

E-BULLETIN

1ST SEPTEMBER 2020



Reading Roadrunners



Virtually Unstoppable

Chairman Chat

Phil Reay



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

166 days – The number of days between Reading Roadrunners led face to face sessions.

During that time our volunteers have provided a large number of incredibly engaging, fun, competitive and inclusive virtual events. Many Reading Roadrunners have participated in these activities, and they've continued to be a source of motivation and connection through what has been an unprecedented and challenging period. As the restrictions on our movement and our freedoms continue to cautiously ease, there is understandably a desire for increased human connection and a measured return to club coached sessions within Government and England Athletics guidelines.

On Wednesday 26 August, we returned to non-virtual Reading Roadrunners group sessions.

What we can offer is severely constrained by government rules, England Athletics guidance, and Reading Sports & Leisure's arrangements for operating Palmer Park safely. It's a start and we're taking an extremely cautious approach to our return.

There's no doubt it's been a tough period for all of us. The pandemic has created additional stresses, anxiety and pressures on all of our lives. Reading Roadrunners has been a point of stability for many. Over the last five months we've stayed united and together as one club. Thanks again to our captains **Sam** and **Jamie** and all the volunteers who have led virtual activities, and of course to the members who participated.

Thanks also to our General Secretary **Bob Thomas**, our committee and our coaches. Without this collective team effort from our volunteers, a return to activity would not have been possible.

We'll continue to review the guidelines and our phased return to activity.

Phil

chairman@readingroadrunners.org

Editor's Note

Ben Fasham

Greetings all, and welcome back to the Newsletter after a long summer break.

Typically the E-bulletin is produced the week after committee meeting, and shares with the membership the minutes of that meeting. Under normal conditions the print edition is available to collect at the Wednesday track session, with a month off in August. I've tried as much as possible to stick to that schedule under Lockdown – so apologies for the extra bonus month off that I appear to have awarded myself. Ironically it's been a period of time during which racing has tentatively started again, which means I'm happy to say there's a return to the Newsletter for **David Dibben's** results service.

Apart from that, and **Stuart Hyslop's** Round Reading Ultra write-up, there's a round-up on our successful Virtual Ridgeway Relay (seems a long time ago now!), and also the Virtual Masters 5k. I've enjoyed all these Virtual events but I'll be happy to see them become a bit less virtual in the fullness of time.

There's also an update from **Rachel Helsby**, our Charity Co-ordinator, which is possibly a touch out-of-date now, so apologies there. Rachel also takes part in our face-to-face chat, this time with **Kathy Tytler**.

And on top of all that, a double-whammy of Committee minutes!

I'm looking forward to seeing some of you at Palmer Park soon,

All the best,

Ben

newsletter@readingroadrunners.org

Reading Roadrunners Committee Meeting

Tuesday 8th July, 7pm (by video call)

The Committee

Phil Reay	(Chairman)
Alice Carpenter	(ex-Officio)
Jill Dibben	(Treasurer)
Anne Goodall	(Membership Sec)
Liz Johnson	(Social Secretary)
Paul Monaghan	(Social networks/Web)
Vroni Royle	(ex-Officio)
Claire Seymour	(ex-Officio)
Bob Thomas	(General Secretary)

Apologies for absence

Claire

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true record by Jill, seconded by Alice.

Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

Nothing to report.

Chairman's report

It remains an uncertain time for everyone however with further easing of restrictions I hope everyone is at least feeling a little better than last month.

We have increased the dialogue with Reading Borough Council and Palmer Park with a view to returning to track. The position currently remains unchanged whilst we continue to follow government and EA guidelines. A reminder that the latter clearly states one coach to five athletes.

Thanks to Captains Jamie and Sam for organising the teams for the virtual Ridgeway Relays. It is an event in which we have participated for 30 years and we were happy to do so again supporting our friends at Marlborough

Running. Well done to all 60 who participated with a special shout out to our Vets, who won their category race.

