



RUNNING SHORTS

- the Newsletter of Harlow Running Club

Number 8

January 2009

Editorial

I hope that you all had a fine Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Now in 2009 there are a whole set of new opportunities for you. Read on!

New Member

A big welcome to Katie Syme.

Dates for Your Diary

22nd January - AGM at Mark Hall.

22nd January - last votes for Club Person of the Year 2008

27th February - 20th Anniversary Dinner & Dance

26th July - Harlow 10

Healthy Living, 24th January

The Club is participating in the Healthy Living Day at Harlow Library on Saturday 24th January from 10am-3pm. Volunteers are needed to staff the exhibit. If you would like to help, please contact Martin or myself as soon as possible.

Your French Running Mates

As some of you might know we divide our time between sunny Harlow and the even sunnier South

of France where we have a house in the Pyrenees. When we're in France the running doesn't stop and I thought you might be interested in what it's like over there.

Broadly speaking French races are classified into three categories.

Road: from 10k to 100k with the usual mixture of half marathons and marathons. Trail: a mixture of road and country (usually mountain).

Mountain, ie up to the top and back!!

Races are normally organised by host villages or towns so the distances can be quite eccentric. It's not unusual to find yourself running 8k, 13k, 17k simply because that's twice round the village or whatever.

There's more of a sense of occasion with a French race than its British counterpart. Here we tend to race, have a cup of tea then slink away.

In France there'll be the local brass band, the Mayor, and the village square bedecked for the occasion.

It's also common to finish the race with a meal where tables are laid out in the square and copious amounts of wine flows alongside bread, cold meats and/or paella. The wine

doesn't only flow after the race however. Many of the feed stations, especially for the trail races, will have wine, bread, cheese and sometimes sausages! On one memorable occasion I was offered not just wine but champagne and muscat. I couldn't face it as I was finding it difficult enough to breathe let alone knock back the local red but there were plenty of French runners who were and seemed to thrive on it! The age categories in France are also different, at least for vets. Both men and women start at 40 and thereafter go up in ten year increments; V1, 40+, V2, 50+, V3, 60+ and so on. When the results are published, usually very quickly and efficiently, you scan the age categories to see where you placed; 17th V3 for example, before noting you were 478th overall. Somehow 17th always seems more satisfying than 478th! Now that Joanne has reached the magic age entitling her to V3 status she's finding herself, if not winning, then placing, which means the presentation ceremonies are now more relevant. These have far more elan and pomp than in Britain. Her name is announced to cheers (everyone's drunk!!), she mounts the podium, often to a fanfare, then has her cheek kissed, twice, by an assortment of dignitaries and sponsors, usually not less than ten and sometimes twice as many. It's not uncommon for her to return not just with her trophy but also a shaving rash! We're very fortunate to have the range of races available to us, ranging from fast flat courses by the sea to beautifully scenic courses in the mountains. The most well known

and prestigious is the Ronde Ceretanne. This is a 20k race through the town of Ceret, up the mountain and back, or a 6k through the town, where runners from all over France, indeed all over Europe, compete. Its attraction is not just the race, but the fact that Ceret celebrates it for the entire weekend. On the Saturday there's a huge market with bands and entertainers, with running workshops (in French). In the evening there's a pasta party with flamenco dancers, fireworks and gallons of wine and this is where the runners from all over meet and get to know each other. On Sunday morning it's the race with about 800/900 entrants, followed by the meal in the square for about 500 where again the wine flows in abundance and bands try to outplay each other. It's held on the 3rd Sunday in September so if anyone fancies it (Karen?), you'd be more than welcome to come over and join us. Ryanair fly to Perpignan for peanuts and we can put some people up, others can camp in our garden or if you wish, we can always find you accommodation at local b&b's. So if you want to experience the French running scene rather than just reading about it, over to you. Bonne Annee 2009!

Peter Mills

Grange Farm & Dunmow Runners Grand Prix 2008

Congratulations to Linda Selby for winning the Ladies Veterans category.

Club Person of the Year 2008

Votes for this need to be cast by 22nd January. The AGM will be your last

chance. Either see me on one of the training evenings, or e-mail me.

Howard Williams Trophy for the Best Road Race in Essex

The shortlist is the Great Bentley Half Marathon, the Southend 10k, the Tiptree 10 and the Billericay 10k. If you want the Club to vote for one of these, please let Martin or myself know before 18th January so that we may submit the Club's vote by 20th January.

Club Handicap 2009

No-one has made any comment about a possible change in the format from 2008, nor has anyone volunteered to organise the Handicap in 2009. There will be a discussion about this at the AGM.

Essex Road Championships 2009

If you wish to score in this, you must enter the races prior to the day. The races are:

- Great Bentley Half Marathon – 8th February
- Essex 20 (Great Bromley) – 1st March
- Halsted marathon – 10th May
- Thrift Green 10k – 19th July
- Tiptree 10 - October

Club Championship 2009

The format will be the same, with the best four scores (on an age-related basis) from 7 races to count. The qualifying races will be different and are:

- Great Bentley Half Marathon (8th February)
- 5k - for Ladies, one race in the 5k series; for Men - our own race organised on one Sunday or evening (May/June)

- Tilty Hilly 5 (June)
- Felsted 10k (July)
- Tiptree 10 (October)
- 20 Miles (any)
- Marathon (any)

First Aid Training

The Club is planning some First Aid training. The British Red Cross can run a basic two-hour course at Mark Hall if we can get a minimum of 8 trainees. It could be either on a Saturday or on an evening. The Club will pay the fees.

If you are interested, sign the sheet on the Mark Hall Sport Centre noticeboard.

Training Grants

There are two opportunities to apply for training grants if you wish to take up some training as a volunteer, are working in or looking to work in sport. One grant is from activeharlow for 50% of the cost or £200 whichever is lower and must be applied for by 20th February. The other is from sportessex for 75% of the cost or £300 whichever is lower and the deadline for applications is 2nd February.

Courses supported must have started by 31st March.

The Club is also willing to consider contributing towards anyone interested in following a course. If you want more details, please contact Martin.

Contributions

Articles on running topics are welcome. Please send them to the Editor, Colin Moody (cam_harlow@yahoo.co.uk), preferably in a Word Document by 31st January for inclusion in the February issue.

Club Web Site

www.thehrc.org.uk

