

Isle of Man Veteran Athletes' Club

Affiliated to IOMAA, NEAA & BMAF

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President	Mr Dursley Stott OBE JP	Chairman	Colin Watterson
Hon. Sec.	Lesley Christian	Hon. Treasurer	Gill Churcher
Committee members:	Sarah Goldsmith, Mike Gellion, Robbie Lambie, Enid Watson, Jock Waddington		
Race Secretary	Marie Jackson.	Hon. Auditor	Ian Turnbull
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Official course measurer and collator of the Running Shield	Alan Postlethwaite		
Collator of the Racewalking League	Robbie Lambie		

Annual General Meeting was held on 29th January at the Ascot Hotel with 21 members attending. It's good bye and thank you very much to Maureen Cox, who has retired from the committee after several years of hard work. Maureen is remaining on the End to End committee, so her expertise will not be lost. The rest of the officials and committee members were re-elected. **We are still two committee members short**, so if you think you could help, please contact Lesley Christian 829164 or Colin Watterson 833655. We have a short meeting once a month and we really need your help to keep up the good work.

Ian Turnbull who is a long standing member, is a former Parish Walk winner, and has given his services free to audit our accounts for many years, was voted to become an Honorary member.

The membership fees for 2008 were fixed at £15 for first claim members, and remain at £8 for second claim members and £3 for social members. The increased amount is due to an extra £5 levy from UK Athletics. The Club actually retains very little of the members fees. Owing to new regulations, all members must fill in the enclosed subscriptions form this year, so please fill in your form and send it with your remittance as soon as possible to Peter Cooper, Woodheights, Knocksharry, German IM5 2AG. We have to submit numbers and levies to UK early this year, so please do not delay, or you may be deemed to have given up your membership. First claim members should remember that paying your subs validates your insurance when competing. **Anyone not paid up may be charged the unattached fee in the 20 mile race, or, may not be allowed to start in the Spring Handicap. Don't say you haven't been warned, (bring your cheque book on the day if you have forgotten to pay!)**

A big thank you to all our sponsors, most of our races run at a loss and without you we would struggle to put on such a varied programme. And while on the subject of putting something into the club, a word to those of you who never come out to marshal for us. How do you think the races could be put on if everyone took your attitude? The point of a club is that it supports you and you support it. We are considering making it compulsory for competitors to marshal / lapscore, the way it is with cycling and motorcrossing. Regular runners can help at the walking races, and vice versa, or if you always do both,

News
letter
February
2008

then you can provide a member of your family as a marshall in your place, at least once or twice a year. And to those regulars who always turn out and are indispensable, thank you again.

Our new website has been up and running for some time now, during 2007 page views reached 60,000. Anyone with news or photos for the website please send them to Adrian Cowin email metmann@hotmail.com

Welcome to new members

Sylvia Podmore, who is a runner and Patricia Blackburn who is a runner in Colin Halsall's group and is hoping to run the Paris Marathon. Also to Barry Moore, a runner and regular competitor. **Flora London Marathon places.** Sadly, since the last newsletter, Ingrid Sugden has been taken ill and will not be able to take up her Club place, although I hear she is now on the mend. Luckily there is still time to substitute Lesley Christian in her place.

Vets in action : Well done to the large group who ran the Brass Monkey half marathon in York last month. Super photos on the website. Their times were: Alan Kelly 1:39.29; Lesley Christian 2:02.27; Moira Hall 2:05.23; Lynne Qyine 2:07.48; Dave Quine 2:07.49; Maureen Kelly 2:14.30; Sue Ackroyd 2:21.47; Vera Jones 2:29.40. It must be unusual to see three married couples competing together in such a small club as ours.

Well done also to our three top racewalkers who have UK rankings: In the senior men's class Peter Kaneen is ranked 4th at 5000 metres, 2nd at 10,000 metres, 5th for 10 km road race and 4th for 20 km road race. At his own age group, V45, Peter is ranked number one at all these distances.

