

# STRIDERS NEWS

<http://www.stowmarketstriders.org.uk/>

Volume Six: Issue One

March 2005

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**Do you have any news  
you would like to share  
with the rest of the  
club?**

**Run any interesting  
races?**

**Let me have a few  
details and I will include  
it in the newsletter.**

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## Welcome to the newsletter of award-winning Stowmarket Striders.

Each year UK Athletics give awards to clubs in any area of athletics to recognise and reward Clubs, Volunteers, Officials, Coaches and Partnerships for their contribution to the sport of Athletics.

Striders were Runners Up in the UK Athletics, East of England region, Club of the Year, "Innovation" category. The awards in the "Innovation" category go to the club that demonstrates innovation and initiative in delivery of athletics at its chosen level and to its chosen audience or community. This recognises the work that the Striders have done to bring running to people of all abilities.

## LONDON MARATHON

Good luck to all Striders in next month's London Marathon. Remember... "One of the basic rules of a training programme is that it should be building you up, not breaking you down, and it won't do this unless you get enough rest" – Bruce Tulloh.

Of course the most important thing is to make sure you get to the start. Phil Rampley is arranging a coach [bus] for runners and supporters to the start of the London Marathon that will also drop supporters off in central London. It is an early start with first pick up at around 5:50am. There should be the usual pick-up points in Bacton, Haughley, Stowmarket and Needham Market. The cost is approximately £8.50 per Strider member and £10.50 for non-Striders. Details and forms are available in the Blue Folder that is brought along to club nights. Please complete the form and return to Phil Rampley to book your place(s) on the coach.

**Annual subscriptions are due  
If you have paid, thank you**

**If you haven't – please pay them  
It's £15 from 1<sup>st</sup> April**

## RESULTS

Most race results are now taken straight from the websites of the race organisers.

The information from the site and any inaccuracies are the result of errors or omissions by the race organisers.

Information on PBs etc is included if you tell Richard Nash or myself.

### Luton Marathon 5th December 2004

Colin Pitts ran the Luton Marathon on 5<sup>th</sup> December and ran 2:45:19. He came 6<sup>th</sup> overall and possibly (*should do*) gained a championship place for next years London Marathon.

He's inspired me to dust off my old runners!!!

*Chris Ling*

Pos	Name	Time
6	Colin Pitts	2:45:19

There were 416 finishers.

### Turkey Trot 10 19th December 2004

Pos	Name	Time
137	Rosemary Thurston	1:42:04

There were 146 finishers.

### Ely New Year's Eve 10k 31st Dec 2004

Pos	Name	Time
526	Sue Seggar	1:06:00

There were 561 finishers.

### Wymondham New Year's Day 10k 1st January 2005

Pos	Name	Time
156	James Mwayi	49:32
226	Jean Lynch-Aird	54:37

There were 299 of finishers

### A Germany 10k 1st January 2005

My Wife Ann and I went over to Germany over the New Year to visit my Brother who lives over there and while we were there we took part in a 10K event. The photograph shows us resplendent in our nice bright yellow Stowmarket Striders shirts.

The event itself was very pleasant and consisted 2 laps through a forest - woodland with varying surfaces underfoot including sand, mud and foliage. In fact it was more a cross country than a road race.

We joined striders in the Autumn and this was our first proper event. I had not done any proper running for a few years and Ann had not done any at all, so it was with a bit of trepidation that we lined up at the start. We needn't have worried though, as we started off slowly and even managed to pick off a few runners ahead of us over the duration of the race. We finished in 59 and a half minutes with Ann coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in her class and me 6<sup>th</sup>. Our hope was to do it in under the hour and we were very pleased that we succeeded. We now have a nice German style certificate each and this not very glamorous photograph. Hopefully this is the first of many such certificates and it is some motivation for us to enter the Great North run in September.