The kindness and generosity of members when many are finding it hard themselves has been something to be proud of. Four months since Parenting Special Children became our nominated charity and the total amounts raised, thanks also to some smart matching schemes, is over £5,000. Tess from PSC has shared her gratitude and the fact that over 1,000 families have already been helped because of our support.

Treasurer's report

Jill presented another almost empty finance report and confirmed that the accounts are balanced for June.

Jill has been trying to understand the options for moving the Club account owing to the type of account being discontinued by NatWest. This is proving problematic as all the banks appear to be focused on little other than COVID-related issues.

General Secretary's Report

Bob sent out a mailshot asking members to review the emergency contact details held by the Club in their regard.

Membership Secretary's Report

Anne reported that no new members joined during June.

Social Secretary's Report

Liz noted that once again several virtual events have taken place organised by many different members. Virtual challenges are proving to be popular with members and the recent quiz raised £200 for the charity.

Liz particularly thanked the Team Captains for their efforts in this regard.

Coaching Report

In the absence of a Coaching Co-ordinator, Vroni reported that the coaches have elected Peter Higgs and Sarah Walters to share the role of Coaching Co-ordinator through to the next AGM. The Committee endorsed their selection and thanks them for having put themselves forward.

The immediate priorities are to keep on top of the emerging guidance on how clubs can operate in the current circumstances and to develop a pipeline of members who aspire to take coaching qualifications.

Return to Track

The management of Palmer Park has contacted the Club to advise that Reading Sports & Leisure is considering re-opening but with a greatly reduced scope of service, primarily to gauge the appetite for an early return and whether opening Palmer Park would be financially viable.

There are many operating constraints, meaning that what could be offered would bear little resemblance to a traditional Club track session, and the number of participants would be severely limited.

Strongly voiced views by Vroni and Phil swung the argument that the Club should not return to the track at this time, though no vote was taken. Phil took an action to broadcast an email to members to explain this decision and what needs to change to cause it to be reviewed.

Any other business

Nothing to report.

Club Vacancies

Treasurer. Jill intends to stand down as Treasurer at the 2021 AGM. It would be ideal if her replacement could be in place in time to shadow her for some time prior to taking over.

COVID Co-ordinator. Once the Club returns to organised running, the Club will have a responsibility to ensure that it is paying due regard to prevailing guidelines, for which the Club needs to appoint a specific post of COVID Co-ordinator.

Members with Health & Safety experience or a specific interest in COVID-related operating practices are invited to speak to Phil in the first instance.

DONM: Wed 12Aug20 by video call

Main Club contact points:

Chairman, Phil:
chairman@readingroadrunners.org

Membership Secretary, Anne:
membership@readingroadrunners.org

Secretary, Bob:
gensec@readingroadrunners.org

Treasurer, Jill:
treasurer@readingroadrunners.org

Social Secretary, Liz:
socialsec@readingroadrunners.org

Coaching co-ordinator, Katie:
coach@readingroadrunners.org

Website / Media, Paul:
webmaster@readingroadrunners.org

Team Captains, Sam & Jamie:
teamcaptains@readingroadrunners.org

Welfare Officer, Tom Harrison:
tom.harrison13w@btinternet.com

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Liz Johnson	(Social Secretary)
Paul Monaghan	(Social networks/Web)
Vroni Royle	(ex-Officio)
Claire Seymour	(ex-Officio)
Bob Thomas	(General Secretary)

Apologies for absence

Alice, Anne, Paul, Vroni

In attendance

Coaching Co-ordinators: Peter Higgs, Sarah Walters

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as a true record by Jill, seconded by Liz.

Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

Nothing to report.

Chairman's report

Phil expressed his thanks to the Team Captains, Sam & Jamie, for their continuing ingenuity and consistency in delivering creative virtual activities, and to Katie for continuing to lead members in strength training.

