



Lewes Athletic Club Newsletter

The AMMONITE March 2021

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We are back. Help!

With Lockdown there did not seem much need for the Newsletter. But things are looking more hopeful – see Peter Master's cautious message below. Also club-related activities have still been taking place, but often in novel ways such as various virtual events such [England Athletics Virtual 5 Mile Relay 2nd Round](#) and [Lewes AC Facebook Group](#) SLAMs. (See below for details. In the first contribution, Chris Gilbert the Lewes AC Super-Vet gives us an inspiring account of the virtual relay, a national event where Lewes AC came 16th in the country.)

For the newsletter to reflect this re-awakening we need contributions from Lewes AC members. The Newsletter focuses on people, and there must be lots of untold stories from lockdown and lots of plans and ideas for the future! For the moment could you email these to bob.hughes@bcs.org.

A huge thankyou goes to Karin Divall for all her work on the newsletter. Some of you may know Karin from her valuable contribution to the 10k Development Programme.

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Light at the end of the tunnel?

A message from Chairman Peter Master on getting back to athletics:

No doubt you will be looking at the dates set down to the Road Map where it looks likely that by the end of March/early April we can get back on the track. It will also be possible by that date to reintroduce pre-lockdown off track running (Mark Pappenheim and David Foster are on this case.)

To get back onto using the track a number of things should be put in place. More details will follow.

The key matter at the moment is undertaking all the tasks to get the track open which requires the appointment of a Covid-19 coordinator

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Club coaching: Zoom for improvement?

Mike Ellis-Martin and Toby Wolpe are undertaking a review of the club's coaching arrangements.

Following wide ranging discussions with club coaches and a number of zoom meetings eight key areas were identified within which the review will take place. These are-

- To review and set down the club's overall coaching philosophy and structure.
- Identify and build on the centres of coaching excellence in the club.
- Identify where there are gaps in coaching provision and seek ways to fill these gaps.
- Explore and put in place appropriate communications methods with and between club members, coaches and athletes.
- Working with the coaches explore with them ways to identify and further develop their coaching skills.
- Examination how best to increase the club's coaching resource and facilities.
- Find ways to relieve coaches of a range of administrative tasks
- Explore and put in place ways to embed strength and conditioning across all coached events

All this cannot be tackled at once so the priority areas are currently:

- The future coaching arrangements for the Academy
- The future administrative arrangements for the Academy
- Communications across and within the Academy and the club
- How best to embed strength and conditioning activities within all club coaching including the future use of the gym.

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England Athletics Virtual 5 Mile Relay 2nd Round 10th-22nd February

Chris Gilbert writes:

It's 8am on my 49th birthday. The temperature is zero but wind chill puts it at -5. I'm standing next to the A27 in a vest and shorts. In a few seconds I will start my watch and I know that when I do, for a bit less than half an hour I'll be battling physical and mental pain. Why? I'm trying not to ask myself that question too much on that cold February morning but really I know that this is a unique chance represent my running club in a competition against the finest runners in the country. Thanks to lockdown we have this opportunity that may not be repeated.

It's been a year since life has been anything like normal for any of us, and for runners that means there have been no real races to speak of. However, we are lucky as we can still race virtually - it's not the same as running alongside a competitor, trying to stay ahead as you reach the finish line, but it's something, and it also means we can race against anyone anywhere.

The London Marathon brought virtual races into the mainstream, but they have been happening on a smaller scale since the first lockdown. The rules are generally to run on your own (keeping social distancing at all times) during a timeframe set by the race organisers, and your GPS watch provides proof of your time so all the results can be ranked.

This year England Athletics organised a large but less publicised race - a nationwide virtual relay race. Every running club in the country was able to pit themselves against each other - the challenge: for each participant to run 5 miles, and the 4 fastest men and 4 fastest women from each club would score for the team.

