



20s PLENTY FOR ED Olympic Half * Rock Up 'n' Race

ED HARE ran the Goodwood Running Grand Prix on Sunday morning. It consisted of 5k, 10k, Half Marathon, 20 miles or Marathon distances. He took on the 20 mile challenge as a training run towards the Peterborough Marathon next month and came away with a 2 hours 48 minutes 51 seconds time which was a personal best (PB) by over 3 minutes. Ed said it was a fantastic event with almost 1000 competitors and certainly the largest attended event since the pandemic started that he'd seen.

He added, "Runners were sent off socially distanced and in fours and there were staggered starts all morning for all the different events. It felt very safe around the event village and certainly gives you confidence that larger events can happen this year. The strangest part of the morning was light aircraft taking off and landing in the middle of the track, but certainly helped taking the attention away from how my legs were."

For Real – a Half Marathon

The half marathon was always a favourite distance for **JIM BROWN** and on Saturday he was able to run the first real one this year. Organised by Run Through this was 0.1 miles plus thirteen laps of the cycling circuit in the Lee Valley Olympic Park. There were plenty of turns and sharp little inclines but at least with only one mile per loop the headwind stretches didn't last too long.

Jim was keen to tick off every mile at just under nine minutes which, having made great use of the Spartans steady five training session to practice, he did to finish in 1 hour 52 minutes 23 seconds. He was the last runner across the start line in the phased starting

arrangements but with his steady pace caught a few and ended up in the middle of the finishers and second in his age category. He was 103rd out of 154 men.

He is still raising funds for the Mayor's charities.
<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JimBrown20>

Rock Up 'n' Race

Six months after their last Rock Up 'n' Run race along the River Lea towpath from Stanstead St Margarets Paul Holgate and Roger Biggs returned to join the fun organised by Fordy Runners. Paul beat his October time by 11 minutes 38 seconds, finishing the half marathon in 2:37:48, while Roger was pleased to complete the 10k event in 1:31:50, only slightly slower than his October time despite the chilly headwind to contend with this time.

Sunday 25th April: Big Cow Formula 5 Duathlon.

A normal duathlon is run-bike-run but the Big Cow Formula 5 Duathlon was run-bike-run-bike-run. Hence the Formula 5 name. The run was 5K on mainly an off-road undulating course in Emberton Country Park. The bike was 40K on roads, around Newport Pagnell which was again undulating, and there was quite a stiff breeze. BRIAN WHITE entered to test out his endurance fitness and it's obviously not that bad! He was second veteran 65 plus and 49th overall in 2 hours 37 minutes 33 seconds.

Racing Round England

In their race around England ten of the fourteen Fairlands Valley Spartans have completed more than 1,000 kilometres and team leader PENNY SCHENKEL is already pushing the headwind down the west coast. She is approaching Fleetwood, northern terminus of the Blackpool Tramways with 2,378 kilometres done. Penny has a lead of more than 300 kilometres within the Spartans and is eighth overall in the national competition.

Second placed **JIM BROWN** has just turned left towards Carlisle. He is at West Chevington near Alnmouth and more than two thirds of the way round with 2045 kilometres.

Early leader **BRIAN WHITE** is third and making good progress with 1,875 kilometres and has reached Cloughton in North Yorkshire. Fourth placed **SHARON CROWLEY** is in Wainfleet St Mary, near Skegness and Gibraltar (!) with 1642 kilometres.

CATHY CRAIG and **HAZEL SMITH** have switched positions since last week. Cathy is on 1256 and has opened up a 15 kilometre gap on her daughter but **KEN JUDE** has got between them again with 1250. All three are in Essex.

JON SYPULA ON 1,100 IS COMING THROUGH Deal in Kent. He's 13 kilometres ahead of **LIZ CROWLEY** who is in Dover. **PAUL HOLGATE** is the latest Spartan through 1,000 kilometres. He's on 1,064 and between Dymchurch and Hythe near the narrow gauge stream railway.

