

# RELAY

## AUTUMN 2024



## Note from the Chair

This is the last piece I'll be penning for Relay in the role of club Chair, as I'll be standing down at the AGM in November. The last four years have sped by! It's been an honour and a privilege to serve our club in this role.

Together we've seen a lot of change during this time. When I took the reins in November 2020 we were in the depths of lockdown. We gradually moved through a sequence of virtual competitions and bubble groups (remember those?) and eventually back to running together. Over recent years we've innovated with (from the top of my head...) Steeplechase runs, Test Way relays, strengthening and conditioning training, new session formats, RRR Lite, social beach events, charity fundraisers, parkrun takeovers, plus the introduction of the new Ganger Farm venue and WhatsApp groups while resuming and building on our established annual rhythm – the pasta party, Couch to 5k, coaching sessions, the Beer Race and the big club turnouts at the RR10s, CC6s and local race favourites.

I'm so proud of the community we have in Romsey. We've grown in numbers but we still feel like a supportive family – diverse in age, ability, background and motivation but united by a love of running. I'd like to heartily thanks all of the committee team – these are the people who do the work! – and I wish every success to the next Chair.

Happy running!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel', written over a faint, hand-drawn outline of a triangle.

## Editor's Note

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Relay. I've been looking after the newsletter since 2019 and feel that it's time for a new editor to take the reins so I intend to stand down at the AGM. If you're interested in taking on this role please feel free to have a chat at a club night.

Included in this newsletter is Tam's description of another epic adventure, plus my recollections of running a marathon down under – the cover picture show Elizabeth and me pleased to have finished!

Thanks to everyone who helped out at our CC6 event on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>. There are 5 more races in the season, held at 0930 on a Sunday morning, dates in the race schedule later in this newsletter. You need 4 results to be included in the end of season rankings, so please come along and join in the fun. Being autumn / winter races there may be a bit of mud – but mostly the races are on decent trails. Arrangements are the same as for the RR10 series, so register your parkrun id once via the CC6 website (and no need to do this if you have previously registered for CC6 or RR10), and then turn up in a club vest or t-shirt and bring your parkrun barcode for scanning at the end of the race.

This is one of the peak seasons for races. Good luck to everyone taking on a race or two, I may see you at the start line! Please remember to submit your results to [results@romseyroadrunners.co.uk](mailto:results@romseyroadrunners.co.uk) to ensure that they are included in the results summary in the newsletter and also included in the club pentathlon competition.

.Nigel



# Membership

Lauren Freestone & Joe Amber

A warm and sunny welcome to the newest members of our team. Introducing;

Milly Stevenson  
Grace Hall  
Thomas Poole  
Sam Gillespie  
Adrian Piddington  
Samantha Taylor  
Andrew Maundrell  
Chloe Griffin  
Duncan Walling  
Iris Walling  
Anita Perry

## Jonny Griffiths

Originally from South Wales, I moved to Hampshire 10 years ago and have 'competed' in various races on both trails and tarmac, ranging from 10ks to marathons. I use the word competed very loosely as at best I can be found in the middle of the pack (I did come 9<sup>th</sup> in parkrun once but don't ask me how many people did it!)

I believe running is for everyone and love that deep down it's such a simple sport. At my previous running club I enjoyed leading inclusive trail runs to help people get into the sport.

I've recently changed jobs and am lucky enough to work in the New Forest. I can often be found running along Hurst Spit, Lyndhurst and of course Fritham. Being part of RRR has been great and I've loved getting involved in the RR10's and really recommend them.

My main goal for this year is to complete the Clarendon Marathon (which runs past my house – hopefully I'll avoid the temptation to stop there!). After obsessing about my finishing time in last year's London Marathon, I'm looking forward to an event where time is less important (hopefully I'll be stuck behind a dog walker on one of the narrow hilly paths so I have a good excuse 😊).



## Adrian Piddington

I'm Adrian and hope to meet more of you soon at training. Running is my favourite hobby and wanted to re-join a club after many years since my last competitive race in 2016. I'm quite self-motivated so do a lot of training by myself

at times to fit in with a busy family and work life. My wife and I really enjoy getting out and about around the South Coast with our nearly 3-year-old son and I travel a lot with work, but I still try my best to fit in at least a few runs per week.

I will be running the Great South which will be my first race as an RRR; it won't be as fast as my 10-mile PB of 61:02 from Alton in May 2013, but if I can finish in sub-75-mins I'll be happy and can build on that. My best races ever were firstly the Eastleigh 10K (March 2013) where I ran 35:12 which at 5:39/mile was a faster pace than my 5km PB, and secondly the Manchester Marathon (April 2013) where I realised, I could take my peak fitness into a fast race to

achieve a sub-3. Whilst I came home in 2:55.43 the course was subsequently reduced to a short marathon due to it being 365 yards too short (!) and whilst it was easily a 2:57 run, I never managed to emulate the same pace in Berlin (Sept 2013) coming in in 3:02.59. Then attempting to maintain this level of pace week-in week-out resulted in multiple foot injuries so I have simply enjoyed running for fitness over the past 9 years.