*Malcolm Hogarth*



**Bungay 20k**                      **20th Feb 2005**

The Bungay website warned those that checked it early on Sunday morning that due to the weather, the race may or may not go ahead. Although more information was due shortly after 8:00am, none was forthcoming until 10:15am. Based upon this, many did not risk the journey to Bungay. However, a few braved the weather, the driving conditions, and participated in the un-cancelled race...

Pos	Name	Time
152	Richard Fellingham	1:39:25
218	Ronel Van der Merwe	1:47:16
264	Jane Fellingham-Boyce	1:52:36
274	Anne Fellingham	1:53:19
295	Jean Lynch-Aird	1:57:35
318	Rosemary Thurston	2:04:56

Well done to Anne Fellingham who came 2nd in her age category. There were 350 finishers

**Bungay 10k**                      **20th Feb 2005**

Pos	Name	Time
18	Stuart Green	40:11
103	Grayhame Fish	51:49
106	Anne Fish	52:54
165	Ian Chapman	1:00:06

Well done to Anne Fish who came 1st in her age category. There were 222 finishers.

**Great Bentley 10m**                      **20th Feb 2005**

Pos	Name	Time
30	Tammy Jordan [1st Lady]	1:05:05

**Congratulations to Tamara who was (yet again) the first lady home.**

There were 317 finishers

**Bury 20m**                      **27th Feb 2005**

A good race for all those who braved the weather and especially so for the Striders who claimed prizes:

Colin Pitts is first male vet 40

Richard Jordan is 4th overall and first male vet 45

Les Basham first male vet 55  
Rosemary Thurston first female vet over 50.

The Stowmarket Striders Men's team came 1st (*out of 15 qualifying teams*) a long way ahead of Springfield Striders and St Edmund Pacers with almost double the points.

The Ladies team came 2nd (*out of 2 qualifying teams*). Excellent result all round!

Pos	Name	Time
4	Richard Jordan [1st Vet 45]	2:00:00
10	Colin Pitts [1st Vet 40]	2:04:26
18	Nick Stephens	2:09:42
40	Richard Denwood	2:15:47
146	Carole Prance	2:43:32
233	Les Basham [1st Vet 55]	3:07:02
246	Ronel Van der Merwe [3rd Vet 45]	3:09:59
264	Adam Howley	3:19:01
297	Jean Lynch-Aird	3:35:15
306	Rosemary Thurston [1st Vet 50]	3:40:56

There were 325 finishers.

**Bury Nearly 10**                      **27th Feb 2005**

For the Nearly 10, John Browning missed out on 3rd overall by 22 seconds.

Pos	Name	Time
4	John Browning	1:03:32
53	Anne Fish	1:18:22
58	Les King	1:19:15
59	Alan Wells	1:19:27
70	Grayhame Fish	1:21:25
117	Sue Seggar	1:38:31

There were 133 finishers.

## Wymondham 20 & 10m 6th March 2005

The start was delayed by half an hour to allow the race organisers to clear the snow and ice from the course.

The Marathon runners in the 20 mile race set off 15 minutes before the 10 milers. A short down hill through the town before a long climb up the hill along the main road before reaching the icy and wet country roads. Aiming for a 75 minute 10 mile race, Bob and I set off the first mile far too fast in under 6:50. Settling down to our pace, the 10 milers pulled in the back markers of the 20 mile race. At about 4 miles the route split and we could just see Jane and Rosemary disappear down the hill of the 20 mile route. A couple of miles later, the routes joined once more and we were on the return route where the 20 milers were just settling down into their rhythm. Bob in his usual competitive way began pushing the pace to drag in those 10 milers who had set off too fast. When the route split once more sending the 20 milers round the route again and 10 milers back home, you could finally see where you lie in your race and suddenly find yourselves running quite alone. The pace was good and comfortable, pushing ourselves up the hill just after 8 miles and finally down back into Wymondham. The side track to run around the mini roundabout was very disruptive to the running rhythm and began the final climb all the way back into the town centre and the finish.

