

# The Chippenham Harrier



**Autumn Issue 2008**

**Edited By : Caroline Blake**

Please note this newsletter is available on-line at [chippenhamharriers.co.uk](http://chippenhamharriers.co.uk)

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How did he do it? - no not organise the event... how did Wiggy manage to arrange the weather?

Most of us know not to book the same week off on holiday as Wiggy or that if he is arranging a BBQ to remember to take your broly! But some how the sun was shining on him for this the highlight event of the 2008 Chippenham Harrier calendar.

After moving house a couple of weeks ago I have just managed to get back on-line and I must admit reading the runners reviews almost brought a tear to my eye. Read these tear jerking comments on pages 8 and 9.

Everyone commends the organisation (a tremendous effort put in by the organising committee), the marshals were continuously

praised for their support and time and again people are saying they will be back next year.

Congratulations to Lucy and Catherine Dawber who both competed in the half (their first one). Read how

Also in this issue a big well done to Brigid as she tells us about her epic 86 mile adventure along the Ridgeway, what will that girl do next?

Colin gives us an update on the view of the club from the chair and tells us what the committee have been up to.

Thanks to Brett for giving us a journey down memory lane—I hope you enjoy this article as I believe there is more to come!

And finally in celebration of our 25th anniversary Chris Constable tells the tale of 'how it all began' all those years ago—and yes

he did struggle to remember!

Thanks to everyone who has contributed this time and maybe next time it could be you!

Caroline Blake



**'Winner' Dave Mitchinson receives his trophy from the Mayor**

they got on (see page 6). Thanks to Catherine and Lucy for taking time out to write us this report.

Wiggy is our 'Runner of the Month'. Learn about how it all began for him and his running likes and dislikes.

## The 5th the Ridgeway Challenge 2008—By Brigid Browne

The 5th Ridgeway Challenge took place on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th August 2008 and I was lucky enough to run (bumble) it!

Described as 85 miles (just over 86 actually) along an old track way. The route runs through the Chiltern Hills, North Wessex Downs, Grim's Ditch, Barbury Castle and Liddington Hill forts. It was not flat including 9000 feet (note "Mountain Dodds" I make no claims to metres!) of ascent. Have to say spread over the length of the course it felt pretty flat compared to my usual Jurassic coast jaunts etc.

It was actually a chance encounter with a rather tasty Londoner on the Marlborough Downs which led to this particular bumbling madness. During the thirty three mile challenge I had lost a check point embarrassingly close to the White Horse where I regularly stomp ! Ironically this lovely chap Ali (Dryrunners org.) a runner from the "smoke" put me on the right track. This just goes to confirm what I have always suspected, that given the right conditions, I could get lost in my own back yard. Over post race grub (he beat me by a couple of mins) he threw down the gauntlet re the Ridgeway Challenge and I naively lustfully accepted.....only he pulled out (metaphorically speaking of course) and left me to trot it on my tod....men !

At first, I thought, I might run it as a relay with a girly mate but that also fell through. Decided then to go it alone...thank goodness I didn't! Although being mostly a walking/cycle track you'd imagine it would be easy to follow, it wasn't! Especially around Goring and during the night section!

Saw other mad cap Chippenham Harrier Jason Harrison at start. It was nice to see another familiar face and share out some sweets, jelly *beans* this time.

I actually ended run/jogging most of it with Tony Nott (Calne Running Club) which was good because he was far better equip than me. I had, on my person a bum bag full of energy gels, jelly babies and glucose sweets plus a small runaid I could fill at check points. In addition I had a simple line drawing of the Ridgeway on a bit of paper slightly larger than a

postage stamp. This last piece of kit had hardened ultra runners convulsed in laughter at the start of the race. It led to many comments re "The Simpsons"? Still not quite sure why?!

Tony Nott on the other hand had his Camel Back (no offence Tony) Garmin with re-charger, glucose tablets, gels, blood sugar level test kit, three varieties of LED lamps, and map of the surrounding country side and various layers of clothing, in addition to helpful kit set to meet him at the half way point, Goring.

At this point I have to acknowledge my "A A" team not "Alcoholic Anonymous" but wonder couple Anne and Arnold Goodship, veteran distance walkers extraordinaire. They provided unfaltering support and additional kit for the latter half of the run through the night. More about these saints later.

Although the run starts at the top of Ivinghoe Beacon, registration was actually a mile away in Ashbridge! Well you would need a warm up wouldn't you? I panicked a bit when I realized it was part of the British National Trial Runners championship but soon relaxed when I caught sight of the winner's trophy. It was a ludicrously giant wooden acorn replicate of the NT route markers. Tilted on a plinth at a strange angle it looked well dodgy and unfortunately appealed to my juvenile sense of humour. Phew thank goodness I wouldn't be winning that am quite nutty enough without having my name emblazoned on one!

Talking about nuts Tony Nott had, in his extreme event preparation, actually deposited, squirrel nut-kin like ,food packages and even a set of walking sticks along the latter stages of the trial. These all turned out to be surplus to requirements but I couldn't help but admire such preparation. The fact he knew where he was going (mostly) also helped .

Picture at the start Ivinghoe Beacon – Master of Ceremonies Tony

## The 5th the Ridgeway Challenge 2008—By Brigid Browne



& Bumble -Taking it all very seriously!