I hope to become more involved with the club in good time, where I consider my goals to be more linked towards running junior park runs with my son in the years to come, working towards V40..V45 category prizes and maybe even getting back towards a higher level of fitness to have a stab at good for age marathon qualifying times.

### **Andrew Maundrell**

Having entered for my eighth Clarendon Half Marathon, I joined Romsey Road Runners this summer as a means to sharpen my training. I've found the club to be welcoming, well-organised and sociable and enjoy the structured training programme.

Being in the over 70s category, my main goal is to simply keep well and healthy enough to continue running, with parkrun my weekly target. Perhaps another Great South Run in 2025?



### **Sam Taylor**

Hi everyone, some of you may remember me as I was a member of the club a few years back before moving to Southampton.

Well, after a stint competing in bodybuilding, I am now back with the club, and living locally.

Pre-Covid (that's how I define moments in my life now!) I took part in triathlons, which I love.

So aside from the annoying injuries I seem to be facing of late, I'm looking forward to building consistency back up and getting stronger, especially for events I have planned for next year.

## Tam's Lakeland100 adventure

### Tam Ryan

I was fortunate enough to get a ballot place for the LL50 2023



Waving the 100 milers off on Friday for 2 nights in the rain made me think I'd never put myself through that much pain & suffering but a remark the race director made "I don't want to hear any 50mile runners say "I'M ONLY DOING THE 50!" Struck a chord with my dysfunctional brain & it told me that was exactly what I was doing, only half of it.

I tried convincing myself the 50 was big enough & the 100 was bigger than me & my body wouldn't stand up to the demands of the 107mile circular route encompassing the whole of the Lakeland fells with 6300m elevation plus a 40hour cut off time which seems generous but the climbs, descents, rugged terrain, darkness & tricky self navigation means there's often a 50% failure rate, There is a strict entry criteria for the 100mile event & I managed to complete the 50mile race in a qualifying time so I entered & the ballot gods were on my side.

I had been having a lot of treatment & rehab for some past injuries but a chronic case of plantar almost put paid to my race, with the odds already stacked against I now started questioning my mental strength to get me through the difficulties faced in these types of races.

I'd just finished 2 courses of shockwave therapy on one of my tendonopathies & had to gamble on cutting back my training to have more treatment on the plantar as running was extremely painful & had started to affect other parts of my body as I was over compensating, I tried night splints, ultrasound, shockwave therapy & acupuncture on the plantar but nothing was working, time was not on my side to rest it & I was losing my confidence.

I went up to the Lakes several times, Sue Sleath kindly came up to recce the route with me over 4 days which ended up being 115mile training week.



Just to add to the difficulty the route is not way marked & you are not allowed any crew or pace makers, the course is brutal with technical slippery sections & waterfalls that you have to cross in the dark. Most weekends I would do a long run, anything from 20plus miles to 50kms & 50miles, I did many races for training runs & LDWA events, I used a lovely route around the Purbecks most weekends in the run up to the race.

I also do about 8 hours a week strength & conditioning in the gym. Lakeland is a fantastically fun event & each year it's themed, this year was "top gun"

Getting your kit right is vital, you get every season in the Lakes so you need to be prepared. You also have to carry mandatory kit including fuel & hydration (mine weighed about 8kgs)

After much faffing we were on the start line ready to set off on Friday night, I started my watch & panicked because the gpx I'd down loaded wasn't any good so I ran the whole race following someone or from memory.

The start is 4 miles climbing up the Old Man of Coniston it was a beautiful evening however I passed the first of two ladies 8 miles in who had broken their ankle.



By mile 22 the rain had started, I'd fallen over numerous times because the course was extremely slippery my tummy had started to grumble & I found myself yawning, the thought of this & worse for another 30odd hours made my question whether I wanted to put myself through all that suffering, I've never had a DNF but I was almost goading myself to see if I could go through with it & pull the pin.

I decided I'd try a caffeinated gel & I never looked back, each aid station I ticked off meant I was one more step closer to finishing.

Nearly all the marshals had themed their aid stations, Christmas complete with Santa, pressies & The Grinch, Jurassic park, I was so focused at the time making sure I fuelled well some of them didn't even register.