Overall a great race with a good finisher's bag.

*Richard Nash*

### 10m Race

Pos	Name	Time
36	Richard Nash	1:13:56
37	Bob Ratliffe	1:13:57
62	Lorraine Phillips [PB]	1:19:36
66	Anne Fish	1:20:52
103	Adela Bamber	1:30:42

There were 126 finishers.

### 20m Race

Pos	Name	Time
5	<b>Nick Stephens [1st V40 &amp; PB]</b>	2:03:22
101	Carole Prance	2:43:07
154	Joe Naughton	2:58:44

155	Les Basham	2:59:25
197	Denise Naughton	3:20:33
214	Jane Nolan	3:30:12
220	Rosemary Thurston	3:37:14

There were 227 finishers

## Bildeston 1/2 Marathon & 10km 13th March 2005

If an entry form says "Undulating" it means it's hilly and Bildeston proved the point. I've heard many comments about the hills on this course but it can't be too bad – there aren't any hills in Suffolk.

### 1/2 Marathon Race

Pos	Name	Time
19	John Browning	1:31:51
47	Bob Ratliffe	1:42:47
69	Lorraine Phillips	1:52:12
70	Jo Naughton	1:52:36
72	Les Basham	1:54:34
78	Alan Wells	1:56:54
84	Ronel Van der Merwe	1:57:54
85	Jim King	1:57:58
97	Richard Fellingham	2:06:57
99	Jane Dolan	2:08:59
100	Denise Naughton	2:08:59

There were 110 finishers.

### 10km Race

Stuart Green was 2<sup>nd</sup>

Anne Fish was 3rd lady

Stow Striders Ladies team were first.

Pos	Name	Time
<b>2</b>	<b>Stuart Green</b>	<b>39:34</b>
29	Peter Tricker	45:27
30	Richard Nash	45:41
46	Anne Fish	49:55
49	Sue Garrod	50:19
52	Grayhame Fish	51:15
69	Jan Starmer	56:51
70	Tracey Lee	57:30

There were 106 finishers.

## Suffolk County XC Championships 16th January 2005

A new venue from previous years that proved to be a real tough course. I don't know about the other runners, but for me this race was more about finishing rather than any hope of a good time. Those big dips at the end of the 6k lap were a killer where each runner was so slow past the pill box to the road, that you may have well crawled. This was followed by a big drop that you needed a hand glider to get down. However, after the aches and pains, this is a real gem of a XC course!

The Strider attendance was excellent with the ladies race consisting of nearly half of Striders that I'm told was an impressive start to the ladies race.

### BOYS UNDER 15

Pos	Name	Time
18	Ben Naughton	18:29

There were 19 finishers.

### MEN'S SENIOR (12k)

Pos	Name	Time
8	Colin Pitts (team A)	44:20
11	Chris Starmer (team A)	45:16
14	Nick Stephens (team A)	45:46
17	Chris Oliver (team A)	47:17
31	John Browning (team A)	50:44
33	Andrew Green (team B)	51:03
48	Chris Gladwell (team B)	55:52
49	Bob Ratliffe ( <i>disqualified</i> )	56:22
54	Richard Nash (team B)	58:00
57	Joe Naughton (team C)	58:18
58	Jim King (team C)	58:50
59	Colin Thomas (team B)	58:54
61	Les Basham (team C)	59:27
63	Les King (team C)	59:37

There were 69 finishers.

Striders team A came 2nd overall with 50 points  
Striders team B came in 8th with 194 points  
(SCAA appear to have disqualified Bob Ratliffe for not wearing a club vest).  
Team C came 11th with 239 points.