The first round was open to all, and the top 50 clubs would go through to the final. And in a truly nail-biting finish, as the race window came to a close Lewes were just about hanging in with the qualifying group. As the final whistle blew we just made it into the top 50 - one of the top clubs in the country - thanks to our team of 8 - Lizzie Keep, Rob Cooper, Andrew McLennan, Mike Green, Rick Curtis, Megan Taylor, Gina Wilkinson and Helen Sida.

The final ran from 10 to 21st February - extended due to extreme weather (the forecast was for ice cold and strong winds together with a bit of snow). Over the first few days the calibre of runners became clear - we were up against international level runners from the finest clubs. But over the days as the results trickled in, it was clear that Lewes were holding their own against the competition, especially the women's team, who had already been going from strength to strength before Covid struck and showed no sign of waning.

As the final results were called, Lewes came in 16th - the 16th fastest running club across the whole of England. Out of about 1,500 affiliated clubs. The team this time, with a combined time of 3:48:06, and just 2 seconds behind the next team, was made up of Charlie Critchley, Toby Meanwell, Ben Savill, Emma Navesey, Chris Gilbert, Emily Proto, Ruby Whyte-Wilding and Megan Taylor.

One day soon life will start returning to normal, and this means sport will start opening up, including races, but one thing that lockdown has given us is the chance for Lewes AC to shine on the national stage.

And back on that February morning, after 28 and a half minutes I stop, my heart starts to return to something like normal and I feel the euphoria as endorphins start to replace the adrenaline that's been keeping me moving. This last year we have all been touched by tragedy and most of us have lost someone close but as runners we are privileged in being able to

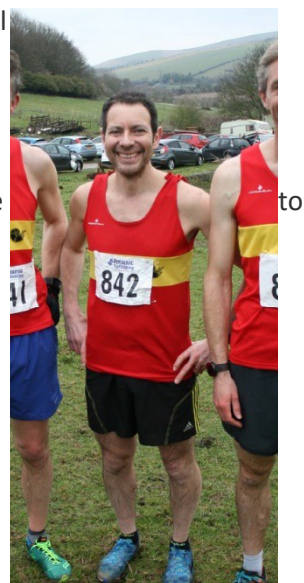


Figure 1 Chris Gilbert

push ourselves to our limits and to reach that point where everything narrows down to a simple primitive physical movement, and we can feel the beauty of being alive at each moment in time.

(Editor's note: 'non-elite' Lewes AC runners could have a go as well. Their 'supporting' efforts are also recorded below)

Position	Runner	Category	Category Position	Time: mm:ss
167	Charlie CRITCHLEY	SM	107	27:07
204	Toby MEANWELL	M40	17	27:36
224	Ben SAVILL	SM	125	27:49
252	Emma NAVESY	SW	11	28:09
275	Chris GILBERT	M45	16	28:26
337	Emily PROTO	SW	18	29:01
373	Ruby WHYTE-WILDING	SW	25	29:23
377	Matt REED	SM	167	29:27
405	Stan PENDERED	U17M	19	29:53
456	Megan TAYLOR	SW	33	30:35
466	Martin RATCLIFFE	SM	184	30:45
607	Helen SIDA	W50	8	32:24
616	Ian FINES	M55	9	32:32
705	Rachel TITHERADGE	SW	93	33:36
766	Phil WESTBURY	M40	67	34:25
855	Oliver BAILEY	U15B	7	36:18
923	Beth HANCOCK	SW	126	38:41
930	Andrew CHITTY	M65	7	38:55
950	Darryl BAILEY	M45	75	40:14
962	Robert HUGHES	M70	2	41:09
971	Mark PAPPENHEIM	M60	21	41:36
983	Colin HARTLAND	M60	24	42:25

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East Sussex Sunday Cross Country League 2019-20

This is going back a bit! The last race that actually took place was at Pett on the 8th March 2020, very shortly before the first lockdown. A new course at The Hub at Bodiam on the 5th April was due to be the last race in the series, to be followed by the final awards. Needless to say that never took place. Months later, on a wintry evening there was a knock on my front door and the redoubtable Ian Fines presented me with a voucher for first place in the Male 70 class. Which was a welcome surprise but slightly weird. For information, there were 13 competitors in the Male 70 class.

