

# Stowmarket Striders Running Club

## 20th Annual General Meeting

Held at the Stowmarket Rugby Club, Chilton Fields, Stowmarket.  
On

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

### **Present**

Richard Nash (Club Chairman), Les Basham (Secretary), Rose Norris (Treasurer), Nick Stevens, Jason Bloomfield, David Daniels, Jim King, Maria Reynolds, Richard Fellingham, Anne Fellingham, Debbie Ghant, Stuart Green, Tamara Jordan, Haley Suttle, Peter Tricker, Rebecca Jordan, Becky Jack, Anne Fish, Grayhame Fish, Ellen Broughton, Chris Starmer, Nick Hammond, Katy Nash, Heidi Bingham, Rachel Toogood, Penny Waggott, David Loades, Sue Moggan, Frank Moggan, Margery Brown, Wendy Hughes, Sue Lewis, Chris Chaplin, Robert Tomlinson, Kim Levett, Jonny Levett, Chris Gladwell, Abi Paton, Richard Day, Alan Wells, Lorraine Mills, Les King.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Jane Dolan, Jean Lynch-Aird, Charmaine Geraghty, Sue Garrod, Miles Garrod, Bob Ratliffe.

### **Accuracy of the Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the 18<sup>th</sup> AGM were approved as an accurate record.

### **Matters Arising from the minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual general Meeting.**

There were no matters arising.

### **Chairman's Report**

#### **Introduction**

Thank you for all coming tonight.

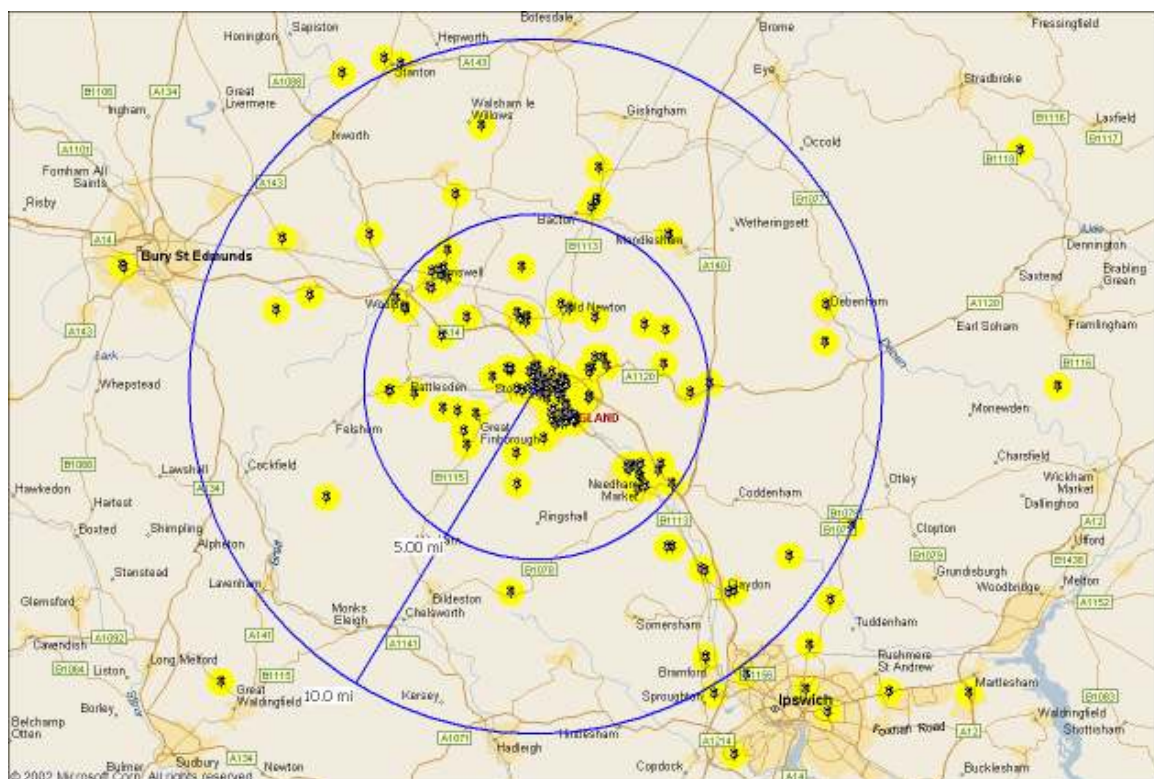
#### **Membership**

I am pleased to announce that the club continues to experience year on year growth in the membership of the running club. The club finished 2006 with 302 members, with a growth of 88 members (41%). The size of the club makes our rural Stowmarket club probably the biggest running club in Suffolk. For this reason the outgoing committee has proposed an increase in the size of the committee and to appoint a new position of Membership Secretary.