The marshals can't do enough for you but it's best not to get too comfy or you won't leave. We were allowed a drop bag at mile 59 Dalemain, that's where the 50milers start, I did a full change of clothes & socks, my feet were covered in blisters & trench foot despite my toe socks & the cream I'd applied, it was just too wet, it had rained solidly for 17hours. disaster struck when I left & I snapped one of my poles, there were still

massive climbs to do.

On my way up Fuesdale I passed what turned out to be a gentleman having a heart attack, the ambulance staff passed me as they were taken up the mountain on the farmers quad bike & within minutes the air ambulance landed on the side of the mountain.



I prepared myself for another evening out & got my head down, each aid station now had a line of runners whose race had come to an end & they were waiting to be picked up.

I was avoiding cut offs but they are tight so it brought added pressure. I was fuelling well & keeping food & liquid down, as night drew in again I started seeing things that weren't there, hallucinations are common. I'd made a couple of nav errors but the last few cut offs were achievable, as long as I didn't do anything stupid.

My mindset didn't waiver after the bad miles I'd had at 22/28 miles. I was really doing this.

Somehow my legs were still powering me up the hills despite my quads & knees feeling like they'd been hit by a hammer, the down hills were far more painful (I ended up losing 8 toe nails as a result), the blisters didn't help & I could have done without stepping in the wrong part of a marsh only to see my legs disappear in bog over my knees.



I grabbed a cheese toasty from the last aid station & ran the last 4 miles with a guy who challenged me to finish in under 39 hours, somehow we sprinted back through Coniston together & crossed the line in 38hours 53mins

I was so tired my eyes were trying to shut involuntarily, it took forever to wash the mud off, my feet & ankles were very swollen but after a few days I felt more human, you don't always experience the feeling of elation that you'd expect because your so tired.

This was my 6th 100 mile race finish, It's hard to put into words the emotions that this sort of challenge brings, but I love how much I learn about myself & others during the journey.

The highs become higher & the lows become lower, this race really scared me & I thought I'd never be able to finish it so I feel extremely lucky that I did. Don't be put off doing something for fear of failure.

## A Marathon Down Under

### Nigel Hemsted

Early in January this year I received a surprise email inviting me to take part in the Age Group World Championships in the Sydney Marathon on September 15<sup>th</sup>. My daughter was living in Sydney and I had thought that we would travel to visit her in early 2025, so after discussions we agreed that we'd come out earlier for the marathon instead.

I'd had some injury issues in the spring but those were resolved and I had some good training runs through the summer and so travelled out to Australia feeling almost ready – although I was as always had the feeling that I should have done a few more long runs.

My flight landed in Sydney on Wednesday morning, and with the race on Sunday morning I didn't have much time to get over the jet lag. It was early spring in Sydney and the weather was unpredictable – in the days leading up to the race we had days where we could sit on the beach, others very windy with sqally showers.

The day before the race was a lovely spring day and I met up with Elizabeth at Centennial park for an easy parkrun – a nice flat course on grass with about 500 runners. I ran at my planned marathon pace of 5min per km, which felt nice and easy, I suspected that running 42km at that pace the next day wouldn't be quite the same.

That afternoon and evening the wind became quite strong and gusty, and I wondered how this would impact the next day.



The race was scheduled to start at 0600, which meant I had to set off before 0400 to get to the start line on time – we had to be ready to get into our start corrals at 0515. It was dark and cool waiting for the start and I can remember shivering. I met up with Elizabeth Prinsep whose age group was in the same corral as mine,

As participants in the Age Group masters we started right behind the elite athletes, so at 0601 we were off. The start was just north of Sydney harbour, and then downhill and across the harbour bridge. I had been expecting the wind to be strong over the

bridge, and whilst I did have to hold onto my cap it was not as bad as I'd feared.



I lost sight of Elizabeth who was running a bit faster, and settled into my rhythm. All the competitors in the age group masters were wearing a sign on their back showing their age group, so I was able to chat with a number of the other runners in my age group. I was managing to keep to my plan of running at about 5m/km and was hoping to finish under 3:30.

I'd agreed with my wife and daughter where they'd be supporting – the design of the course had us passing almost the same spot 4 times, so that's where they were! The first time was just before the half way point, and then again several times in the second half of the race. Part of the course was a loop of Centennial Park where I'd run parkrun the previous day. I was surprised and delighted when my daughter appeared and ran with me for about a km in the park.

We were then getting close to the end – the course took us past Sydney Cricket Ground and also the rugby stadium where England won the World Cup. We then headed back to the harbour, with a loop out past the Botannical gardens including some final hills = the steep downhill was more painful than the uphill . It was real relief when we started the final descent down to the Opera House and the finish.

The last 10k had been difficult and my pace had slipped but I was pleased to finish in just over 3:35 – well within my Good for Age time for London which was my aim. The winner in my age group finished in just over 3:09 which is incredible.

