

AMMONITE Lewes Athletic Club Newsletter



June 2024

Please send contributions and corrections to errors to newsletter@lewesac.co.uk.

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1. 40 years of Lewes AC - The Summer Track Social! Thursday 4th of July 5-9pm



Grown-ups! Plenty of time to vote ...

Then join us for an evening of races and socialising... Come get your new PB!

Once again, we will be hosting our own club social event, on what is sure to be a sunny evening at our track, with some great events to participate in, grab a PB, enjoy some pizza and see and cheer on your clubmates!

5-6.30pm: Academy Olympic Year Championships

75m, 600m, Shot Putt, Long Jump & Relays

6.30 - 8pm: Adult Races

200m, 1 Mile & Mixed 400m Relays

Plus

- Pat's Pizzas on site
- Refreshments
- Ice creams available too!
- Officials & volunteers recruitment: get involved!

Races will be seeded based on your estimated times that you put down below.

<https://wiki.lewesac.co.uk/summer-track-social,-4-July-2024>

Academy members will be sent a separate sign up sheet for participation.

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2. Opportunities within our Club

Phil Westbury writes:

As a community club run by volunteers, we count on our members to help support Lewes AC in all areas. By having more volunteers, we can spread the workload and also grow and develop the club with a wider available skill set.

This is where you come in, on two key areas—

Coaching Assistants and Coaches

We want to increase the number of Coaching Assistants and Coaches in the academy, along with volunteers to help with communications, team management, events and administration.

Lewes AC will help organise and finance the cost of becoming a fully accredited coaching assistant or coach, and you would only be expected to contribute a few hours each month.

You'll also be helping Lewes AC maintain its role in the local area as a leader in athletics coaching and organisation, getting to be part of this wonderful club, utilising your skills and/or learning new ones. These rewarding roles help produce tangible results in the events Lewes AC takes part in and the brilliant young athletes it produces.

Website Developer & Website Editor

We've decided to update LAC's website, as part of our overall club communication review.

Here's where we need your help! As a community club, we rely on our members to volunteer their help and expertise.

We're looking to fill two roles:

Website Designer

- Work with the club's communication team and stakeholders to determine user journeys and website needs.
- Create the website platform, design and layout.
- Migrate relevant existing data to the new website.
- Provide support, training and user guides for updating/maintaining the website.

Website Editor

- Responsible for website content, updating and structure of the information, and ensuring social media teams are updated with the same content.
- Write and edit copy where needed.
- Work with coaches and run leaders who will provide much of the content, to ensure news and club information is kept up to date across all our communication channels.

Are you a great fit for either of these roles? Or know someone within your network who is?

We'd love to hear from you!

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3. Sussex Under 15 League: First match Friday 13th May 2024

This took place at the Withdean Stadium in Brighton and put Lewes comfortably in the top half of the League.

	Team	Score
1	Brighton & Hove	509
2	Crawley	416
3	Eastbourne	372.5
4	Chichester	364.5
5	Lewes	294.5
6	Horsham BS	213
7	HYAC	174.5
8	Worthing	172
9	East Grinstead	147
10	Hastings	124
11	Haywards Heath	62

Event	Place	Performance	Points
Boys A 100m			
Eoin Dacey	7	13.3	5
Boys B 100m			
Xavier Parker	6	14.3	6
Boys A 200m			
Eoin Dacey	7	27.8	5
Boys B 200m			
Charlie Perry	3	27.5	9
Boys A 300m			
Boys B 300m			
Boys A 800m			
Charlie Perry	4	2:22.9	8
Boys B 800m			
Thomas Muddle	5	2:44.1	7
Boys A 1500m			
Michael O'Connor	3	4:39.64	9
Boys B 1500m			
Max Farley	2	4:48.6	10
Boys A 80mH			
Oscar Fermor-McGhie	3	14.5	9
Boys B 80mH			
Boys A Pole Vault			
Bill Scott	2	3.00	10
Boys B Pole Vault			
Luca Mindel	1	2.60	11
Boys A High Jump			
Michael O'Conner	5	1.30	7
Boys B High Jump			
Joseph Baynes	2	1.30	10

Boys A Long Jump

Oscar Fermor-McGhie	10	3.81	2
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Boys B Long Jump

Xavier Parker	5	3.78	7
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Boys A Shot Putt

Edward Bagnall	6	5.75	6
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Boys B Shot Putt**Boys A Discus**

Thomas Muddle	7	11.18	5
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Boys B Discus**Boys A Hammer**

Roscoe Harris	6	13.24	6
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Boys A Javelin

Joseph Baynes	5	18.46	7
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Boys B Javelin

Roscoe Harris	3	17.13	9
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Boys 4x100m

	5	55.8	7
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Girls A 100m

Isla Tivey	7	14.2	5
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Girls B 100m

Maia Williams	4	14.6	8
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Girls A 200m

Isla Tivey	3	29.3	9
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Girls B 200m