Majority of members come from Stowmarket itself, but now draws in members from over a 10-mile radius of Stowmarket.

With the exception of a member based in Plymouth, the area covered is as northerly as Stanton, easterly as Framlingham, southerly as Belstead (Ipswich) and westerly as Bury St Edmunds.



This growth in the club is largely down to the advertising of the club through our visual presence running around Stowmarket, the leisure centre advertising, beginner sessions, word of mouth and the clubs excellent website that attract about 32,000 hits a month. The most popular page on the website is the ‘beginners guide’.

### Coaches

With the club now hosting different sessions for the juniors, beginners and seniors, the club must give thanks to the hard work from the club coaches who voluntarily give their time to organise and give structure to the training nights.

The coaches have put their time to additional activities such as 'Suffolk Athletics Sports Hall' meetings and the county's 'Suffolk Games', representing Mid-Suffolk District. During this time, a number of the coaches were nominated at the Suffolk Sports Awards where they came runners-up in the category for Spirit of the Games Award.

During the year, two more members came forward to assist in the coaching, being Penny Waggott and Rachel Champion who were successful in achieving the UK Athletics level 1 in coaching. In addition to Richard Fellingham and Peter Tricker who continue their training towards UK Athletics level 3 coaching, Stuart Green has also made progress towards this higher level of coaching.

## **Juniors**

The junior section has grown slightly from 2005 by 6 members to 50 juniors. As mentioned in last years Chairman's speech, the club's committee takes its responsibilities for running a junior section very seriously.

The club has made huge progress toward achieving the high standards required for 'Club Mark' which are good working practices applicable principally where a club looks after Juniors, as recommended by Sport England and UK Athletics. This scheme is designed to:-

- Ensure the well-being of young people whilst in the care of the club;
- Enthuse young people to enjoy running to build a healthy and active lifestyle;
- Enable young people to use their leisure time creatively;
- Allow young people to optimise their talents and personal ability; &
- Identify and support the development of the most talented young people.

With the help and thanks to our committee's Welfare Officer, Carole Prance, we are nearly there. A number of policies and Codes of Conduct have been written and will be advertised over the coming months. It is anticipated that the club will achieve all the standards and requirements within this next 6 months.

However, as part of achieving these requirements, you should be aware of the rule change required for Club Disciplinary. Further detail of this is within the AGM pack provided. This rule is required for the club to be successful towards Club Mark and recommend that you all vote in favour of this change.

## **Sport England**

Major events are happening in the bureaucratic world of athletics that will likely affect this running club over this next year. To provide a summary of events, the club is affiliated to SEAA (South of England Athletic Association) who in turn reported to the AAA (Amateur Athletic Association). This structure has been superseded by a single organisation called Sport England. At this time, the club is being obligated to affiliate to Sport England from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

Where it affects our members the most is that Sport England wish for individual membership to be implemented. This will require an additional fee of £3 per member for 12 months from 1st April 2007, increasing to £5 per member thereafter. Members will be given an affiliation number that will be unique to a member and retained over the years.

Full details are not yet fully known and there are many questions that remain unanswered. For the moment, members should be aware that it is likely to have an effect on membership fees, if not for 2007, then for future years.

## **Retirement**

As some of you may be aware, Jim King is retiring from his job in July of this year and deserves a special mention for many reasons. Jim is the Estate Manager for Haughley Park where, with Jim's help and assistance, the club has been fortunate to be able to hold Cross Country and Friday 5 races, as well as play host as a training ground for the Striders on winter Sunday mornings. Those who have run through the park in late spring will have seen the remarkable carpet of the Blue Bells. Let us not forget the club's summer BBQ's for which Jim's house behind Haughley Barn has been a wonderful venue. On Jim's retirement, he is handing the house over to the new Estate Manager and move away from Haughley Park.

So to Jim and his wife Daphne, I would like to take this opportunity to make a special mention to them both and thank them for all their support and hard work for the club. We all hope that they will not move too far away and that we shall still see them regularly.

Jim's retirement also raises a couple of issues for the Stowmarket Striders Running Club. The first is that Jim has had the space and ability to store many of the club's equipment to include signs, barriers and tape. The club will have to find a new home for this in the next couple of months. With this in mind, the outgoing committee have proposed that the club's surplus finances are used to purchase a large enclosed trailer capable of storing most of this equipment and to transport it to our race venues. Estimated prices are from £1,500 for a second hand trailer to £3,500 for a new trailer.

