

RELAY

AUTUMN 2023



Note from the Chair

Summer is turning rapidly into autumn. It's time to dig out the hi-vis, charge up those headtorches and embrace the colder weather. I love the way that getting outside and running in the winter months can turn into something so enjoyable and hearty in less than inviting conditions. Typical sentiment at the start of a club session: 'whose idea was this?'. Roll forwards to the end, and the mood is inevitably 'that was fantastic'!

We've had a typically mixed bag of summer weather, but I've really enjoyed this year's RR10 series. Well done to the men's team and to Matt Bennett for scooping team and individual prizes. I always love a relay, and the both Mile of Miles and the Test Way events have been real personal highlights.

Looking towards the autumn season, I'd love to encourage you to consider joining a Romsey team in the [Hampshire Cross Country League](#). There's a winter series of Saturday afternoon races which are free to enter (we pay a club subscription) and are always good muddy fun!

November is when we come together as a club for the AGM and Awards Night. It's a great opportunity to celebrate the contributions and achievements of the year. The date this year is 24th November. If you're new to the club, I'd really encourage you to join the fun.



Editor's Note

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Relay. I hope you enjoy reading this. As always, if you have any comments on the content or suggestions for items for future editions please get in touch.

We've just had the last of the summer Monday sessions, so it's goodbye to Fritham and the forest and hello again to the streets of Romsey. I can't pretend to prefer the winter sessions but the club sessions are a great incentive to keep running through the winter and prepare for spring races.

The summer RR10 races are now just memories, but the winter CC6 races start in October. These are held on a Sunday morning, with 7 races over the winter months. Each race is about 4.5 miles, and as for the RR10 races all you need to do is to turn up wearing a club vest or t-shirt. This year the CC6 races will use the parkrun system for results processing, as successfully used for this summer's RR10 races – so don't forget your barcode! The dates of the races are in the race schedule later in this newsletter.

Each club involved in the CC6 league has to help with the organisation of one of the races (and are not allowed to run in that race). This year we're organising the first race on Sunday 8th October. I'm still looking for more volunteers to help with marshalling, so if you are free that morning and haven't already volunteered please drop me a note at nigelhemsted@hotmail.com. We'll also need cakes for the runners so start baking!

Mark noted above that Matt Bennett and the men's team were winners in the RR10 league (and the cover shows Matt winning the final race of the season). Congratulations also need to go to Alex Young who was 2nd in the men's competition, to Ray Webb who was 3rd in M70 and to Anna Duignan who was 2nd in the F70 category.

Nigel

Membership

Penny Jennings

A warm welcome to the club for Scott Hill, Lidia Matusiak, Jack Wood and Hamish Leeds

Jack Wood

Hello, I'm Jack and I'm really excited to have joined Romsey Road Runners! I started running at the beginning of 2022 and got the bug when I signed up for the Southampton 10k later that year. I enjoy running and volunteering at parkrun - Ganger Farm is my local so I might see a few of you there!

I'm running the Solent half marathon in October and have a charity place for the London Marathon next April. That will be my first marathon, so I'll happily hear any tips you might have! I look forward to meeting you all soon!

Jack



Hamish Leeds

Thank you everyone for the warm welcome having been part of the club for a couple of weeks everyone has been really friendly and welcoming!

I have been running properly for just over 2 years now and recently completed a 52km ultra marathon. I would like to do 100km at somepoint!

I have taken part in a few half marathons and have been so close to 1h:30 each time so I would love to break that this coming year!



Lidia Matusiak

Hello everyone,

I'm excited to join Romsey Road Runners and be a part of this lovely running community. My journey with running began about seven years ago with a short jog and since then has had its ups and downs but I'm still persisting. I've always had a bit of a love-hate relationship with it. It's my partner, Scott, who's the true running enthusiast in our duo, and he's the one who usually nudges me to lace up my trainers. While I'd probably label myself more as a hiker than a runner at heart, I relish every opportunity to be outdoors, and trails are my favourite. Running, for me, is a means to maintain fitness, and that post-run sense of achievement, and the rush of endorphins keep me hooked. I thrive on challenges and the incredible atmosphere of running events and club training sessions. Surprisingly, I've even completed two marathons. However dealing



with a couple of injuries and recurring plantar fasciitis has led me to stick to shorter distances nowadays. While I don't have a specific running goal, I do aspire to improve my technique, and hopefully with regular practice, enjoy those Saturday ParkRuns even more. I look forward to running with all of you! 🏃🌟

