

# E-BULLETIN

## 1 APRIL 2020



# CHARITY YEAR KICKS OFF AMONGST HOME COMFORTS



# VIRTUAL BINGO (NOT) RUN

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## Chairman Chat

### Phil Reay

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*Phil joined the club in 2010 and from 2016-18 was the Men's Team captain. Outside of running he works in Marketing, Sales and Business development roles. Phil enjoys long distance running and has completed over 59 marathons, including the ultramarathon Marathon des Sables in 2016.*

*chairman@readingroadrunners.org*

I hope you're doing okay - both you and your families!

I'm sure you all continue to keep up-to-date with the news reports around COVID-19. Please continue to follow the UK Government website <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> , for the latest updates on this challenging situation.

Like you, the way I live my life has changed and I'm learning to adapt. Everyone's situation is different. The impact on all of our health and those most vulnerable in our society is top priority and the instruction for the health authorities reflects that prioritisation. For me, I'm most concerned about the vulnerable members of my family. I now call my mam even more than normal although not travelling to the North East for mothers day was particularly hard emotionally, it was an easy decision in the circumstances. Many of you will have made similarly difficult but necessary decisions.

The weather has been kind over the last week and we're in a fortunate position where we can still go out for our exercise, whether that be walking, running or cycling. Exercise certainly helps with clarity of thought and it is important to maintain physical and mental wellbeing. I'm continuing to also encourage non-runners in my friendship circle to exercise – replace the walk around the shops with a walk around the block to stay active. I find the streets to be eerie and now, if running alone, I tell someone where I'm going to be running, roughly how long I will be and ask them to track me via WhatsApp location. It's nice to get out in the fresh air; it's more important to stay safe, be kind, and look after each other.

I've been impressed with the creativity within the club and it's made me smile seeing how many of you have been using technology to stay connected. To see so many Reading Roadrunners from all areas of the town connecting so effectively given the current environment we're all in really is heartwarming. Thanks to Women's Team Captain, Sam Whalley, who this week organised a Virtual Fitness Bingo raising over £700 for this years nominated club charity, Parenting Special Children. I'm sure there will be many fun stories of virtual activities over the coming weeks.

I've accepted this situation will last for the foreseeable future. I'm feeling fiercely determined, strong and resilient. My focus remains entirely on what I CAN DO. Stay connected - the spirit and the camaraderie of the Green Vests of Reading Roadrunners does not stop. This team, this community, continues virtually until such a time when we can all be together again at an event. Thanks to our new Newsletter Editor, Ben Fasham, for producing this weekly ebulletin.

To all those members working for the NHS, to care workers, to those working in the food and pharmaceutical supply chain, to those working to speed up the essential manufacturing of equipment in the fight against CV19 and to all other key workers. THANK YOU.

STAY AT HOME. STAY STRONG.

Phil

chairman@readingroadrunners.org

## Editor's Note

**Ben Fasham**

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Hello all,

Week 2 of Lockdown and I hope everyone's adjusting to the new reality, and enjoying whatever running and exercising you're managing to do. It's a very strange experience being out at lunchtime and the roads are just as quiet as at 6am, but it certainly makes for a more pleasant run.

Thanks to everyone who's contributed to this week's E-bulletin – it's a bit slimmer than last week's because there are no committee minutes or results to fill up the pages. However there's still plenty going on, and you'll find some of it here. **Sam Whalley**'s been Face-stalking the female side of the club to see what they've been getting up to with their extended downtime, while **Alan Freer** reports from one of the most socially-distanced races in the country. **Mark Apsey** starts up what we hope might be a regularish column with a delicious-looking curry dish, and **David Dibben**'s staying on top of the race organisers' scene to make sure we've got everything up-to-date when it comes to postponements and cancellations.

There's also a report from Sam on the 2020 Virtual Bingo (Not) Run, which took place on Sunday morning, looked great fun, and kicked off the club's charity efforts for the year in style (with all due respect to the post-Bramley tuck shop). If you weren't able to take part but would like to donate to Parenting Special Children, then the link is included at the end of Sam's article.