Treasurer's report

Jill presented yet another almost empty finance report and confirmed that the accounts are balanced for June.

Jill has continued to review potential bank accounts to which she can transfer the Club's funds, one of which appears to be possible but not ideal. Jill still has a small number of additional possibilities to follow.

General Secretary's Report

London Marathon. Members will be aware that the 2020 London Marathon has been cancelled for all but the elite runners. Bob has cancelled the club's coach bookings and Jill will refund members who have paid for seats on the coaches.

Membership Secretary's Report

Nothing to report.

Social Secretary's Report

Nothing to report.

Post-meeting note: One new member joined during July.

Coaching Report

Nothing to report.

Return to Track

Quite a lot of work has taken place since the previous report, including a visit to Palmer Park by Phil and Bob at the invitation of the stadium manager. It was very reassuring to see the measures in place to create a COVID-secure environment.

Bob has produced an app to be accessed through WebCollect to allow members to book a training slot.

With this and a revised risk assessment, Phil asked for another Committee vote on whether we should proceed. On this occasion, the motion to proceed was passed by two votes.

We then engaged with the Coaching Co-ordinators to ask for coach availability. Whilst there is wide support from our Leaders in Running Fitness, unfortunately our coaches were

unable to confirm availability. The Coaching Co-ordinators advise that LiRFs are not allowed to manage a group on track, which means that we are still unable to re-start training at Palmer Park.

Post-meeting note: Two of our coaches and four Leaders in Running Fitness have subsequently volunteered to provide coaching groups and outruns for the three successive Wednesdays from 26Aug20. Arrangements for taking part will be posted in due course.

Any other business

Club Championships. The Club Road and Marathon Championships are both cancelled this year. Subject to races having generally re-started, the 2021 Championships will commence on 1Jan21.

The Team Captains obtained approval from this year's AGM to operate two annual cross-country championships based on the TVXC and Hampshire Leagues. If either or both leagues go ahead with at least five races, the XC Championships will be competed.

CLUB VACANCIES

Treasurer. Jill intends to stand down as Treasurer at the 2021 AGM. It would be ideal if her replacement could be in place in time to shadow her for some time prior to taking over.

COVID Co-ordinator. Once the Club returns to organised running, the Club will have a responsibility to ensure that it is paying due regard to prevailing guidelines, for which the Club

needs to appoint a specific post of COVID Co-ordinator.

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Roadrunners' Race Results

David Dibben

GREAT to see members back in competitive racing for the first time since March.

Markus Orgill was the first Roadrunner home in the Round Reading Ultra — the first race in the south of England since lockdown — and **Swinda Falkena** the first RR lady to finish.

Well done to all Green Vests who turned out to defy the pandemic.

After the ultras it was the turn of some of our quicker guys to get back into competition at a quality 5k at Milton Keynes.

Runners being sent off ten at a time in Covid-era graded waves helped **Jack Gregory** to trim a second off the **club record with a PB of 15.04**.

Mark Worringham was only five seconds off his long-standing PB with 15.43, earning an age grading of over 86 per cent.

August 1st

Round Reading Ultra (50k)

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Chip</i>
11	Markus Orgill	4:15.24
21	Stuart Hyslop	4:36.24
71	Alan Thomas	5:05.54
101	Swinda Falkena	5:31.59
141	Jo Sollesse	5:55.07
170	Donna Saunders	6:17.54
185	Beth Rudd	6:28.31
204	Mo Fassihinia	6:55.03
222	Pete Morris	7:16.10
223	Elizabeth Detenon	7:16.11
232	Kerry Eastwood	7:38.49
254	Sarah Walters	9:33.08
255	Anthony Eastaway	9:33.13
256	Sue Jones	9:33.14

August 21st

Resultsbase Milton Keynes 5k

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Chip</i>
35	Jack Gregory	15.04 PB
91	Mark Worringham	15.43
204	Ryan Faulkner	18.05

August 23rd

St Albans 10k

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Chip</i>
151	Dan Whittaker	42:37

Masters Virtual 5k Road Relay Championships (June 14-20)

Sam Whalley

In May 2019, despite some navigational hilarity, I had been delighted to take two teams of women to the Masters 5k Road Relay Championships in Sutton Park, Birmingham.

