



# SOUTH CHESHIRE Harriers

Newsletter

Spring 2007

## HARRIERS' INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Greetings from South Africa

**Gilroy Domingo, who came along to run with us during his secondment to Bentley in Crewe, writes:**



“Just want to say thanks for everything and report on my well being. I have been out of action for two weeks but am okay now. Will start training on Wednesday. Here are some photos of me and

my son Keanu. I am missing all of you. Best regards to all.”



The photographs are from Gilroy's run at the Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town. He describes it as “one of South Africa's most beautiful races”. No wonder he was happy to return home - the weather looks wonderful.

### Barcelona Marathon

**Steve Dawson and Dave McGrath ran the Barcelona Marathon on 4th March.**

We left Manchester on a cold Saturday morning, and landed in Barcelona at 10:30am where the temperature was 20°. Great for a short holiday, but not for running 26 miles the next day, having trained in sub zero temperatures!

We spent the afternoon relaxing, buying fruit and water; but uncharacteristically Dave didn't drink any beer, saying he wasn't 100%; was this genuine or just race tactics? We had an evening meal: pasta and more pasta, at a small restaurant opposite our hotel, in the company of the English and Welsh Teams who were running the 10k race.

The next morning at 8am we headed for the start at the main Plaza with the famous fountains; about 600 metres from our hotel. The air was fresh but a warm 17°; a big change from England.

I had somehow been allocated a place in the sub 3hr start pen - rather worrying as it filled with tanned Mediterranean athletes who looked as if they would better that time.

At 8:30 we were off. I needed to be overtaken by anyone who was trying to break 3 hours and then dig in behind; easily achieved at 3km as a group led by a man carrying a balloon with '3H' on it stormed past, going like bats out of hell.

At 5km I took a much-needed drink before heading back towards the start, completing the 10km circuit. The tall buildings of the city sheltered us from the morning sun, but as we ran out towards the Port we began to feel its heat.

I reached halfway at under 1hr 36. By now the temperature was really rising and the going becoming tough. The plentiful support was a much-needed boost. At 30km we turned back towards the city, looking forward to finding some shade.



At 35km I paused for a drink and to stretch - then realised Dave McGrath was in front of me. How did he get there? The last few kilometres around the city streets were assisted by terrific crowd support, which I really needed. I could still see Dave in front but had nothing left to catch him.

At 40km I could see a big crane ahead; I knew it was close to the finish line, but the last 2km were straight with an incline at the end. It felt like climbing a mountain. Suddenly we turned at a roundabout and there was the finish with the fountains - DONE IT - and a PB!



I needed some shade to collapse into, but settled for plunging my legs into the fountain before I limped back to the hotel for a shower and change in anticipation of finding some well-earned beers. Dave realised I wasn't going to walk anywhere; we took the tube to the Port area and found a bar where we could sit in the sun.



Finish times (for the Race):  
**Dave: 3:12:09**  
**Steve: 3:13:27**

*Steve Dawson*



## International News, cont from p1

### Pafos Half Marathon

#### Glenn Riley took part in the Pafos Half Marathon, Cyprus, on 11th March



It was very hot that day with temperatures around 23-25 degrees. There was a very good atmosphere about the race, and it was good to see runners from different countries taking part, including quite a few from England.

The start is by the harbour of Pafos next to the Medieval Fort. There were two other races at the same time: a Full Marathon and a 10k race. It was disconcerting that the mile markers (measured in Km) went up to a certain point in the Half Marathon and after that the markers were all for the Marathon, which made it difficult to know where I was in the race. In parts of the route, mostly near the finish, we had to run with the traffic through the town of Pafos but I did not get run over. Overall, there were around 400 runners all taking part that day.