Vida Johnson	7	31.9	5
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Girls A 300m

Isla Tivey	7	49.9	5
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Girls B 300m**Girls A 800m**

Eliza Barry	4	2:32.4	8
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Girls B 800m

Millie Button	5	2:43.7	7
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Girls A 1500m

Izza Docwra	7	5:07.5	5
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Girls B 1500m

Jess Wickens	8	6:13.8	4
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Girls A 75mH

Fernanda Wolfson	7	13.9	5
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Girls B 75mH

Romy Holdsworth O'Donnell	5	17.5	7
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Girls A Pole Vault

Sylvie Ward	1	2.50	11
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Girls B Pole Vault

Suzie Chadbourne	1	2.40	11
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Girls A High Jump

Fernanda Wolfson	6=	1.25	5.5
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4. Lewes AC count the County medals

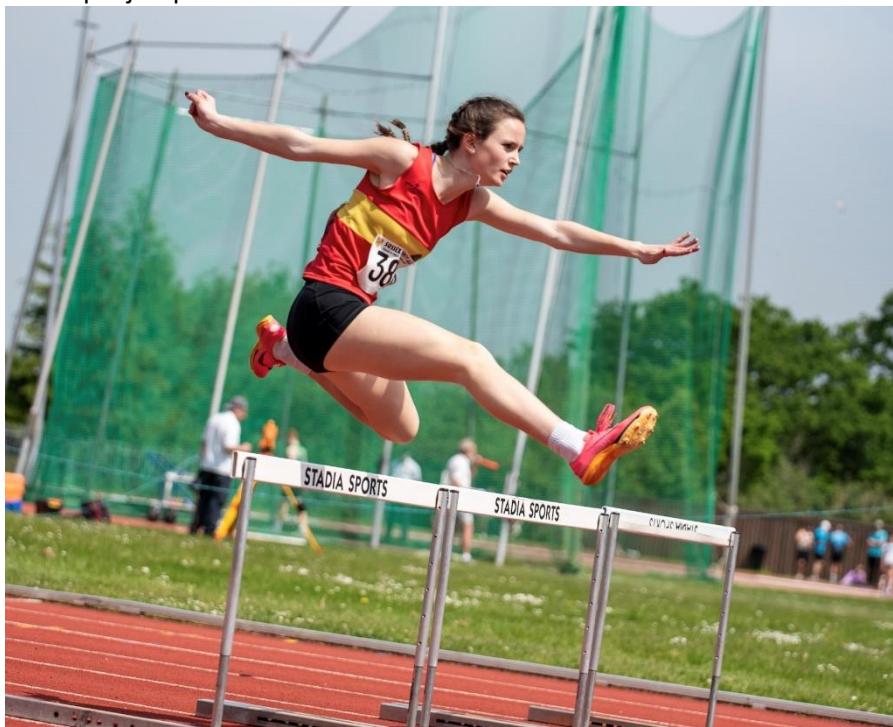
Sussex County Track and Field Championships

K2 Crawley 11th & 12th May 2024

Lewes AC is not just a running club. Summer reminds us that athletics is not just running but jumping and throwing as well. So Lewes athletes of all ages and different skill sets descended on the K2 stadium in Crawley for the Sussex County Track and Field Championships. Gratifyingly the club came away with nine bronze, twelve silver and eleven gold awards. The breadth of events where Lewes won these awards bodes well for the future.

Several of gold awards went to runners who are no strangers to success. Under 20 women's 400m gold went to Grace Tuesday with a time of 58.32. In U17W 800m Ava James took gold in an outstanding 2:11.45. There was success for some vets with Andrea Sansottera taking the VM35 5000m gold in 16:39.05, in addition to 1500m silver performance. Jonathan Burrell, one of the club's foremost vet internationals, took gold in the VM60 category in a time of 2:22.59.

With regard to silverware – figuratively speaking alas - as well as Andrea Sansottera, Esme Stephenson came second in her 1500m competitions: in his M35 vet event Andrea's time was 4:22.27, while Esme's time in the U17 women's final was 4:51.83. Also in the U17 category Thalia Witham achieved a double silver in the 80m hurdles (13.07 secs) and 300m hurdles (51.32). In the second race she was pipped at the post for gold by Emilia Singer (48.68 secs) who also won both long and triple jump bronzes.



The list of bronzes included Henry Crook's Under 15 100m in 12.35 which matched by Maria Breeze's bronze in Girls' version of the sprint (13.41 secs). Archie Besley focused on endurance and it took him rather longer (17:26.5) – how does that compare with your parkrun time? - to get his bronze in the Under 17 5000m. Meanwhile, Emilia Singer won Under 17 bronze with a neat 5m long jump. Another Under 17, Fred Gander, leapt 10.38m in the triple jump. But Emilia took to the triple jump

and won yet another bronze (with a 10.16m jump).