This year, we had also planned to enter teams, so news that the inevitably cancelled relays were back on, virtually, in June, was well received by many of our Masters athletes.

As with the nationals and TVXC relays earlier in lockdown, this was essentially to be a 5k time trial, in which individuals and teams were pitted against those in just their 10-year age group. The competition was for those aged 35 and over, but seniors were also allowed to upload their times and see how they compared.

It was great to see so many of our members have a go. Sometimes it's good to be able to just test yourself, and get a measure of where you are, even if speed training hasn't been at the forefront of your mind in recent months. Well done, especially, to the WV65-74s, who not only managed to field a team, but also learned how to upload their results to the website - much appreciated.

Other details of note were **Mark Worringham's** whopping 87.9% age grade, and **Katherine Sargeant's** 9th WV50, **Jane Davies'** 8th WV60, and **Rita Dykes'** 6th WV70 placings.

The BMAF results are quite tricky to read (see for yourselves - <http://bmaf.org.uk/results/res2020/bmafvr2020%20Team%20Results.pdf>), but this is how our teams fared.

Women 35-44 (4 to score) - 87 complete teams

Incomplete team

Nikki Gray (21.22), Nicki Farrell (22.14), Caroline Jackson (22.19)

Non-Scorer:

Ellie Gosling (18.30)

Women 45-54 (3 to score) - 108 complete teams

A Team Placing: 48th

Katherine Sargeant (19.32), Angela Burley (23.54), Liz Ganpatsingh (24.09)

B Team Placing: 87th

Sam Whalley (24.16), Lorna McLeod (24.27), Zoë Browne (29.00)

Non-Scorers:

Gill Manton (39.39), Becky Mellor (40.11)

Women 55-64 (3 to score) - 46 complete teams

A Team Placing: 23rd

Jane Davies (22.03), Ros Crawford (25.30), Steph Smith (26.50)

Non-Scorer:

Adele Graham (29.21)

Women 65-74 (3 to score) - 10 complete teams

A Team Placing: 7th

Toni McQueen (26.09), Rita Dykes (28.28), Cecilia Csemizcky (34.22)

Men 35-44 (6 to score) - 81 complete teams

A Team Placing: 74th

Mark Worringham (15.49), Ian Giggs (19.43), Chris Barkus (20.33), Clinton Montague (21.13), Ben Fasham (21.25), David Walkley (21.58)

Non-Scorer:

Alan Williamson (23.44)

Men 45-54 (4 to score) - 116 complete teams

A Team Placing: 43rd

Tony Page (17.34), David Parton (17.48), Alex Harris (17.56), Eoin McLeod (20.57)

B Team Placing: 112th

David Caswell (21.34), Brian Grieves (23.06), David Fiddes (24.01), Chris Manton (24.37)

Non-Scorers:

Phil Woolfall (18.34), Art Atwal (25.08)

Men 55-64 (3 to score) - 75 complete teams

A Team Placing: 50th

Brian Kirsopp (19.21), Chris Mason (22.10), Peter Reilly (23.55)

Non-Scorers:

Phil Davies (25.32), Peter Higgs (29.03)

Men 65-74 (3 to score) - 24 complete teams

Incomplete Team

Andrew Small (28.18)

Non-Masters

Jacob Atwal (18.59), Jon Green (21.33)

Club Charity of the Year Update

Rachel Helsby, Charity Coordinator

Our Charity Fundraising Tops £5,000

I am delighted to report that as we have raised over £5000 for **Parenting Special Children (PSC)** our charity of the year. We raised £3,706.60 via the Good Exchange, which included match funding (our donations were doubled) and we have raised almost £1,000 via Local Giving. We had £618 in our charity bank account from activities before the lock down and so we are as of 21 June at a grand total of £5,434.