After quite a long delay, the hope that the final race in the series could take place at some point was abandoned and it was decided to use the remaining results to calculate the winners for 2019-2020. Once again the overall victorious club was Lewes AC. Below are the Lewes AC individual category winners.

Category	Podium place	Runner	Points
Male 40	1st	Adam Vaughan	1181
Male 45	1st	Ben Hodgson	1107
Male 55	3rd	Ian Fines	1059
Male 70	1st	Bob Hughes	708
Female 50	1st	Helen Sida	781

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Chris Smith Memorial Virtual Ditchling - Blackcap and back race

At the end of October 2020 the Sussex running community and more widely the mountain running community were shocked by the death of Chris Smith. Born in Aberdeenshire he had settled in Sussex where he had connections with both Thames Valley Harriers and Haywards Heath Harriers. While on holiday in Scotland he went for a training run in the hills in the afternoon planning to return two hours earlier. He never returned and his body was recovered two days later. He left a wife and two sons.

He was a member of UK & NI national teams in several World and European events. In 2016 he helped team GB in gaining a bronze in the European Mountain Running Championships.

Haywards Heath Harriers organized this memorial team competition which involved runners from the Harriers, Burgess Hill Harriers, Phoenix and Lewes AC. The competition was a virtual event where participants submitted times (with electronic evidence) for running an out and back course between Ditchling Beacon and Blackcap. You could choose which end you started, and there was a complicated algorithm (which I did not understand), to adjust your time depending (I think) on which end you started. These numbers were crunched to give the overall team performance rankings: (1) Phoenix, (2) Haywards Heath Harriers, (3) Lewes, (4) Burgess Hill. You can see below how we did in various individual categories.

MS			MV			MSV		
runner	time	Club	runner	time	Club	runner	time	Club
1 Ben Gibson	00:29:18	HHH	Chris Gilbert	00:31:16	Lewes	Paul Whelpton	00:34:40	PHX
2 Simon Heath	00:29:37	PHX	Mike Ellicock	00:31:26	Lewes	Tim Hicks	00:38:11	HHH
3 James Collins	00:29:46	HHH	Marcus Kimmins	00:31:26	HHH	David Prince-Iles	00:38:27	Lewes

FS			FV			FSV		
runner	time	Club	runner	time	Club	runner	time	Club
1	Bobby Searle	00:34:23 PHX	Samantha Leader	00:37:03 PHX	Marion Hemsworth	00:48:20 HHH		
2	Erica Martin	00:38:08 PHX	Helen Sida	00:37:39 Lewes	Anne Hagan	00:49:24 Lewes		
3	Cat Bounds	00:37:22 PHX	Siobhan Amer	00:38:16 HHH	Nicky Callus	00:49:35 BHR		

Appropriately, after the competition the performance record for this segment of the Sussex Downs Way remains with Chris Smith.

Lewes AC team results

Ranking	Runner	Category	mm:ss
1	Chris Gilbert	MV	31:16
2	Mike Ellicock	MV	31:26
3	Lewis Sida	MV	31:41
4	Mike Green	MV	32:38
5	Ben Pepler	MS	32:49
6	Ben Hodgson	MV	33:57
7	Rick Curtis	MV	34:00
8	Robert Cooper	MV	35:41
9=	Helen Sida	FV	37:39
9=	Michael Ussher	MV	37:39
11	Mauro Lazzati	MV	38:26
12	David Prince-Iles	MSV	38:27
13	Rob Stanway	MV	39:01
14	Mat Homewood	MV	39:37
15=	David Foster	MV	39:39
15=	Ellen Brookes	FS	39:39
17	Tamsyn d'Arienzo	FS	39:45
18	Gerard Dummett	MSV	42:37
19	Peter Kennedy	MSV	43:32
20	Beth Hancock	FS	43:48
21	Ian Hilder	MSV	44:13
22	Andy Perris	MV	44:19
23	Helen Bowman	FV	45:37
24	Mark Pappenheim	MSV	46:30
25	Bob Hughes	MSV	46:45
26	Ruth Wray	FV	47:03
27	Hugh St John	MSV	47:16
28	Andrew Chitty	MSV	47:16
29	Colin Hartland	MSV	47:43
30	Fran Witt	FV	48:51
31	Anne Hagan	FSV	49:24
32	Anita Amies	FSV	50:13
23	Emma Hodgson	FV	53:27
34	Emma Gardner	FV	54:04
35	Naomi Ross	FS	54:10
36	Julie Deakin	FV	54:12