An example of the breadth of athletic techniques the club can call upon is race walking. In the U13 2000m race walk Seth Muddle took gold in 13:32.02 followed by Rainbow Love's silver with a time of 16:28.61. In the U15 3000m Race Walk, Charlie Perry took gold with a time of 17:21.19 and Thomas Muddle came second in 21:41.46. Finally Beverly Sheridan took silver in over 65 women's 3000m race walk with a time of 22:19.69.

Lewes AC is lessening its reliance on track, as field is beginning to assert itself. Jia Louise Atkins took the hammer throw Under 20 gold with a throw of 28.35m and U20M javelin throw's gold went to Hugo Mason with a throw of 47.59m.



But biggest off-track Lewes events have been pole vault. The club has a reputation as a centre of enthusiasm and excellence in pole vaulting to the extent that its home pole vault run-up track is getting worn out. So here is a long list of their county medals: **U13B** (Under 13 Boys) Tarn Allan 1.80m Bronze, **U15B** Bill Scott 3.20m Silver, Luca Mindel 2.70m Bronze, **U17M** Ivan Wray 3.00m Silver, **SW** (Senior Woman) Emilie Oakden 3.40m Gold, **U13G** Milly Pile 2.10m Silver, **U15G** Beth Boyes 2.90m Gold, Sylvie Ward 2.60m Silver, Imogen Taylor, 2.60m Bronze, U17W Imogen Clarke 3.20m Gold and Ava Hayes 3.00m Silver. That is three golds, five silvers and three bronze for the one discipline.

Results of Lewes AC participants

U15 B 100m · Boys · U15 · Heat · 1

Place	Athlete	Performance (Time)
5	Eoin Michael Dacey	13.60

U15 B 100m · Boys · U15 · Heat · 2

1	Henry Crook	12.27
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U15 B 100m · Boys · U15 · Final

3	Henry Crook	12.35 bronze
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U20M 100m · Men · U20 · Final

7	Dominic James Redshaw	12.15
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U17W 100m · Girls · U17 · Heat · 1

3	Maria Breeze	13.37
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U17W 100m · Girls · U17 · Final

3	Maria Breeze	13.41 bronze
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U15B 200m · Boys · U15 · Heat · 2

5	Eoin Michael Dacey	27.52
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U15G 200m · Girls · U15 · Heat · 2

5	Isla Tivey	28.67
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U15G 200m · Girls · U15 · Final

7	Isla Tivey	28.88
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U15M 300m · Boys · U15 · Heat

5	Edward Riseborough	40.07
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U15G 300m · Girls · U15 · Heat 1 of 2

3	Florence Tuesday	47.12
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U15G 300m · Girls · U15 · Final

6	Florence Tuesday	46.11
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U20W 400m · Women · U20 · Final

1	Grace Tuesday	58.32 gold
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SM 800m · Men · Senior · Final

4	Patrick McManus	2:12.46
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U17M 800m · Boys · U17 · Heat 1

3 Jacob Trotman 2:09.23

U17M 800m · Boys · U17 · Final

7 Jacob Trotman 2:07.54

VM60 800m · Men · M60 · Heat

1 Jonathan David Burrell 2:22.59 gold

U15G 800m · Girls · U15 · Final Group A

4 Florence Tuesday 2:35.62

U15G 800m · Girls · U15 · Final · Group B

6 Eliza Barry (2:29.14

U17W 800m · Girls · U17 · Heat · Group 1

1 Ava James 2:15.44

7 Eva Winton 2:23.27

U17W 800m · Girls · U17 · Final

1 Ava James 2:11.45 gold

U20W 800m · Women · U20 · Final

6 Lara Nolan 2:47.82

U15B 1500m · Boys · U15 · Final · Group A (of 2)