I was hoping I could repeat my performance in the

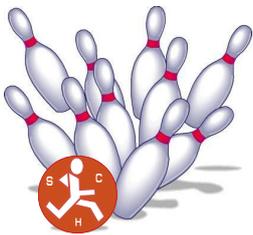
Village Bakery Half Marathon in Wrexham on 18th February, where I finished in 1:34:50, but the Pafos Half was a tough race for me, due to the fact that I flew out on 10th March (a 4 hour flight) and did not get to my hotel until near midnight. After less than four hours sleep I needed to be up early as the race started at 9.15am. The course was mostly flat so there was every chance of a personal best, but I struggled. It was the heat; it was really draining, like running on a treadmill in a sauna. It reminded me of the other nightmare race I took part in last year, the Potters Arf, which was really tough because of the heat.

My finish time was 1:43:05 and out of 169 runners that took part in the event, I came 40th. I got a big medal and a goody bag which had all sorts in it including a T-shirt. Even though I had insufficient time to adjust to the climate, I enjoyed it overall and am satisfied with the result. It was well organised with marshals pointing the way and at the end of the race they had music and celebrations.

It was an honour flying the flag for the Harriers, though I felt a bit lonely as the only one there.

I would recommend the race to other Harriers who like a challenge. There is every chance of personal best if they are capable of running in hot weather. The atmosphere is good as well. But try to get there a few days before the race, to adjust to the climate before running.

Glenn Riley



## Friday 4th May, 7pm, at The Bickerton Poacher

*Join us for a fun night out. The evening will consist of A team skittles competition, good pub grub and a few bevies. All for just 9.50 groats per person (bevies not included).....*



### Choose from:

*Traditional Hot Pot served with crusty bread.*

*Lasagne Verdi & garlic bread.*

*Steak & Ale pie topped with puff pastry, served with new potatoes.*



*Cheese & broccoli bake served with chips.*

The cost of the evening includes private hire of the skittle alley, grub & magnificent prizes for the winning team.

**Please ring or e-mail Cindy by 27th April with numbers & food selection**

**07775 585617 - [Cindy@cats1439.freemove.co.uk](mailto:Cindy@cats1439.freemove.co.uk)**



## A Birthday Run - Sylvia Smallwood

## The Village Bakery Half Marathon at Wrexham 18th February 2007

We could not have picked a better day, the weather was perfect as the mini-bus drew up to start our journey to Wrexham.

We arrived with time to relax and prepare for our 13 mile run and as the rest of the Harriers arrived we had plenty of time to gather together to wish each other luck before the start of the race.

I had been training on regular long Sunday runs with Chris, Roger, Tina and Steve, so was well up to running a good time and beating the over-65 record (2:18:55) by at least 8 minutes. As we made our way to the start I felt pretty good. The first 4 miles led us in a circle back to the start so we were able to give all our supporters a wave as we started the last 9 miles heading out into countryside.

Martin kept a steady pace, Charm was running with us, Cindy in front. It was lovely to see George slightly ahead in his first half marathon for a while and running well. The rest of the Harriers were gone at this point and heading towards a fast finish.

I am pretty consistent; not fast, but I keep going. At 9 miles I found myself having to stop with back ache, something I had never experienced before and by the time I reached the 10 mile mark I had Martin rubbing my back and I was trying everything and anything to keep myself moving.

At the 12 mile marker the whole of my back had frozen and the pain at this point had reached my shoulders. I continually had to stop to stretch and have Martin rub my back with kind words like "Keep going it's still the quickest way back". I knew the finish was near and I could finish.

At this point I had realised how cold it was. I had taken off a layer just before the race and at 65 running in a tee shirt in the middle of February is not to be recommended. By now I felt the record had completely gone out of the window.

But as always my faithful pacer was on hand with those famous words "Come on, only half a mile to go" so with a little pushing and dragging along I finally turned a corner and saw the finish.

Charm came back to meet me and ran the last few metres to the finishing line with me. I had a tremendous welcome with poppers, cheers, applause and I really thought I had "won the race". There was a lovely fruit loaf for finishing, it was wonderful.

After a couple of pain killers and a cup of tea I felt better although a little disappointed that the race had

not gone as well as I would have liked.