The day was beautiful, sunny but cool, just right for running. Runners set off at mid day whilst walkers and those expecting to take over 24 hours had already set off at 10am. We set off to Tring at a cracking 8 minute mile pace which worried me slightly but then it was downish hill. Managed the first 12 miles far too fast and not at what, I imagined, was a maintainable speed.

I scoffed as much as I could at every check point.

Have to say around twenty miles I really started suffering and thought "Oh, oh not even going to manage a marathon at this rate." Was worried about holding Tony up so kept telling him to run on but he didn't. Got to a check

point and I had a really good nosh and a felt fine again. We even decided to sprint (ish) the marathon mile..which actually I think did the legs some good.

From then on to Goring the half way point felt fine. Had a slightly surreal experience where at the thirty odd mile mark on way to Grim's Ditch we got lost in the woods. As we gazed around a disembodied voice called out "it's that way!" Looked up and there was a man up a tree (don't know whether he was a resting runner but he knew the way) Tony reckoned he was an angel but then his blood sugar level was low at that point or "on the floor" as he put it. A few glucose crunches later and we were off.

Pretty uneventful for the next 10 miles except I managed to fall flat on my face over absolutely nothing. Have a tendency to announce "Watch out" to the person behind then fall over whatever I'm warning about doh! I later fell over of all things a bicycle tyre lever! After having successfully negotiated our way through a foot jungle of roots... bl\*\*dy cyclists!

We were making exceptionally good time...too good... the rate we were running we'd have finished sub 18 hours (and I would have been happy with anything under 24!). Then we got lost ! Five miles outside Goring resulting in an hour or so of phaffing around before we hit a main road into the town. Luckily we didn't miss a check point so did not suffer an official time penalty, other than the hour or so we'd given ourselves trying to hunt down the Ridgeway..doh!

At Goring we met up with the "AA team" as night was falling. The check point was in a hall and we stopped there for nearly an hour. Tony sorting out all the important stuff like lights etc while I just helpfully stuffed my face with the laid on food. I ate a baked potato with cheese and beans, a rice pudding, two bananas, about twelve Jaffa cakes, a couple of glasses of orange juices and a cuppa coffee + a few jelly babies.

At this point I should mention I was missing a dear friend's hen night so was also trying to keep in regular contact with a drunken bunch of hens which took my mind off things a bit.



## The 5th the Ridgeway Challenge 2008—By Brigid Browne

Then we were off into the night and opps managed to get lost again on our way out of Goring! Missed the Ridgeway and was running up a main road with another runner who was looking decidedly unwell. Luckily a vehicle stopped and redirected us...another angel. So all in all we had added on a good few miles to the expected 86...I mean why run that when you can round it up to 90?

It is actually quite a long incline out of Goring back onto the Ridgeway. But I always think hills are better tackled in the darkness. If you can't see them, you sort of don't feel them, if that makes sense. Tony came up trumps with his LEDs as the old fashioned light I borrowed from AA wasn't really up to the job. It was tricky negotiating all the rubbily rutted bits of track in the darkness. Also you imagine it is easy to follow a track but it keeps bifurcating into byways and it's really hard to tell if you are still actually on the Ridgeway. The spooky red lights of Wantage seemed to be moving in front of us which was well.. weird. The bobbing lights of other joggers were now few and far between. We did pass a couple of blokes memorable because one had on, what looked like school girl, over the knee socks very peculiar in the lamp light!

Tony by this time was using his power walking practice and striding along at about 4 miles an hour up the rutted inclines while I discovered I am actually not that good at walking! Had to, instead maintain a slow bouncing jog. Anne and Arnold, blessed people spent the night travelling between check points to meet up with us ( a feat in itself) and check we were OK. They said it was always such a relief to see us appearing out of the gloom, they could tell it was us we were "Strider and Skippy the Kangaroo" At each checkpoint they clapped us and others in they were such a moral boost. As were the check point manning saints themselves. So far the night had not been too bad but about 56 miles in conditions took a distinct turn for the worse!

Considering it was August the temperature dropped, the wind rose and the heaven's

opened. We were at the time on very exposed parts of the Ridgeway and I have to say I have never felt quite so cold and tired simultaneously. It was hell. At points I thought my contact lenses were going to be blown and washed out of my eyes. I fell in umpteen puddles. It was a severe cross wind so one side was frozen and soaked whilst the other remained peculiarly dry it was all very strange. We passed a man who seemed to be staggering from side to side. I thought he was just avoiding puddles but when we reached him he was speaking gibberish and clearly in a bit of trouble. He made it to the next check point but not sure if he went any further than that.

One check point consisted of two ladies battling in their tent a gale force wind. They were trying desperately to get a kettle of water to boil for runners tea but the flames were being so blown about it was never going to happen. I marvelled at them it was bad enough keeping moving in those conditions but to be stood still they must have been absolutely frozen...great people!

Another surreal thing happened we came to a very odd divide in the Ridgeway (often signs have gone) and there, pitched in the middle, was a tent of singing men surrounded by cans of beer! They turned out to be people who had run the event last year and got lost at that very point so they decided their mission was to stop this happening again and were offering beer to all the runners that passed. They sounded Australian, possibly they could have been Londoners (the guy who won was Australian) they were stars but we didn't stop.

