



Crowborough Runners

Club Update May 2025

OMG it's the end of May already!

Someone, much more literate than what I am, once said that "May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes and the month of hope". I am sure that this perfectly encapsulates the feelings of many of the members of Crowborough Runners with summer running beginning in earnest and the paraphernalia associated with the dark days of winter being fully relegated to the back of the wardrobe, hopefully for a few months at least.

Summer running for many means the Sussex Grand Prix races and its thanks to Ron Grover and Carol Wilson of Arena 80 who started the whole thing in 1985, back when I was just a boy. Now comprising 24 running clubs and 12 races, of which our Club and our 10k is one, it has grown considerably over the years, and is the chance for runners to give those running clubs the much needed support they require.

Events

4th May 2025 - Haywards Heath 10-mile

By tradition almost, the Grand Prix kicks off with the Haywards Heath 10 mile race, which itself is part of the mid-Sussex Marathon Weekend. The marathon weekend gives runners the opportunity to run a marathon in chunks, being proceeded by a 10 mile race in East Grinstead the day before and concluding with a 10k in Burgess Hill the day after.



Like most people I now circumnavigate Haywards Heath via the relatively new Rocky Road. What I was to find out was there is definitely more than one rocky road tucked away in the hinterland of the

town, as you follow a route of ups and downs, twists and turns, largely off road, that is so enjoyable you get the chance to run twice.



As it turned out, the conditions were ideal for a run with the 10:30 start certainly helping warm things up, and on the day 410 runners turned up, with a duet of male runners representing the Club.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
120	Chris Russell	1:17:22
398	Bob Archer	2:01:57

Chris turned in a very respectable 4th in his age category, but for me, I have to say, not my finest hour. However, as someone else once said, at the end of the day it's just a run. Oh, and that was me by the way.

11th May 2025 – Horsham 10k

Sussex Grand Prix race two was in Horsham.



By contrast with the previous week, the temperature in Horsham could best be described as warm and at worse tropical for that time of year.

The route is a two-lap undulating, multi-terrain course on bridleways and roads around the town and this year the start/finish had been moved slightly, meaning a bigger lap of the rugby field to begin but meaning a closer finish line, after what I remember to be an uphill climb, the put it politely.

The race saw a noticeable increase in runners from the Club, with a trio of male runners taking part this time, who all turned in some amazing performances, it has to be said.

Leading the Crows home was Will Isted, followed closely by Olly Welch, coming 1st and 2nd in their age category, and with Byron Thomas putting in a very creditable performance out a field of 434 runners it was definitely a good day at the office.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
8	Will Isted	0:38:12
9	Oliver Welch	0:38:53
133	Byron Thomas	0:51:41

11th May 2025 – Seaford 10k



For those that preferred to spend their time on a run more on the horizontal, the Seaford 10k was on the same day, which is essential taking the coastal route from Seaford to Newhaven and back.

Running conditions were, as in Horsham a little roasty-toasty for that time of year but there was a sea breeze to take the edge off of it.

It was down to Tim and Mary to represent the Club in this instance and didn't they do well.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
76	Tim Probert	0:47:21
Ladies		
176	Mary Nightingale	0:58:02



Well done both.

18th May 2025 – Rye 10-mile



This brings us to race three in the SGP calendar and the historic town of Rye where smuggling used to be rife, and where struggling was rife on the day of the race, up some pretty punishing hills.

The race took place, as always, around the quiet country lanes located in the scenic countryside surrounding the charming village of Peasmarch and for the Crows it was ladies day, with Janie and Sarah C representing the Club.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Ladies		
106	Janie Perry	1:23:11
134	Sarah Cooper	1:27:52

Some pretty impressive performances once again with Janie coming in in 3rd place in her age category and Sarah setting a personal best for Rye and a 10 mile distance.

A race enjoyed by all, as Sarah reports

“Good mixed group of runners. Lots of banter before, during & after. Definitely lots of laughs enroute and needed as the hills just keep on coming. Well organised, lots of support from marshals along the way & Jaffa cakes at the finish!!”



