



## **ULTRA AND TRAIL WEEKEND FOR SPARTANS Race to the King \* MK24 \* Hampshire Hoppit**

**Teamwork makes the dreamwork!! Karen Ellis, Jackie Downes, Neal Muggleton, John Nelms and Hazel Smith ran the Race to the King (RTTK), part of the South Downs Way, in 13 hours 53 minutes and 51 seconds. The route was undulating with 5278 feet of elevation across the 55 miles route. The route started at Goodwood Race Course, Chichester and finished at the beautiful Winchester Cathedral with stunning views along the way.**

**Altogether Seven Spartans completed the Ultra Marathon in the very humid conditions. This route has around eight quite steep hills and some rough, stony paths. One hill seemed to go on forever and at times only walking was possible. It was Karen Ellis's longest race, so she was happy to finish strongly. The rest of her team of five consisted of Hazel Smith, Jackie Downes, John Nelms and Neal Muggleton. They finished together at around 9pm, just as a torrential downpour started and darkness began to fall.**

**The other two Spartans, Sharon Crowley and Cathy Craig finished in 16 hours 30 minutes at around 11.30. For them, running in the dark, with the muddy, slippy conditions underfoot was quite a challenge. Sharon had been injured in 2019, so it was an amazing achievement to train from not being able to run at all to be able to complete such a tough Ultra. Everyone was pleased with what they did and extremely thankful for the support of fellow Spartans Mike Crowley, Jenny Garrett and Julie Shadbolt.**

### **MK24**

**As if 55 miles wasn't enough DAVID BOWKER won the Milton Keynes 24 hour race. Here the target is to see how many 6.55 mile laps can you complete in 24 hours. He ran 15 laps in 23 hours and 45 minutes.**

## **Hampshire Hoppit**

**The Hampshire Hoppit marathon and half marathon are both multi-terrain trail races, i.e. predominantly off-road and are approximately 26.2 miles and 13.1 miles long. They use routes that are clearly marked and marshalled, and include local sections of famous long distance footpaths, the Wayfarers Walk and (for the marathon) the Harrow Way. Both are scenic single-lap courses that start and end at Kingsclere on the Hampshire/Berkshire border, reaching some of the highest points in Hampshire with views across the county. There is about 650 metres of elevation gain in the marathon. There are occasional quiet road sections or road crossings that have marshals.**

**Unlike road races, it is accepted that the actual distance for trail races is difficult to measure.**

**Spartans CHARLOTTE SMITH and ROBERT WRIGHT together with Charlotte's sister Harriet tackled the full marathon. Robert finished in 4:59:54 and Charlotte in 5:31:30.**

**The race start had a new location this year. It was on a part of the Kingsclere Stables estate that is around two miles south of the village.**

## **Victoria Park 10K**

**The Victoria Park 10K started warm and dry but very humid early morning in a quiet London park. It was more like a time trial, with one runner starting every 10 seconds. The Spartans' YUKO GORDON was seventh woman overall in 45 minutes 18 seconds.**

## **Flying On Number 57**

**The Spartans are still flying. On Saturday morning total numbers were a down a bit to 185 due to the return of "real" racing but three Spartans were "there" to enjoy the 57<sup>th</sup> Fly 5K.**

**JIM BROWN** was second in his category with 26 minutes 24 seconds at 65<sup>th</sup> overall; **NICOLA ANDERSSON** 90<sup>th</sup> in 28:39 and **PAUL HOLGATE** 139<sup>th</sup> in 31:57.

### **(Not) Parkrun**

In addition to those using the same effort to record Fly 5K times on Saturday some other Spartans ran (not) parkruns on other days. For example this week **ALISON SHELLEY** ran a 28 minutes 48 seconds 5K on Wednesday.

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

### **Racing Round England**

The Spartans have a winner in their Bristol to Bristol virtual run, cycle and walk challenge around the coasts and borders of England. **PENNY SCHENKEL** crossed the finish line during the Spartans Wave 10K run on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May with all 2,970 kilometres done.

She was 434 kilometres ahead of **JIM BROWN** (2536) and 789 ahead of **BRIAN WHITE** (2181).

By Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June **JIM BROWN**, in second place, had less than a parkrun to go, 2.73 kilometres and was 99.91% done. **BRIAN WHITE** has maintained his third place and is by the Pleasure Beach in Blackpool with 2396 kilometres done. **SHARON CROWLEY**, fourth, has done some catching up and is near Haverthwaite in the Lake District on 2324.

Meanwhile **KEN JUDE** is the fifth Spartan through 2,000 kilometres. He's on 2047 at West Chevington heading west to Carlisle.

This virtual event was another great distraction and motivation during the months of restrictions on racing and training together. It started in Bristol and followed the coasts and borders of England in an anti-clockwise direction. The other nine Spartans are still clicking up the kilometres and have until December to finish the event. Many other clubs are participating in the Virtual Coast Challenge.