Have to include this..as I believe runners need to "share" their worries. Tony did not suffer this problem as he had taken some medication but I actually had to stop five times over the night section of the run to deposit all the nosh I'd been consuming to get round. I don't think anything in that respect will ever phase me again! I needed to eat loads to keep the energy up. I refuse to bung myself up and run with sore guts or trumpet my way round like other runners so it was the price I paid. Have to say my only concern was poor Tony but fair play to him he didn't moan about my additional stops at all! What a gentleman!

## The 5th the Ridgeway Challenge 2008—By Brigid Browne

By this time we were into the late 60 miles and absolutely frozen the wind and raging rain had not let up..it was quite hideous..until we reached the next checkpoint where they had built a raging fire. We got hot drinks and cake. AA gave me some trousers to put on and a hat. Tony got some gloves. We were warned about the next section where there were lots of chances to get lost. We ran on heartened and warmed.

Who should be ambling along, long legged, in front but fellow Chippenham Harrier Jason. His turn of speed was at that point a bit fast and he went on ahead. Was starting to suffer. Tony had fallen over rather badly and I'd had a panic that he was bleeding all over the road but it turned out to be the drink from his camel back..phew! I did what I always do when I feel dead and want to speed up I plugged into my iPod and poor Tony was subjected to a sudden turn of speed. I fairly galloped off up the road over a motorway bridge and back up onto the Ridgeway passing even Jason on a steep incline. It felt so much better to speed up. It should have been getting light at this point as we were heading toward Swindon, the lights from that should have helped but then a freezing fog descended.

Conditions underfoot on the Downs were terrible. Both of us were running in road shoes. At this point Jason had skipped off and disappeared into the distance. Tony and I slipped and slid the next couple of miles. It was painfully slow. Tony keeled over for the second time that night and landed almost head first in a huge puddle. I'd have laughed if I hadn't been so worried he'd broken his arm. Have to say I stayed plugged into my iPod. It was only during this time that I saw Tony look really fed up. I felt bit more upbeat cause I imagined it was only a few miles from Barbury Castle and I was coming to the conclusion we might actually finish this run after all.

Conditions improved in daylight, the mist cleared slightly. The traipse to Barbury seemed to take forever luckily Tony had practiced this bit as the Ridgeway had now turned

into field crossings. On my own I would have been hopelessly lost! The race winner actually had got lost at this point hours before.. (he'd had the darkness to deal with as well). We reached the last check point and only stopped briefly. Tony's son Simon met up with us. This scared me because he is such a fast runner but luckily he moderated his speed for us for the last six miles. It was slightly downwards to Avebury and I actually began to feel really good. Having thawed out somewhat. magic Anne and Arnie appeared again out of nowhere and gave us some boiled sweets and suddenly I wanted to run as fast I could to finish this run. I knew my kids would be up to mischief at Avebury and I was desperate to see them! I sped up, overtook Jason who was really suffering. I felt for him but I just wanted to get to the end. It was surreal I know it was downhill but I wanted to sprint the last couple of miles it felt so good. Something awful happened with Tony's breathing he sounded like a wounded buffalo. I can joke about it now as I know this is a trait of his but it seriously alarmed me at the time. I thought we'd have to stop but Simon seemed to think it was quite normal so we pushed on. I turned up my iPod to drown out the noise, it really was painful to listen to! As we hit the approach to Avebury I think Tony tried to get me to slow down but I couldn't hear him at all. I had no intention of running into the finish without him anyway, as without him I'd probably still be out there. I think we were actually seven and half minute miling it at the end. My friend Ali ran the last few hundred meters with us. She had heard us coming thanks to Tony's noises about half a mile before we appeared. She'd come straight from the hen party still dolled up, with a flask of Earl Grey tea. Tony grabbed my hand and we ran through the finish. At the same time Logan my son tried to run between us and skidded through the mud at the finish on his rear end...it was a perfect ending. Only bettered by finding out I'd actually come third lady overall and the race organizer presented me with an engraved medal.

Will I do it again next year.?..you try stopping me! I am now hooked on ultra running. I might not be the fastest runner but it's nice to know I can go the distance.

Cheers Bumble

## Chippenham Half Marathon Report—By Catherine Dawber

"I would be happy if I could complete a half marathon in my lifetime..." This is what I remember saying shortly after completing the Chippenham Harriers Beginners 5k Challenge in early November 2007. Having never run any further than 3 miles, I felt it would take a lifetime, if possible at all, to build up to 13!

In early 2008, with a few 10k runs behind us and running 3 times a week, my sister Lucy and myself began to feel that we were ready to try a half marathon. With the revival of the Chippenham Half, where better than on your own doorstep to run your first half marathon! With this in mind we began to gradually increase the length of our weekend runs but were still not totally sure that we were actually going to do it. That is until July, when we told the Gazette and Herald that we were, and to publicise the half they did a story about us sisters running our first half. Well that was it, we had to get our entries in now!

By this point we were running up to 10 miles and each time we did this it felt slightly more comfortable. By the time we were running 11 miles, we were confident that we could do the extra 2 and complete a half. We did, however, still want to actually run 13 miles before the day and this we achieved towards the end of July. Now that we were satisfied that we could do it, we relaxed the runs somewhat in anticipation of the big day.