1 Michael O'Connor 4:47.50

5 Thomas Grimble 5:14.89

6 Casper Dennis 5:28.09

U17M 1500m · Boys · U17 · Final

12 Isaac Tarafder 4:38.53

14 Toby Cherry 4:59.54

U20M 1500m · Men · U20 · Final

4 Charlie Wright 4:11.90

VM35 1500m · Men · M35 · Final

2 Andrea Sansottera 4:22.27 Silver

U15G 1500m · Girls · U15 · Final

9 Millie Elizabeth Button 5:33.46

U17W 1500m · Girls · U17 · Final

2 Esme Stephenson 4:51.83 Silver

4 Eva Winton 5:00.48

9 Amelie Bedford 5:17.06

10 Nesta Pring 5:29.61

U20W 1500m · Women · U20 · Final

8 Darcy Pring 5:05.95

U17M 5000m Boys U17

3 Archie Besley 17:26.5 Bronze

VM35 5000m · Men · M35 · Final

1 Andrea Sansottera 16:39.05 Gold

U17W 80m Hurdles (76.2cm / 8m) · Girls · U17 · Final

2 Thalia Witham 13.07 Silver

U17W 300m Hurdles (76.2cm / 35m) · Girls · U17 · Final

1 Emilia Laura Singer 48.68 Gold

2 Thalia Witham 51.32 Silver

U13B Pole Vault · Boys · U13

3 Tarn Allan 1.80m Bronze

U15B Pole Vault · Boys · U15

2 Bill Scott 3.20m Silver

3 Luca Mindel 2.70m Bronze

4 Remy Louis 2.50m

U17M Pole Vault · Boys · U17

2 Ivan Wray 3.00m Silver

SW Pole Vault · Women · Senior

1 Emilie Oakden 3.40m Gold

U13G Pole Vault · Girls · U13

2 Milly Pile (2013) 2.10m Silver

4 Edith Emmeline 1.80m

5 Jasmine Clarke-Walker 1.70m

6 Felicity Una Frappell 1.60m

U15G Pole Vault · Girls · U15

1 Beth Boyes 2.90m Gold

2 Sylvie Rose Ward 2.60m Silver

3 Imogen Taylor 2.60m Bronze

4 Ayla Kimpton-Bragg 2.50m

5 Iris Hitchmough 2.40m

6 Suzie Chadburn 2.40m

7 Libby Higgins 2.20m

U17W Pole Vault · Girls · U17

1 Imogen Clarke 3.20m Gold

2 Ava Alexandra Hayes 3.00m Silver

4 Georgia Docherty 2.60m

5 Phoebe Scott 2.60m

6 Manon Barbet 2.50m

8 Natasha Robyn King 2.20m

U15G Long Jump · Girls · U15 · Final

12 Maia J. Williams 3.95

U17W Long Jump · Girls · U17 · Final

3	Emilia Laura Singer	5.00 Bronze
6	Maria Breeze	4.81

U15B Triple Jump · Boys · U15 · Final

4	Oscar Fermor-McGhie	8.61
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U17M Triple Jump · Boys · U17

3	Fred Gander	10.38 Bronze
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U15G Triple Jump · Girls · U15 · Final

5	Maia J. Williams	8.81
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U17W Triple Jump · Girls · U17 · Final

3	Emilia Laura Singer	10.16 Bronze
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U15B Discus Throw (1.25kg) · Boys · U15 · Final

4	Thomas Grimble	24.81
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U20W Hammer Throw (4kg) · Women · U20

1	Jia Louise Atkins	28.35 Gold
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U15B Javelin Throw (600g) · Boys · U15 · Final

4	Bill Scott	26.40
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U20M Javelin Throw (800g) · Men · U20 · Final

1	Hugo Mason	47.59 Gold
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U13B 2000m Race Walk · Boys · U13 · Final

1	Seth William Muddle	13:32.02 Gold
2	Rainbow Love	16:28.61 Silver

U15B 3000m Race Walk · Boys · U15 · Final

1	Charlie Perry	17:21.19 Gold
2	Thomas Jed Muddle	21:41.46 Silver

VW65 3000m Race Walk · Women · W65 · Final

2	Beverly Sheridan	22:19.69 Silver
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5. Southern Athletics League: Division 3 South

Round 1 - Crawley - 18 May 2024

In this competition Lewes AC forms a unit with Haywards Heath Harriers. Two characteristics of this League include the breadth in ages and the competition being regional rather than local. Lewes and Haywards Heath's position after the first leg is very encouraging.

Team	Score
1 Havant	362.5
2 Worthing	272
3 Chichester	262
4 Lewes/Haywards Heath	255
5 Horsham Blue Stars/East Grinstead	230
6 Thanet AC	214
7 HY Runners	207
8 Paddock Wood/Folkestone	197.5

Event	Place	Athlete	Category	Performance	Points
Men's A 100m	4	Dominic REDSHAW	U20	12.22	5
Men's B 100m	2	Ollie FYFE	SM	12.76	7
Men's A 200m	5	Dominic REDSHAW	U20	24.93	4
Men's B 200m	4	Harvey PERRY	U20	26.09	5
Men's A 400m	5	Harvey PERRY	U20	60.35	4
Men's B 400m	2	Ollie FYFE	SM	57.48	7
Men's A 800m	2	Ollie FYFE	SM	02:06.0	7
Men's B 800m	1	Harvey PERRY	U20	02:09.0	8
Men's A 1500m	1	Charlie WRIGHT	U20	04:08.0	8
Men's B 1500m	2	James SKINNER	M50	04:33.0	7
Men's A 3000m	2	James SKINNER	M50	09:26.0	7
Men's B 3000m	5	Tim POPKIN	M45	13:19.0	4
Men's A 3000m Steeple	5	Paul COUSINS	M60	14:26.0	4
Men's B 3000m Steeple	2	Tim POPKIN	M45	15:58.0	7
Men's A Pole Vault	2	Ivan WRAY	U17	3.3	7
Men's A Shot Putt	6	Tim POPKIN	M45	5.62	3
Women's A 100m	5	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	16.93	4
Women's B 100m	8	Jacqueline BARNES	W55	24.28	1
Women's A 200m	7	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	37.47	2
Women's B 200m	6	Jacqueline BARNES	W55	48.14	3
Women's A 800m	1	Grace TUESDAY	U17	02:11.0	8
Women's B 800m	2	Esme STEPHENSON	U17	02:21.0	7
Women's A 1500m	2	Darja KNOTKOVA-HANLEY		SW	04:56.0
	7				
Women's A 3000m	1	Eva WINTON	U17	10:17.0	8
Women's B 3000m	1	Darja KNOTKOVA-HANLEY		SW	10:18.0
	8				
Women's A 100mH	2	Annie CLOSE	SW	23.58	7
Women's A 2000m Steeple	1	Ava JAMES	U17		06:48.0
	8				
Women's A Pole Vault	2	Alice JOHNSTON	U17	3	7