The second issue is that it has been unclear whether the club would continue to have use of Haughley Park, which is a privately owned estate. This concern was only resolved on the Saturday before the Haughley Park Cross Country where the owner, Robert Williams, offered the club continual use after Jim's retirement. However, we cannot assume that the barn will be available for use and of course continue to respect the park and its users. We are extremely grateful to Robert Williams for his generosity and the privilege for having access to such a great venue.

## **Club Races**

The club hosted its usual 4 races during 2006 being Haughley Park XC, Joe Cox 10, Friday 5 & Scenic 7. The Joe Cox 10 is the club's race for charity and raised £575 for MSRC. It has been agreed by the committee that 2007 will see the last Joe Cox 10m and the club is looking for a longer course to fit in better with the Marathon training season. A half marathon route has been identified and is currently being assessed for length and safety. This will be called the Joe Cox Half Marathon.

The Friday 5 saw a large increase in runners with 345 finishers against a prior year total of 282. Scenic 7 in 2006 also exceeded the prior year total of 328, seeing the largest race held by the club with 361 finishers. The club continues to receive excellent feedback from those that run these races and take onboard any comments that they may raise.

A huge thank you goes to Chris Chaplin and Heidi Bingham whose considerable work, largely unseen, goes into organising these events. A huge thank you also goes

to the marshals and helpers, without whom these races would not be possible. New regulations have been set by UK Athletics where a number of members who are experienced in organising different aspects of club races are to register with UK Athletics as 'race officials'.

The club participated in a number of successful relay events including Mutford, Ekiden, Hereward and Round Norfolk Relay. Attending these events takes a huge amount of time to organise and can require a team of helpers to support the runners. These events create a great feeling of team spirit and it is hoped that the club will continue to enter teams.

## **Awards**

The winners of the club championships were Charmaine Geraghty and David Scotford, with Debbie Ghan and Chris Starmer voted by the members as the 2006 Striders of the year.

The coaches themselves announced their own awards with Millie Payne, Debbie Ghan and Jason Bloomfield receiving acknowledgement for their running achievements.

London Marathon places went to Becky Jordan, Debbie Ghan, Glenda Taylor and Rachel Toogood. Phil Rampley has organised the transport to and from the London Marathon for the runners and supporters for many years. Phil will hand this responsibility over after the 2007 London Marathon and I would like to express the clubs sincere thanks to Phil for his organisation.

## **Anniversary Years**

2006 was the club's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this was celebrated with a dinner dance at the Cedars Hotel last June. A great social evening was organised by Kim Levett (social secretary), Chris Chaplin, Rachel Toogood, Tracey Lee and Sue Garrod.

2007 is the clubs 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary and I am proud to see the club enter its coming of age in such good health.

## **Finally...**

Finally, I would like to thank the outgoing committee for their help and support during 2006 being Les Basham, Chris Chaplin, Sue Garrod, Chris Gladwell, Les King, Kim Levett, Lorraine Mills, Rose Norris, Carole Prance, Chris Starmer and Peter Tricker and wish the incoming committee every success in 2007.

## **Treasurer's Report**

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### **Accounts for the Year 2006**

The turnover for 2006 was just over £17,400, which is approximately a £3000 increase on the previous year. Current surplus income over expenditure is £414, which is a drop of approximately £740 compared to 2005.

With a continuing increase in the membership this year, the club now has just on 300 members (including juniors). This healthy growth is shown in the membership income, which has increased by over £1400.

There was a significant increase of over £1200 in income from our hosting of race events this year, whilst expenditure on these events rose by £525. Our profit on

these races has risen by £700 compared to last year. These excellent figures reflect the increase in entries the club has received for races, along with continuing popularity and successful running of our refreshment stalls.

Social events throughout the year resulted in a loss of just over £730, attributed in the main to the cost of our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and in part to the Summer BBQ. Having said that, the Xmas party was a great success and efforts by the social secretary and helpers resulted in a surprise profit of just over £300.

Club Kit income has this year shown a shortfall of just over £730 compared to last year's figure, whilst £739 of stock is currently being held by the club. A large order of stock was made shortly before the end of the year, thus the net cost for club kit and the greater level of stock held at the end of the year.

Our Affiliations, Permits, Insurance and Coaching Expenditure decreased by approximately £200 this year. This reflects the levelling off of the need for coaching expenditure after our heavy investment last year, although new level one coaches are currently being trained to provide cover for our continuing membership growth.