Thank you hampers

As a way of saying thank you, I have put together some hampers of goodies and, while we can not hold big events where we can have a raffle, I am offering them as a simple thank you to any roadrunner who makes a donation in a given time period. I hope they bring some joy at a difficult time for many. I have put together the hampers with generous donations from friends, family and of course running club members. Thank you to all members who donated.

Picnic Hamper - Dianne Hodder

Last week I had the pleasure of delivering our first hamper to **Dianne Hodder** (right). She plans to socially distance friends and family over a picnic or two and she did mention that she *may* share her Pimm's with them!



Donation Celebration Hampers - 13 July - 27 July

Our next **two** hampers have a celebration/end of term theme and Tess from Parenting Special Children will again put the name of all roadrunners into a hat for any donation of £5 made by a roadrunner for the two week period **13 July to 27 July** to our local giving fundraising page (see below for link).



The **Pamper Hamper** (left) contains a bumper selection of quality pampering products from face masks, to shampoos, and candles. It also includes chocolates, fizz, a bottle of Bailey's and a bottle of Archer's! This might be a hamper to share with family and friends in your bubble. Or perhaps you know someone who might really welcome a pick me up at this time and you can gift this to them!

The **Sweet Treat Hamper** contains 8 boxes/bags of sweets for everyone to enjoy and it might be a lovely gift for a teacher or for children to share with friends at the end of a long school year! You also get the cute little hamper to keep

All you have to do is to make a donation to the link below at any point between 13th and 27th July:

<https://localgiving.org/fundraising/readingroadrunners>

Company donations

In June we were delighted to receive a £ 250 donation boost from the company Rockwell Collins, now part of the Raytheon Group. RRR Coach **Peter Higgs** works for the company and encouraged their Care Committee which makes donations to charitable causes to think of RRR and PSC. From us all, we say thank you!



Roadrunner **Annette Russell** has also been in touch with me, inspired by the work that PSC do. She has worked with them to put in an application to her workplace to see if they might consider giving to PSC as one of their chosen charities. Thank you Annette for nominating PSC. Fingers crossed your application will be successful.

Please do get in touch if you work for a company which might consider adding to our fundraising efforts and supporting PSC!

Rachel Helsby

Charity Coordinator



www.parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

Virtual Ridgeway Relay (June 28th)

Sam Whalley

Reading Roadrunners has entered the Ridgeway Relay for many years, and it really suits those within the club who like hills and trails, who can follow the National Trail signage, and who don't mind running alone. Despite most team members not really seeing each other throughout the day, it manages to be a fantastic team event. The A team usually does pretty well, and had won in both 2018 and 2019.

When organisers Marlborough Running Club offered to host a virtual version on the day of the planned event, interest was high, even with the promise of no prizes whatsoever. Runners would need to run the distance specified at certain times during the day, and routes were to be as off-road as possible. This was one race where seeking out the flattest road route would be frowned upon, so we looked for grass, woodland, hills, steps, and even a gate or two, to be in keeping with the real thing.

We usually manage to field four teams for this, but perhaps the lack of travel was a real bonus for some, and six teams were entered. Mostly Men's teams must contain at least two women, while Mostly Women's teams can contain a maximum of two men.

The Mostly Men's A team was 2nd, losing to White Horse Harriers 'Thoroughbreds' by only two minutes! The Vets team was 1st vets team, finishing 29 minutes ahead of those in 2nd. The Mostly Women's team was the only all-female team, not that it mattered, but it felt good.

Well done to everyone who took part - the team spirit was fantastic during the day - and do put the provisional date of 20th June 2021 in your diaries.