Women's B Pole Vault	1	Alice JOHNSTON	U17	1	8
Women's A Long Jump	2	Annie CLOSE	SW	4.81	7
Women's B Long Jump	7	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	2.72	2
Women's A Triple Jump	1	Annie CLOSE	SW	10.6	8
Women's B Triple Jump	4	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	5.77	5
Women's A Shot Putt	6	Jacqueline BARNES	W55	4.65	3
Women's B Shot Putt	6	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	3.76	3
Women's A Discus	4	Alexandra YOUNG	U17	18.27	5
Women's B Discus	5	Jacqueline BARNES	W55	8.92	4
Women's A Javelin	5	Jacqueline BARNES	W55	9.04	4
Women's B Javelin	4	Jo BUCKLEY	W55	8.38	5

Non scoring

100	3	Eoin Darcey	U15	13.32
200		Eoin Darcey	U15	27.35
1500		Colin Bennett	V55	04:54.0
PV		Phoebe Scott	U17	2.9
3000		Emily Proto	W35	10:47.0

Man of the Match Awards

Women

Pole Vault	2	Alice JOHNSTON	U17	3
800m	1	Grace TUESDAY	U17	02:11.0
3/5000m	1	Eva WINTON	U17	10:17.0

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6. Sussex Under 13 League – East Event 2

Friday 24th May 2024 at Lewes

Sussex Under 13 League - East Division

	Team	Score
1	Brighton & Hove	230
2	Lewes	154
3	HYAC	95
4	Eastbourne	80
6	Phoenix	50
5	Hastings	23

Event	Place	Athlete	Performance	Points
Boys' A 75m	2	Samuel Trotman	11.5	5
Boys' B 75m	1	Rainbow Love	1.4	6
Boys' A 150m	3	Daniel Tennant	24.0	4
Boys' B 150m	3	Miles Levy	23.0	4
Boys' A 600m	4	Samuel Trotman	1:55.4	3
Boys' B 600m	3	Seth Muddle	2:04.8	4
Boys' A 1000m	3	Rex Hastings	3:17.9	4
Boys' B 1000m	2	Ralf Pelkonen	3:26.3	5
Boys' A High Jump	3	Antoine Dohmatob	1.05	4
Boys' B High Jump	1	Stanley Taylor	1.05	6
Boys' A Long Jump	3	Daniel Tennant	3.57	4

Boys' B Long Jump	4	Alex Wallace	2.88	3
Boys' A Shot Putt	1	Rainbow Love	7.98	6
Boys' B Shot Putt	1	Seth Muddle	4.81	6
Boys' A Discus	2	Noah Alderman	11.89	5
Boys' B Discus	2	Henry Hills	8.08	5
Boys' A Javelin	1	Rex Hastings	34.55	6
Boys' B Javelin	2	Noah Alderman	20.21	5
Boys' 4x100m	3	Lewes	61.9	4
Girls' A 75m	5	Kitty Rowland	11.5	2
Girls' A 150m	6	Anna Westbury	25.9	1
Girls' B 150m	4	Abagayle Marbare	25.2	3
Girls' A 600m	4	Kitty Rowland	2:05.4	3
Girls' B 600m	3	Jasmine Clarke-Walker	2:12.8	4
Girls' A 70mH	4	Jasmine Senyakti	21.8	3
Girls' A High Jump	2	Betty Barry	1.15	5
Girls' B High Jump	2	Maya Trunfall	1.15	5
Girls' A Long Jump	4	Jasmine Senyakti	2.74	3
Girls' B Long Jump	2	Maya Trunfall	2.47	5
Girls' A Shot Putt	1	Sunshine Love	6.28	6
Girls' A Discus	2	Sunshine Love	15.36	5
Girls' B Discus	2	Anna Westbury	9.93	5
Girls' A Javelin	2	Jasmine Clarke-Walker	15.40	5
Girls' B Javelin	1	Jasmine Clarke-Walker	12.79	6
Girls' 4x100m	3	Lewes	65.5	4

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7. How I ran the London Marathon in 2024 David Barham



Like so many, I grew up watching the London Marathon, the iconic music, the camera at Cutty Sark, and the masses grinding through the streets of London. In truth I never imagined I would do it: I didn't run at all. Then a little over three years ago, I decided I'd better do something, as lockdown had left me feeling like a chubby middle aged man. So I started to run. A year or so later I'd done a

couple of races, found my way to Lewes AC and decided to enter the London Marathon ballot for the first time - it was a no. I did the Brighton Marathon instead and entered the ballot again - still a no go. It began to dawn on me, with odds at about 30:1 and a good-for-age at a smidge over 3 hours I might not be able to run London at all.