Michael George is ranked 9th in the senior men's 20 km road race and 3rd in his own age group, V40.

Marie Jackson is ranked number one in Britain in the VL45 group at 3,000metres, 10 km road walk and 20 km road walk. Maybe we should call ourselves the race walking capital of the world as well.

Club Fixtures for 2008

ENTER NOW!! **9 March Leinster Management 20 mile run**
27 March Blackrock Vets Spring handicap **ENTRY FORMS ENCLOSED**

10 August	Marathon and ½ marathon	21 September	End to End Walk
31 August	Open 20 km walk	23 October	Vets Autumn handicap
2 November	Sid Quirk ½ marathon		

FIXTURES LIST: Some amendments and additions to the list I send out last month:

The Open 20 km walk is on the 31 August: The 20 km walking champs are on 4 May:

The Seven Stations Walking Challenge is on 6 April (the Firestations 50 mile walk, like last year)

The Anna Marie Cutillo 10 km run and walk is on 14 August:

Don't forget to alter the list you have pinned on your kitchen wall!

Off-island: 18 May Brathay Windermere marathon and open day www.brathay.org.uk
5 October Loch Ness marathon www.lochnessmarathon.com

The End to End walk is to have its own dedicated website from the beginning of March, called www.endtoendwalk.org. There will, of course, be links from our own website.

If you have any 5 litre or bigger water bottles you don't need please could we have them for the marathon and the End to End. Phone any committee member.

The new high visibility Club vest was approved at the AGM and has been sent for approval to the UK powers that be. I hope to sent out an order form with the next newsletter, the committee has approved a special reduced price for the initial order.

THE VETERAN'S ROAD RUNNING SHIELD - an age/sex graded road running league where your times are compared to a system based on the Road Running Club age/sex standards. Points are awarded for each event run, positive points if your time is better than the standard one for your age/sex but negative scores if you produce a time slower than set by the scheme. The final results are based on each competitor's best seven points scores, with no more than two of these scores being from the same distance group. The distance groups are as follows:

Group 0: 4 to 9.99 miles Group 1: 10 to 12.49 miles Group 2: 12.5 – 17.49 miles
Group 3: 17.5 – 23 miles Group 4 Marathon

This means that at least one of the seven counting results must come from a 20 miles or marathon distance. At the time of writing the events are: the March 10K at the NSC, IOMVAC 20 Mile, Round 1 Scratch race of the Dave Phillips Memorial Races, Peel to Douglas, Northern 10, Western 10, IOM Marathon at Ramsey, Ramsey Half Marathon, Bushys Great South Run, A-M Cutillo 6, Ramsey Fireman's Round 1 Scratch race and the Syd Quirk Half Marathon. Plus a maximum of two results from off Island (but not from Group 0) can be included for which evidence must be provided. If there are any changes to the above list these will be announced in future newsletters and or local press.

Bethany Clague has been making a splash in the Thames Path Ultra, read on:-
For photos of this report visit our website.

Thames Path Ultra 50

I stood on the start line in King's Meadow, Reading, with 168 ultrarunners wearing the compulsory backpacks holding water bottles and survival gear. It was 8.45am on Saturday 19th January 2008 and I was about to run / walk 50 miles along the River Thames Towpath in the Thames Path 50 Ultra Race. The finish was the Holiday Inn at Shepperton. The furthest I had ever run in training was 27 miles from Ramsey to Douglas via Peel. However a twice-finisher of the Parish Walk, I knew I could at least walk it! I had managed 36 miles in 11 hours on day one of MOB Coast last July as well. Having crewed for the 'Marathon Of Britain (MOB)' I knew lots of the runners and those marshalling at the 4 checkpoints. It was like a reunion and they were delighted to see me running. The weather was perfect; no wind, no rain and cool but not cold.

Rory Coleman, the race director, gave the briefing and warned us the first 25 miles were flooded! I was a little uneasy when he said he did not want to send out 'frogmen' to look for us, and we were not to attempt to wade through 20-foot deep water!