We both tried not to think about what times we would complete in, choosing to believe that it would be a great achievement to finish. However, Lucy was being predicted a time of 1:45 and was hoping to achieve that and I made no secret of the fact that I would be over the

moon to run sub 2 hours but suspected that I may exceed that by a few minutes.

September 14<sup>th</sup> 2008, the day had arrived! At around 8:15am we headed over to Bristol road, Lucy fuelled with porridge and myself granola bars and banana (about all I can stomach at 7 in the morning!) As we approached, with mixed feelings of nerves and excitement, we could hear the loudspeaker and see others making their way from different directions. It was then that the 'buzz' of the atmosphere could be felt.



Lucy & Catherine still 'looking good' at the end of their run

After a little while and a few trips to the Portaloos, it was time to make our way to the start line. We placed ourselves near the back so as not to be carried along and start too fast. Too late to be nervous now, we were off!! A short way over the start line we said goodbye to each other (as we do at any run, I have my limits and trying to keep up with my sis is beyond me!) and I watched as Lucy disappeared amongst the crowd of runners. As planned, I took it nice and steady and began to enjoy the run. At around 2 miles, I introduced myself to a chap who was running at around my pace and ran with him until mile 7, when I pushed on a little (this probably had something to do with spotting Harrier, Derek ahead!)

I remained quite comfortable until mile 10, when I began to tire and it was a nice distraction to talk to another runner for a while!

Meanwhile, Lucy had also had a comfortable first 7 miles and thought they went by quite quickly. That was until about mile 9 to 10 when she also felt very tired and a little bit ill. So she thought it would be a good idea to slow down a little to recover.

When she arrived at mile 12 she decided to use any bit of energy she had left and pick up the pace. She was spurred on when a passing runner told her "Jade Goody ran the first 18 miles of the London marathon, so don't give up now".

She maintained the pace over the final mile and pushed hard to the finish line, in a time of 1:46:37.

While Lucy began to recover, my run continued!

I felt myself struggle when I hit Langley Burrell, this being familiar running ground, I knew only too well what was coming up. However, I had the downhill near the end to look forward to and the realization that I was actually going to make it in under 2 hours! Benefiting now from my steady start I kept going, even managing to pass others despite feeling slow and weak and made it to the finish line in 1:57:05.

It was all over and we both felt great about it. We were both glad of the opportunity to run our first half in our home town and the support from the marshals and all others along the course was greatly encouraging and appreciated.

The biggest bonus was that I didn't ache at all the next day, though Lucy was not quite so lucky!

Now all we need to do is decide when and where we will do our next one...

## **“Runner of the Month”**

**Name : Ian Wiggins**

**Age : 52**

**Running Years : 16Years/Entered London in 1992 just to have a go—got the bug!**

When and why did you join the ‘Chippenham Harriers’?

Joined in 1993—Was out running, bumped into ex harrier Jimmy Whale who invited me along to the club night. Found them to be quite a welcoming bunch, not only could they run but they also liked a drink!!

What is your favourite race and why?

London Marathon—A great atmosphere

What is your least favourite race and why?

Wiltshire Cross Country Championship round at Devizes—I was C\_\_p!, it was almost dark by the time I finished.

To date what has been your best running ‘moment’?

**Finishing London 1992.**

What are your running aspirations for the future?

**To stay reasonably fit and to help organize another Chippenham Half Marathon**

<u>Personal Best Details :</u>			<u>Distance</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Where/When</u>
	10k	41.22			Weston (when I was younger)
	10M	-			-
	½ M	1hr 33mins			Bath
	Marathon	3hrs 37mins			London 97



## 98% said they would do it again... By Kevin Napier

14<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Chippenham Half Marathon, celebrating 25 years of Chippenham Harriers. In the words of Max Boyce "I was there!" and so were you which is what made the day such a great success. But don't just take my word for it, read some of the things that the runners said about the day in their emails to us and on the Runners World forums because it really was a day to remember for Chippenham Harriers!.

*"Fantastic....well organised, friendly, value for money and must tell my friends, are just a few of the descriptions I received from my team yesterday. Between us we have all run in different events but I think yours captured the professionalism we all hope for, the organisation we all dream of and the friendliness that is so rare in an event of this size. We hope that you will pass on all our thanks to your many helpers, who clearly had generously stepped down from their running for the day, in order to help achieve an event for runners that hit the mark."*

*"This was only my third (have done Bristol and Reading before) but was by far the best. The organisation was great and so was the route but more importantly the friendliness and encouragement from all the race marshals was second to none...."*

*"I especially liked the positive enthusiastic marshalling, the pleasure of being able to run properly from the line (unlike the likes of Bristol and Bath which have too many entrants for the space), and the route itself."*

*"All of our little group (Hickey's Harriers, Devizes) agreed that it was one of the best organised races we'd ever attended. All the facilities were excellent (plenty of loos and a well organised baggage tent count for a lot). The course was lovely, fast and well marshalled."*

*"One of the best races I've ever done in terms of support, great course, organisation and marshals – all were full of encouragement. I had been warned that the course went out into the sticks so don't expect any support but it was brilliant"*

*"If only every race was as well organised as this one."*

*"A big well done to Chippenham Harriers for this race. The course is great, the marshalling was superb, loads of toilets what more could anyone want!"*