Our 'Other' income of just over £1200 pounds includes the receipts for seats on the London Marathon coaches, as well as for coaching given at the Mid-Suffolk Youth Games. This income is offset against costs, which are listed under Miscellaneous Expenditure.

The Miscellaneous Expenditure amount of £4899 consists of the following significant spending:

▪ Club admin	£368.00
▪ Team race entries (2 team entry to the RNR Race cost £370)	£860.00
▪ Ocean Adventure Hire	£480.00
▪ Purchasing of equipment (Including computer hardware £690)	£1356.00
▪ Other Miscellaneous (Includes cost of London Marathon Coach hire £900 and £159 for club car stickers)	£1719.00

Finally, £1000 was transferred from the club's current account to its Nationwide savings account during this year.

Big thanks to Jane Dolan for auditing the 2005 accounts.

### **Looking to 2007**

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It is intended that during 2007 a trailer for storage and transportation of the club's equipment used for race events be purchased, the monies for this to be taken from the club's savings account.

Items that need addressing in considering the 2007 members subscription charge include payments for:

- Continuing use of the Leisure Centre's 'Ocean Adventure' area for the main club sessions of the seniors.
- The use of the Stowmarket Middle School facilities during the winter months for the juniors.
- Club insurance costs.
- The continuing aim of further enhancing our capital savings in order to be able to realise a longer term aim of contributing to the cost of the development of a running track for use by both the juniors and seniors.
- The cost to the club of the necessary affiliation to Sport England, as mentioned in the Chairman's report.

Although the effect of the Sport England affiliation may mean a rise in subscriptions for 2008, our current healthy financial standing means that I propose that membership subscriptions for 2007 should stay the same as for the year past:  
 £15 for seniors if paid before or on 31<sup>st</sup> March (or if a new member within first 6 months of year)  
 £18 for seniors if paid on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April  
 £8 for junior members

*Last Years charges were:*

*£15 for seniors if paid before or on 31<sup>st</sup> March (or if a new member within first 6 months of year)*  
*£18 for seniors if paid on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April.*  
*£8 for junior members*

## **RULE CHANGES**

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As per the notification two rule changes are proposed. They are as follows:-

The outgoing committee proposes these changes.

Changes to the Club Rules require a two thirds (2/3rds) majority vote of the members present at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Proposal One – Increase in Committee Members**

In view of the clubs growth of the club over the last 7 years from 60 members to 300 members, there is a requirement for a new role being a Membership Secretary. The committee is proposing the following change.

Rule 6 currently states:-

“6. The Management Committee shall consist of all the Officers of the Club and not less than one or no more than nine other members of the Club who shall be proposed, seconded and elected by ballot at each Annual General Meeting. Elected members of the Management Committee shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting when they shall retire but shall be eligible for re-election from year to year.”

To be amended to:-

“The Management Committee shall consist of all the Officers of the Club and not less than one or no more than **eleven** other members of the Club who shall be proposed, seconded and elected by ballot at each Annual General Meeting. Elected members of the Management Committee shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting when they shall retire but shall be eligible for re-election from year to year.”

### **Proposal Two – Disciplinary Procedures**

To ensure that the Club Constitution is written to satisfy the requirements of UK Athletics Club Mark (an award for managing a junior section within well defined good practices) and for the club’s general good practices, the following changed is proposed.

Rule 33 in the Club Rules current states:-

“33. If at any time the Management Committee shall be of the opinion that the interests of the club so require they may, by letter, invite any member to resign from the Club within a time specified in such letter. In default of his resignation the question of his expulsion shall be submitted to a Special General Meeting to be held within three weeks after the date specified in such letter as the date before which he shall have been invited to resign. The member whose expulsion is sought shall have notice of such meeting and of the grounds on which it is sought to expel him. At such meeting the member shall be allowed to offer an explanation for his conduct verbally or in writing and if two-thirds of the members present shall vote for his expulsion he shall thereupon cease to be a member of the Club. Providing that the voting at any such Special General Meeting shall be by ballot if not less than five members present thereat shall so demand. It shall be in the power of the Management Committee to exclude such member from any Clubhouse and grounds until such Special General Meeting shall be held.”