Chris Walsh said "I think you have done just enough to beat the record for the over 65 age group". Eventually my name was called out as winner over 65 then, after checking the race times, called again to win the record time for my age group.

I struggled to finish but, this was all part of the strategy. Martin had planned the race well and he would be thinking "Next year she will be a year older and this has to be taken in to consideration". So instead of beating the record by 10 minutes which would make it much harder for me to beat next year he had decided we would beat the record by 1 second!

I hadn't realised that the cold in my back made it easier for me to beat my own record next year and I am sure Chris had explained to the rest of the club members at the finishing line that it had been part of the training schedule to beat the record by "1 second"!

It really was a wonderful day. Three Lady Harriers won prizes: Sheila Bickerton; Shelegh Swinnerton and me. I think we all felt pretty good and there were cheers all round.

Chris had arranged for us all to go for a meal, so back in the mini bus with Simon at the helm we left for a pub lunch. I had celebrated my 65 birthday on the Friday before and I really didn't think it could get any better.

We had a wonderful meal; the venue was perfect. Everybody enjoyed themselves as we relaxed, talked about the race and revelled in all celebrating together.

The biggest surprise of all was a Birthday Cake Tina brought out with candles burning ready for me to blow out. With some very kind words from Martin, the candles blown out (not quite 65) and the cake cut, it really was a Birthday Treat to remember.

I have many thanks: to Chris for the arrangements and "all that training"; to Simon for driving the bus; to Martin for dragging me round, without you I would not have my "second" of glory and a big Thank You to Tina for making such a wonderful Birthday Cake.

Thank you also to all club members; for all the cards, presents and good wishes, and for making it such a special day.

*Sylvia Smallwood*

## Race Results

*Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February*

### Nick Beer 10K, Llandudno

Starting on Llandudno Promenade and climbing up the Great Orme along Marine Drive before descending to the West Shore and returning to the promenade via the Tramway Station, the Nick Beer provides a complete change from the previous week's exertions on the pancake flat Alsager 5.

A record 562 runners completed the race on a very pleasant day; again a change from the gales of the previous two years of the race.

With support from Gordon Bickerton, Colin and Gael Earp, four Harriers competed: first home was **Dave McGrath** in 43:12 followed by **Mike Cutler** in 46:48; **Sheila Bickerton** was first lady in her age category, in 45:57; **Cindy Morrisette** made up the quartet of runners, finishing in 60:06.

The race winner, in 33:24 was Birchfields' Luke Northall, with Lynn Wright first lady in 38:25.

*Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February*

### Village Bakery Half Marathon

This is the third in the list of Harriers Race Championship events. Encouraged by Chris Walsh, there was a good turnout of 18 Harriers, including first-time ½-marathon runner **Charm Parker**, and **George Arrowsmith** making a welcome return.

The number of runners and supporters was also due to the birthday celebrations of popular Harrier **Sylvia Smallwood** who had achieved her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday the previous week and wanted something different to celebrate her youth!!

First Harrier home was **Dave Hindley**, who lopped a large chunk off his previous PB to log in at 1:25:03; first Lady **Sheila Bickerton**, in 1:37:16 and 2<sup>nd</sup> in her age category. **Shelagh Swinnerton**, in 1:55:43, was 3<sup>rd</sup> in her age category. A special mention must be made of **Sylvia Smallwood**, who broke the course record for Ladies over 65, by one second, in 2:18:54.