*"One of the best organised races I have ever done. Everything had been thought of and even the weather held good."*

*"One of the best races I've ever been in - only my second half but done loads of 10ks and 5 milers. Excellent organisation, great marshalls, great route and loads of support everywhere, even out in the sticks. Friendly lot of runners too. I'm from Liverpool so very refreshing to have the cliché "no-one is very friendly down south" disproved. Funny eavesdropping on conversations slagging off Bath's races. I would certainly travel for this again."*

*"As someone who isn't actually a half M fan, I really liked this event for its organisation, friendliness and the fast countryside route."*

*"Well done Chippenham Harriers, choosing this over Bristol was definitely the right move."*

*"Great marshals, good support and a great course. Who needs the Bristols of this world!"*

*"This has to be in the top three must do races for next year. If only every race was as well organised as this one."*



## 98% said they would do it again... By Kevin Napier

*The organisation was second to none - when you're not organising the 2009 event you could always spend the rest of the time showing others how it should be done?!"*

*"A very well organised event. It puts running in big city races in the shade."*

*"I am a Chippenham resident who took part in the event. I just wanted to say you made me proud to be associated with the event in my home town as it was really well organised. Thanks to all the enthusiastic marshals"*

Not only did we get the thumbs up from the club runners but we got the seal of approval from the first timers as well.

*"This was my first half marathon and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, so much so I'm now thinking about running another one!"*

*"... It was my first ever half marathon and although it took me ages it was a great experience and lovely route. Please thank the marshals who were so supportive to us slow runners at the back."*

*"This was my first Half Marathon and enjoyed every minute of it! (Although I forgot nipple plasters) Please pass on my thanks to all the stewards who encouraged the runners along the route, this helped me so much!!"*

*"I was running with Sara in our first half. We managed to run the whole course and finish with smiles on our faces".*

*"I just wanted to say thanks for a great race. I have no previous experience as this was my first but I loved it."*

*"Intended to be 1st and only half marathon but so good I may be tempted*

Unfortunately we couldn't please everyone though!

*"The only thing which was not to my liking was the omission of the drinks station at the 12-mile marker. Although it was only a mile further to the end of the race, I was feeling very dehydrated and nauseous and furthermore, I had been running with that landmark in mind."*

*"While I agree your course was not in the slightest bit 'hilly' I am most certainly not alone in regarding it a little more undulating than flat... when a race is billed as flat you set your targets accordingly, and I know a lot of people missed their targets because they didn't expect the undulations"*

*"It was impossible to drink any water. The cups that were given out only had an inch or so of water in them, also anyone running at speed cannot drink from a cup at the same time! Given there was an entry fee, I am sure you could have provided bottled water, I had one sip all the way round and at the end drank three Powerades in quick succession I was that thirsty. I actually think that the water situation was potentially dangerous it was so badly organized. I now know why so many people had brought drinks with them. Can I suggest that for 2009 you get this sorted out even if it means increasing the entry fee."*

*"The one thing that was horrible was the water at water station 6 miles!! It tasted very odd!!"*

*"I do have a gripe which is with the other competitors and that is those runners who were using mp3 players"*

*"... the last mile (and a half) is just too steep to get the right rhythm. A gentler downhill would help the times"*

Despite that they still want more!!

*"PLEASE PLEASE stage it again next year"*

*"PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, make this an event every year in future."*

Continued on page 10

**98% said they would do it again**

Continued from page 9

*"I hope you keep the event in the running calendar for many years"*

*"I just hope it wasn't a one off event, as (injury permitting) I'd love to take part next year."*

*".... will definitely be back next year."*

*"I am originally from Chippenham and I think it was great for the town and hopefully look forward to this becoming a yearly event!"*

And finally...

*"You did a fantastic job and should be really pleased with yourselves"*

Yes Chippenham Harriers, you should be really, really pleased with yourselves!!

Roll on 2009!!!

Thanks to Kevin Napier for this great summary of September 14th.

**An update from Your Chairman—Colin Morris**

The Summer is usually a pretty relaxed time as far as racing is concerned and once we have the Cotswold Relays out of the way. A time to enjoy the sunshine, sit in the garden with a beer and a barbeque but this year the weather has conspired against us all and days where we could sit in the garden at all were so very few and far between!

On the plus side this has meant that I have managed to keep up a decent level of running because I usually suffer from the heat and have to cut back on the longer runs. That said once September came upon us there were lots of races to get stuck into from 10K's to Half Marathons including our own 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Chippenham Half. Although due to work commitments I was unable to attend the event I know from reports from local people and postings on web sites and forums that it was extremely well received by all those who took part and most of them are asking us to make it an annual event.

Huge praise should go to Ian Wiggins and the committee for their superb organisation in the lead up to and on the day of the race and for the huge boost it has given to the club's standing in the community. There are many names to be mentioned and I am sure we will do a role call in a further edition of the newsletter but I am sure that you will all want to join me in giving them a big vote of thanks for their efforts.

Meanwhile the committee has been working hard to support the race organisers and to think up new ways of making this a better club that is more accountable and in tune with

you the members. To this end we will be speaking to you over the next few weeks on club nights, on the run and in the bar to get your views on subjects ranging from the club championships to the annual awards dinner. Don't be afraid to share your views and let us know what you want from the club and how you think we should be doing things to make it better.

