

# THE DECKCHAIR

ISSUE 11 – 2019



## INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to the last issue of The Deckchair in 2019, which is a festive special, including a review of the year.**

**Thank you to everyone who has contributed race reports, profiles and helped with the production and design of the newsletter, most notably Maria Gandara and Rosie Harris, plus Ed Steele and others for photographs..**

**Happy Christmas and here's to good things in 2020 !!**

Andrew Deighton

## KENT GRAND PRIX

**Nearly two months after the final event of KGP 2019, Kent County AA have still not provided final results, or confirmation of final placings... but we're still very confident that we are the champions in both the mens and womens events.**

Fortunately, we have our own scoring processes, which confirm that the winner of this years Club Grand Prix Trophy is Andy Howey, just ahead of first women, Jillian Holford, in second place.

Special mentions to Keith Mitchell (3rd), Ana Maria Green (4th) and Alex Holmes (5th) who each ran in 9 of the 10 events and to Mike King and Gem Stilliard, who both ran in 7.

The race dates and venues for KGP 2020 are...still to be confirmed by Kent County AA, even though we anticipate the first event may be the Canterbury 10 on January 26th.

## CROSS COUNTRY NEWS

### **Kent League Event 3 – Danson Park, Bexley – Nov 9th**

**A muddy course and new layout greeted the Senior Women and M70 Harriers on a cold and damp autumnal day.**

Cathy Gill was first Harrier home for the third race in a row, finishing 22nd, followed by Jillian Holford (39th) and Gem Stilliard (74th) for the 3 to score team race. Close behind was Michele Bradshaw (75th), Clare Andrew (99th) and Amanda Smith (100th) for the six to score.

After three races, Cathy is now in 16th place overall and Michele is 2nd in the M55 category.

Ian Bracken (M75) and Bryon Taylor (M80) finished 9th and 11th respectively in the M70 race, but topped their age categories.

South of the Thames Event 1 – Morden Park, Surrey – Nov 23rd

Following a week of fairly, consistent rain, the hardy harriers that made the journey to Morden, were greeted with a wet and muddy multi lap course to contend with.

The one race for both men and women, including all age categories saw Andy Howey be lead harrier, finishing 33rd and first M55. Alex Jeffreys followed closely behind, with Kieran Fitzpatrick, James Sarre and Simon Howden all in the top 100.

Jillian Holford was first of the seven Harrier women, finishing 44th, followed by Ana-Maria Green, Clare Andrew and Lesley Page.

## Kent Veterans XC Championships – Central Park, Dartford – Nov 30th

**31 Harriers participated in this years Veterans Championships, across three different races, all benefitting from the terrific support that the turnout and course layout enabled.**

Andy Howey, Dave Hadaway and Chris Potter all ran superbly to clinch bronze medals, for third place in the M50 race, as did Jillian Holford, Ana-Maria Green and Sonja King in the F35 race, but were pipped to the bronze by just one agonising point.

Tom Woolley was first Harrier in the M40 race, finishing 17th and Steve Austin ran a fine 12th place in the M60 race, which saw the return to cross country competition of our esteemed President, Cheeky, after something like 8 years...good to see he's not lost his post race rehydration ability!



*Team photo at South of the Thames (Andy choosing to be anonymous)*



*Simon Howden and Colin Timmins helpfully point out which lap they're on at the Kent Vets*

## CLUB & COMMITTEE NEWS

Wed Dec 18 Christmas Pressie Night, inc Xmas lights run, fish and chips, VLM draw.

## RUNS AND RACES OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

Sun Dec 22	East Grinstead Hash House Harriers Hash from Groombridge
Wed Dec 25	Maidstone Christmas Day parkrun
Thu Dec 26	TWH Club Boxing Day Run
<b>TBC</b>	<b>TWH Christmas Hash on Ashdown Forest</b>
Sat Dec 28	Local parkruns
Sun Dec 29	Staplehurst 10 Mile
Wed Jan 1st	Maidstone New Years Day parkrun
Wed Jan 1st	Lamberhurst 5k & 10k
Wed Jan 1st	TWH Club Run

## UPCOMING LOCAL RACE CALENDAR

### CROSS COUNTRY

Dec 21	South of the Thames 2	Lloyd Park
Jan 4	Kent Champs	Brands Hatch
Jan 5	Penshurst 5	Penshurst
Jan 25	Southern XC Champs	Parliament Hill

### ROAD

Jan 19	Bromley 10k	Bromley
Jan 26	Canterbury 10 miles	Canterbury



## RACE REPORT SPECIAL 1 “HARRIER HOLLIS HITS HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS”

In the first week of November, Paul Hollis took on the challenge of the iconic Himalayan 100 mile stage race, often described as the ‘most scenic race in the world.’

The race takes place over 5 consecutive days, with different distances each day and a route that offers spectacular views of Everest and many other iconic Himalayan peaks.