18th May 2025 – Hailsham Community 10k

This was the third Hailsham Community Run, which boasted 1,000 participants in four races, aimed at all abilities and was designed to be fully inclusive. The 10k run comprised two laps of a challenging track.

As you see, some pretty impressive running by Crowborough Runners.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
1	Ollie Welch	0:37:12
3	Will Isted	0:37:29
44	Byron Thomas	0:49:56
Ladies		
49	Eileen Welch	0:51:25



1st June 2025 - Hastings 5-mile



I thought I would just tuck this one in.

Held in another of the Cinque Ports, along the coast from Rye, the 2025 race was the 17th iteration of an event named in memory of Nick Chandler, a former member of Hastings Runners.

It was what I would describe as an uncomplicated race that was, as advertise, fast and flat, although I could have done without, as could we all, the headwind along the promenade at the start and on the final stretch.

As you can see, it was the day a duet became a quartet, with 4, yes 4 runners, from the Club taking part.

Finishing Position	Name	Time
Men		
139	Tim Probert	0:36:18
144	Chris Russell	0:36:32
285	Kevin Battell	0:43:05
463	Bob Archer	0:53:32

It was certainly a good day for Chris coming 3rd in his age category and for me only a smidgen slower than when I ran the event 2 year ago.



Members Corner

New and Returning Members

It was a warm welcome back to:

Ceri Cook
Gareth Owen-Williams

And a welcome on board to:

Edward Moffatt
Sam Hyde
Denise Jeffery
Carol and Peter Turner

Going North of the Border

The Edinburgh marathon took place on 26th May 2025. It is billed as one of the UK's most iconic running events, offering runners a chance to take on the historic city of Edinburgh and experience its famously fast and flat course that winds past medieval buildings and sweeping city views. This is why it attracts in excess of 25,000 runners each year and this year, amongst them, was Crowborough Runner Nick Harvey.

As Nick reports

“It was a crazy race. The incessant 40+ mph headwinds over the last eight miles were crippling. Having devoured the weather forecast beforehand, I knew that gales were going to hit me, but I didn’t think they’d be so brutal. After 18 miles, it was like running through a brick wall. My average splits dropped from six minute miles to seven and a half minute miles almost immediately. I hoped there might be a

few moments of respite, but there were none. This last section was incredibly tough, both physically and mentally.

Still, it was a really enjoyable day - well organized and very well supported - and I was very happy to have got PBs for both the marathon and half marathon (2:48 and 1:18 respectively), and to have come 66th overall and 2nd M50.

This was my second time running the Edinburgh Marathon and I'll definitely be back again one day".



Now that really is impressive.

Running A Marathon In The Baltic



Riga is the vibrant capital of Latvia and a cultural gem in Northern Europe and the biggest Baltic capital. The city is rich in history and brimming with unique cultural experiences. If you are a runner, one of these is the annual Rimi-Riga marathon, which attract runners from all over the world, which this year included one from Crowborough Runners.

John Everest, the Club's Development Manager, writes:

"My wife and I set off for Riga-Latvia, taking off in beautiful British sunshine only to land in cloudy Baltic conditions.

Although taking part in a short run on Sunday (18th May), the trip was primarily planned to celebrate my birthday (40 years old on 23rd April) and our wedding anniversary (15 years on 15th May).

Come race day (Sunday) we awoke in the hotel to torrential rain outside. As the race start was 0705 in the morning, I snuck down to the breakfast room (which had been opened at 0600 for runners) early and nervously filled up on porridge and black coffee. I then donned my plastic rubbish bag and strolled into the old part of the city. There were a huge amount of bag drops and despite there being 40,000 runners it was easy to bag drop, deposit last minute nerves and join one of the three self-designated corrals.

The race starts and the route drags you across the River Daugava several times, all on closed sections of bridges, highways and motorways from the old city into the newer parts of Riga and back again. There were wonderful brass bands, singers and comedians on many locations/junctions throughout the route and in particular the highlight of a 300 strong choir that sang deafening euphoric hymns as you passed the freedom monument on two occasions.