Mostly Men A: 2nd
Mostly Men B: 11th
Vets: 13th
Mostly Men D: 23rd
Mostly Women: 24th
Mostly Men C: 39th

Leg 1 - 8am - 11 miles

A: Tony Page (1.09.15) - fastest time for this leg – pic right
B: Joe Blair (1.32.41)
C: Art Atwal (1.52.06)
D: Brooke Johnson (1.14.24) - 4th fastest time for this leg
Women: Sarah Dooley (1.26.25) – pic left
Vets: Katherine Sargeant (1.16.52) - 7th fastest time for this leg



Leg 2 - 9am - 6 miles

A: Ben Fasham (46.40) - 7th fastest time for this leg
B: Liz Johnson (53.23)
C: Sara Lopez (59.56)
D: Lesley Whiley (54.22)
Women: Miriam Coleman (53.58)
Vets: Carrie Hoskins (42.46) - 5th fastest time for this leg

Leg 3 - 10am - 9 miles

A: Ian Gosling (58.50) - 2nd fastest time for this leg
 B: Mike Hibberd (1.00.17) - 3rd fastest time for this leg
 C: Leanne Home (1.34.44)
 D: Dan Stockwell (1.13.37) – pic right
 Women: Sophie Hoskins (1.09.33)
 Vets: Alan Freer (1.08.47) - 9th fastest time for this leg

Leg 4 - 11am - 6 miles

A: Nikki Gray (45.08) - 7th fastest time for this leg
 B: Darren Lewis (39.50) - 3rd fastest time for this leg
 C: Kevin Strong (58.37)
 D: Jacob Atwal (37.47) - fastest time for this leg
 Women: Sam Whalley (51.22)
 Vets: Maureen Sweeney (1.10.14)

Leg 5 - 12pm - 10 miles

A: Mel Shaw (1.16.16) - 8th fastest time for this leg
 B: Shweta Saikumar (1.42.31)
 C: Peter Higgs (1.52.52) – pic below right
 D: Tony Streams (1.23.13)
 Women: Alice Carpenter (1.36.59)
 Vets: Gary Clarke (1.39.21)

Leg 6 - 1pm - 10 miles

A: Jamie Smith (1.03.07) - fastest time for this leg
 B: Dan Coleman (1.19.54)
 C: Eoin McLeod (1.20.21)
 D: Eddie Thorpe (1.56.55)
 Women: Lorna McLeod (1.35.45)
 Vets: Brian Kirsopp (1.07.43) - 3rd fastest time for this leg

Leg 7 - 2pm - 9 miles

A: David McCoy (55.57) - fastest time for this leg
 B: Clinton Montague (1.04.21) - 8th fastest time for this leg
 C: Donald Scott-Collett (1.27.28)
 D: David Fiddes (1.21.14)
 Women: Claire Seymour (1.25.36)
 Vets: Julie Rainbow (1.11.34)



Leg 8 - 3pm - 8 miles

A: Jamie Cole (49.53) - fastest time for this leg

B: Tracy Jenkins (1.13.18)

C: Chris Manton (2.18.16)

D: Sarah Walters (1.39.34)

Women: Gemma Higgs (1.09.07)

Vets: Brian Grieves (1.03.09) - 7th fastest time for this leg

Leg 9 - 4pm - 11 miles

A: David Ferguson (1.13.49) - 5th fastest time for this leg

B: Ian Giggs (1.25.53)

C: Rob Corney (1.19.11) - 10th fastest time for this leg

D: Chris Cutting (1.29.31) – pic below, left

Women: Katie Gumbrell (1.54.15) – pic below, right

Vets: David Caswell (1.24.43)

Leg 10 - 5pm - 9 miles

A: Mark Worringham (53.08) - fastest time for this leg

B: David Walkley (1.18.43)

C: Alan Williamson (1.33.30)

D: Sahan Jinadasa (1.22.47)

Women: Angela Burley (1.15.12)

Vets: Sian James (1.33.36)



Round Reading Ultra Marathon (July 31st)

Stuart Hyslop

After what seems like forever the prospect of an actual physical race felt like an odd one: On the one hand I was keen to get back to racing – the excitement, the struggle, the sense of achievement when it's all over I have undoubtedly missed. But the uncertainty over races (will they, won't they) and if they do will they be safe for both me and anyone touched by the race (well not literally I hope)? So with some mixed feelings, I decided to give it a go at the last minute.