Scott Hill

"My name is Scott, and I've been a passionate runner for the past 7 years, immersing myself in numerous races, including the completion of 4 marathons. I particularly love traveling abroad for races, seeking out exciting running adventures in different parts of the world. The highlight of my running journey was gaining a coveted spot in the London Marathon ballot in 2021, allowing me to check off a long-standing item on my bucket list. Unfortunately, I faced some setbacks due to injuries in the last couple of years, which temporarily slowed my running down. However, I'm eager to reignite my passion for running and start to get back into more regular training. I was looking for a small, friendly club, and Romsey seemed like the perfect fit!. I'm known for never turning down a race invite, and it didn't take long for me to get roped into participating in the Test Way Relay just a few weeks after joining! It was a really fun day and a great way to get to know some of the other club members better. I'm glad to be a part of this vibrant running community and look forward to meeting more club members and sharing many more exciting running experiences with the Romsey Road Runners!"



Meet the RRR: Louise Holliday

Road shoes: Brooks Adrenaline

Trail shoes: Saucony Peregrine

GPS Watch: Garmin Forerunner 245

How long have you been running?

About 5 years

Why did you start running?

My daughter and I challenged ourselves to get fit and do the Race for Life on Southampton Common

What do you like most about it?

I find running a very useful time to sort out the rest of my life in my head – or at least try to! I also like that cool clean air in lungs feeling, especially on autumn and spring mornings.

When did you join RRR and why?

April 2019. It was a New Year's resolution, but I waited for the clocks to go forward to avoid running in the dark...

What has been your best running experience to date?

Doing the full RRR Steeplechase route with Debby F and Lin W this summer was lots of fun

Describe your worst running experience.

Definitely Gosport half-marathon. It is a two-lap course and I almost stopped after the first lap as it just didn't seem to be happening for me that day. I pushed on though, back into the head-wind, just thinking I would finish the race somehow – and I got my fastest time for a half-marathon to date!

Do you cross train and if so, what do you do?

I used to be good, and did yoga, swimming and cycling too, but it has been just running for me for the last 18 months or so...time for another New Year's resolution!

Any tips for a new runner?

Don't do too much too soon

Trail or road?

Either. I am getting quite into trail running this year after doing a couple of Big Feat Events

Gel or real food?

Gel – then I can stick it in my pocket

Marathon or 10k?

I haven't run a marathon yet so I had better say 10K!