Please do continue to send in articles, race reports etc. Aside from the topics I mentioned last week (Favourite PB, worst race, first Marathon/Ultra, etc), how about getting the grey matter moving on one of these topics:

- Book reviews (running-related, preferably)
- Vaporflys helped my running, and I have the data to prove it
- I'm learning something new during the Lockdown
- Or anything else you fancy!

There are still a couple of submissions from a while back that haven't appeared yet, and these will appear next week.

All the best,

Ben

[newsletter@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:newsletter@readingroadrunners.org)

## NEWSFLASH – VIRTUAL NATIONAL ROAD RELAY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Who's feeling speedy? The southern and national spring road relays were cancelled this year, but there is still a chance to compete. All you have to do is register via the link below, run 5k any time between 00:01 on Saturday 4th April, and 23:59 on Wednesday 8th April. Runs from the fastest 12 men and 6-12 women will count - only one attempt per person. Individual runners should upload their runs directly to Strava via the opentrack link below.

Don't go thinking you can run it all downhill, as that won't count! All runs MUST be completed solo, and UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should anyone be making unnecessary journeys to their 'course' or gathering with others at the beginning or end of their run. No driving to Dulwich Park! Choose your own 5k route, and go run it. Enjoy!

<https://results.opentrack.run/x/2020/GBR/vnrrc/>

## Ladies' Captain's Report

Sam Whalley



*Sam joined the club in 2015 just after her first marathon. She has 3 teenagers, 2 dogs and one husband; she works part-time as a secondary school teacher. She is a huge fan of XC running, doesn't mind swimming and is a fair-weather cyclist. When not running, she will quite often be baking.*

*teamcaptains@readingroadrunners.org*

There may be no races on the calendar, but fret not, our women have been active, and achieving great things as usual, and I don't just mean being the last one standing during PE with Joe Wicks. My own garden has not had so much attention in years.

**Gemma Buley** was proud to have completed a Disney+ ultra marathon of 7 Disney films in one day - High School Musical 1-3, Cheetah Girls 1-3 and Go Figure. Her thoughts on the matter: "I don't regret a thing."

**Catherine Leather** won a 2-hour Monopoly marathon, and felt so strong that she could have carried on, had the grandchildren not needed to go to bed. Good work, Catherine!

**Gill Manton** is focusing on strength training this season, but has achieved a daily whole-family walk, while also managing to watch 14 episodes of Line of Duty in one weekend. Well done, Gill!

**Emma Caswell** beat Peter Pan in a tower-building contest at school. If that wasn't enough, Emma was also the first 'hen' to get into her fancy dress outfit for a cancelled hen weekend - wow!

**Claire Seymour** has not only been managing to run with boyfriend Lance on a regular basis - result! - but has also been using virtual communications technology for the first time, and become something of an expert - could this replace running marathons as Claire's favourite thing?

**Caroline Jackson** has replaced marathon running and travelling to sunny climates, temporarily at least, with a re-found love of cooking, scoring huge success with her first Spanish tortilla. Next on Caroline's calendar is a Cypriot Beef Stifado - we will look forward to seeing the result of that.

**Coach Sarah** Dooley has fixed a washing machine for the first time - amazing! - and also set a PB for arriving at Tesco - 6am! Great effort, Sarah, you always were an early bird!

**Claire Woodhouse** has been on an epic cleaning spree - no mean feat with two young children - and arranged some new gin glasses on the top of the cupboards, as well as hanging a print 4 months after it was received as a birthday present. Fantastic!

**Zoë Browne's** team (she and **Nicola Gillard**) completed this year's Bingo (Not) Run in 19 rounds. That's a PB, being a whole lap/round sooner than Zoë's Team Bramley last year. Well done, Zoë!

Nicola Gillard has also excelled herself with the amount of patience required to teach her daughter to ride a bike. Excellent work - that definitely deserves a medal!

And finally, **Alex Bennell** achieved a financial PW with a complete weekly shop in M&S. A small price to pay avoid the queues, Alex, I'm sure, and you'll be back to your normal spending in no time.

