



News Release

29<sup>th</sup> January 2017

## **PARLIAMENT HILL SLOG Marathon in Madeira**

Nine Spartans braved the iconic South of England Cross Country Championships course at Parliament Hill Fields on Saturday. Starting with a lung busting climb straight from the start the nine mile race is one of the longest in the cross cross calendar. Conditions were more favourable than many years making the race faster and less of a mud fest but a hard, hard event nevertheless.

Racing over the full fifteen kilometres CRAIG HALSEY was 190<sup>th</sup> out of the 1,068 finishers in 57 minutes 24 seconds; DAVE RIDDELL was 656<sup>th</sup> in 67:38; TODD GRAY 664<sup>th</sup> in 67:46 and TIM ROBINSON 1,051<sup>st</sup> in 86:52.

The women's race was over eight kilometres, about five miles, LAUREN ING was 381<sup>st</sup> in 43:25; HAZEL SMITH 462<sup>nd</sup> in 46:29; PETA WILSON 506<sup>th</sup> in 48:31; CALLIE CHAPMAN 515<sup>th</sup> in 49:15 and SHARON CROWLEY 541<sup>st</sup> in 51:58.

### **Funchal Marathon – Sunday, 29th January 2017-**

Funchal is the Capital of the Portuguese Island of Madeira, which sits in the Atlantic 400 miles from anywhere.

The marathon course was considered flat by the locals but ROGER BIGGS didn't think so! It was two and a half laps on an undulating section to the West of Funchal, then a nice drop down on the promenade, before four laps including a climb onto the cobbled streets of the Old Town.

He managed to keep a reasonable pace to finish in 4 hours 49 minutes 18 seconds.

## Serpentine

It was cold but dry and with a light breeze for Friday's Serpentine 5K round Hyde Park. JIM BROWN found it hard to get going but sped up a bit towards the end to finish in 24 minutes 27 seconds. He was 183<sup>rd</sup> out of the 261 finishers in the lunch time race around the lake.

## Santa Pola

Cathy Craig ran the Santa Pola Half Marathon for the ninth time in a row recently and got a time of 2 hours 21 minutes 36 seconds. She arrived on the Wednesday to the worst weather for 100 years with more rain falling in 48 hours than had fallen in the previous five years. Luckily the weather on race day was pretty much perfect with a bit of wind blowing the rainfall over the ocean and away from the town. It's a flat course along the sea front and a major event for the town with over 8,000 entrants. Local support is great with bands playing along the route. By the time Cathy left for home yesterday, it was lovely sunny weather and she was sorely tempted to book a later flight and stay a few more days.

## Parkrun Reports

CAROL PAUL was first Spartan woman to finish at Stevenage parkrun this week, crossing the line in 26:20 for 8<sup>th</sup> place. VERITY FISHER was the only other Spartan woman represented also in the top ten with in 26:42.

For the men, STUART STABLES finished in 25<sup>th</sup> place in a time of 22:00. DARREN EMMERSON continues to be consistently at the front end of the male Spartans at the venue, finishing 30<sup>th</sup> this week in 22:25. CHRIS HOLLAND was third Spartan male in 22:46 and MARTIN DUDLEY was not far behind in 23:10.

The other Spartans in action were MARK BEASLEY (24:01), NEIL ROBINSON (24:19), ALASTAIR BALDWIN, who notched a new course Personal Best of 29:12, PETER CARPENTER (32:07), JAMES SOUTH (32:09) and CALLUM BEASLEY (33:34).

**CRAIG BACON** took on the hill at Wimpole Estate, finishing in a time of 24:46. He was joined there by **ANTHONY OSBORNE** who completed in a time of 38:04.

Finally this week **THOMAS SAUKA** went down to Panshanger Park and completed in 21:24.

### **Coming Events**

Many Spartans will be enjoying a busy programme of races, social and training events over the next few weeks including cross country league. The opportunities include:

- **Watford Half Marathon inc. County Senior Champs on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Fifth and Final Cross Country League Race at Royston on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Veterans County Cross Country Championships on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Serpentine 5K in Hyde Park on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Spartans Presentation Evening in Old Stevenage on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Roding Valley Half Marathon on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Essex 20 and Berkhamsted Half Marathon on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **Finchley 20 on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **Welwyn Half Marathon on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **Sandy Ten and Wymondham 20 on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **Serpentine 5K in Hyde Park on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March.**
- **Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon in Waltham Forest on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.**
- **Brighton Marathon on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April.**
- **Maidenhead Easter Ten on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April.**
- **London Marathon on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April.**
- **County 1500 Championships in Stevenage on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May (TBC).**
- **Dereham 10 (ten miles) on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May.**
- **Summer Solstice 10K at St Albans on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May.**
- **Stirling Marathon on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May.**
- **Peterborough Half Marathon on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October.**

- **St Neots Half Marathon on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November (TBC).**
- **Bass Belle 10 near Royston on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November.**

**We should know the 2017 Mid Week Road Race League dates soon after 8<sup>th</sup> February.**

### **Join The Spartans**

**Live in or near Stevenage? Like running? Fairlands Valley Spartans is your local running club and is on the up! The club was voted the UK's Best Running Club in 2010. It now has hundreds of members and encourages participation by all. The Spartans have a varied training programme to suit those who want to run 5 kilometres through to full marathons.**

**The Spartans weekday training sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Go along to the new sports centre at Marriotts School – a Sports College, Telford Avenue, Stevenage (SG2 8UT) at 7p.m. Up to five running groups go out on training nights – there will be one to suit you!**

**The Spartan Starter group starts from Marriotts at 7.30p.m. every Monday (except public holidays) and 7p.m. every Thursday.**

**Most long Sunday morning training sessions start 9a.m. sharp. Spartan track training sessions are held at Ridlins Athletics Track, Woodcock Road, Stevenage most Saturdays from 9.15a.m. There are events to enter every Sunday. Newcomers are very welcome – those who have not yet done very much running might prefer to start with a Thursday, Saturday or Monday session.**

**Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £37 per year, £25 without UKA affiliation. Concessions are available. Membership forms are available on the Spartans website [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk) Please ask if you would like a paper copy. You can also join online.**

**If you want to know more about the Spartans please contact Jim Brown (0793 968 7509), Andy Neatham 0777 197 5499 and 01438 816889; or Karen Palmer (07734678566) or visit their website [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk)**

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**More from Jim Brown (Press Officer) 0793 968 7509; Andy Neatham 0777 197 5499 and  
01438 816889 or Karen Palmer (Secretary) 0773 467 8566**

**[www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk)**