



Crowborough Runners –March 2026 Update

Okay, so this is the bit where I normally ramble on about this and that, but this month I am not going to. Why? It's because there is so much to report. It's, well, going to take you a while to get through this bumper edition of Update. It's a bumper edition simply because of the many contributions that members have sent me, for which I am truly grateful.

Now, over to you.

28th February 2026 – Brighton Half Marathon



There is nothing like a trip to the seaside for some sun and fresh air.

Really? In March?

Well, that's not quite how it worked out for the Brighton half marathon this year, but more of that later.

One of the earlier and still one of the large-scale half marathons, this year the race attracted more than 10,000 runners, demonstrating that it still retains its popularity despite some controversy in past years. By this I mean the course was found to be slightly too long in 2012, and later, in the years 2015–2017 it was found to be 146 metres too short. This meant times from those years were not officially valid. However, rest assured, all was good this year.

If you fancy a scenic seaside course that passes landmarks like Brighton Pier and the Royal Pavilion then this race is for you. Ideal for sightseeing in good weather, which brings me to my earlier comment. It was certainly not the best of weathers on the day this year, as Sarah Cooper confirmed on the day, "it was a great race as always, but a bit wet and windy".

Nevertheless, from what I have read, the crowd support was awesome, the bands played on, the choirs sang and the bag drop ladies were full of smiles at the end despite standing out in a gale all day. Factors that mean a lot to any runner. Despite the conditions, four of the Club's members took part, with one, Naomi Noble, securing a PB for herself.

The results were for the members attending were:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
513	Sarah Cooper	1:48:14
1537	Heather Stevens	2:03:25
1637	Fay Margo	2:04:37
1770	Naomi Noble	2:06:12

And for Sarah Cooper it was two half-marathons in two weeks. Great going Sarah, and great running by everyone who took part.



4th March 2026 – Batter and Chatter Night



With the days getting longer and the nights getting shorter, and the time when the clocks go forward fast approaching, bringing with it the possibility of Wednesday runs off-road, what better excuse was there to have one more “batter and chatter” night at our favourite local chippy.

A regular for a number of years now in the Club’s social calendar, the prospect of a run and a catch-up over fish and chips afterwards was found too tempting for many of our members and the event was as well attended as always.

A good time was had by all.



8th March 2026 – Paddock Wood Half Marathon



From starting as modest club-run event in 1989, to raise funds to build a local running track, the Paddock Wood Half has grown into one of the most respected and widely attended half marathons in the South East. It is known particularly for being flat and fast, making it especially appealing to runners aiming for personal bests, or using the race as preparation for larger events such as the London Marathon, as was the case for Zach Drake and Jamie Gough who were in attendance. Also, amongst the 10 Club members on the start line was Peter Noon, who writes:

“Outside of the cross-country races, which are a firm favourite for both my son Max and I, I went to the Paddock Wood half with several other brilliant Crows.

I haven't run a flat road half ever before, as I usually prefer trail runs, so I scored a PB for the distance at 1:29:28, making good use of one of the pacers for 90% of the course.

I would recommend that race to anyone, from someone who wants to do their first half marathon to someone pushing for a best. Well supported and a very manageable course”

Great running guys and the results for our Club members were:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
385	Dean Taylor	1:25:32
427	Zach Drake	1:26:56
440	Ian Balmer	1:27:28
563	Peter Noon	1:29:28
764	Maurizio Di Santo	1:36:08
815	Byron Thomas	1:37:54
816	Oliver Welch	1:37:54
911	Peter Turner	1:39:06
1607	Jamie Gough	1:57:28
Ladies		
2241	Eileen Welch	2:23:19



22nd March 2026 – Hastings Half Marathon



Pre-dating the previous two events by some years, the Hastings Half Marathon is one of the longest-running and most distinctive half marathons in the UK, with the seed for a race being sown by the running boom that followed the launch of the London Marathon in 1981. A driving force from the first race in 1985 until his retirement as race director in 2022 was Eric Hardwick MBE, who served as race director for that entire time. Good on you Eric!

Now, if you fancy running it in future years you might like to know that part of its appeal comes from its challenging, by this they mean notoriously hilly, yet scenic course. So, if you fancy following in the footsteps of William the Bastard, or William the Conqueror as he is better known, who was not noted for his running prowess from what I understand, give it a go.

Did such a description deter five of our plucky members?

No way Jose.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
101	Mark Redfern	1:28:13
Ladies		
1032	Sarah Cooper	1:56:29
1994	Lisa Herbert	2:21:02
2289	Jayne Meyers	2:36:34
2431	Shirley Matthews	2:51:33



29th March 2026 – ESSCCL Pett

The quiet of this quiet, scenic village was broken on the morning of 29th March 21026 by a horde of cross-country runners invading the village hall, our members amongst them for, by tradition almost, the location for last race in the ESSCCL season.

I kid you not, as runners approached the start line the air was filled with a toxic mixture of Voltarol and tension, emanating especially from the Club's runners. Yes, miracles do happen, and I am sure that the 31 members attending kept reminding themselves of that fact as they made their way around the course, and that there was still a chance that the Club could still secure first place in the championship.