For me, the race was one of two halves, up until mile 15 my pacing was all going to plan, despite the rain switching from torrential to drizzly and back to torrential on an almost kilometre by kilometre basis, I felt good and was floating nicely.

Some way towards mile 16 I felt a hot ping in my hip and quad that left me momentarily by the roadside. The rest of the race was unfortunately just a self-rescue exercise, stopping every kilometre to stretch out the leg, walk a bit and slowly get back to a jog. Finally crossing the line 4 hours 17 minutes and 10 seconds from when I had set off.

Although initially disappointed with the injury, the pain and time due to needing to go slow, on later reflection the race itself was a wonderful event, hugely supported and planned meticulously.

For me, as always it served as a poignant moment to reflect on my running journey, my marriage and my life thus far. There's no greater culmination of feelings than that of crossing the line, regardless of the distance, time or speed. To finish, collecting your token and being greeted by a loved one is a simple and true joy for anyone and all."



Parkrun

There has been a lot written and a lot said about the institution that Parkrun has become and one of my favourites is “Here’s to doing what others don’t – so you can do things you never dreamed of”.

What started as a run with friends now sees millions all over the world forsake a lie-in on a Saturday morning and head to a local beauty spot for 5k of pure joy.

I know that there are many regular Parkrunners who are members and we are fortunate to have so many locations to choose from so close to hand. However, for those in pursuit of completing their Parkrun alphabet, no distance is too far travel, so it seems or as they say

“Żaden dystans nie jest zbyt daleki, aby podróżować”.

I reported recently James Welbury’s excursion to The Hague in search of the elusive Parkrun beginning with the letter “Z”, there being no Parkrun yet in Zeal Monachorum, Zeals, Zelah, Zennor or Zoar in the UK. If you are willing to travel even further afield, Poland is your destination and this is where Shirley Matthews decided to take a trip to run the Zeilony jar parkrun for that all so important tick in the box.



Shirley reports:

Zeilony jar translates into to Green Park. The briefing was in Polish but they also had a young translator repeating the briefing in English. There were a lot of Brits there, some had completed their alphabet in park runs. It was a beautiful day. An undulating course with four laps around the lovely park. There were no marshals only a photographer and the race director at key turning points on the first lap. They used arrows and cones to keep the runners on the correct course. There was a lot of cheering and encouragement throughout from all. Afterwards one bar code scanner, who also sorted the tokens as he went. Fortunately there were only 68 runners.

No toilet. No coffee shop. Not important to me, but a plus factor for lots of runners.”



Brzmi trochę podstawowo, ale jestem pewien, że to dobra zabawa, Shirley.

A little closer to home, Uckfield celebrated its 250th Parkrun on Saturday 24th May 2025 and there was a “murder” of Crows there to help them celebrate, including Sarah Hilliard, who is Club Treasurer, Assistant Coach& Run Leader, and Club member since Sept 2006, who ran her first ever Parkrun.



She writes:

"I really enjoyed this friendly well organised event, despite the rain and slippery mud, and I was third in my age category! I will definitely take part in more Parkruns in future if my horse riding commitments allow"



The Further Adventures of Pebble - A Time For Reflection

Lisa Herbert writes

"From May 20th to May 24th, Pebble (2 year old Hungarian Vizsla) and I embarked on an exhilarating journey along the coastal path from Falmouth to Plymouth, covering a total of 80 miles over five days. We used a company to arrange the dog-friendly accommodation and they also moved our baggage between overnight stops - dog food alone weighed 16kg.



The Journey

The coastal path from Falmouth to Plymouth is renowned for its breath-taking scenery and challenging terrain. Over the course of five days, I spent a total of 32 hours on my feet, navigating the rugged coastline and soaking in the stunning views. The journey was not just about the distance; it was also about the elevation. With a positive elevation gain of 4,437 meters, the path tested my endurance and determination at every step. I think I broke the Vizsla, to be honest.