In the virtual race around England the Fairlands Valley Spartans team have already covered a total of 17,980 kilometres, the equivalent of six times round the course, and are now scattered between Devon and Lancashire.

| Bib no. | Distance | Participant | Location |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 120 | 2377.9 km | Penny Schenkel | Fleetwood |
| 118 | 2045.1 km | Jim Brown | West Chevington |
| 115 | 1874.7 km | Brian White | Cloughton, North Yorks |
| 99 | 1642.0 km | Sharon Crowley | Wainfleet St Mary, near Gibraltar |
| 110 | 1256.4 km | Cathy Craig | Purleigh, Essex |
| 108 | 1249.7 km | Ken Jude | South Woodham Ferrers, Essex |
| 128 | 1240.9 km | Hazel Smith | Wickford, Essex |
| 98 | 1100.4 km | Jon Sypula | Deal, Kent |

| | | | |
|-----|-----------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 100 | 1087.0 km | Liz Crowley | Dover, Kent |
| 102 | 1063.7 km | Paul Holgate | Dymchurch – Hythe, Kent |
| 113 | 899.1 km | Liz Carvell | East Wittering |
| 109 | 825.1 km | Tracy Pez | New Forest |
| 136 | 737.8 km | Wendy Tharani | Leaving Weymouth |
| 114 | 580.7 | Lee Pickersgill | South Devon AONB |

Fly 5K #49

NICOLA ANDERSSON was the fastest finisher from Fairlands in Saturday's 49th Fly 5K. She was 133rd out of runners all over the world in 28 minutes 14 seconds. **PENNY SCHENKEL** was on five seconds and two positions behind at 28:19 and 135th.

MASRIAN MORLEY was 143rd and third woman 55 plus in 28:35 and **PAUL HOLGATE** 203rd in 31:52.

Next week's Fly 5K #50, on Saturday 1st May, includes an inter-club competition and the Spartans are hoping for a successful team entry.

The virtual Fly races started during lock down to help keep people active.

(Not) Parkrun

In addition to those using the same effort to record Fly 5K times on Saturday **JIM BROWN** recorded 26 minutes 11 seconds in the first 5K of his half marathon race. **NICOLA ANDERSSON** had run 27:38 on Friday. The other (not) parkrun Spartans on Saturday were **TOM SAUKA** 22:11 and **ALISON SHELLEY** 28:45.

(Not) Parkruns can be run on any day of the week.

Group Runs Are Back

The return to club training went really well helped by some glorious evenings. Members have to book in advance to keep the numbers within Covid guidance and there are several starts at different places around Stevenage.

Parkrun Roundup 24th April 2021

Parkruns, the popular free Saturday morning 5K runs, have restarted in some other countries with a recent Saturday seeing more than 27,500 participants across 218 events, in five countries. There were 1,640 who walked, jogged, ran or volunteered with Parkrun for the very first time. Not yet in the UK.

Fairlands Valley Spartans and many others are looking forward to the 200th Stevenage Parkrun which will be the first local parkrun when the events can restart. It's looking like that will be on Saturday 5th June. The 199th Stevenage parkrun was on Saturday 14th March 2020. It'll be some party when they restart.

(Normally all the week's Spartan parkrun results can be found near the end of our release).

Train With The Spartans

Group training had to be suspended again from 19th December but there are lots of ideas available on Spartan social media and opportunities to pair up for motivation and safety. Group Training is restarting with free pre-booked sessions for groups of up to twelve people from Monday 29th March. To join the Spartans visit www.fvspartans.org.uk now.

Coming Events

Despite the lack of races and restrictions on group training in January 2021 the Spartans had 333 members, 171 men and 162 women. They have an average age of 45 with a very wide range.