Well done, everyone. Keep those achievements coming in!

## Alexa's Advice – Covid-19 and Running

### Alexa Duckworth-Briggs

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*This week, Coach Alexa shares some links and resources covering various aspects of the CV-19 experience for Runners.*

The impact on your psychology of the changes and unknowns around running, racing and goals:

<https://performanceinmind.co.uk/2020/03/12/racing-interrupted/>

A good summary of the impact of the virus on running (USA specific aspects to the article):

<https://www.runnersworld.com/news/a31439358/running-during-coronavirus/>

This physiotherapist is sharing home workout suggestions for endurance athletes:

<https://twitter.com/theEndurancePT>

*Alexa is a UK Athletics Coaching in Running Fitness specialising in Endurance Events working privately and volunteering for Reading Roadrunners. She's also a Sports and Remedial Massage Therapist, Nutrition Adviser and Outdoor Leader.*

*You can find out more about her here: <https://www.ontherunhealthandfitness.co.uk>*

I've had questions about the impact of training on the immune system especially longer periods of intense training; some thoughts.

The science isn't 100% cut and dried on this. There are some studies that show there is a small dip in immune system function after sessions that involve long period of intense effort - e.g. long threshold reps. Also some evidence to show that peak training blocks, e.g. final block of high distance and intensity before a race, can also have a more prolonged, negative, impact on the immune system. However this is relative - if that training is normal for you then it won't have as big an impact.

The general consensus is that, for the immune system, the benefits of training outweighs these risks, but it's probably best not to start training really hard or for extended periods of time now; err on the side of caution.

A nice article that gives more information is here;

<https://thegrowtheg.com/you-cant-boost-the-immune-system-but-you-sure-can-suppress-it/>

## Loch Ossian Challenge

Alan Freer

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Wild Scottish mountains, a beautiful wilderness Loch, a 7.6 mile trail run challenge, over twenty miles from the nearest town and road, yet easily accessible by public transport.

This is the Loch Ossian Challenge, which comprises a circuit of the remote Loch Ossian on a good gravel track, starting and finishing at the front door of the iconic Loch Ossian Scottish Youth Hostel, pictured above. The challenge has been in place for over forty years, and all those who succeed in running the circuit in under an hour, get a place in the record books kept there.



Being in Scotland last Spring, I arranged to spend one night there, and to try the run after seeing it featured in Trail Running magazine. Whilst there are no roads anywhere near, the renowned

scenic West Highland railway line has a station at remote Corroul, just one mile away down the path. Having spent the earlier part of the day walking around the foothills of Ben Nevis (the low cloud making a second summit visit pointless), I arrived at the hostel early evening, then set off shortly later on a run attempt.

I had seen it was advertised as a seven mile run, so set off at a suitable easy pace, that would get me round in just under the hour. The wide track undulates up and down a fair bit, and at the halfway point at the loch far end, I was already on 33 minutes. So I sped up a bit, and with wide open vistas you can see the finish hostel nestled between the mountains throughout the last three miles, but never getting any closer. I finally touched the finish door at one hour three minutes, so missed the target, but it was an absolutely beautiful experience. The evening afterwards was very sociable with a wide variety of different visitors and nationalities staying, and of course if you have a clear sky in the wilderness, you can actually see all the night sky stars, unpolluted by background light.

The whole experience can even be done in a weekend from the south. The Caledonian Sleeper train from London Euston each night calls at Corroul each morning on its way to Fort William, so you can easily do a trip up Ben Nevis on a Saturday, stay at Loch Ossian the night, run Sunday, take in a Munro or two, and take the train back to London overnight on a Sunday evening.

Now that I know the distance is actually 7.6 miles rather than just a 7, it certainly gives me a good reason to go back there again shortly, and give it another try!

Alan

## Race Diary

David Dibben

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Roadrunners looking for an autumn marathon should be spoilt for choice. Following the postponements due to Coronavirus, the new-look schedule shows a packed programme.

