



Crowborough Runners

Club Update November 2024



A very warm welcome to the last Update of 2024. I am, like you, asking where the last twelve months have gone. Can it be only 12 sleeps until that white -bearded old man comes in to our life once again?

Anyway, I have started to burble and there is a lot that happened last month I need to tell you about. And, if you think it will be all about track sessions and Club runs, think again, although it is heartening to see attendance on these occasions has seen some all-time highs in recent weeks.

Events

Airman's Day Remembrance Day Service



It has been a while since I took a walk on the Ashdown Forest but I knew that on one of the many popular walks was the Airman's Grave; this being a memorial to the six air crew that died in 1941 when a Wellington bomber crashed on the southern slopes of the forest. What I

didn't know was there was an annual short, informal Remembrance Day service organised by the Friends of the Ashdown Forest.

Thanks to Steve Bolton, it was brought to my attention a while ago that the service was normally attended by a members of a number of local running Clubs, joining along with runners from Tunbridge Wells Harriers, as part of a Sunday morning run. It therefore seemed appropriate that Crowborough Runners be represented and this is what happened for the first time this year.

Starting at Gills Lap, a number of the Club's members had the opportunity on Sunday 10th November of a scenic off-road 5-mile run to the grave, together with runners from Uckfield, Lingfield and Tunbridge Wells, before attended this year's service, along with hundreds of other well-wishers. All the members that attended said it was a very moving experience and is something the Club should repeat on an annual basis. So, Sunday 9th November 2025 is certainly in my diary and I am looking forward to attending next along with many others.



Marathon Workshop_1

After the Monday night track session on 11th November members were invited to the first in a short series of an informal runners' marathon workshops being run by coaches Janie Perry and Mary Nightingale.

Janie, as some of you will know, is an expert in sports nutrition and has multiple marathon race experience, having competed in marathons all around the world. Mary has competed in multiple half marathon and 10k races, has a couple of sub-4 hour road marathons under her belt and, in addition, 3 off-road Beachy Head marathons.

12 keen runners attended and plied the coaches with plenty of questions covering:

- Pre-race nutrition;
- Carbs versus protein;
- Why we need 'good fats' with every meal and where to find them;
- Alternative protein sources to suit different diets;
- The relative merits of gels, energy drinks and shakes;
- Fuelling and hydration during the race;
- Post-race recovery; as well as
- Touching on the impact of hormonal cycles on our running.

Janie was a mine of information and provided lots of good practical advice, drawing on both her own experience and science.

There was also a brief discussion on training plans but time ran out to cover this in detail, and so it was agreed that this be covered in future sessions, along with injury prevention, the importance of cross training and rest days. These would be aimed at beginner and less experienced runners, as well as there being a separate focus on the more experienced racers working on their times.

Tips to take away from the workshop were:

- Bananas are best consumed before a race or hard exercise session;
- Porridge needs lots of good protein added to it to be of nutritional benefit;
- Cottage cheese and egg whites are excellent low fat sources of protein;
- Berries are best and chocolate is good, the darker the better!

Crowborough 5k and 10k Races

Having to be brought forward a week earlier than originally planned, the Club's 5k and 10k races were held on Sunday 17th November. I know that this is not news to a lot of the members, as many of you volunteered or ran on the day. On that subject, a huge thank you once again from members of the organising committee for giving up your Sunday morning for an occasion that would not have happened without your help. Thanks also to the bakers amongst you who contributed cakes and other goodies, the sale of which raised in the order of £250, which is to be donated equally to the Friends of Crowborough Hospital and the Kent Air Ambulance.

You don't need me to tell you that these annual races are a major fundraiser for the Club. The numbers competing were down on last year at just over 320, due to a number of factors, not least of which was the need to change the date, which meant the races clashed with a number of other races. Nevertheless, whilst the sums are still being finalised, the level of net income generated is expected to be on a par with last year, and in excess of £4,000.

As for next year, the actual date has yet to be decided. It is likely to be the 30th November 2025 but we will let you know when the exact date is known. As I have said before, the event is reliant on the goodwill of the members volunteering on the day, so please put the date for next year in your diary as soon as it is finalised.





There were also a number of members who were able to find someone to volunteer on their behalf and competed in the races. A huge well done to those that did.