Day-by-Day Breakdown

- Day 1: Falmouth to Portloe 14miles/22km

The adventure began in Falmouth, where after 2 ferry rides we finally got to start 'the path' which was a mix of steep climbs and descents, offering a preview of the challenges to come. I got extremely sunburnt and went through at least 10 litres of water - Pebble came first in the water line-up and so there were some stages, where he got to drink and I didn't. I learnt the hard way regarding sun and water.

- Day 2: Portloe to Charlestown 19.5 miles/ 31.5km

The second day brought more elevation gains and stunning coastal views. The hot weather made hydration a priority, and Pebble and I took frequent breaks to rest and enjoy the scenery. I had also forgotten my cell phone charger at the hotel in Falmouth and so with 2% left, arranged for a new one to be delivered by Amazon to the next night's hotel. The path was treacherous and I had visions of falling over the edge with a dog attached without a phone for help. We only ran about 2 hours that day and it took a good 10 hours to complete.



- **Day 3:** Charlestown to Polperro 18 miles/ 28.5km

This segment of the path was particularly demanding, with several steep sections that tested our stamina. Pebble had his first puppy ice cream and I wore full sleeves and leggings because brambles and sunburn don't go well together. The picturesque village of Polperro was a welcome sight at the end of the day.

- **Day 4:** Polperro to Portwrinkle 16 miles/25 km

The penultimate day was marked by a series of rolling hills and beautiful coastal vistas. The hot weather continued, but the promise of reaching Plymouth kept us motivated. Saw kestrels and buzzards and the feeling of being alone out in nature was just so fulfilling.

- **Day 5:** Portwrinkle to Plymouth

The final stretch was both challenging and rewarding. As we approached Plymouth, the sense of accomplishment grew stronger. Pebble and I completed the journey with a mix of exhaustion and elation. He kept lying down on the pavements of Plymouth and I knew that any further would have been met with mutiny.

Reflections

This was an unforgettable experience. The combination of stunning landscapes, challenging terrain, and the companionship of Pebble made it a truly unique adventure. The hot weather was tough but the option of being drenched would have been much worse.

This journey was not just about physical endurance; it was also a mental challenge. Each day I was absolutely physically depleted but the freedom was inspiring.

For anyone considering a similar adventure, I highly recommend this route. The coastal path offers a perfect blend of natural beauty and physical challenge, making it an ideal choice for avid runners and outdoor enthusiasts alike."



Sounds amazing and so inspiring. Thank you for sharing that.

Club Matters

Cross Country

I know that for many members the cross-country season is one of their highlights of the year and full list of the 2025/26 events will be being published soon. What will not be amongst them will be an event hosted by Crowborough Runners.

As you know, the Club ran a highly successful event at Eridge Park as part of the 2024/25 season and, as such, it would be good to replicate this at some time in the future. Nevertheless, the Club currently has a vacancy for a Cross Country Manager. In addition, running the event last year proved a huge learning experience for all involved. It highlighted a number of issues needing to be addressed to guarantee the safety of the runners, ensure the event runs smoothly and the need for an appropriate organisation structure to be in place. In the absence of this, the decision was taken at a recent Club committee meeting to advise

the ESSCCL that the Club was unable to commit to running an event as part of the forthcoming season. The hope is, however, for the Club to still host an event at some time in the future.

Annual General Meeting



It has been decided to ring the changes on what we do for our annual get-together and you should have already received an invitation to the AGM and BBQ that is taking place on Wednesday 2nd July at Crowborough Rugby Club starting at 7:00 p.m.

Dates For Your Diary

15 th June 2025	Heathfield Midsummer 10k
25 th June 2025	Tonbridge AC Midsummer Relays
6 th July 2025	Bewl 15 Mile
16 th July 2025	Brighton Phoenix 10k

Finally, thank you for sticking with me to the end. There was a lot to report this month again, but keep it coming. A big thank you, as always, to all the contributors for sharing their experiences with us all.

If you think there is something missing, it could be you. Looking forward to hearing from you at sometime in the future.

Thank you for your support as always.

Bob