After some rather confusing times with UK Athletics we have now managed to get all our members (including juniors) up onto the UKA database and we should all receive membership cards with our individual registration numbers. In most cases you will see this as a requirement on race entry forms but it is not currently being enforced and so you should not be penalised for not knowing your number. As a club we are also affiliated to ARC and so you can safely enter ARC permitted races as an affiliated member as well. We are also affiliated to the British Triathlon Association (BTA) and details can be found on their web site.

Last but not least please make sure that you are seen out on your runs and be sure to wear something bright and reflective as well as watching for traffic appearing out of turnings and blind exits.

Keep running and keep safe!

Colin

## The 2008 Club Championship Results as at 27th October 2008



Please find listed below current club championship results on each of the 4 competitions. Each table only shows the top ten positions for each category (for complete listings please see the relevant page on the website).



### Mens Age Graded Championship

1	Paul Dodd	10	200
2	Jeremy Coward	10	175
3	Steve Bollen	9	145
4	Neil Perry	10	140
5	Kevin Wright	10	135
6	Ade Hurren	7	131
7	Mike Thomas	10	133
8	Paul Gillham	9	129
9	Richard Schofield	6	114
10	Sean Butler	6	108

### Mens Open Championship

1	Paul Dodd	10	198
2	Jeremy Coward	10	189
3	Neil Perry	10	162
4	Mike Thomas	10	159
5	Paul Gillham	9	149
6	Kevin Wright	10	128
7	Ade Hurren	7	126
8	Richard Schofield	6	112
9	Steve Bollen	9	106
10	Steve Bond	10	104

### Ladies Age Graded Championship

1	Joc Dodd	10	200
2	Debbie Jones	9	171
3	Margaret Napier	9	165
4	Brigid Browne	8	151
5	Linda Opie	8	125
6	Cheryl Hurren	4	69
7	Kirsty Murphy	5	66
8	Sarah Strange	4	64
9	Catherine Dawber	4	56
10	Di Tabley	3	56

### Ladies Open Championship

1	Joc Dodd	10	190
2	Debbie Jones	9	179
3	Margaret Napier	9	157
4	Brigid Browne	8	153
5	Linda Opie	8	116
6	Kirsty Murphy	5	73
7	Sarah Strange	4	70
8	Cheryl Hurren	4	69
9	Catherine Dawber	4	58
10	Di Tabley	3	58

## A Jog Down Memory Lane via Red Square by Brett

I still haven't finished the task of copying all my race results into the computer. Every time I open the drawer and pull out the pile of dog-eared papers I can't resist plodding through the long lists of finishers, looking for names that ring a bell and generally reliving the event. Even when I have typed up all my results, I think I will keep this pile of brightly coloured paper. After all it would be a sin to throw away the product of an unpaid race official, working into the small hours on a Sunday night, in some cases without the aid a computer (I started running in 1984). Hand-typed, photo-copied, in some cases hand-written and produced on a spirit duplicator; by their very appearance these documents proclaim the hard work that went into them - something you can't say about a spreadsheet or a PDF file.

One of my most memorable races is not featured in my pile of results sheets. It was too much trouble for the organisers to post results to every participant, not because they were lazy but because the mail would have had to cross the Iron Curtain.

I had been running for nearly 4 years. Almost all my running acquaintances had run a marathon. I wasn't sure why, because everyone had a tale of agony to tell. I suppose London and the other everyman marathons had exerted some influence. After all, if a sixty year old housewife with no sporting background can complete a marathon, I suppose

that puts some pressure on club runners to follow suit. After hearing from much tougher people than myself about how painful the marathon was, I didn't really want to do one but I felt it was something that had to be done once, a rite of passage if you like. Having decided to run a marathon I had to decide which one. London was out of the question. Shoe chips had not been invented so your official time was the only time they gave you, ie gun to tape. I had heard that most people on the Blue Start take more than 10 minutes to cross the start line. Much as I fancied the atmosphere and the crowd support that was guaranteed at London, I had no intention of torturing myself for three hours, only to have ten minutes added to my time. In the end I booked a weekend tour based on the Moscow Peace Marathon, with a travel agent that specialized in running holidays.

Step 2 was to prepare for a marathon. Based on performance over shorter distances 2:50 would have been an achievable target. I consulted John Robbins at City of Bath AC and he gave me a programme that seemed very sensible. The plan was to build up to 60 miles per week, by which time I would be running 20 miles for my Sunday run. John said I should do at least 3 Sunday runs at or above 20 miles, the last one being a split tempo run - the first half at 7:00 min/mile and second half at the target race pace of 6:30 min/mile. The last 20 miler fell 2 weeks

before race day, the week immediately following the last 20 miler was identical to the preceding week except that on the last Sunday I only ran 10 miles. In the final week I was to taper quite drastically - to about 20 miles.

