation and took 7h32m

After the previous day's punishment, I started Day 3 with what can only be described as trail-running PTSD. Every cloud looked suspicious.

Naturally, the weather was wonderful. The day took me across huge swathes of empty moorland where the sheep were often my only company. The silence was remarkable. Out there, every sound becomes noticeable: the wind through the grass, distant birds and the squelch of shoes on wet ground. It was one of the most peaceful and memorable days of the trip.

Day 4 (Kirby Stephen to Reeth) – The Importance of Costa Coffee

36.47km with 1240m elevation and took 7h28m

The weather swung back the other way on Day 4. The rain returned and my mood definitely suffered. Fortunately, the route passed through a town and, like a mirage in the desert, a Costa Coffee appeared. After several days on the trail, a hot coffee (and a toastie and cake), somewhere dry to sit and a chance to warm up felt like absolute luxury.

One thought stayed with me throughout the entire journey: **At no stage would I rather have been in the office.**

Even on the hardest days, there is something liberating about waking up with a simple objective: keep moving forwards.

Day 5 (Reeth to Danby Wiske– Enjoy It While It Lasts

40.50km with 755m elevation and took 6h47m

The weather finally played nice again and the terrain became noticeably more runnable. With fewer brutal climbs, more running and the knowledge that a rest day awaited, the whole day felt easier. More importantly, I became aware that the adventure was coming to an end. For the first time I found myself thinking: *"I'd better enjoy this because it's nearly over."*

It is a strange feeling when something you've spent months preparing for is suddenly slipping away mile by mile.

Day 6 (back to collect car in St Bees and drive to Blakey Ridge) – Recovery and Reality

The rest day was welcome. Unfortunately, collecting my car proved almost as challenging as the run itself. Thanks to train cancellations, the journey involved six trains and a taxi.

One train from Leeds was heading towards Blackpool on the same day that Pride celebrations were kicking off, while several stag and hen parties appeared to have selected the very same service.

After spending days crossing empty moors and mountains, sharing a packed train carriage with half of northern England heading for a celebration made me realise how much I had grown to love the solitude of the trail.

Day 7 (Blakey Ridge to Robin Hood's Bay) – A Perfect Finish

41.84km with 851m elevation and took 5h56m

The final running day was bittersweet. The weather gradually deteriorated once again, but after a rest day my legs felt surprisingly fresh, despite the accumulated wear and tear. This became my fastest stage of the entire trip.

There is apparently a tradition of celebrating the Coast to Coast with a glass of bubbly at the end. I chose a different approach. Instead, I headed to the Victoria Hotel and ordered a seafood platter for one. I spent the next three hours sitting in what can best be described as a personal steam chamber of waterproof clothing, slowly drying out while replacing the calories I'd burned during the week.

By the time my taxi arrived to take me back to my car, I had a full stomach, dry socks and plenty of time to reflect on the experience.



What I Learned

The Coast to Coast wasn't just a training run. It was a lesson in resilience, patience and adaptability. Over the course of the week I experienced glorious sunshine, relentless rain, mountain winds, endless moors, sheep, Costa coffee, train chaos and some of the finest scenery England has to offer.

Most importantly, it gave me confidence that my next ultra-challenge is achievable. And despite the storms, sore legs, wet shoes and occasional questioning of my life choices, of course I have booked the next adventure already!



Thank you Lisa for sharing this with us. I know you will not agree, but you are a true inspiration to us all.

Man versus horse

One week after the South Downs Relay, Race Member and Club Development Manager John Everest undertook the Man vs Horse race in Llanwrtyd Wells / Brecon Beacon.

John reports

"The race took place on the 13th June, I arrived the night before and took part in the pasta party at the Neuadd Arms. This is the pub where the race was conceived 45+ years prior. The publican, Gordon Green, overheard two men discussing the relative merits of men and horses running over mountainous terrain. Soon after the race was born and there is a prize fund that grows each year a human does not win the race. The prize fund had reached £25,000 pounds before Huw Lobb won it in 2004

I had heard about the race from a friend and thought, why not. What ensued for the next 22.5 miles was some of the most disgusting terrain I have ever had to cross. If it wasn't a sheer climb, it were a boggy and rutted moorland. There were some flatter gravel paths and gentler slopes in the second half of the race, however, my legs wouldn't allow me to enjoy them. There were 80 horses and riders in all. Yes, they are on most of the same route that is run, sometimes brushing by you within inches. Rarely do you catch them on the downhills.

I'm glad to say I got round and managed to beat 4 horses back to the finish line as I dribbled in at 5 hour 22 minutes.

Incredible race, wonderful atmosphere - Tired legs"

That's amazing John, in all sense of the word.

Parkrun Update

A quick update from members Mark Chapman.

Mark writes:

"I was cycling through Europe and decided to nab my Z, as in at Zuiderpark Parkrun in Den Haag. My legs were shot from lots of cycling, my time was awful, but I'd ticked off the hardest letter."

Result!

Well done Mark and we hope the rest of the trip went well

"If you go down to the woods today"

I was contacted recently on your behalf by the Wild Spa located on the Wowo campsite, located close to the Chailey windmill.

If you are looking for something a little different and to reconnect with nature you might like to give it a try. The spa combines nature connection with a delicious spa experience that leaves you feeling relaxed, connected and nurtured.

Bringing sweat bathing treatments, practices and rituals from around the world, you can be assured to have a high quality hot/cold experience that will likely incorporate something you've never tried before.



You never know, you might see me there.

Well, that's it.

As I always say, if it wasn't for you and your amazing contributions this would be a blank page and if you think there is someone missing, it could be you. All contributions welcome. So, once again, I am eternally grateful for you getting touch and I am looking forward to putting together the next edition.

Bob