Local parkrun speed rankings

Mark Stileman

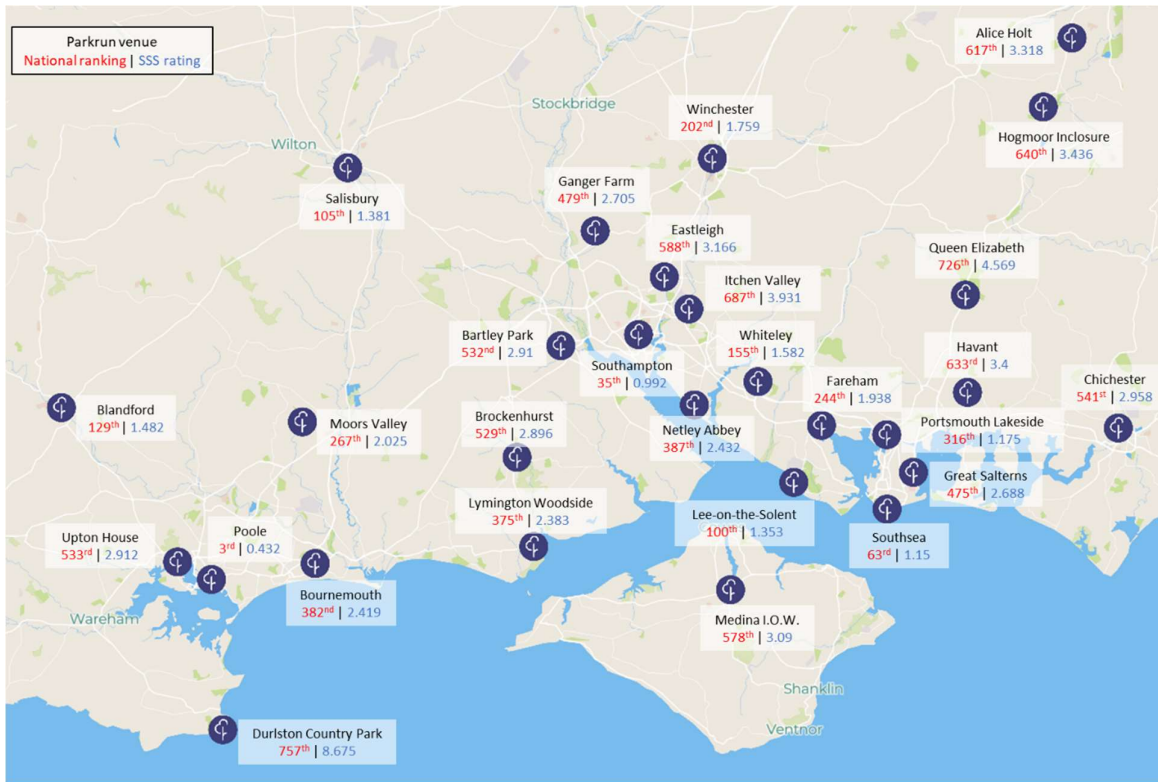
I love running parkruns, I'm always keen to explore new places and I'm a bit of a data nerd. So when I found out about the statistical scoring of all the parkruns in the UK, I was fascinated.

Runbritain allocates a Standard Scratch Score (SSS) to all races. Here's how they explain it.

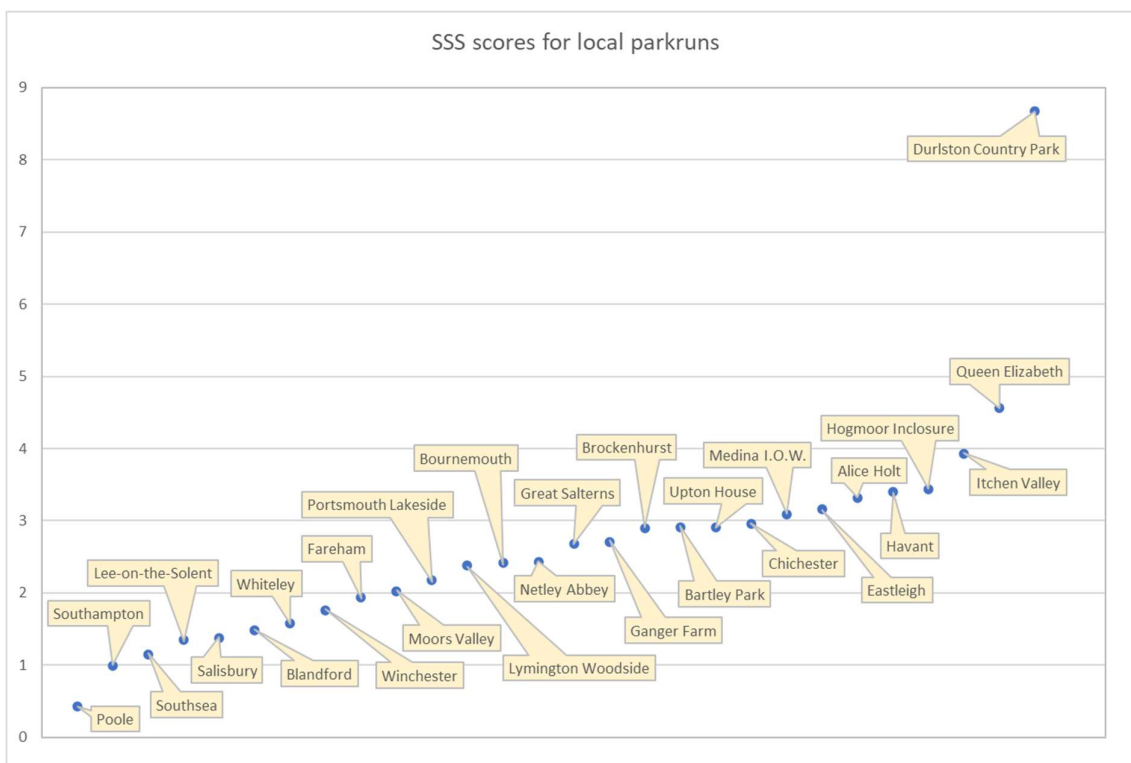
The SSS is a difficulty score based on how easy or difficult it was to run a quick time in a given race. The harder it was to run a quick time, the higher the SSS score. The way it is worked out is by looking at people's times in a particular race and comparing it against their previous performances. As a very simplified example, if 100 people run in race A one weekend, and the same 100 run in race B over the same distance the next weekend, if, on average, the field is 60 seconds slower in race B than race A, there was clearly some factor (be it weather conditions, accuracy of course measurement, type of terrain, competitiveness of the field, how hilly the course was etc) which caused times to be slower. Therefore the SSS for race B will be higher than the SSS for race A.