Running 60 miles a week is damned hard, unless like me you split the days training load into two. Each week day I ran 3 miles to work, ran 3 miles home, then on reaching home I would dump my rucksack and set off immediately for a further 3 or 4 miles. How can such a disjointed effort be effective? I don't know but believe me it works. The proof came when, half way through my training programme, I took some time off training to do a few "Sharpeners". In 2 weeks I ran 5 races and 3 of them were PBs upon which I never came close to improving. I enjoyed a 2:19 800m, a 9:50 3000m and a 16:42 5000m, not to mention a victory (albeit donated by Gary Haskins) in the Chippenham Carnival Run. Despite these confidence boosters the Sunday runs were proving a real ordeal. All day long I could think about nothing except how hard the next Sunday run would be, or for that matter, how hard the race would be. I was constantly tired and cranky, yearning to be normal again but having invested a lot of time, effort and cash in this venture I was determined to see it through. My average pace for the final tempo run was slower than my target pace for the actual race but in the final week of the programme I was satisfied that I had prepared as



## A Jog Down Memory Lane via Red Square by Brett

well as I could. I still felt that 2:50 was in the balance, especially in the light of all the scare stories I had heard about marathons - hard work wasn't enough, bad luck could find you on the day.

The advertised tour package entailed leaving on a Thursday morning and returning late afternoon on the following Sunday. A week before departure I had still heard nothing from the tour operator, which shall remain nameless. Four days before departure I received a letter advising me of 2 "Alterations" to the package. Firstly instead of flying with BA we would be going with Aeroflot, an airline, which at the time had one of the worst safety records in the Northern hemisphere. Secondly the tour was being curtailed by half a day - instead of sight-seeing on the Sunday we would be coming straight home. There would be no rebate in recognition of this. A courier would meet the customers at Heathrow to distribute flight tickets and goodie bags. It fell to the git who met us at the airport to tell us the really bad news. The company had not booked us into the race as advertised. Instead we would have to register ourselves on the Saturday - another sight-seeing day lost. The bastard even had the cheek to try and placate us by boasting that they were not charging us for the goodie bag - worth £5.

The fact that this spiv survived the morning is a testament to

English tolerance. Off we all went to Moscow, thinking that things couldn't get any worse. At this stage I didn't even class the inedible in-flight meal as a problem. In fact the flight was quite pleasant I got to know some of the other victims and even made a friend. Alan was a vet 50, and a veteran of several marathons. But unlike me he wasn't out to prove anything, he just wanted a few days away, a few beers and leisurely run (of 26.2 miles).

There were other interesting characters on the tour. Michael was a Jack-the-lad who was looking forward to all the wonderful things his hard currency could buy him in a country where a pair Levis was a luxury item. Sarah was attractive, intelligent and gentle. She saw the light side of everything, which was just as well because at this stage she didn't know that her running kit was going to Tokyo. Sarah's husband, a police officer, was not on this trip but that did not stop the KGB from taking an interest in Sarah. Jean was a vampish, raven-haired 40 something, who had also left her husband at home. The outbound flight was one of the few carefree periods on the whole trip. Our next problem was waiting for us at Sheremetyevo Airport. Her name was Olga (seriously); she was about 16 stone, hair like a yard broom and breath that must have been developed at Porton Down. She viewed the World through 2 paper weights that had been fashioned into a pair of people's spectacles. Comrade Olga was our

tour guide. As soon as she had gathered her flock she asked for our passports "In order to confirm our return flights". There are few people I will trust with my passport and dodgy tour reps who probably also moonlight for the KGB are not among them. "What if we refuse", I asked. "Then you don't get home", said Olga. This wasn't Barbados, so I caved in. To my surprise she gave back all the passports when we were on the bus to Hotel Belgrad. On reflection this was probably a ruse to gain our confidence. When we got to the hotel, Olga started interpreting our personal details to the receptionist one by one. Perestroika had not yet accelerated the Soviet pace of work so it was taking ages. Olga waited until a few guests were getting irritable then suggested that we lend our passports to the receptionist so she could copy type the details from them. We were all eager for a shower and a meal and after all, we got our passports back last time didn't we? As soon the last passport was behind the security grill, Olga announced that the hotel would keep our passports until our departure "For safe keeping". By then I was too tired to argue and in any case there was no way to get our passports back now, short of rifling the safe and it later transpired that only the KGB had that privilege.

The next day we spent most of what was supposed to be a sight-seeing day on queuing to register for the race. Afterwards there was still time to visit the Exhibi-

## A Jog Down Memory Lane via Red Square by Brett

tion of Economic Achievements. As time was limited, Olga spared us the full tour and decided to head straight for the only worthwhile feature in the whole park: the Spaceflight Museum. The Spaceflight Museum was nearly a mile from the entrance, so we waited for the diesel road train to take us straight there. Unfortunately Olga managed to pick a train that was nearly full already. A Western tour guide would wait till all the guests were aboard before boarding herself; Not Olga. She saw her chance, jumped aboard, told the driver to set off and left Alan and me behind - two nil to Olga.

On Saturday, the eve of the race, the MD of the nameless travel agency that rhymes with Sportsman's Travel flew in to Moscow and sent a message round that he would be available in the hotel that evening to address any "Problems" his customers might have. He was wise not to keep that promise, as the queue to murder him was now growing rapidly.

That morning I went out for what was intended to be a couple of miles jogging. Given the importance of not overdoing it the day before a marathon, a wise man would have gone out and back the way he came, and that is what I intended to do. However, a mile into the run I could not resist exploring some of Moscow's quieter streets. After 15 minutes I was hopelessly lost in a city where I could not speak a word of the language. It took me an

hour to find the hotel again. Thus I had already broken one of the golden rules of marathon preparation.