### LADIES SENIOR (6k)

Pos	Name	Time
2	Tamara Jordan (team A)	24:02
13	Louise Bunch (team A)	26:41
14	Heidi Bingham (team A)	27:45
18	Karen Goodwin (team B)	28:32
19	Rachel Champion (team B)	28:36
20	Ellen Broughton (team B)	28:55
26	Kim Levett (team C)	30:31
27	Anne Fish (team C)	30:32
28	Becky Jack (team B)	30:44
30	Jane Fellingham-Boyce (team C)	31:10
31	Anne Fellingham (team C)	31:21
32	Ronel Van der Merwe (team D)	31:28
33	Alison Halestrap (team E)	31:56
36	Penny Waggott (team E)	33:08
37	Tracey Lee (team E)	33:11
41	Jean Lynch-Aird (team D)	34:20
42	Maria Reynolds (team D)	34:21
45	Jane Dolan (team D)	36:50
46	Sue Seggar (team E)	36:54
49	Julie George (team F)	40:12
50	Helen Wrigley (team F)	41:00
51	Rose Norris (team F)	41:07
52	Diane Pennington (team F)	41:52

There were 52 finishers.

Striders team A came equal 2nd with Newmarket on 29 points

Ladies B team came in 7th with 57 points

Ladies C team came 8th with 83 points

Ladies E team came 10th with 106 points

Ladies D team came 11th with 115 points

Ladies F team came 13th with 150 points

## RACE REPORTS

It's always good to add a short report to the race results. Some of you are regular contributors to the website and I publish some of the reports here for those without Internet access. However, the London Marathon will give you memories that will live with you forever, please put pen to paper for the newsletter and website.

## FIXTURES

27th March	Stowmarket Striders Joe Cox 10ml
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Bungay Marathon
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Bungay ½ Marathon
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Castle camps 6 ml
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Paris Marathon
10 <sup>th</sup> April	The Trowse Spring 10k Norfolk Ski-Centre,
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Flora London Marathon
24 <sup>th</sup> April	Nicola's Canvey Island 5ml
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Heritage Coast Marathon Walk/Run Thorpeness
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Heritage Coast ½ Marathon (14 miles actually) Thorpeness
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Heritage Coast 6 mile run Thorpeness
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Breckland 10k Croxton Village Hall, Thetford
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Ashdon 10k, Saffron Walden
8 <sup>th</sup> May	Benfleet Bluebell 5
15th May	Woodbridge 10k
22nd May	JAFFA 5 & 10m
27th May	Kirton Friday 5
3rd June	Bury Friday 5
10th June	Ipswich Friday 5
3rd July	Newmarket 10k
10th July	Mutford Relays
24th July	Haverhill 5km & 10km
4th September	Framlingham 10k

At the start of a marathon, imagine yourself holding back, wearing a confident, knowing look, as you set off at the same gentle pace at which you have successfully completed all your long winter runs – Cliff Temple

## COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The road running clubs within the county organise a complete range of road races with distances to suit all ages and capabilities. Some of the races incorporate the county championships as part of their event.

The events in this year's county championships are;

Long Distance (Over 15 ml)	Muscular Dystrophy Bury 20	27th Feb 2005
5 Miles	Jaffa 5	22nd May
Relays	Mutford Relays	10th July 2005
10 K	Haverhill 10Km	31st July
Half Marathon	Felixstowe ½ Marathon	2nd October
10 Miles	Lowestoft Turkey Trot	18th Dec

Mentally, I've conquered the distance. I still respect it – 26 miles is a hell of a long way – but once I finished a race properly, I thought, "That's a big psychological barrier out of the way" – Paul Evans

The morning after winning London, I woke up feeling as though I had been run over by a bus, and it took me nearly a month before I could start running freely again – Allister Hutton

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 24TH JANUARY 2005

Here are a couple the items from the AGM:

### Chairman's Report

The club membership increased substantially during the year increasing from 102 members at the end of 2003 to a massive 161 members in 2004, the biggest membership in the club's 18 year history. This makes the rural Stowmarket Striders Running Club *probably* the largest club in Suffolk.

Much of this is attributable to the summer beginner sessions held by Peter Tricker that emphasis that the club represents '*running for all abilities*' and not just for the elite. The summer beginner's sessions will be promoted again this year with many thanks to Peter.