Chris Smith winning Hayward Heath 10 mile race 2018 (*Photo by Carys Hind*)

Two bits of Hayward Heath Harrier trivia:

1. Daley Thompson was once a club member,
2. HHH members refer to themselves as the Beetroots - primarily because of the colour their club vests.

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Lewes AC Facebook Group

Have you joined the Lewes AC Facebook Group? The group moderator has been keeping lockdown spirits up by setting East Sussex county town runners a number of SLAM challenges. For example:

1. Places of Worship
2. 18 Pubs
3. Lewes Schools
4. Corner Stores

You will get your SLAM name on the Facebook leaderboard. There is no time limit, but special memes will be gifted to the people who complete it first, fastest, and with the funniest anecdotes. This is entirely on trust, but please feel free to post your strava maps for others to follow.

Please don't forget to give other pedestrians a wide berth, even if it means slowing down for a bit or stopping. Some people are very nervous around runners at the moment. And take care of yourselves at the same time.

1. Places of Worship (approx. 7 miles) start at St Thomas's, Cliffe High St; Lewes Free Presbyterian Church; Kings Church, Brooks Road; South Malling Church; St John Sub Castro; Christ Church, Prince Edwards Road; St Mary's Church Highdown Road; St Pancras Church, Irelands Lane; St Anne's Church (just opposite); Trinity Church, Southover High St; Priory Ruins; Priory School Chapel; Kingdom Hall, Station St; All Saints Centre, Friars Walk; Religious Society of Friends, Friars Walk;; Eastgate Baptist Church.

Wildcards that you have to work in yourself: St Michaels and Westgate Chapel, High St

2. 18 Pubs (approx. 5 miles)... Start at the Snowdrop, The Dorset, The Gardeners, John Harvey Tavern, The Volunteer, Elephant and Castle, Tally Ho, Lewes Arms, Rights of Man, Brewers Arms, Pelham Arms, Black Horse, The Swan, The Kings Head, the Rook Inn at the Dripping Pan, The Lansdown, the Royal Oak, and the White Hart and back to the Snowdrop.

3. Lewes Schools: start at Priory School, South Downs College, Western Road School (opposite the Grange), Southover School, Lewes Old Grammar, St Pancras School, Wallands School, Lewes Old Grammar Junior School, South Malling School, and back to the Priory.
4. Lewes Corner Stores: start at the station at Station Food and Wine, St Pancras Stores, Winterbourne Stores, Leicester Rd Stores, Mount Harry Stores, Londis Landport, Malling Stores, Martin's High Street, and back to Station Food and Wine.

The following runners have completed all SLAM challenges:

Colin Hartland

[Jane Holford](#)

[Andrea Campbell](#)

[Joshua Peter Burgess](#)

[James Turner](#)

[Peter Kennedy](#)

[Jo Buckley](#)

Fran Witt

It is not too late to complete the four challenges and join this elite group.

Strava Art

Another challenge is to plan and run routes that create nice pictures when the course is mapped from your GPS watch via Garmin Connect/ Strava.



Claire Underwood

Fran Witt



Things are developing at speed on the Lewes AC Facebook – so make sure you go and have a look at it.

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