Here's the list of new dates later in the year for **marathons** which are traditionally staged in the spring:

August 16th: <b>Dorset Ooser</b>	October 11th: <b>Manchester</b>
September 6th: <b>Milton Keynes</b>	October 18th: <b>Paris</b>
September 14th: <b>Boston</b>	October 25th: <b>Newport</b>
September 20th: <b>Brighton</b>	October 25th: <b>Rotterdam</b>
October 4th: <b>London</b>	November 15th: <b>Madrid</b>

These events have elbowed their way into the space which is normally the preserve of the three autumn majors...

September 27th: <b>Berlin</b>	November 1st: <b>New York</b>
October 11th: <b>Chicago</b>	

Of course, you can't run a marathon without a long warm-up rehearsal race and the good news is that a couple of old favourites will be staged six months later than usual. The **Dorney Lake 16/20/24** prep race will now be on September 5th while the **Datchet Dashers'** popular 20-miler should be rescheduled in late August or early September.

New dates also found for other big local races include:

August 16th: <b>Wokingham 5k and 10k</b>	October 25th: <b>Woodley 10k</b>
September 20th: <b>Eastleigh 10k</b>	November 1st: <b>Reading Half Marathon</b>

Races which have been **cancelled** — rather than postponed — in the last few weeks, include the **Fleet Half Marathon, Reading 10k, Shakespeare Marathon, Beaconsfield 5, Cranleigh 15 and 21, Cyprus Marathon, Combe Gibbet to Overton 16** and the **Rome Marathon**. Some of these events have already refunded race entry fees while others are offering deferrals to 2021.

Organisers of **Endure 24** have earmarked the weekend of September 12th/13th as a provisional new date for their massive event, while the **London Landmarks Half Marathon** are still trying to find a slot to re-stage.

Another big London race looking for a new date in the autumn is the **Vitality 10000**. Six men and six women Roadrunners had been lined up to contest what is the British 10k championships on May 25th.

Road relay racing has also been decimated by the pandemic. The **Masters Road Relays, Southern 12/6 stage Road Relays** and the **National Road Relays** have all been lost in the last few weeks.

Now ladies captain Sam Whalley, who spent a lot of time and effort organising entries for those cancelled fixtures, is pessimistic about the chances of the staging of the **Ridgeway Relay**. Roadrunners are due to defend their title in that iconic event on June 28th but the organisers are making no decisions until May. Sam said: "To be honest that's quite late for people who need to recce their legs."

With all running events suspended until at least June 1st there is a huge cloud of uncertainty hanging over the **Roadrunners' club championship**. Two races have been staged but, of the remaining 10, the next four have already been called off. These are:

April 10th: **Maidenhead 10**

May 10th: **Reading 10k**

April 19th: **Highworth 5**

May 17th: **Hook 10**

Of these Maidenhead and Highworth are both looking at their options for later in the year while organisers of the Reading 10k have said that there will be no rescheduling. They are already planning next year's race.

October 11th is being discussed as a provisional new date for the Hook 10 but as that is the same day as the Reading 020 10k, the Oxford Half Marathon and the Manchester Marathon — not to mention the Hampshire Cross Country League which kicks off that weekend — it may not prove universally popular.

Meanwhile Roadrunners general secretary **Bob Thomas** said: "I'm not planning to do anything about the club champs until it calms down a bit.

"If we are let out of captivity later in the year we can have a look at what's left and decide what to do then, if anything."



## Virtual Bingo (Not) Run

Sam Whalley

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1. squat
2. left lunge
3. press up
4. star jump
5. c crunch
6. split squat (right)
7. alternating lunges
8. figure of 8
9. split jack
10. bicycle crunch
11. sumo squat
12. right lunge
13. asymmetric press up (left)
14. tuck jump
15. side crunch
16. split squat (left)
17. curtsy lunge
18. asymmetric press up (right)
19. twist jump
20. knee to elbow

For five years now the Bingo Run has been a firm favourite in the Woodley racing calendar. What started off as a largely Woodley parkrun event, has extended to include club runners and generally anyone else they can rope in.