Those who ran were:

Crowborough 5k

	Place	Name	Chip Time
Junior Female			
	15	Amelia Brown	0.24.09
	25	Anna Ivaldi	0.28.57
	36	Penelope Noble	0.32.55
Junior Male			
	8	Jasper Cassidy	0.20.59
	11	Charlie Workman	0.23.07
	13	Sam Buckwell	0.23.11
Ladies			
	18	Christy Styles	0.25.27
Male			
	21	Lawry Freeman	0.27.20
	47	Dan Hare	0.34.38

Crowborough10k

Junior Male			
	13	Luca Picco	0.40.06
	22	Jacob Smith	0.42.31
Ladies			
	143	Mary Nightingale	0.56.44
Male			
	6	Ollie Welch	0.37.25



Particularly well done to Ollie Welch, who came 1st in his age category, and Mary Nightingale, who just missed 1st place in hers by 4 seconds. Can you Adam and Eve it, I hear you say.

Can I also thank those of you that sent me photographs of the event. These I will be uploading to the Club website following successful negotiations with the British Museum for the ones that are on there at the present time.

Hartfield Honey Run

As mentioned previously, the move in the date of the Club's annual races, meant it clashed with a number of other events, which also meant I, for one, was otherwise committed. This meant that foregoing the undulations of my home turf, meant seeking out the hills and dales of Hartfield and the surrounding area. The course for the 10k had changed since I ran it last and they have added on a half-marathon as well. Nevertheless, whilst the event had grown in size in the intervening years, still retained that home grown feel, with all proceeds going to support local charities. I managed to knock out a time of 1.14.11, which based on the fact that we seemed to be ascending for the first 4k before things got a bit more sensible, I thought not too shabby.

Definitely one for next year, if anyone would like to join me.



It also appears that I was not the only one playing truant that day.

Marden Half Marathon

If you were anywhere in the vicinity of Marden, in Kent, on 17th November, there is a good chance you would have come across your fellow member, Ceri Cook, who was playing the “lone wolf”, like what I had done, who was running the half-marathon.

Well done Ceri, a very creditable performance, coming in at 2:00:25. Don’t tell me, she was aiming for under 2 hours. Don’t you just hate it when that happens?

Batter and Chatter Night

Another social run and a catch-up afterwards at Fisssh took place on 20th November. A very popular occasion, and we must be into our second season of this event, all stemming from a passing comment from Francis Leary, as I recall.



Snape Wood Cross Country

It was at this point I was hoping to report on the Snape Wood Cross Country that was planned to be held on 24th November, but it was not to be, all due to storm Bert. And so oozing through the mud in the pouring rain and wind had to be swapped for a lay-in in the warm. Still better safe than sorry, as my old dad used to say. He was called Bert as well, by the way.

Ah well, at least there was New Place Farm to look forward to December.

Other News

London Marathon Ballot Result

It is almost a tradition now that the winner of the Club' ballot for its place in the forthcoming London Marathon is announced after the prize giving at the Club's 10k event.

This year there were four entrants that met the criteria for application and I am pleased to announce the lucky winner was none other than Lou Ellis, who assures me she has already started her training. This means she will be joining Jo-jo Smith, who had to defer her place from this year, and Louise Knapp, who is running for the British Legion.

As a reminder, if you want to enter the ballot next year, you must

- Have entered the Public ballot and been unsuccessful;
- Not been awarded the Club place the year before;
- Have been a member for at least a year at the time of application;
- Must have volunteered, or someone has volunteered on your behalf, for the Club 10k race.

South Downs Way Relay

It's a way off until June 2025, but having made the commitment to hire a mini-bus for the event, it was thought sensible to know we at least had a team.

Many thanks once again to those that submitted an entry via the survey I sent out. As you would expect, those entering came up against some strong competition and all who entered were worthy of a place, but unfortunately only a small number of places were available.

I can now announce that the mixed team for next year's Club entry is as follows:

Eileen Welch	Team Captain
Maddie Price	
Janie Perry	
Sioni Williams - Fraser	Reserve
Pete Woodward	
Chris Price	
Neil Couchman	
John Everest	Reserve

SPOND

In was during November that an invitation to join the Crowborough Runners Group on the SPOND was extended to all members. This means that the Club now has one place where a member can find out, and there can be a two-way communication, on what is going on in the Club.