Paul ran 11 marathons this year and trained in an altitude chamber, in preparation for the race.

As well as representing the Harriers, Paul was running for the Cardiomyopathy UK charity

Here is the story of his adventure in his own words...

Day one was the toughest thing I’ve ever done! 24 miles with an elevation gain of nearly 3000 metres and a final climb to a finish at 3600 metres of altitude, where we stayed at Sandakphu. I was shocked to find I had finished in second place overall and worried that I might have gone off too hard.

Day two was an out and back 20 miles and I was acutely aware as we headed down quite steeply at the start, that we were obviously going to have to climb back up at the end! At one point I came around a bend to encounter a wild Yak, with a sheer drop off the cliff on one side, but fortunately he showed no interest in me at all, as I slipped passed on the wall side. Again, I finished in second place.

The middle day brought the Everest marathon, which was a goal for me, as completing this would be my 12th marathon in 12 months. This was the most technical race I have ever run, with the downhill section being through jungle. I encountered more Yaks, wild horses and monkeys and the surface was wooden steps, planks over streams and ravines. I took a tumble at one point, giving me a bruise on my thigh with as many colours as the Sandakphu sunrises.

Day four was shorter, just (!) thirteen miles and on tarmac, but with plenty of ups and downs and an overnight stay in Rimbick, a lovely well cared for village.

The final day started with a six mile climb and then a mostly downhill section into Mane Bhanjang, which is where the race had started a lifetime (or was it just 5 days) earlier

After an incredible week long experience, I was awarded third place overall at the evening award ceremony, behind a young lad from Delhi, who without doubt has a future in running and a lad from the UK military.

## **RACE REPORT SPECIAL 2. BY MICHELE BRADSHAW**

### **CYPRUS INTERNATIONAL 4 DAY CHALLENGE**

It all began way back in February when I was talking to Bob Lawrence about which events I should consider running in the future. I am never going to run a Marathon so an event of a distance over the classic 26.2 miles was never in my thoughts, but I did want to test myself and the 4 Day Challenge, where the total distance raced was greater than a Marathon, was an obvious choice to put on the bucket list. A number of members also showed interest so we booked flights and waited for others to do the same. Nobody else did, but we decided to go anyway. I am so glad that we did.

Training had been punctured by work related injuries but, with a flexible training plan, I was in shape to, at least, complete each day of competition. (I hoped). Bob's training had been hampered by a house move and was not as well prepared as hoped but was going to "stumble through" the four days. It was going to be a series of firsts for me. My first flight for more than twenty-five years, my first ever sunshine and hotel holiday and certainly my first ever overseas running trip.

Day One of the Challenge was a 6K time trial where competitors are set off at 10 second intervals. It was very interesting catching some of the early starters while being swallowed up by the faster athletes who were frighteningly speedy. I went passed Bob early on and was quite surprised at the end to find that I was heading my Age Group. Bob finished a little later, but not too distressed. A short Coach Ride back to the hotel gave me time to take my first sea swim, with Bob taking his more customary spectating role.

Day Two was The Uphill Multi terrain race. The hardest of the four days: 11K of running almost continually uphill. The winner, who is a sub 30 minute 10K runner completed the course in 45 minutes 46 seconds, which was a record. All agreed that to record such a time on that course was obscene. At least it got all the runners talking. I managed to increase my Age Group lead as I was again first "old bird" up the hill. Bob was not so lucky and after suffering with a problem exacerbated by his blocked ears decided it would be foolish and advised officials he was dropping out. He still had to walk most of the way to the finish. Our reward was an epic sized ice cream that was worth all the pain.

Day three was to be my first ever Half Marathon. I am sure I could have picked an easier route. The first 100 metres was up a hill that made Frant Road look like a gentle slope. The route continued to climb on rugged tracks for about 5K before descending the southern side of The Akamas peninsular until we reached the Coastal track which we all followed for the final 10K finishing with the final 400 metres on the beach and soft sand. Bob had been supporting about 2K from the finish so I had time for a quick swim before he returned craving another ice cream before heading back to the hotel. The Austrian lady who had won my Age Group in 2018 was now some 8 minutes behind me with one race to go so Bob was confident that I could complete the set and win my Age Group overall.

To avoid the Paphos Sunday traffic and the Paphos Half Marathon that was taking place on the same day a very early breakfast was put on for us so we could be transferred to Paphos Harbour in readiness for an 08:00a.m. start for the 10k race. Bob made a few enquiries from some of the other competitors that he knew and we realized that if I stayed in front of Mike Gratton (our tour organizer) I would be safely in front of my Age Group challengers. I managed that, to win the F60 category every day and the overall F60 prize. Finishing in front of a London Marathon winner also gave me a huge sense of satisfaction.