Sadly this was not to be. However, starting the day in 3rd place and walking away in 2nd place at the end of the season is no mean feat, and is testament to the huge effort put in by all that ran on behalf of the Club during the season. Another great season for the Crows.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
5	James Bryant	0:27:59
6	Matt McCarthy	0:28:31
10	Jonathan Rafferty	0:29:33
29	Zach Drake	0:32:09
31	Peter Noon	0:32:23
34	Mark Redfern	0:32:34
37	Gordon Berry	0:32:58
39	Adam Styles	0:33:13
69	Peter Turner	0:36:22
77	Andrew Joad	0:37:10
109	Niall Smith	0:39:38
110	Ashley Box	0:39:39
127	Alistair Lee	0:41:07
128	Bryan Tapsell	0:41:07
170	Graham Stevens	0:45:48
177	John Crockford	0:46:25
209	Ron Cutbill	0:51:57
235	Roger Stone	0:56:53
Ladies		
78	Heather Stevens	0:37:18
91	Christy Styles	0:38:19
136	Claire Styles	0:42:27
145	Alice Richardson	0:42:49
146	Ella Gavin	0:42:50
150	Louise Ellis	0:43:04
154	Bex Stevens	0:43:11
155	Lorna Buckwell	0:43:20
162	Sarah Cooper	0:44:11
175	Pearl Manser	0:45:58
217	Jayne Meyers	0:53:47
240	Shirley Matthews	0:58:42
247	Julie Erxleben	1:00:55

Also, securing honours for themselves and, as you know, points mean prizes, were the following:

Matt Mccarthy	2 nd Senior Male
James Bryant	3 rd Senior Male
Colin Tricker	2 nd Male 40
Jonathan Rafferty	3 rd Male 50
Chris Russell	2 nd Male 65
Bryan Tapsell	2 nd M70



I nearly forgot to mention, this was another stomping season for our juniors, with the results in the last race of the season being:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Under 11 Boys		
4	Max Noon	0:09:40
9	Zak Bryant	0:10:35
Under 13 Girls		
1	Charlotte Howard	0:09:52
2	Amelie Hutton	0:10:00
Under 15 Boys		
3	William Dean	0:13:59
Under 15 Girls		
3	Amelia Brown	0:16:29
Finishing Position	Name	Time
Under 17 Boys		
1	Jacob Smith	0:13:09

Also, securing honours for themselves for the season were:

Charlotte Howard	1 st Under 13 Girls
Amalie Hutton	2 nd Under 13 Girls
William Dean	3 rd Under 15 Boys
Amelia Brown	2 nd Under 15 Girls
Jacob Smith	1 st Under 17 Boys

Niall, I know, is already planning some pre-season cross-country based training and will be letting know what it is some time soon, but for now it is auf wiedersehen Pett for another year.

Members Corner

New Members

On behalf of all of us, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the members that joined us in March 2026, who were:

Hannah Slater
Adam Fee
Yasmin Jenkins-Khan
Jeff Morehen
Ben Mayhew
Julie Miller
Bambi Lee
Simon Remordina
Charlotte Roth
Claire Joannou

And it's a warm welcome back to Frazer Young.

A Case of Divided Loyalties

I usually get one shot at a half-marathon a year, and this year was a choice of, do I run with my fellow members at Paddock Wood, which, as most of you may know is an old stomping ground of mine, or go it alone and run Eastbourne. I chose Eastbourne as it was more child friendly and my little boy Enzo could come along. Enzo is my miniature dachshund by the way.

I had chosen a "winter" half this year, having run the Big Half last year when I found there were far too many distractions during the summer months; far more options to choose from other than training runs. It was also a very hot day, as other Club members who ran will testify.

For me the race this year turned out to be a "good day at the office". The conditions were just right. The temperature was as you would want it to be. Only a light breeze. I'd followed

Janie's instructions from her recent workshop to the letter, both before and during the race, and felt good all the way round. A nice surprise was that pesky hill up towards Beachy Head that used to start at Mile 3 had been taken out of the course and indeed I found myself veering off and making my way back along the promenade.

If I say so myself, I finished strong, passing another old boy who I had followed round the course, in the process. The only one more excited than me as I entered the park for the final run home was Enzo, who, if he had had the chance, would have beaten me to the finish line.

Already started planning my next half.



A Day Trip to Woking

What can I say about the Surrey half marathon that took place on 22nd March this year that you might want to know? Well,

- The course has been designed with simplicity in mind, making it fast and ideal for gaining yourself a PB.
- It's advertised as flat, but some would say not a flat as you might think.
- It has been consistently praised for being a smooth, professional, and well-managed race

However, what you really want to know is that this year the Club's attendees were Luke Forbes and Mike Woodrow, who knocked it off in 1:16:56 and 1:37:47 respectively.



Not Like Surrey at All

My good friend Alexa told me that the route of the Berlin half-marathon is not like Surrey at all, for some reason.