## **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 within Covid guidance and there are several starts at different places around Stevenage. From Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May maximum group sizes increased to thirty. There are six groups out on Tuesday, three groups out on Thursday, three groups out on Sunday, starters on Mondays and a whole range of other activities at the weekend including track training on Saturdays and the return of racing events.

## **Parkrun Roundup 19<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

Fairlands Valley Spartans and many others are looking forward to the 200<sup>th</sup> Stevenage Parkrun which will be the first local parkrun when the events can restart. It's looking like that will be on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July. The 199<sup>th</sup> Stevenage parkrun was on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> 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).

## **Coming Events**

This would be the season for the Mid Week Road Race League. It is happening in 2021 but it's a bit different. The first two races will be virtual. For the first Spartans could run a 10K anytime between 24<sup>th</sup> May and 6<sup>th</sup> June and the club have organised a waved start 10K on Tuesday evening 25<sup>th</sup> May. The second Mid Week League second virtual 10K race is between 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June with an opportunity to run it in "wave" format on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>.

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):**

- **Mid Week League second virtual 10K race between 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **Summer Solstice Beat the Sunset 10K in St Albans on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June.**
- **Second Spartans MWL Wave 10K event in Stevenage on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.**
- **Turing 10K at Milton Keynes on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **Milton Keynes Half Marathon and Rocket 5K on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **Greenway Challenge (13.1 miles, largely trail) in Letchworth on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June (POSTPONED).**
- **Milton Keynes Marathon on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **EMAC Event Two at Cambridge on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **Ware Ten (10 miles and 10K) on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **(ATW cycling event at Watton on 11<sup>th</sup> July).**
- **Chase the Sun 5K and 10K at Olympic Park on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Fairlands Valley Challenge (off road) on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Herts Fast 10K and 5K at Drift Limits on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July (including deferred entries from the Love Welwyn 10K).**
- **Run Dorney 5K, 10K and Half Marathon at Dorney Lake on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Bedford Harriers Doug Anderson 5K on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July.**
- **Marston Forest 5K at 7p.m. on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.**
- **Return of Parkrun on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July including the 200<sup>th</sup> Stevenage Parkrun.**
- **Running GP (inc 5K; 10K; Half; 20 miles and Marathon) at Bedford Autodrome on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **EMAC Event Three at Bedford on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Beds 10K in Priory Park, Bedford on Friday evening 30<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Lee Valley Velopark 5K; 10K; 10 miles or Half Marathon on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> July.**
- **MK 10K on Tuesday evening 10<sup>th</sup> August.**
- **St. Albans Summer 10K on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August (new date).**
- **Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon at the White Water Centre, Waltham Cross on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August.**

- **Welwyn Half Marathon on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August.**
- **Live Fly 5K event at Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August (new date).**
- **Clacton Half Marathon and 10K on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August.**
- **Great Hertfordshire AONB multi-terrain run at Offley on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August.**
- **Lee Valley Velo Park on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August.**
- **Hitchin 5K on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August.**
- **EMAC Event Four at Milton Keynes on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September.**
- **Bedford “Spring” Half on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **St. Albans Stampede on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Bedford Running Festival Half Marathon on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Hillingdon 20 on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September. Includes Hertfordshire Championships for Seniors (18 plus).**
- **Richmond (Thames) Marathon on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Stevenage 10K on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **EMAC final at Milton Keynes on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Lee Valley Velo Park on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Standalone 10K in Letchworth on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September (Note unusual date). County Championship for veterans.**
- **London Marathon on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.**
- **Chelmsford Half Marathon on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.**
- **Manchester Marathon on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Great South Run (ten miles) in Portsmouth on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Running GP (various distances) at Bedford Autodrome on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Chelmsford Marathon on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Stirling 5K on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.**
- **Abingdon Marathon on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Stirling Scottish Marathon and Half on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October.**
- **Love Luton Half Marathon and 10K on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October.**
- **Baldock Beast Half Marathon on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October (new date).**
- **Paul Maguire Five and Bryan Moore Ten FVS handicap events in Stevenage on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November.**

- Hertfordshire Half Marathon and 10K (2021) at Knebworth House on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November.
- Stebbing Ten (miles) in Essex on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November.
- Stevenage Half Marathon on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November (Note unusual date). County Championships for seniors (18 plus).
- Lee Valley Velo Park races on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November.
- Hatfield Five (2021 edition) on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Includes Hertfordshire Championships for Seniors (18 plus).
- Bass Belle Ten Miles on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November (TBC).
- Cross Country League Race on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December (TBC).
- Oakley 20 on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
- Brighton Marathon on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022.
- London Marathon on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022.
- Edinburgh Marathon Festival on 28/29 May 2022.

### Tables

Full results for all Spartans when there are a lot at an event will be listed below. It's back!

### 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. 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 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 six 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 and all Spartans get free entry to the summer Mid Week Road Race League. 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](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); Jenny Garrett (0771 113 0439); [info@fvspartans.org.uk](mailto:info@fvspartans.org.uk); or visit their website [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk)**

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