Time, afterwards to reflect on the whole event. Four very different races that were superbly organized, brilliant marshalling, a live results service, twelve different countries represented, good quality hotel, but above all the competition, was the friendly atmosphere between competitors.

Would I do it again – at the drop of a hat. I loved every minute of it.

*Race reports for this month from Richmond, Bedgebury, Brighton, Crowborough, South Downs and Bedford can all be found on the website, in the e-mail section.*

## **FROM THE TWH ARCHIVES**

### **Notes from the Minutes of the 2006 AGM held on December 8th**

The club finished 65th of 100 teams at the National Cross Country Championships, held on the famous course at Parliament Hill in London. A large team of harriers braved the deep mud and biting icy winds to witness the 50th anniversary run of Spud, competing in his first event at Parliament Hill.

A major event during the year had been the move to the Nevill Pavilion, which had provided improved (separate) changing and shower facilities, plus the advantage of a bar steward.

Thanks to Andy Joad for providing a superb venue for this years summer BBQ and to Cheeky for teaching us to make bras from our napkins at the Curry Evening.

## 2019 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Jan – Southern XC

### JANUARY

There was a good start to the year for Mike King and Cathy Gill, who both managed 4th place finishes at the much loved Penshurst Village Cross Country race, with Andy Howey, Tev Austin and Stella Richardson picking up age group wins.

The end of the month saw the Southern XC Champs on Hampstead Heath, where 15 men and five women took on the challenge of Parliament Hill.

Jillian Holford led home the harriers in the ladies 8k race, with Andy Howey and Kieran Fitzpatrick finishing 305th and 429th respectively in the men's race.

The next day Michele Bradshaw set a new F60 club record for 10 miles, at the first Kent Grand Prix race of the year, in Canterbury.



Feb – TW Half Marathon

### FEBRUARY

Sunday 17th saw the 36th running of the Tunbridge Wells Half Marathon and the sunny, crisp morning saw two Harriers on the podium – Billy Hobbs running 1:12 for 2nd place in the men's race and Harriet Woolley 1:28 for third in the women's.

Michele Bradshaw followed up her 10 mile F60 club record with a 22:04 clocking for 5k, which was not only another new F60 club record but also the leading age category time in the UK at that point in the year.

The concluding race of this year's Kent XC League, saw the women clinch 3rd place in the six to score team event, Andy Howey topping the M50s, Michele Bradshaw 2nd in the F60s and Peter Richardson 3rd in the M60s.



Mar – Dame Kelly Holmes evening

### MARCH

Club Championship month saw Alex Jeffreys and Harriet Woolley winning the club road race champs, while Andy Howey and Jillian Holford claimed the XC titles.

There was success for the team of Gem Stilliard, Nicola Morris and Hayley Larkin, who picked up 1st place in the womens team event at the Lydd 20 in the KGP.

We were privileged to have Dame Kelly Holmes join us on the 20th, where having joined in the club run, she then spent the rest of the evening giving insight into her career, with some training tips, before signing copies of her book for most of the 100+ Harriers in attendance.

The Annual Party at the Vittle and Swig on the 23rd, went with a bang – in no small part due to Steve 'Cherry' Wellstead and his fantastic band – and the club silverware was handed out to the deserving winners.



April – London Marathon

## APRIL

At the AGM on the 10th, John Hepner was appointed as the first Vice President of the club in recognition of his long and distinguished service.

Marathon season saw strong turnouts at both the Brighton and London Marathons.

A windy day in Brighton saw PBs abound, Mike King was first harrier home in a 3:02 PB, with other PBs coming from Patrick Bareham, Kelvin Desmoyers-Davis, Richard French. Gemma Stilliard ran a 3:38 PB and Good For Age time, leading in the women, with Sarah Ferns setting a PB and Ana Marie Green running an age group PB.

Two weeks later in London, there were more PBs, with Alex Jeffreys setting a new best of 2:51, Steve Wellstead claiming a PB and Geoff Turner and Tev Austin setting age group PBs. Harriet Woolley was first women Harrier home in a 3:07 PB, followed by Cathy Gill with a 3:18 PB and Stella Richardson claiming 39th place in the F60 category with her PB.



May – Bluebell Run

## MAY

The annual club Bluebell run took place in the first week of May, with a turnout of c25 Harriers and associated canine companions, who all thoroughly enjoyed both the run and an encounter with a herd of obdurate cows.

It was closely followed by the first handicap of the year, with nearly 50 harriers taking on the challenge. Mike King claimed the quickest time on the night and Ollie Smeed topped the handicap rankings.

This year's annual Mark Taylor Birthday Hash actually took place on Mark's birthday, with a great turnout for a lovely evening run starting and finishing at The Windmill in Sevenoaks Weald.

The month was topped off with another terrific Billy Hobbs performance, when he finished in a fantastic 3rd place in the Edinburgh half marathon, from a field of over 10,000.