For this exercise, an average SSS was generated by analysing all parkrun results from July 2021 (post lockdown) to April 2023 and creating a league table of all 760 parkrun courses in the country. That's a lot of data. The full list of national parkrun scores is published [here](#).

I thought it would be interesting to compare the data for our local parkrun events. I started with a map, and added the national rankings (where 1st is the fastest in the UK and 760th is the slowest) and the corresponding SSS scores.



I then compared these venues by plotting them on a graph according to their SSS rating. Check this out!



The lesson is that if you're looking for a fast course, Poole (0.432) is your best bet. In fact, it's the third fastest parkrun venue in the country. Number 2 in the speedy charts is Bromley in south London (0.234), and number 1 is Pegwell Bay on the east coast of Kent (-0.747).

I find Southampton's relative speediness (in the national top 5%) interesting because – as anyone who has run it will tell you – it's not flat! There's a fairly steady progression of SSS values from Southampton to Hogmoor Inclosure, and then we see a significant uptick for Queen Elizabeth and Itchen Valley, both of which get honourable mentions for

being challenging courses, and finally there's Durlston Country Park (8.675), which is right off the local scale. This parkrun started in March 2022, and it's statistically the fourth slowest venue in the UK. It is by a long way the slowest course in our area, and by the way it's a cracker – right on the Purbeck coast.

The slowest, since you ask, are:

- 758th Woolacombe Dunes (8.761)
- 759th Whinlatter Forest (9.121)
- 760th Great Yarmouth North Beach (10.382).

There's a [great video](#) explaining the whole SSS process and giving a flavour of a selection of national parkruns. We're very lucky to have such a variety of venues on our doorstep, and it's also really exciting how parkrun venues are expanding – since April the UK total has expanded from 760 to 771. So many to explore! And I think it's a fascinating exercise to compare your own results with the statistical rankings... how do they compare with the curve?

Meet the RRR: Nigel Hemsted

Road shoes: Brooks Glycerin 19, Nike Vaporfly (for races only)

Trail shoes: Brooks Cascadia 15

GPS Watch: Garmin Forerunner 735XT

How long have you been running?

I ran at school but then not again until 2004 when I was in my late 40s.

Why did you start running?

I wanted to get fit again and the company I was working for entered a team in the Chase Corporate Challenge – 5k race in Battersea Park. I trained to get fit for that, but on the day the event was cancelled due to high winds.

What do you like most about it?

Being able to run wherever you are and with minimal kit

When did you join RRR and why?

Whilst I was still working I used to run at lunchtime and often with other runners from my company. I knew that I would be finishing work in the summer of 2018 so joined RRR in late 2017 to find some local running partners

What has been your best running experience to date?

Running the Clarendon Marathon relay with my 3 children – and they let me have the last leg which is the shortest and easiest!

Describe your worst running experience

Boston marathon in 2017. I probably started too quickly and ran out of energy after about 10k. The last 30k were painful and I finished about an hour after my target time – but I did get the medal and t-shirt!