Runners would be given 3 numbers between 1 and 20, and then would run a roughly one mile loop around Southlake (from my house), picking a counter, numbered between 1 and 20, out of their bag, after each lap. They would keep going until all of their numbers had been drawn. With the average number of laps always seeming to be 16, this is a tough gig, whether solo or in a team. In the history of the event, only once has a team finished in 3 laps, and that was in the first year.

The idea of a Virtual Bingo Run, where runners would run a mile loop or out-and-back from their own individual houses, was welcomed, but before the date arrived, despite it only being a week away, distancing rules had changed, and we had been asked to #stayathome, making it impossible to leave our houses multiple times to run.

Plan B, then, was the Virtual Bingo (Not) Run. Coach **Katie Gumbrell** devised 20 exercises, and we were required to complete 5 reps of each exercise per round. This did not appeal to all, but there were still 32 teams signed up.

We gathered online via Zoom, and it was so nice to see everyone 'together' after what seemed like such a long time already. Many of us wore our green vests too.

Some decided quite quickly that they'd either just do their own thing, or do as many exercises as they could in their own time. Which was fine. One pulled out early in fear of injury, and opted to knit 1, perl 1 instead! The focus was supposed to be on fun, and raising money for the club charity. Ordinarily we would hold a raffle, but the circumstances dictated that we just make a donation in order to take part.

So the results. Hmm, well, these are a bit sparse, as some were picking their own numbers at home. All we really know is that everyone finished, or finished to the best of their ability, at least. What follows may be hugely inaccurate...

First to finish were charity co-ordinator, **Rachel Helsby** and husband Nathan, in only 6 rounds. I say only, this was still 600 exercises between them. Mum and son team, **Corinne** and **Morgan Rees**, also completed 6 rounds, albeit on their treadmill. **Caroline Hargreaves** and boyfriend Pete were done in 8 rounds, and

**Sian James** in 9. Katie herself, with her sidekick **Chris**, completed in 10, I believe, as did **Peter Reilly**. Not so lucky were **Team Manton** and **Hannah McPhee** (13), and **Jo Sollesse** (13), while at the seriously unlucky and wishing they'd never started end of the scale were **Pete Morris** (16), **chairman Phil** and **Christina** (16), **Nicole Rickett** (17), **Paddy Hayes** (17), **Suzanne Bate** (18), Nicola Gillard and Zoë Browne (19), **Team Higgswood** (19), and me (19), although I didn't have time to do them during the event, so did them later in the day! Somewhere among this was also the **entire Ganpatsingh family**, **Rachael Derry** and **John Bullock**, **Sarah Richmond-Devoy**, and Alex Bennell. Well done, all!

Having to complete the full 20 rounds, a whopping 2000 exercises, were **Cathrin Westerwelle** and boyfriend Dan, **Annette Russell** and friends, and a team made up of **Joanne Kent**, **Sarah Alford**, **Sarah Bate** and **Steph Smith**. Last to finish, and crowned unluckiest of all, were **Juliet Fenwick**, along with her husband and brother.

Needless to say, Katie's offer of a Zoom stretch the following day was snapped up!

If the event proved anything, it was that you don't have to be in the same room to be sociable; it was a lot of fun too. What's more, over £700 was raised for the charity - a great start to the year!

Roadrunners can donate direct to our Charity of the Year, Parenting Special Children, through this link [https://app.thegoodexchange.com/fundraising-profile/364/rachel-helsby/17609/sleep-clinics-and-workshops-for-children-and-young-people-with-special-needs?fbclid=IwAR2p9eJ\\_i4TxKDonF8G7ISju27JCddiP1-OfE2102E3MfnxTMCfRvSeKMQ](https://app.thegoodexchange.com/fundraising-profile/364/rachel-helsby/17609/sleep-clinics-and-workshops-for-children-and-young-people-with-special-needs?fbclid=IwAR2p9eJ_i4TxKDonF8G7ISju27JCddiP1-OfE2102E3MfnxTMCfRvSeKMQ)