By now I was training for Brighton again. Things were going really well despite the rain. Then there was an email from Phillip saying the club had some places for London, so I asked. It seemed unlikely, but if you don't ask.... Soon after I got the unexpected news that I could have the spot!

Then the wheels fell off. I got injured, I was overtrained and losing confidence by the minute. I DNF'd at Brighton Marathon and severely doubted my ability to finish in London two weeks later. A tricky time, this was very likely my one chance, I really didn't want it to become a nightmare. My solution was to ditch the goal time, cover up the watch, get over myself and enjoy the experience. Genuinely, my best running decision.

From the off, the experience was amazing, chatting with other nervous runners on the bus and in the 200m+ toilet queues. After a chilly wait we were off, the iconic music playing and people cheering on the streets. After a few miles the routes all merged and the atmosphere was like nothing else I have ever experienced. When I reached Cutty Sark I had to blink back the tears. It was absolutely incredible. I suspect there were a million people lining the streets of London that day, and the collective effort of the runners and the support from the crowd was unbelievable. I even managed to see a few friends along the way (although I missed my family!). The support was pretty much uninterrupted from start to finish and despite some cramping in the last few miles I had an amazing time all the way.

I am so grateful to Lewes AC for this opportunity, it is something I shall never forget. Thank you.

Below: **Ammonite Picture of the Month**. Thanks to George Stewart.



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8 How I ran the London Marathon in 2024 ...2 Euan Baker

I was given the opportunity to represent the club at the London marathon this year. Lots had been said about the amazing atmosphere that London had so I was incredibly excited to get stuck into a training block for it.

12 weeks is all I had after coming off an injury from last year. I quickly was able to gain fitness though thanks to some hard track sessions on Wednesday nights with the squad & weekend long run workouts with my teammates.

Half way through the block I tested my fitness over the half marathon distance and came away with PB of 1:14:11 so all was looking good.

Five weeks later it was time for race day. I set off with Fraser and Jason in the chaotic crowds. I felt like I was skating on ice for the first three miles with people all over the place. I had never participated in anything like this: it was almost overwhelming.

We settled into a 6:00 Mile pace with the end goal of a sub 2:40 marathon but early on I could tell something was not quite right: all this hard training to start feeling rubbish at 10 miles. I was hoping this was just a little blip but it was not.



Picture above: Euan, Fraser and Jason at Tower Bridge: Photo by George Stewart.

After coming through the madness that was Tower Bridge, Fraser and Jason started to slip away from me. I was starting to really work. Two miles later I had stitches all the way up both my abdominals and was on the side of the course moaning to my dad that I wanted to stop. After watching people go past me for about 2 minutes I decided to hop back on and finish the race. I finished in 2:51, a personal best but a bittersweet one. The marathon is brutal so many variables can affect the day and it can't always go right.

Thank you so much to Lewes AC for the opportunity and my amazing teammates for smashing it on the day.

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9. Marolles Trip Spring 2024: Trail de la Grand Pierre 14th April 2024

Andrew Chitty writes:

Since before the dawn of time our French twin club in the village of Marolles, in the Loire valley, has been welcoming visitors from Lewes AC for their spring running event, and we have been welcoming Marolles runners in turn for the weekend of the Lewes Downland races in October.



This year was no exception. 24 Lewes AC members took the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry on the Friday morning of 12th April and drove across Northern France all day – in some cases with a detour into the tunnels under Western Paris! – to arrive in the late evening to a typically warm welcome from the Marolliens in their trophy-littered clubhouse (the club has an extraordinary history of success in regional and national competitions). From there we were taken to the houses of our various hosts for the weekend for offers of French food and drink, which as we know is the best in the world!

On the Saturday we spent the morning strolling around the markets in a local town, then after a big shared restaurant lunch, the afternoon in a guided tour of the exquisite [Chateau des Grotteaux](#) near Marolles, conducted by its owner in perfect English. There I learnt an immense amount about the history of the Hundred Years War from a French perspective, and also some more recent wryly delivered facts. (Did you know that when the British commissioned a new nuclear submarine in 2018 they named it *HMS Agincourt*?) Then it was on to a local vineyard for a tour of the winemaking facilities and an extended wine-tasting.