At 9am we started. 66 runners had signed up for the race but not started. They obviously were locals who knew about the flooding! The golden rule of ultrarunning is to keep your feet dry, as wet feet = blisters! So I was shocked to find within 100 metres we were wading through freezing-cold water. The towpath just disappeared into the Thames! This was to continue for many miles. I have never seen so much water. I had expected to be running by the Thames, not wading in it! By 'Sonning' it was waist-deep. We clung onto trees so as not to go underneath the water. It was not pleasant, infact it was very scary. At one point I thought we were crossing the River Thames, until someone pointed out the River was ¼ mile to our right, with a canal beside it with boats moored in the middle of this lake, which was infact a field, despite being under three foot of water! After seven miles the group of runners I was wading with decided we had had enough of the icy water. My feet were completely numb with cold and my waterproof socks squelched as I ran to warm my feet and expel the water. We decided to run on roads and avoid the towpath, which did not exist anymore. We ran into Henley-On-Thames navigating using our maps and turned right to checkpoint one. It was essential to be on the correct side of the River to reach the church. However the road up to it was flooded – what a surprise – but it was shallower than the towpath.

After the first checkpoint I ran with Andy who I met at MOB. I changed my socks to remove the river silt, and we ran east along roads. Somehow we reached CP2 by running along the grass verge of the A404 to Marlow. Having cars drive by at 60mph was unnerving and this was supposed to be a 'trail' race! We scrambled down an embankment and over a fence to reach the checkpoint (approx. 20 miles). Runners were coming from all directions. Everyone was following different routes. Some tried to stick to the towpath and there were stories about people swimming!

I left CP2 and ran by myself along roads to 'Maidenhead'. I train by myself so am used to being alone. Eating sandwiches, I ran at my pace, rather than try to keep up with others. At 'Maidenhead' I joined lots of runners in different groups and we ran along a muddy towpath to CP3. I began to struggle and was walking and jogging. It was a delight to see Patrick handing out diet coke, water and sweets at this checkpoint. Feeling refreshed I headed on - 30 miles done.

The next stage was hard. I miscalculated where I was on the map and then realised I was not as far along the towpath I thought I was. It was a real struggle, but eventually I joined a group of 4 ladies and enjoyed their company. 'Windsor Castle' looked magnificent. We caused quite a stir as 20 of us ran across 'Windsor Bridge' in our running kit.

The light faded at 5pm and the headtorches came out. I like running in the dark, as you seem to cover distances quickly. However it was difficult to see the mud or knee-deep puddles. When I reached CP4 Quentin, who I crewed with for MOB and was marshalling, gave me a huge hug! It really lifted my spirits and I set off determined to reach the finish - only 10 miles away. I met Andy again and we ran for 5 miles until we joined a group of walkers. We stayed with this group, as the leader, Pete, an experienced ultrarunner, knew the way off the towpath to the finish. The Hotel was elusive though. We marched quickly through Shepperton and were heading along a main road into the countryside, before a sign for the Hotel appeared. I was so relieved to be on 'Felix Lane' and sure enough we rounded the corner of the driveway to see lights. Andy and I broke into a 'shuffle' and were greeted by cheers, applause and hooters as we reached the hotel steps. I had done it - 50 miles (approx. as I did not run along all the towpath, so am uncertain quite how far I ran!) in 10 hours 56 mins. I finished 107th out of 154 with 15 people retiring. The first finisher ran 6 hours 30 mins and the last in 17 hours. I was very pleased to receive a medal for finishing. It had been quite an experience!

After taking off my shoes and socks and washing my muddy feet, I checked into my hotel room. Lots of guests were asking us about the race and were amazed at the 50 miles we had run. All I basically did was run from one checkpoint to another! My next running goal is the London Marathon on 13th April, which should be easy after this race, although I will be dressed as a pirate!

For more information about the race, look at www.thamesultra.com

Bethany Clague

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