As a race experience it was a little different, precautions and amended procedures were well publicised to competitors in the build-up. Some probably overdue in the long-distance running game even without Covid (communal bowl of peanuts at mile 25 anyone?!). It clearly wasn't without some risk – but to my mind it had been thought through and was minimised wherever possible.

A staggered start meant small groups dispatched at regular intervals rather than charge for the first gate. We were soon spread out, passing other runners occasionally and exchanging encouraging words. I was with a friend who (slightly annoyingly) is a little faster than me - everyone knows someone like this and can relate I'm sure. I clearly had a choice to run my own race, but writing that and doing it are different. We therefore ran together and ate up the first section up the Thames to reach Purley in what seemed like no time. Clearly the perfect pacing strategy.

After heading South through Tilehurst, and back toward town on the Kennet, the loop continued South of the M4 across toward Wokingham. My slightly faster friend finally moved on ahead. We (or more accurately 'he') had been getting gradually quicker and by halfway I was hanging on. I was conscious of overcooking in the warm weather, and was glad to see him go on ahead. I kept up a decent pace promising myself a little dip in the ford I knew was coming up just before Sindlesham as a reward. Sadly when I got there some 4 legged beasts had the same idea, and I had to miss out on my cooling bath.

Another tweak for this year's event became evident next – the narrower sections of the course had been replaced in favour of wider alternatives that gave more space for competitors and those out and about. This included a fast section on the cycle path up Hatch Farm Way to the Showcase roundabout. Without my dip I was feeling the heat, brain fog descending I failed to spot one of the many carefully placed large yellow signs. I was sure I was right – I knew the route after all... oh well what's another mile? Well at the time it felt like a big deal – I was annoyed and rushed off (too fast) to try and make up the lost ground.

The last section was a matter of just hanging on – and making sure I check and double check for directions of course. Even the tiny little rise up the A4 as the route headed for the finish in Sonning now felt like a big hill. Just enough left to muster a little sprint at the end I felt as though I had given all I could; a cool drink and some shade definitely much needed at the end. Despite my little detour (grrr) I was really pleased with 4:36 – which was a nice pb for the distance. Incidentally my previous best included unplanned bonus miles – so at least I'm consistent!

We are clearly a way off large mass start races, but I do hope that carefully run small scale events like this one can start to re-emerge on the calendar. The format was a little different but it retained a friendly and supportive feel and the changes to make it as safe as possible did not detract from the experience.



Face-to-Face (Virtually)

Rachel Helsby & Kathy Tytler

This time, our Charity Coordinator for the year Rachel chats to West Reading Ultradistance legend Kathy Tytler...

Kathy started by asking Rachel when she started running and Why?

RH: I started about seven years ago when I dabbled in the parkrun at Woodley. I was inspired by **Kerri French** (parkrun ambassador) to keep going. Later, I started to take it more seriously and trained for the Reading Half Marathon in 2018, but it was cancelled.

Rachel then asked Kathy, what was the most unusual place she had run?

KT: I have been running 30 years and I think that one of the most unusual races has been the Tooting 24-hour track race where you run around the track which I have run twice. They start you off at 12 noon and you run for four hours in one direction and then change direction every four hours. Although you can rest whenever you want, my strategy was to keep going however slowly and this got me climbing up the leader board; the first time I ran it, I started at the bottom and finished near the top!

The other interesting event is the Bishop Castle Tandem Triathlon which I have done for about five years now with a friend. He rides on the front and I am on the back of the tandem. I also have to do the swim and the run. It is good fun especially as we have his dog on the back of the bike which makes everyone smile.

