



## **THE COAST OF ENGLAND VIRTUAL CHALLENGE Team “in” British Columbia and Heading South**

Fourteen Spartans took up the Coast of England Virtual Challenge organised by ResultsBase to give their training a continued focus through lockdown and beyond, aiming to complete the 2970 kilometres around the coast of England by the 31st December 2021, competing at their own pace, fast or slow, on a bike, or walk, a run or swim. The challenge began in Bristol near the Severn Estuary and started by tackling the south coast path around Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.

From Plymouth the route heads east across the bottom of the UK including the Jurassic Coast. Following this you then journey towards Southampton, Brighton and finally Dover before following the Kent coast to the Thames Estuary. But it doesn't stop there! You then continue to the east coast and onto the north Norfolk path heading through small towns such as Sheringham, Wells-next-the-Sea and Hunstanton. Once this has been tackled it's time to head up north, exploring the Yorkshire coast and cities like York and Whitby.

The Northumbrian coast is next before heading up to the Scottish border where the Spartans will venture to Hadrians Wall and then back down to the Lake District. Coming back more inland they then walk, bike or run to Liverpool before brushing by Wales and taking on the final part of their epic journey by heading to Offa's Dyke, then through the stunning Forest of Dean back to Bristol.

At the end of January BRIAN WHITE leads the way 672km into the challenge and is now heading along the South coast between Exmouth and Weymouth. SHARON CROWLEY has completed 410km as she makes her way around Lands End, with KEN JUDE close behind at 360km through St Ives. CATHY CRAIG has completed 342 km, midway between Newquay and St Ives, while TRACY PEZ (297km), PAUL HOLGATE (294km),

LIZ CARVELL (294km) and LIZ CROWLEY (277km) are all heading towards Newquay, with JON SYPULA (222km) and LEE PICKERSGILL (200km) both now through Ilfracombe. KERSTIN WEINER (201km), ANDY PRIOR (136km) and WENDY THARANI (109km) are heading towards Ilfracombe, and SIMON SYPULA (69km) and LISA JERROM (8km) have both left Bristol on the start of their journeys.

Fairlands Five in Fly 5K. Despite poor weather in many areas a record 301 runners raced in Saturday's virtual Fly 5K race. The conditions may have been reflected by JIM BROWN taking more than two minutes longer than the previous week but winning his category with 27 minutes 15 seconds.

NICOLA ANDERSSON returned to Fly 5K action with 28:28. NICK KLEANTHOUS took 29 minutes 21 seconds. PENNY SCHENKEL improved by 23 seconds on seven days earlier with 29:37 and PAUL HOLGATE came in with 31:01.

Jim	Brown	27:15	160
Nicola	Andersson	28:28	183
Nick	Kleanthous	29:21	206
Penny	Schenkel	29:37	215
Paul	Holgate	31:01	242

As (not) Parkruns don't have to be run on a Saturday some different times are possible. This week they were Marian Morley 25:19; Paul Shelley 26:34 (Wednesday); Jim Brown 26:44; Nick Kleanthous 27:15 and Alison Shelley 27:26.

There may be no live races, with all the restrictions, but there are many opportunities to take part in virtual events or enjoy training runs in ones and twos.

### USA Done Now It's Canada

Virtually nothing stops Fairlands Valley Spartans and they have now run nearly 18,000 miles in their race across North America. Lockdown 2 - Briefly Tier 3 - Now Tier 4 and they continue into 2021.

Having covered the USA they have completed a tour of Canada by running more than 800 miles over the weekend. On Saturday they have completed the Vancouver Marathon, something Spartan CAROL PAUL has done in real life, and visited Vancouver Island. From there it was a short journey to Victoria for the Spartans completion of the Trans - Canadian Highway. On day 84, Saturday, FVS completed 217 miles with 39 members posting a distance.

Then on Sunday, day 85, 79 members ran an impressive 609 miles to complete the Trans Canadian Highway. That had kept the Spartans busy for a total of 22 days, 5205 miles and had included seven marathons.

The total distance run so far is 17,898 miles.

Now they are taking a bus trip to San Antonio in Texas where they will pick up the Pan – American Highway through Mexico. A tour of South America will follow.

### **On and Off Road Challenge**

Results will soon be available for the Spartans' on and off road challenge. They were encouraged to run a 5K and/or 5 miles in November and then see how close they could get off road over the same distances in December or January.

To join the Spartans visit [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk)

### **Parkrun Roundup 30<sup>th</sup> January 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 us for the very first time. Not yet in the UK.

**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. The 199<sup>th</sup> parkrun was on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. 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 19<sup>th</sup> December but there are lots of ideas available on Spartan social media and opportunities to pair up for motivation and safety. To join the Spartans visit [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk) now.**

### **Coming Events**

**Despite the lack of races and restrictions on group training in January 2021 the Spartans have 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):**

- **Stripey Saturday for Fairlands Valley Spartans on training runs and virtual races on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Fly virtual races on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March including 10K; Half Marathon; 20 miles and Marathon.**
- **Bedford Autodrome running events on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **Run Fest at Lee Valley (Half Marathon and 10K) on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March.**
- **St Albans Easter 10K on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.**
- **Dorney Lake Marathon on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.**
- **Bedford Autodrome 5K and 10K on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April.**

- **Essex Marathon and Half Marathon at Debden on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April.**
- **Greenway Challenge in Letchworth on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> (TBC).**
- **Peterborough Marathon on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May (new date).**
- **Hertfordshire Half Marathon at Knebworth House on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (the postponed 2020 event).**
- **St. Albans Half Marathon on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June.**
- **FVS Off Road Challenge on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **St. Albans 10K on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August.**
- **Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August.**
- **Bedford Running Festival Half Marathon on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **Stevenage 10K on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September.**
- **[Standalone 10K in Letchworth on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September (note unusual date. TBC).]**
- **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.**
- **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 on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November.**
- **Hertfordshire Half Marathon (2021) at Knebworth House on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November.**
- **Stevenage Half Marathon on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November (provisional. Note unusual date).**
- **Bass Belle Ten Miles on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November (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](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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**More from Jim Brown (Press Officer) 0793 968 7509 or [secretary@fvspartans.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fvspartans.org.uk)**

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

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