That afternoon, fearing any more of Olga's hospitality, Alan and I made our own entertainment. We took the Metro to Red Square and looked for souvenirs in the Gum superstore. It was a hot summer and we were both wearing shorts. The looks of disgust on the locals' faces told us that wearing shorts in the street in Russia was the equivalent of strolling through the Vatican in a just a thong worn the wrong way round. Gum was more like a jumble sale than a department store. It consisted of hundreds of what amounted to market stalls, almost all of them selling fabric by the meter. One or two stalls sold luxury manufactured goods, such as T-shirts with monochrome motifs, one inch wide neckties or silver plastic belts.

The official rate of exchange was one rouble to one Pound Sterling and like the law-abiding citizen that I am, I had purchased my Roubles legally. Gum was the first place we had been in Moscow where there was anything remotely worth buying. I fancied a white T-Shirt bearing the Soviet emblem and the word "Perestroika" but the marked price was 12 Roubles. At the official exchange rate, that would have been steep even by today's prices. So I offered Comrade Stallholder £3 cash for it, no questions asked. He seemed delighted with that offer but ges-

tured desperately for me to put my money away. He signalled for me to go with him to a quieter spot to make the transaction. Feeling fearless I followed him to a deserted stairwell, after all I had instigated the business. My trust was justified. All he wanted was to do a bit of black marketeering in currency but I was not game for that because, as I have mentioned, there was nothing to spend Roubles on in this forsaken city.

Alan was relieved to see me return alive from my rendezvous with the youthful criminal. We decided to loiter for a while to see if we were being followed. Sure enough a short stocky man also stopped and propped up the same wall as us. I tried to save him some of the tedium of his job by telling him where we were going next but he appeared not to be an English speaker. He hung on there doggedly until we left for our hotel. Alan and I became resigned to being tailed, after all the locals seemed to regard it as perfectly normal.

You will have to wait till the next issue of the 'Chippenham Harrier' to find out 'what happened next'..... Does Brett get to the marathon? And if so what time does he do?

## How it all began.... By Chris Constable

As it is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club and as I am the longest serving member of the Harriers still alive and still running ( If you can call it that ) Caroline asked me to put together a potted history of how the club came into being.

She mistakenly thought that I would remember how the club started but didn't take into account the onset of old timers disease..... memory loss !! Ask any of the other old gits in the club, Phil H, Wiggy, Paul E and all...they know what its like.

I have a job to remember my name let alone what happened 25 years ago !!

I did not join the club until late 1984 so in order to get that kind of info I had to do some research. .

I honestly did not think I would still be running 24 years later, running is for young people isn't it ??

Anyway here we go, I apologise in advance if there are any chronological mistakes;-

The following info is courtesy of Dennis and Zina Marchant for which I am very grateful.

Back in those days many of the races held in Chippenham were organised under the auspices of the Chippenham Town Football Club.

Just prior to running of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chippenham Marathon the race was cancelled for reasons lost in the mists of time.

Therefore in order to avoid letting down all the entrants who had trained hard for this race Dennis & Zina Marchant, Gary Haskins, Tony Knee and (we think) Alan Goodway decided to host a 10K race instead.

This was a massive success !

On the back of this success, the group decided to reform the Chippenham Harriers.

In the C.T.F.C. club house, Chippenham Harriers 83 was formed.

Present at the meeting were Dennis Marchant, Zina Marchant, Tony Knee, and we think Alan Goodway and possibly Eddie Barr.

All these individuals are still running as far as we know but not like the loonies that they used to be.

The first committee was formed with Dennis Marchant as chairman, Tony Knee- secretary, Tony Land – treasurer. Alan Goodway and Eddie Barr members.

The original Chippenham Harriers folded some time prior to the 1983 version that has been in existence for the last 25 years.

Some of you may have wondered why we were called Chippenham Harriers 83, this was due to the fact that at the time the previous Harriers disbanded owing money.

By calling the new club CH83 this avoided being chased by the old club's creditors for reimbursement.

There were none of the original defunct Chippenham Harriers members on the newly formed 83 version.

The 83 logo has now recently been dropped from official club details as it is now deemed as being irrelevant.

The club colours were the same as now, a blue band around the vest at chest level.

Also a red and blue torch with the club name and logo 83 emblazoned on the band.

The rest as they say is history, hope you found this article not too boring !!

Happy running  
Chris Constable

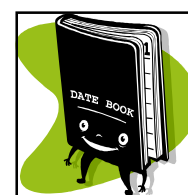
## Dates for your Diary



7/8/9th November—Youth Hostel, River Dart, Brixham, Dartmouth, see JD for more details

16th Jan 2009—Annual Dinner

22nd Jan 2009—AGM



## Your 'Articles' are wanted!

Have you got an interesting story to tell?, perhaps you have recently competed in an unusual event or maybe you are training for something specific—then why not write an article for the next newsletter—please....

The Newsletter gets published quarterly and is only as good as the articles I receive (generally I have to hassle people to write something for me!)

The Winter issue is due out at the beginning of 2009 so please email your articles to me (Caroline Blake) at newsletter@chippenhamharriers.co.uk. I will be eternally grateful!