Do you cross train and if so, what do you do?

I do a weekly Pilates class. It's made a real difference to my core strength and flexibility

Any tips for a new runner?

Find someone to run with – running is so much easier when chatting

Trail or road?

Trail. I'm lucky in having trails almost from my front door – there are so many great trails around Romsey

Gel or real food?

Gel – but only if I'm running more than half marathon. Otherwise it's just internal storage!

Marathon or 10k?

10k, although I probably have another few marathons in me

Sports drink or water?

Water

What question would you ask the next 'Meet the RRR'?

Where's your favourite running route

Good one! What would your answer be?

Along the ridge up to Dean Hill. Beautiful countryside with great views

Strength & Conditioning

Cliff Reeves

As most of us know, Strength & Conditioning (S&C) plays a big part in running but it is often overlooked, forgotten about, gets pushed down this list of priorities in our busy lives, or perhaps we simply just don't know where to start. Our journey started last winter, when Steve, James, Tam, Neil, Liz and I attended a small group S&C training course with Running Stronger over in Chandlers Ford. We found the 8 sessions really beneficial and enjoyed them so much we signed up for 8 more!



In an effort to bring something new to the club and share what we learned, we invited members to join us for some S&C exercises over six Thursdays as an alternative to the usual track sessions at Mountbatten. The sessions consisted of timed sets of different techniques to target specific muscles that help us as runners. We started nice and gently (mostly!), building up from there as the weeks went on with the sets becoming slightly longer and more difficult as we incorporated bands and light weights.

What we weren't expecting was just how many people showed up - we felt a bit sorry for Steven Melligan-Hart who only had about three people for the track the first week. There was clearly some pent-up demand for this with us being asked several times to share what we did with everyone, and many of you joining us for all six weeks. Everyone that turned up said it was great that we did this as they all knew how important S&C was to runners but they'd never have done any of this had we not put the sessions together.

In delivering the programme, we learnt a lot, especially in the first few weeks, about what worked well and what didn't work so well ('supermans' in week 1 beat a hasty retreat, and week 2 we fumbled with two squat-based exercises back-to-back), and tailored the choice of techniques and progressions accordingly as we went along.

Details have been posted on the group email. Remember to go slow, concentrate on your form, and don't rush through each set. Always listen to your body and don't compare yourself to others. It's normal to find some of the techniques to be really difficult while others might feel like you're not working at all, easier or harder on one side of your body than the other; or easier or harder from one session to the next (ignoring any progressions we sneaked in). We all have different bodies and these differences are a function of genetics, your long-term conditioning, any injuries, how active you've been in the last few days, what you've been eating and drinking, and so on. Always work within your range of movement and comfort, and if it hurts then stop. If any one exercise is too strong for you then take it back to one of the earlier, easier versions.

Thanks to Steve Geary for arranging the original course which got us into this, pushing this initiative through with the club, and keeping a tight hold of the stopwatch. Thanks also to Steven MH for sharing his knowledge and helping to develop the programme. Finally, thanks to everyone who took part, we loved sharing this with you all.

RRR Race Diary

October

Oct 1st

Clarendon Marathon

Full, Half, Relay and 5 mile options. A big favourite with RRRs. Trail run with beautiful scenery.

Oct 8th

CC6 Roundhill campsite

1st race of the season, RRR are organising so we have to volunteer not run !

Ageas Bowl 10k

Fast course, starts and finished at the Ageas Bowl

<https://racesignup.co.uk/site/event.php?eventid=3331>

15th Oct

Great South Run 10 miles

10 miles at Portsmouth, flat and popular event

29th Oct

New Forest 10 mile

A Hampshire Road Race League race

<https://racesignup.co.uk/site/event.php?eventid=3288>

November 2023

5th Nov

Hayling 10 miles

Another HRRL race

12th Nov

CC6 Itchen Valley Country Park

Just turn up wearing a club vest or t-shirt – and bring your parkrun barcode

19th Nov

Gosport Half Marathon

Fast and flat course along the front at Lee on Solent. Popular with club members

26th Nov

New Forest Stinger

10 miles of trail in the forest – tough but great fun

December 2023

3rd Dec

Victory 5 mile

Not a scenic course (at North Harbour) but fast and flat. Another HRRL race

10th Dec

CC6 King's Garn Enclosure

January 2024

14th Jan

CC6 Ocknell campsite

28th Jan

CC6 Holmsley campsite

February 2024

4th Feb

Ryde 10 miles

HRRL race, anyone fancy a day trip to the loW?