## Apsey's Recipes

Mark Apsey



*Mark is a self-employed chef specialising in high-end dinner parties, and a former Head Chef at L'Ortolan Restaurant in Shinfield – so not only is he one of Berkshire's top runners, but also one of its best culinarians. In a semi-regular series for the E-bulletin, Mark brings us a delicious, healthy recipe. Do let us know if you've tried any of them, and enjoyed them!*

My'lkd grew out of a need for better. I can't eat any dairy products, that's anything made from milk. Unfortunately milk is in everything, and what's the alternative when I'm not vegan? That led me through a career as a chef in high end restaurants, of which I was head chef at Readings L'ortolan several years ago, to develop a style of cooking without in an unnoticeable fashion. That doesn't restrict me to only cooking without, and more often than not do use milk and cream in desserts unless my clients have requested them to be dairy free.

Back at the beginning of 2019, after a battle through depression and unemployment where I was stitched up by a chef and athlete I had known for over 14 years, I decided to go alone and start working for myself. My'lkd was born. Over the last year I have been working on development for some incredible products for restaurants and company product launches.

Cooking dinner parties in a wide variety of homes, from small family dwellings to large stately homes. I have also travelled with some of my clients as their private chef. I did have a couple of outdoor weddings booked in for this coming summer but this is currently on tenterhooks. All this, alongside trying to be runner. Due to the current unknown entity of COVID-19, I have just begun selling vouchers for future dinner parties and home cookery classes. Thanks to some amazing people, these have been very well received so far. They are perfect for gifting, anniversaries, birthdays, celebrations, this list goes on... I can be found via my Facebook page [www.facebook.com/mylkd](https://www.facebook.com/mylkd)

### The recipe - store cupboard curry

The hardest part about the coming weeks and months as runners is going to be balancing what you eat properly. The likelihood is, we're all going to have a little more time to exercise more (albeit once per day), whilst working less. Your calorie output will change. Some of us it will go up, such as those who work sat down in an office all day and are coming home to look after unruly kids who don't want to be at home, or some will go down. There's no one perfect solution for diet, so I'm not going to preach that. I am going to try and provide a couple of recipes in the coming weeks that can all be made from items we have in our cupboards, with simple tasty ingredients. They can all be adjusted to suit each and every pallet.

- 1 Can of Chickpeas - drained and rinsed
- 200g Red Lentils
- 1 tbsp Madras Curry Powder
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground turmeric (amazing antioxidant and for helping with sore muscles!)
- 1 tsp fennel seeds

2 Carrots - peeled and cut into chunks  
1 Onion - diced  
1 Garlic Clove - crushed  
1 Can Coconut Milk  
1 can chopped tomatoes  
Handful of spinach, green beans, etc if you have them, frozen is fine

Ok, so the key to getting the most flavour here and making this really simple is having everything prepared and gathered before cooking. This can even be made before going for a run and reheated afterwards to best your recovery. For those who want to can also add some dice chicken, pork, beef, tofu etc.

Place the cumin seeds into a pan and on a medium heat, toast without any oil until they become fragrant and aromatic.

Add the ground spices and toast for a further minute. Ensure that they do not start to blacken. When they begin to smoke, or you reach one minute, add a splash of oil and the onion, carrot and garlic. Sauté on low for 5 minutes.

Add the lentils, chickpeas, tomatoes and coconut milk and gently simmer for around 30 minutes, stirring every couple of minutes so that the lentils don't catch on the base of the pan.

You almost can't over cook this, so if its still too thin, or too thick for your liking you can always top up with water or stock. If you're eating this later, pause here.

When ready to go, add your greens and bring back to hot.

Check your seasoning with salt and lemon/lime juice if you can, maybe some chilli or coriander too?

Remember if you've just been for a run your curry will taste like it needs more salt to you than to your non-running household.

Great with rice, another easy thing to cook before running and cool down quickly under running water.

Ensure you reheat anything to hot (that's the bit I'm legally bound to say)

Happy cooking!