To be replaced with:-

#### **“Discipline & Appeals”**

All complaints regarding the behavior of members should be submitted in writing to the Club Welfare Officer. A Disciplinary Committee will meet to hear complaints within ten days of a complaint being lodged. Whether the attendance of the member against whom action is being taken is required at the meeting will be decided by the committee and notified to the member at least three days prior to the disciplinary meeting. If attendance of the member is required at the meeting the member will be offered the right to bring another member or independent person to support them during the meeting. The member will be allowed to offer an explanation for their conduct verbally or in writing during the meeting. The club’s disciplinary committee will comprise of the Chairman, Club Secretary, Membership Secretary (if position is elected), Treasurer (if relating to finances), Welfare Officer and a male or female coach or Captain. The Club Secretary will take minutes of any disciplinary meeting, which will be made available to the member. The Committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action. In any case where disciplinary action is brought forth, the member will receive one or more of the following outcomes:-

- An initial warning (which expires after 6 months)
- A second warning (which expires after 12 months)
- Suspension from the club (for a fixed period to be set by the committee)
- A final written warning (no expiration)
- Expulsion from the club.

The outcome of a disciplinary hearing will be notified, in writing, to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within 7 days of the hearing. There will be the right of appeal to the Management Committee following disciplinary action being announced. The committee should consider the appeal within 21 days of the Welfare Officer receiving the appeal. Details of the appeals procedure will be provided on request”

Both of the above rule changes were carried unanimously.

## Election of Officers

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Position	Candidate	Proposed by	Seconded by	Agreed
Chairman	Richard Nash	Carole Prance	Chris Starmer	Agreed
Secretary	Les Basham	Chris Chaplin	Carole Prance	Agreed
Treasurer	Frank Moggan	Katy Nash	Grayhame Fish	Agreed
Race Director	Chris Chaplin	Heidi Bingham	Peter Tricker	Agreed
Men's Captain	Chris Starmer	Peter Tricker	Lorraine Mills	Agreed
Ladies Captain	Debbie Ghant	Peter Tricker	Chris Starmer	Agreed
Coach Coordinator	Peter Tricker	Lorraine Mills	Robert Tomlinson	Agreed
Membership Secretary	Penny Waggott	Nick Stephens	Debbie Ghant	Agreed
Social Secretary	Rachel Toogood	Anne Fish	Kim Levett	Agreed
News Editor/Publicity	Chris Gladwell	Chris Chaplin	Les Basham	Agreed
Club Kit Officer	Les King	Grayhame Fish	Carol Prance	Agreed
Welfare Officer	Carole Prance	Rachel Toogood	Anne Fish	Agreed
General 1	Nick Hammond	Chris Chaplin	Grayhame Fish	Agreed
General 2	Haley Suttle	Penny Waggott	Rachel Toogood	Agreed

## Any Other Business

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Striders member David Loades was introduced as the co-opted Male Welfare Officer to work along side Carole Prance.

David gave a resume of his experience in child welfare matters, gained in his teaching career.

Richard Fellingham expressed concern that the membership fee may not be sufficient to cover our costs. i.e. relay entries etc. The Chairman explained that the two main expenses this year were, 'one off' items, specifically the new computer and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party. Which explained why we had not made as much profit on turnover as the previous year.

Richard Fellingham proposed that members pay half the cost of the entry fee for club relay events.

This proposition was put to the vote with 9 in favour and 25 against. Therefore the proposal was not carried.

Katy Nash asked that if a member's entry fee was paid and they did not race should they be asked to repay that entry fee?

It was felt that there was normally a reason why a member dropped out and usually a substitute could be found to fill there place. It was generally agreed that members should be encouraged to repay an entry fee if they did not race and a replacement could not be found.

Grayhame Fish asked for clarification on the purchase of a trailer. The chairman explained that due to Jim King's impending retirement from Haughley Park, where we currently store much of our race equipment, this storage facility would not be available to us. A trailer will hold all of the clubs race day equipment and be able to

be transported to any race location. The issues of security and insurance would have to be investigated.

Richard Fellingham asked why the Joe Cox 10 was being extended to half marathon. Chairman. Due to the fact that many entrants around this time of the year are marathon training and the 10 mile race may not be as appealing. It was hoped that the Half Marathon distance should encourage more runners to enter. However, we are not totally abandoning the 10-mile option.

Chris Chaplin, Race Director, said that although he was not entirely happy with the proposed course for the Half Marathon he felt that the 10 mile race was now 'a bit stale'.

Richard Fellingham Commented on the Club Championships not favouring the more experienced runner and that it favoured the newer runners. The chairman agreed that it probably does favour the novice runner, as it is a handicap race. However this does encourage the newer members to the sport and it is always proved popular and highly contested. Any proposed alternative would be given due consideration.

As there was no other business the Chairman reminded members that subscriptions were now due and these should be handed to the membership secretary Penny Waggott.

The date of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting was set for 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

The meeting was closed at 21. 30pm.