I am pleased to say that when I last looked there was an 80% take up of the app and the feedback I have been receiving is extremely positive. It is early days but I am sure we will find more ways over time on how to use this extremely useful tool. I have already started to post up the plan for my forthcoming track session, which means you know what to expect on the night, and if you can't make it, you have a session to work to that week in your own time.

Advanced Track and Speed Session

The 27th November saw the introduction of an additional track session into the Club's calendar. Taking place every Wednesday from now on, starting at 7:00 pm on the track at Goldsmith recreation Ground, James Welbury will be leading a track session, geared to the specific needs of our more advanced runners, looking to improve their marathon performance.

If you go along you can expect a hard session, based mainly on a number of repeats.

Members Corner

New Members

I am delighted to say that the size of the Club continues to grow and in November we were delighted to welcome:

- Chris Zeigler,
- Matt Kedwards, and
- Andy Jones.

Canicross Half Marathon



If you have not heard of it, canicross is the sport of cross country running with dogs, which has become a popular stand-alone sport, especially in the UK.

Some of you will have met Lisa Herbert when she organised this year's Summer Runs. At that time you will also have met Pebble, her canine companion.

The two of them have taken up canicross with a vengeance.

Lisa writes

"Having taken a year off of running socially, or entering races, while Pebble grew big enough to participate, we completed our first canicross half marathon on Saturday, the 9th November.

The South Downs Trail Run was hosted by Run Rebel UK and started from Goodwood Race course, making the best use of the South Downs. We avoided rain and it was cold enough not to sweat too much but not too cold that we needed doggy-jerseys.

The two biggest challenges were:

- The start! The trick is to keep away from chaotic whirling canines baying to be off, and just keep your dog as calm as possible.
- Keeping the puppy-petrol maintained. We stopped at 5k, 10k and 18k for biltong (like us, he needs a gel or three) and lashings of water. I carried extra water just in case.

Pebble did so well and I loved running this route with him. The scenery was breath-taking, the marshals were lovely and the water stops really looked after both 2-legged and 4-legged runners. At about 18k, he started to flag. Lots of praise and encouragement from supporters got him to the finish line, where he pepped up and finished at full tilt.

He slept all the way home and was ready for action as soon as the car stopped. Next is Run Rebel UK's Wittering Beach Run at an easy-peasy 15km, on the 23rd November 2024."

Going That Extra Mile or 100.



Fellow runner, Niall Smith, joined the Club relatively recently and is on a running journey he would like to share with you.

He writes

"I'm actually on a really interesting running journey (well it's interesting to me). My main goal is to do a 100-Mile race next June 2025 (Centurions South Downs Way 100), so everything is a build up to this really.

Over this year, I've been building my experience and distances - I've completed:

- South Downs Way 50 Mile in May 2025
- Maverick South Downs 54k in October
- Maverick Jurassic Coast 56k in October (my wife's first ultra)

Sadly I was meant to complete the South Coast Challenge 100km in September, however due to some nutrition issues I had to pull out of the race. However, I took huge learnings from this and I am treating this more as a learning curve rather than a failure. It's only made me want to push on and keep exploring trail running even more.

So the next challenge is the UK Ultra Winter 55 miler. After, a mini training block after the Jurassic Coast race, and a last big weekend of mileage, it has been tapering all the way to race day on 7th December 2024. I know in myself that this is a tough challenge (mentally and physically), however it's part of the fun really to explore & find out what you can really do. There will be lots of highs and lows through the race, I won't know when they will come, but I know I've got to push through the lows and really enjoy the highs. I hope I can come back to you and say I did it but let's watch this space..."





Thanks Niall, I will make sure that I include an update in the December Update, which will be winging its way to everyone in the New Year. And by the way, you will shortly be seeing more of Niall, as he the Club's latest recruit to the coaching team.

And that's it from me, except to say on behalf of myself, my coaching colleagues and the Club committee, a big thank you for your support during the past year, as having you there makes our job so much easier, and very happy Christmas, and we hope you achieve the PB of your dreams in the New Year

Bob