The Spartans are looking forward to a busy programme of races, social and training events when it is possible for events to start again including (please check as, obviously, race dates may change depending on government and UKA guidance):

- **50th Fly 5K and inter-club competition on Saturday 1st May. World wide.**
- **Hatfield Five on Sunday 9th May (NEW DATE).**
- **Greenway Challenge in Letchworth on Sunday 9th May (POSTPONED to June/July).**
- **Richmond Marathon on 16th May (POSTPONED).**
- **Peterborough Marathon on Sunday 23rd May (new date).**
- **Run Through Half Marathon, 10 miles, etc., on 29th May at Lee Valley on Saturday 29th May.**
- **Hitchin 10K on Sunday 30th May.**
- **Parkrun returns ☺ on Saturday 5th June (check for details).**
- **Hertfordshire Half Marathon at Knebworth House on Sunday 6th June 2021 (the postponed 2020 event).**
- **St. Albans Half Marathon on Sunday 13th June.**
- **Peterborough New Year's Eve 10K on Sunday 13th June (deferred date).**
- **Love Welwyn Garden City 10K on Sunday 20th June (deferred date).**
- **Live Fly 5K event at Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead on Sunday 27th June.**
- **Ware Ten on Sunday 4th July.**
- **Off Road Fairlands Valley Challenge on Sunday 18th July.**
- **St. Albans Summer 10K on Sunday 8th August (new date).**
- **Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon on Sunday 15th August.**
- **Welwyn Half Marathon on Sunday 22nd August.**
- **Hitchin 5K on Sunday 29th August.**
- **Bedford "Spring" Half on Saturday 4th September.**
- **Bedford Running Festival Half Marathon on Sunday 5th September.**

- **Hillingdon 20 on Sunday 5th September. A Hertfordshire County Championship.**
- **Stevenage 10K on Sunday 19th September.**
- **Hitchin 5K on Sunday 19th September.**
- **Standalone 10K in Letchworth on Sunday 26th September (Note unusual date). County Championship for veterans.**
- **London Marathon on Sunday 3rd October.**
- **Chelmsford Half Marathon on Sunday 3rd October.**
- **Manchester Marathon on Sunday 10th October.**
- **Great South Run (ten miles) in Portsmouth on Sunday 17th October.**
- **Love Luton Half Marathon and 10K on Sunday 31st October.**
- **Baldock Beast Half Marathon on Sunday 31st October (new date).**
- **Paul Maguire Five and Bryan Moore Ten FVS handicap events on Sunday 7th November.**
- **Hertfordshire Half Marathon (2021) at Knebworth House on Sunday 7th November.**
- **Stevenage Half Marathon on Sunday 21st November (Note unusual date). County Championships for seniors.**
- **Bass Belle Ten Miles on Sunday 28th November (TBC).**
- **Cross Country League Race on Sunday 19th December (TBC).**

Tables

Full results for all Spartans would normally be listed below – back soon.

Join The Spartans

Live in or near Stevenage? Like running? Fairlands Valley Spartans is your local running club and is on the up! In June 2019 they were promoted to division one in the mid week road race league. At November 2019 FVS had 346 members, 177 women and 169 men – that's more than the previous year. The Spartans encourage participation by all. They have a varied training programme to suit those who want to run 5 kilometres through to

full marathons. It puts back into the sport by organising events such as the Stevenage Half Marathon, Fairlands Valley Challenge, the Relays in the Park and events for the Mid Week and Cross Country Leagues.

In “normal” times the Spartans weekday training sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Go along to the new sports centre at Marriotts School – a Sports College, Brittain Way, 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.

Watch out for when the regular training sessions and events start again.

Membership is only £28 per year for 2020/2021 which includes UKA affiliation. Concessions are available (£21.75). Membership forms are available on the Spartans website 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); Jenny Garrett (0771 113 0439); info@fvspartans.org.uk; or visit their website www.fvspartans.org.uk

E N D S

More from Jim Brown (Press Officer) 0793 968 7509 or secretary@fvspartans.org.uk

www.fvspartans.org.uk

Jim Brown, 106 Oaks Cross, Stevenage, SG2 8LT