Other Harriers competing were:

Melvyn Cole	1:29:53
Stephen Dawson	1:31:04
David McGrath	1:31:04
Robert Bonson	1:31:58
Glenn Riley	1:34:50
Michael Cutler	1:39:25
Mick Tobin	1:40:17
Simon Walker	1:41:30
Alasdair Dyde	1:42:49

David Griffiths	1:52:22
George Arrowsmith	1:56:58
Charm Parker	2:07:16
Cindy Morrisette	2:11:40
Martin Stirna	2:18:14

Following the race and presentations, the club retired to a local hostelry, where various forms of carbo-loading occurred, as well as the lighting and consumption of Sylvia's Birthday Cake. (see p3)

*Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March*

### Cloud 9

*Special Reporter Charlie Rowlands writes:*

**Since the dawn of time, man has spent his Sunday mornings running up and down hills in the rain.**

And as more than 300 such men (many of them actually women) set off from Congleton on March 4, you fancied you could hear the ancestral voices echoing from the rocky outcrops of Bosley Cloud. "Seriously," they seemed to be saying, "get yourselves indoors. I wouldn't send a dog out in this weather!"

The Cloud Nine is not quite nine miles, and this year the sense of elation its name suggests seemed a bit wide of the mark too. With low cloud, cold winds, punishingly strong in places, and a steady downpour to greet the start, this was one for the hardier souls. Happily, the club is well served in this department.

**Melvyn Cole** does not remember the dawn of time, but he probably remembers the Third Battle of Ypres, and the state of the fields at either end of the race may well have put him in mind of the Flanders' mud. His stomach for the fight could not be questioned however. Resplendent in fluorescent yellow thermals beneath his Harriers' vest, he skipped lightly over the sapping bog like a man nearly 20 years his junior. Speaking as a man nearly 20 years his junior, I can tell you this was a thoroughly depressing sight - and one I could only see at all because the fluorescent yellow was visible three counties away.



Ahead of us, a less one-sided fight was developing as Harriers (fairly) new boy **Dave Hindley**, buoyed by his showing in last month's Village Bakery Half, toughed it out with **Rob Jones** for the privilege of being first Harrier



## Race Results (continued)

home, and therefore first to stand in a bucket of cold water and scrape the mud off his legs with a wire brush. The lead changed hands on more than one occasion as the two of them became embroiled in an additional battle to stay ahead of the leading lady in the race. Being proper gentlemen, neither succeeded, but Dave, 43rd in 01:08:08, came away to beat Rob by 49 seconds.

Mel and I (in 01:14:44 and 01:15:24) followed them home at a respectful distance, chased in by **Dave Naylor** (who critics say has yet to translate his oftentimes dazzling club night form into day-time race performances) in 01:20:16 and another relative newcomer, **Pete Cooper**, in 01:22:55.



Souls don't come a lot harder than **Mike Cutler** but, as he intimated at the start, this was not really his sort of surface - in fact, for a good part of the race there was no surface at all, which made it harder still. Mike still clocked up his

9,000th race in Harriers colours in a very respectable 01:44:06.

**Cindy** was our only female representative, appearing in the Harriers' controversial yellow and green away kit, and finishing in 01:57:59, which since the mud must have been over her head in places, is a tribute to her determination.



Charlie Rowlands

### Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March

#### Stafford 20

5 members kept the Harriers' flag flying; **Mel Cole** first home in 2:29:18. **Martin Stirna** continued his return to form with 2:50:51; **Mike Cutler** ran his umpteenth race with the Harriers in 2:53:41; **Karyn Amson-Orth** completed her long run, in the build-up for London, in 3:06:02 and New Grandma **Shelagh Swinnerton** celebrated the birth of her granddaughter by finishing in 3:16:00.



## YOUR CLUB NEEDS



# YOU

Harriers run in races organised by other clubs; let's do **our** bit by helping organise a race for others.

If you can help in any way

Please contact **Simon Walker** 01270 662671  
07722 605362

[snap39@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:snap39@tiscali.co.uk)

**FREE T-shirt or Easter Bunny to all helpers!**

## SOUTH CHESHIRE HARRIERS 10K AND 5K FUNRUN

A reminder that this race is on **Easter Sunday, 8th April** starting from South Cheshire College in Dane Bank Avenue.

### WE NEED HELPERS

Marshals  
Registrars  
Drinks Station Attendants  
Timekeepers  
Message Runners (finish to Results Desk)  
T-shirt and Easter Bunny distributors