When I asked her why, she said think flat, wide roads and scenic landmarks all the way round.

She then said my 10 minute timer was up and promptly went quiet on me.

I have had the pleasure of visiting Berlin twice, and running alongside a section of the infamous Berlin Wall is a particular memory. I also remember feeling slightly under-dressed as I wasn't sporting a tattoo.

Two people who I am sure brought back lots of memories are members Tasha and Carl Tebbutt who ran the Berlin half marathon on 29th March 2026, with Tasha walking away with a new PB of 1:58:32.

Tasha writes:

“Thanks to Crowborough runners for helping us prepare for this half marathon!”



Tolles laufen euch beiden, as they say

It's Not All about Cross Country You Know

If you are looking for a way to run off those hot cross buns and chocolate eggs, and some of our members obviously were, you need to try the Easter Monday Lewes 10k trail run. Multi-terrain and mainly traffic free, the course takes you along tracks to the south of Lewes, taking you beside the river Ouse and in the lee of the South Downs, and then it's back to the Lewes AC running track from whence you started. It's billed as a fun run, but some participants might not be quite so sure as to where the fun bit comes in. Nevertheless, 493 runners partook on what was a sunny morn, with five of the Club's members amongst them, and doing the Club proud.

The results:

Finishing Position	Name	Time
191	Ashley Box	0:53:25
249	Bryan Tapsell	0:56:21
273	John Crockford	0:57:40
291	Alastair Lee	0:59:19
458	Sarah Cullen	1:15:14



On The Waterfront

March was a key month for new member Jeff Morehen

He writes

“March was a key month for me in my training for the Cape Town Marathon on 24 May, 2026. It is an important event for me as if the race goes well, it will be recognised as a Marathon Major which will give me my eighth “star” for completing all eight events.

My training in March included pushing up the kilometres for the longer runs, but also to get a bit more serious for the interval/speed sessions. The latter is my “weakness” and too easy to skip, so I knew that I needed some assistance and decided to join the Crowborough Runners!

I’m still an “old plodder” but already I’ve felt the benefit of coming along to a few sessions!”

Great to hear Jeff, and all the best from us all for Cape Town.

Going Overseas

Someone who left these shores this month was John Crockford, who took a trip to Espania.

John writes:

“I had the pleasure of having a long weekend in sunny Malaga, which by chance (at least that's what I told my wife Liz) included taking part in Malaga Half Marathon on Sunday 15 March. It's a very popular half marathon which attracted 12,000 and takes you supposedly around Europe's oldest continuously inhabited city. The race takes place through the city streets and along seafront with spectacular views of the ancient city on one side mixed with a view across to the Mediterranean Sea on the other.

It was an “earlyish” start for the race but the temperature did quickly push above 20c but there was a welcome sea breeze. It's a highly competitive half with the men's race winner finishing in 59:30 and the women's in 1:06:33. Unfortunately I couldn't quite keep pace with the leaders and finished in 2:16:28. Slower than I had hoped and what I thought I had finished in (chose not to look at my watch whole way round) but enjoyed it immensely all the same.

Also highly recommend is a visit to Malaga, with highlights including the Alcazaba and Gibralfaro castle, as well as the cathedral. It's a very walkable city (130,000 steps in 5 days is testament to that) but be prepared for a steep climb up to Gibralfaro castle. Plenty of great bars and tapas restaurants to hydrate and fuel both pre and post-race!”



Thank you John. Sounds very tempting

Running for Charity

As I have said in the past, if you want added pressure preparing and running a marathon, then run for a charity. Two members doing just that and running the Brighton marathon, are members Roisin Archer and Sarah Cooper

Roisin is running for the charity Jigsaw

Jigsaw is an independent non-profit organisation founded by a team of professionals and activists seeking to make a positive impact and contribution to the lives of those less fortunate. Its mission is to work together, as volunteers, to deliver life-saving and life-changing solutions to those who are facing struggle and hardship as result of war, poverty, disease and disaster. To show the world that we can create a meaningful impact on the poor and destitute from a place of compassion and care, as volunteers. To create a better world, piece by piece, where each and every volunteer, donor, advocate and supporter works hand in hand to complete the jigsaw and create significant and positive change.

If you will like to donate go to <https://2026brightonmarathonweekend.enthuse.com/pf/roisin-archer/post/19904994>.

Sarah is running for the charity Taylor Made Dreams.

Taylor-Made Dreams enables children with life-limiting illnesses to achieve their dreams when time is precious. Its aim is to enable children and their families to experience unique quality time and experiences together, which otherwise may not have been possible.

Alongside wish fulfilment, Taylor-Made Dreams provides nine other essential services to make sure families are financially and emotionally cared for throughout their difficult journey.

If you will like to donate go <http://www.justgiving.com/page/sarah-cooper-69>.

Well, would you believe it, that's it for another month.

If you have made it this far, thank you for sticking with it and I hope you enjoyed reading what we have all be up to.

There will be another edition next month, when all contributions will be welcomed.

Bob