What are your favourite races, Rachel?

RH: I don't run lots of races, but I remember the ones where I've got a PB; Woodley 10K and Cardiff Half Marathon. My favourite race was Run the Rock 10K in Stokenchurch. It was in beautiful countryside, it was nice and low key with a village fete atmosphere and cakes at the end.

Do you have a running mantra Kathy?

KT: Yes. The more miles I run the more chocolate I can eat. One year running the Compton 40 the weather was really bad and this mantra really helped. I will eat any chocolate, but my preference is Hotel Chocolat!

Rachel, what are your running goals?

RH: I had hoped for another half marathon this year, just for the experience. I have run a PB for 5K during lockdown, motivated by putting on my green vest and running for our charity of the year Parenting Special Children. At present my goals are to get stronger, especially core strength which will help prevent injury."



What's been the best thing about your running since lockdown Kathy?

KT: It's been going out early with no pressure and exploring new places close to home. When we were limited to just one hour, I really liked running in Prospect Park with all the bluebells. I try to be really aware and notice the nature. Now that we can go a bit further and longer, I am discovering new paths, again close to home.

Rachel, how do you fit running in to the rest of your life?

RH: I don't do lots of races. I run 2 or 3 times a week and since lockdown I've encouraged my husband to come with me. I try to blend running in to my life by keeping it local. When I'm at work I run at lunchtime around the university, I run with neighbours and I have even encouraged one of them to do parkrun.

Kathy, what are your running goals?

KT: I had some goals for this year which are now for next year. Such as the Ridgeway Challenge where you have 28 hours to run the 86 miles. I have finished it 8 times. But the last three times I have done it I have had to retire, as I have run out of time. Also, everyone talks about being in the 100-mile club for Endure24. I had hoped to do my 100th lap this year. These goals will have to wait until 2021.

Rachel, what other interests do you have?

RH: I have organised a street choir in Talfourd Avenue for the last six years. We usually practise in my house, but now we have to meet on Zoom. There are about 16 people taking part with a wide range of experience and we are very enthusiastic. We perform at our regular street festival and other community events. Two of our current songs are, 'We Shall Overcome' and 'I wish I knew how it feels to be free'.

Kathy, who inspires you in your running?

KT: The first person that got me running was back in 1990 when I stayed with a friend in New York and she was training for New York Marathon. She would come back from a training run tired but really happy. I went back three years later and completed the New York marathon. Unfortunately, she was injured but she came out to support me at different parts of the race.

**Rachel, have you learned anything about yourself during lockdown?**

RH: I am blessed to be living with people I get on with. I haven't got as much time as I thought I would have for things like reading. I'm pleased I have kept the choir going, although I do not like Zoom for social contact because it is not personal enough.

And Kathy, tell me what other interests and hobbies you have

KT: I write poetry and short stories and lockdown has inspired me to write. I do miss the performance side of poetry; I perform regularly at the Dreading Poetry Slam; doing them by Zoom isn't the same. I have recently started the course "Get up on Stage" run by the Rabble Theatre Company. This is now on Zoom each Monday evening and it is working well.



Rachel, three things that you will be doing after lockdown

RH: I was supposed to be going to Malaga this summer, so I am looking forward to going there when I can to see my family.

I want to meet face-to-face with my choir again and sing together.

I am looking forward to going back to the track and training with the club.

Kathy, great minds think alike, what are you looking forward to when we return to the new normal?

KT: I treat races as social events and I am looking forward to them and seeing all my friends. The first thing I am going to do is take my friend to Tutu's in Palmer Park for a meal. And I am going to go camping in my tent. I am also looking forward to going back to my regular Sunday nights in my local, the Nags Head.



If YOU would like to take part in Face-to-Face then please let me know on the newsletter email address newsletter@readingroadrunners.org