In the evening there was a grand feast in the village hall, and then on Sunday morning it was time for the two [Trail de la Grand Pierre](#) races of 9k and 16k, named after the Vallées de Grand Pierre nature reserve through which they both pass. I took on the 16k and can testify to an extremely varied terrain, across wide open fields, along a lakeside, through deep forest, and including at least one point where we had to clamber up a steep rocky slope with the help of a rope. (There might have been two of those, but race-related cognitive impairment prevents me from being absolutely sure!) Then came the traditional prize ceremony, with lavish gifts for the male and female winners in every age category up to V70, followed by a huge collective picnic in the sun on a trestle table that felt as if it was 100 metres long.



Picture Above: Delegation Leader Ian Hilder (more of whom later) plus some of the greatest minds of Lewes AC

The afternoon was for post-race recovery, but then in the evening various host families welcomed other families and their English guests for a series of dinner parties around the village. I don't know about the others but the one at my hosts' house can only be described as riotous! Then it was sad goodbyes on Monday morning, and the long trip north to endure harassment by 40mph winds as we recrossed the channel.

Really this was a weekend to remember. The weather was perfect, our hosts were fantastically hospitable, I understand the wine was very good, and the race itself was a great challenge. Thank you to everyone from Marolles who looked after us so well, and we look forward to seeing as many of you as can manage it in October!

Meanwhile I strongly recommend this trip to Lewes AC members for next year. The only expense is a share of travel costs for your car, many of the Marolliens speak good English and Google Translate can do a great job if needed, the atmosphere is genuinely festive all weekend, and it is a chance to experience a very different kind of running club culture. Thank you to Ian Hilder who painstakingly organised the trip in collaboration with the Marolles club over several months, and Vive La France!

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10. Spring 2024 Beginners Course Report by Mark Pappenheim

"Many thanks to all the leaders for a fab course, your enthusiasm is infectious."

"Thanks for everything - great group and great leaders."

"Thank you for the sessions, the emails, the encouragement, the advice, etc etc! It really is a brilliant course and I really appreciate you and the others giving up your Saturday mornings for us."

"I'd also like to thank you and the rest of the team for all your support over the last 10 weeks - you've all been stars and truly inspiring. ... It's been a blast so thank you for getting me through it."

"Thanks for running this course. I didn't expect to enjoy it as much as I have done. All of the club members and coaches have been so welcoming and have really given me the belief that it is possible to run!"

Just some of the informal feedback we received from participants on our Spring 2024 Adult Beginners Running Course, which kicked off on Saturday 24th February with a full class of 30 sign-ups (27 female, 3 male), ranging in age from their mid-30s to their mid-60s. With a slightly higher incidence of drop-outs than usual (albeit due as much to personal reasons as to running-induced niggles/injuries), we ended the course with 23 still on the register, though in the event only 11 were able to participate in the "graduation" parkrun at Peacehaven on 27 April, while one grad actually did her parkrun over in Hamburg, Germany (Gut gemacht, Liz!).



Above The 11 Spring 2024 Beginners who ran Peacehaven parkrun on 27 April, proudly holding their graduation certificates (from left to right): Sarah Jonas, Jane Alderton, Clare Williams, Rachel Phillips, Adrian Thompson, Catriona Wheeler, David Jackson, Michele Sussams, Claire Saunders, Cressida Murray and Louise Hill-Hottinger.

Although some inevitably then went their separate ways, content to go on running 5Ks on their own, a baker's dozen bravely signed up for our 5K-to-5mile Progression Course, which eight of them successfully completed with an out-and-back run from the Southdown Sports Club to Iford village on 1st June. And six of them have now also signed up to do our Hill Progression Course, which should see them conquering ever higher elevations over the next five Sundays, starting with a gentle run up to the Ashcombe Windmill on Day 1 and culminating in an ascent to the summit of Blackcap on Day 5. Meanwhile, nine of them have also joined the club (successfully mastering the complexities of registering via JoinIn!) and a few have already done their very first Tuesday-evening club run.

So huge thanks to all those coaches and leaders who have generously given up their time to help to deliver yet another successful course: run leaders Alex Sutton, Amar Saggar, Andy Perris, Anne Hagan, Bob Hughes, Claire Hawes, Colin Hartland, Helen Sida, Jane Holford, John Coleman, Karin Richter, Kate Seymour, Phil Westbury and Terry Rogers, plus our guest coaches Toby Wolpe and Siobhan Boyer.

Kudos too to all the other club members who turned out in such impressive numbers (and such a sea of red) to support the Beginners on the Peacehaven parkrun.

And special thanks as well to Richard Bailey and Sally Norris for volunteering to marshal at Peacehaven: if it hadn't been for them, the event would almost certainly have been cancelled for lack of sufficient marshals on the course.

By way of a coda/cool-down ...

When trying to string a few words together to welcome the new intake on Day 1 of the Beginners Course, my mind began freely associating between the following apparently random thoughts that had occurred to me during the previous night's fitful sleep:

1. The fact that, for me, running is primarily about fun and friendship - with fitness only ever coming a poor third (and I speak as a recovering heart case).