The Age Group Masters athletes had a special post race area, where we were handed an extra medal for our participation in the championship, plus a breakfast box as it was still before 1000. Elizabeth greeted me as I received my extra medal – she had stormed to a new PB of 3:17:25.

Overall it was great experience. The course wasn't flat and the support not anything like the London marathon, but the weather was ideal for running and some of the scenery spectacular. It was a long way to go for a race, but we made sure that we had a great holiday in the following 2 weeks before having to head back to the UK.



## **RRR Race Diary**

**October 2024**

**27<sup>th</sup> October**

**New Forest 10 mile**

**November 2024**

**3<sup>rd</sup> November**

**Hayling 10 miles**

**10<sup>th</sup> November**

**CC6 Holmsley campsite**

**17<sup>th</sup> November**

**Gosport Half Marathon**

HRRL race, fast course as long as not a gale!

**24<sup>th</sup> November**

**Boscombe 10k**

**December 2024**

**1<sup>st</sup> December**

**Victory 5 miles (North Harbour Cosham)**

**8<sup>th</sup> December**

**CC6 Race 4, Holmsley campsite**

**January 2025**

**12<sup>th</sup> January**

George Skeates Charity Run, 7.5 miles

Lovely low key cross country event from Stockbridge Town Hall. A favourite with a number of RRRs

**19<sup>th</sup> January**

CC6 Event 5, Itchen Valley Country Park

**February 2025**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb**

Ryde 10 miles

**9<sup>th</sup> February**

CC6 Race 6 Badger Farm

**March 2025**

**2<sup>nd</sup> March**

CC6 Race 7 Itchen Valley Country Park

**23<sup>rd</sup> March**

Eastleigh 10k

**April 2025**

**6<sup>th</sup> April**

Salisbury 10 miles



## Results

### July 2024

#### Lordshill 10k

Damien Harvey	35:36
David Morrison	38:17
Jack Wood	41:35
Kirsty Templer	42:53
Elizabeth Prinsep	44:56
Mark Judkins	47:31
Alice Lane	51:48
Joe Amber	54:27
Lauren Freestone	54:27
Angela Milln	1:00:39

#### Battle of Britain Half Marathon

Lottie Budd	2:42:01
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#### Snowdon Ultra Marathon 57km

Susie Parker	8:41:34 1 <sup>st</sup> AG
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#### Tour of the Woods

Neil Jennings	36:15 1 <sup>st</sup> !
Joe Amber	39:11 2 <sup>nd</sup> !
Penny Jennings	51:21 1 <sup>st</sup> AG
Jessie Hughes	1:12:23
Gemma Ingason	1:12:39
Julia Abab	1:14:07
Derek Kelly	1:14:23

#### Big Heat 16 miles

Lin Windsor	3:33:47
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#### Bright Skies Surrey Hills Half Marathon

Lottie Budd	2:34:50
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#### Harting 10 miles

Neil Jennings	1:06:26
Joe Amber	1:20:20
Penny Jennings	1:32:23 3rdAG
Lin Windsor	1:45:13
Wayne Windebank	1:58:55
Julie Shanker	2:00:34

#### The Big Pilgrimage 15 miles

Lottie Budd	3:15:23
Lin Windsor	3:05:33
Penny Overy	3:08:21

#### Frome 10k

Bob Gold	1:08:42
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#### Frome Half Marathon

David Morrison	1:24:20
Elizabeth Prinsep	1:36:53 1 <sup>st</sup> AG !

#### Bedford Twilight 10k

Shaun Murray-Brown	0:35:03
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#### Andover Trail Half

Lin Windsor

#### New Forest Half Marathon

Kirsty Templer	1:35:15 PB!
Mark Judkins	1:50:05 PB!
Daniele de Corte	1:54:02

#### Great North Run

Emma Bailey	1:52:14
Andy Whittingham	1:54:34

#### Overton 5 miles

Damien Harvey	0:28:34 PB!
Alice Lane	0:42:56

#### Sydney Marathon

Elizabeth Prinsep	3:17:25 PB!
Nigel Hemsted	3:35:47

#### BigSky Marathon

John Wheatley	3:55:17
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#### BigSky 18 miles

Lin Windsor	3:37:01
Penny Overy	3:43:43
Natalie Stacey	3:52:47

#### Truro Half Marathon

Alice Lane	2:05:11
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#### Weymouth 70.3 Tri / Half Marathon

Curtis Badley	1:37:47
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#### Windsor Half Marathon

Diane Thompson	2:17:37
Natalie Stacey	2:41:29
Gemma Ingason	2:42:43

#### Utilita Bowl 10k

Alice Lane	50:54 2 <sup>nd</sup> AG
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