June – Club Tour

## JUNE

The second handicap in this years series saw 10 runners under the 40 minute mark and Mike Staddon head to the top of the handicap table, with Phil Long and Lyndon Jennings close behind.

Taking on a longer challenge were the 15 Harriers who did one of the Weald Challenge Trail races. Tara Taylor was first harrier home in the 50k event, while Kelvin Desmoyer-Davis was leading Harrier in the half marathon.

There was another great turnout for the annual Club Tour, which this year visited the Isle of Wight.

The latest KGP event was a hot and sultry North Downs 30k, where 31 harriers took on the hills and trails and Andy Howey (gold) and Stella Richardson (silver) picked up medals in the British Masters Trail Championships.

We were even cover stars in this months Town Crier magazine.

## JULY

July was the month that Bollywood came to TW, with filming at the Nevill meaning we had a couple of 'awayday' hashes, one being Cheeky's Retirement Hash from the Red Lion in Rusthall and another a terrific hash from The Junction in Groombridge.

The latest KGP event – the Sevenoaks 7 – saw over 50 harriers race, with Billy Hobbs following his win the previous week at the Bewl 15, with another first place around Knole Park. Great performances in both the mens and womens races meant we started to believe we could lift both trophies with three events to go.

The last weekend of the month saw the annual Gentlemens Train-Inn Evening, with 20 participants, including two gentle men – Carl and Cuthbert – plus Yorkie the dog



## AUGUST

The first week of August saw records tumble, with Billy Hobbs setting new times for both 5k and 10k, Will Levett, a new 5k track record and Ana Maria Green a new F50 5k record.

The final club handicap finished with 25 Harriers in contention, having run at least 3 events, but this years Speldhurst Trophy winner Phil Long, was crowned with honourable mention to Duncan Ralph who was only 2 seconds behind.

Over in France, Tara Taylor qualified for and completed the Courmayeur Champex Chamonix – a 101km race around the massif of Month Blanc and being top Briton in her age category.

Sad news during the month, that well loved club member Steve Barnfield passed away.



## SEPTEMBER

The first day of the month saw a glorious day for 351 runners in the Eridge 10, with Billy Hobbs adding another win to his summer of success, Jillian Holford having a fine run for 5th in the women's race and many members participating as volunteers.

The following week saw 18 Harriers dress as (French) superheroes and head to Bordeaux for the Marathon du Medoc, where a good time was had by all.

Another strong turnout of 45 Harriers at the Larkfield 10k, on a gorgeous sunny Sunday morning, meant we had now almost clinched both KGP team titles.





September – Billy winning Eridge

## OCTOBER

As the weather started to turn, many Harriers decided to take on half marathons and marathons, from Bournemouth to Berlin, Chester to Cardiff, Lyon to Frankfurt, Chicago, Beachy Head and beyond.

It was also the start of the XC season, with the season opener at Swanley seeing 11 women led home by Cathy Gill in her leopard print shoes and Alex Jeffreys leading in the 31 Harrier men competing.

Race 2 of the Kent League saw Dillon Hobbs wearing the deckchair in the mens U17 race, before Cathy ran another strong race to be top Harrier again, to be followed by Alex doing the same in the men's race.

There was a Harrier 'takeover' of the relatively new Kingdom Parkrun, where a great turnout of members took on many of the volunteering roles and promoted the club.

Billy Hobbs set a new 10k club record, with a fantastic 31:04 clocking at the Abbey Dash in Leeds (....or so we thought – see December)

## NOVEMBER

As the fireworks started, the darker nights brought round the annual Curry Night, where c50 Harriers were fed and watered at Junahki in St Johns.

The Airmans Grave run was held for the ninth year, with runners from other clubs now attending too and the annual Wednesday club night Bombing run took place, after an informative introduction, courtesy of Andy Howey.

There were another couple of great overseas achievements by Harriers, with Paul Hollis taking on the massive challenge of the Himalayan 100 and Michele Bradshaw winning four daily stages and the overall F60 prize in the Cyprus International Challenge.

The cross country season continued (as per reports elsewhere in this newsletter) with bronze medals in the Kent Vets M50 team event for Andy Howey, Dave Hadaway and Chris Potter.

## DECEMBER

The month started with Billy Hobbs again/finally/definitively (delete as appropriate) setting a new club 10k record of 31:43, after his recent run at the Abbey Dash in Leeds was found to be on a mis-measured course – short by 23 metres.



October – Cross Country at Somerhill



Nov – Airmans Grave Run

**If you would like to contribute in any way to the newsletter, please contact Andrew Deighton at [adeighsk@gmail.com](mailto:adeighsk@gmail.com)**

**And don't forget, if you want race reports or other news submitting to the local press, post to the Google group, or send directly to Andrew 11am any Monday morning.**