2. When I posted our Beginners Course flyer on Facebook a year or so ago, some smart-arse added a comment to say, "*Thanks, but I learnt to run shortly after I learnt to walk.*" They clearly thought they were being clever - and in fact they were! If you really want to see running in its purest form, just watch a bunch of kids at play. Children can barely stop running - and, as most parents/carers know, you spend nearly all of your time telling them not to. And, when they run, they do so with an innate ease and sense of joy and freedom ... and then they grow up, spend too much time sitting down, lose all that flexibility and muscle tone, and barely even have the ability to run for a bus. So, for novice runners of a certain age, learning to run for fun is not just about getting fit, it's about recapturing your lost youth!

3. That set me thinking about Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man" and then back (through more than seven ages) to Oedipus and the Riddle of the Sphinx. You know the one: "What is it that walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon and three legs in the evening?" And you know the answer: "Mankind." But follow that arc of transition through - from the "mewling and puking" infant, crawling on all fours, with every limb in nearly constant contact with the ground, to the "lean and slipper'd pantaloons", shuffling along from foot to foot with a sturdy stick to stop them falling flat upon their face - and at the very apex of midday you can just about discern the runner's true aspiration, and perhaps also the ultimate aim of the Beginners Course, which is to reduce any contact with the ground to the barest minimum, to lift those feet ... and to fly!

So, yes, no wonder that most of the class just looked at me in confused bemusement - I don't think they talk about the Sphinx on the NHS app! But amazingly one beginner, Emma Lumsden, was apparently sufficiently inspired by my incoherent ramblings to go home afterwards and write a poem (the first time I've ever been cast as someone's muse!), and by her kind permission we reproduce it here:

running

the difference between walking and running?

the human aspiration to fly...

*the call of the void (l'appel du vide)
- not merely in dream state,
but to actually take flight
with the wings and yearnings of Icarus.*

*transcending all earthly confines
- cavorting not just the clouds,
but all heavenly horizons
and know the existence beyond ...*

*or,
an attempt
to fly in the face
of our corporeal fate:*

*four feet in the morning,
two feet in midday,
and three feet in the evening*

(quizzed the Sphinx to Oedipus so precisely)

*so,
with the road ahead,
let me put one foot in front of the other
and know how high I can soar*

© emma lumsden (27/02/24)

Sadly, Emma then managed to go and break her little toe - not by running, it seems, but by kicking her bed base. But hopefully she'll be rejoining us for our autumn course. That's scheduled to take place, again on Saturday mornings at 9am, from 14 September to 16 November – so, if you know anyone who might want to sign up, they can join the waiting list by emailing beginners@lewesac.co.uk or wait for online booking to open (sometime in July) via our Beginners page on the club website at www.lewesac.co.uk/beginners. We can't promise them that we can teach them to fly, but we can at least help them to get up off that couch and run.



Above: What Lewes AC is all about: existing club members turned up in force to support the latest cohort of adult beginners on their graduation 5K run at Peacehaven parkrun on 27 April 2024

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11. Getting to know you...? no 23: Ian Hilder

The Accidental Runner



Above: Ian Hilder at King's Head Canter (208). Spot the other Lewes runner.

It was the millennium year that sparked my interest in running. I had run on and off over the years, but never considered myself a runner. My school's cross-country team got me plodding around the fields of Cambridgeshire and Essex in a pair of worn out off-white Dunlops and it got me out of Latin lessons! I joined in the 'National Fun Run' in Hyde Park in 1987, then forgot about running and got on with life.

In the millennium year I found myself in Barcombe High Street waiting to run down the High Street as part of a tennis club relay team, lured by a free pint of Harvey's at the finish. On the day I went off too fast (what's new) couldn't drink more than quarter of the pint, so had to pour it over my head before the next runner in the team could set off. My running adventure could have ended there in a pool of beer, but someone spectating that day saw me running and later offered me their place in the 'Great South Run' (GSR). I said 'yes' and have been running ever since!

Training fitted in well with my rather sedentary job as a genealogist and local historian. The next step was a half marathon, then a faster GSR, then the Worthing 20 and the New Forest Marathon. Despite having self-coached myself to 4 Marathons, including 2 Londons and Edinburgh (3:35 PB), I still didn't think of myself as runner! I was finally persuaded to join LAC by Tim Monson, who I had played tennis with. And so I went from being a tennis player who ran, to a runner who played tennis.

During my first year with the club I had a go at everything; WSFRL, ESSCCL, SCCL and SGP. I also joined in the LAC visit to Marolles in France to run the 'Trail de Grand Pierre', a 10-mile trail run with a boulder climb. I was hooked, and have returned many times since and making many friends in the process, including my Spanish running buddy Pablo with whom I ran a half marathon in his home town of Santander.

Latterly, while injured (by both running and tennis) I have become a swimmer who cycles (2km is my current longest swim). What's next? Well if I can keep myself injury free for long enough, a new age category in the Sussex Grand Prix beckons next year. Life's all about challenges...

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