11th Feb

CC6 Badger Farm

March 2024

10th March

Itchen Valley Country Park

Last race of the season

17th March

Salisbury 10 mile

Nice course alongside the river. Another popular race with RRR

April 2024

21st April

London Marathon

Ballot is closed, there will be a club place available for one lucky runner with a ballot rejection ! Runners with a fast time may be eligible to enter via Good for Age process – entries for this open at the start of Oct

Results

July 2023

Lordshill 10k

Mark Stileman	37:49 3 rd AG
David Morrison	39:49
Amanda Hull	39:59
Hayley Weston	42:08
Matt Cheales	45:44
Elizabeth Prinsep	46:37
Sue Stileman	48:08
Susie Parker	48:47
Emma Smillie	49:22
Mark Judkins	50:37
Ben Sharman	51:03
Penny Overy	55:33
Angela Milln	58:50
Lin Webb	1:04:34
Bridget Wells	1:05:15
Nikki Skeates	1:06:35

Westonbirt Half Marathon

Lottie Budd	2:11:00
-------------	---------

Black Mountain Ultra 38m

Sue Sleath	8:30:00 1 st Lady!
------------	-------------------------------

The Big Heat 16 miles

Lottie Budd	3:36:01
-------------	---------

Tour of the Woods

Jon Pillinger-Cork	2nd!
Penny Jennings	1st AG
Penny Overy	
Alice Lane	
Louise Holliday	
Mark Judkins	
Lauren Freestone	
Joe Amber	
Lin Windsor	

Wye Valley Half Marathon

Lottie Budd	2:24:40
-------------	---------

Maverick Chilterns Ultra

Alice Lane	6:35:00
------------	---------

Lakeside 5k

Mark Stileman	18:02
---------------	-------

Twilight 5k

Alex Prinsep	16:48
--------------	-------

Lakeland 50 miles

Em Gordon	11:32:39
Sue Sleath	11:35:43 1st AG!
Tam Ryan	13:09:29
Alice Lane	14:08:53

August 2023

Harting Multi-Terrain 10 miles

Neil Jennings	1:05:57
Penny Jennings	1:34:32 1 st AG!
Debby Ferre	2:06:16
Julie Shanker	2:06:20

Lightning Bolt 10k

Elizabeth Prinsep	45:01 1 st AG
-------------------	--------------------------

The Big Pilgrimage 15 miles

Penny Overy	2:44:43
Suzie Parker	2:48:38
Lottie Budd	3:01:26
Louise Holliday	3:02:08
Lauren Freestone	3:02:47
Joe Amber	3:02:51
Lin Windsor	3:09:40

UTMB 52k

Matt Hammerton	6:18:00 3 rd AG!
----------------	-----------------------------

Gothenburg Marathon

Lottie Budd	5:25:22
-------------	---------

Overton 5 mile

Mark Stileman	30:10 1 st AG
Alice Lane	41:40

September 2023

Cheltenham Half Marathon

Elizabeth Prinsep	1:40:38 1 st AG
-------------------	----------------------------

New Forest Half Marathon

Alex Young	1:17:26 2 nd , 1 st AG
Mark Judkins	1:59:05

Lake District Mountain Trial

John Horton	4:10:28 8 th , 2 nd AG
-------------	--

CapTen (10 hilly miles)

Mark Stileman	1:49:13 3 rd
Alice Lane	2:30:05

Goodwood 20 miles

Elizabeth Prinsep 2:38:54 1st lady!

Boaz Project Trail Run 10k

James Bryne 51:29

Emma Way 1:06:24

Manchester-by-the-Sea Half Marathon

Lottie Budd 2:27:30

Big Sky Trail Marathon

Alice Lane 4:49:47

Salem Wicked Half Marathon

Lottie Budd 2:20:40