The club's growth however has not been without tragedy, losing George Leggett and Paul Larking before their time.

2004 saw the Stowmarket Striders Running Club become an approved 'Community Amateur Sports Club' with the Inland Revenue, being the second running club in the country to be eligible for the beneficial tax incentives.

- Coaches

The beginner sessions saw the significant progress of our Coach Development programme that has promoted 5 volunteers to achieve the UK Athletics Level 1 Coaching profession (*Chris Gladwell, Sue Garrod, Olwyn Clayden, Jenny Relf, & Les Basham*). Peter Tricker also progressed successfully taking the UK Athletics Level 2 Coaching course. Together with Richard Fellingham and Chris Starmer a big thank you goes to the coaches for their time.

- Awards

The winners of the club championships were Les King and Lorraine Phillips, with Les Basham and Sue Garrod voted as 2004 Striders of the year.

With the help of Chris Oliver, the club now has a Club Standards for those runners who wish to aim for a time. Those achieving the bronze, silver, gold or platinum standards will receive a

certificate in acknowledgement of their achievement.

Due to the increase in the size of the club, there are 3 automatic London Marathon places available for the members. Using the criteria set in the club rules, the London Marathon club places went to the applicants Richard Fellingham, Denise Naughton and Les Basham.

- Club Races

The club hosted its usual 4 races during 2004 being Haughley Park XC, Joe Cox 10m, Friday 5 & Scenic 7. The Scenic 7 in 2004 was one of our largest and most successful races to date with 257 finishers. We were also proud to receive excellent reviews in forums such as Runners World where this race is voted to be in the 'Readers Races of the Year 2004' top 40 out of 280 races countrywide, the top voted race in Suffolk and the 2<sup>nd</sup> in East Anglia.

A huge thank you goes to Chris Chaplin and Heidi Bingham whose considerable work, largely unseen, goes into organising these events under ever more stricter regulations. Also a thank you goes to the marshals and helpers, without whom these races would not be possible.

- Social Events

Many thanks go to Lorraine Phillips for organising the Striders social calendar with assistance from other committee members such as Tracey Lee, Sue Garrod and Chris Oliver.

In June of this year the club is planning a weekend away in Blackpool on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2005. Open to all the members, there is a Marathon and Half Marathon race together with the usual Blackpool attractions to look forward to.

Before moving on, I would also like to thank Les Basham for his hard work looking after the Club Kit, and developing the range of kit available.

- The Future

For 2005 the committee is looking into the UK Athletics Club: Future programme and will be participating in the best practices involved with this to ensure that the club maintains a high standard in terms of administration and coaching.

Both Peter Tricker and Richard Fellingham are investing their time in achieving the UK Athletics level 3 coaching profession with the club's financial support. This will make sure that the club has the most qualified coaches in the county to support the membership, regardless of ability.

Higher coaching also helps with the aim to promote 'year round running' for the youth. Liaison with the local schools will be necessary together with a look at improving the athletic/running based facilities available in Stowmarket and for our running club.

- Finally...

Finally, I would like to thank the outgoing committee for their help and support during 2004 and wish the incoming committee every success in 2005.

### Treasurer's Report

The 2004 turnover was just under £10,500. These healthy figures are primarily due to increased subscription and earnings from club kit. The Treasurer thanked PT for his part in increasing the club membership and DH for collecting subscriptions.

Club kit accounts for £410 of the club assets. BR thanked LB for his part in doubling the Club Kit Sales. Later during the meeting LB thanked LK for helping with organising the kit.

Race expenditures were down on 2003 costs, social event costs remained at 2003 levels, but insurance, affiliation costs etc. went up due to the increased size of club membership, and increased attendance at club races.

The club made £1359.94 in 2004, as opposed to £18.29 in 2003.

The current account is standing at £3,026.80, with the Nationwide account standing at £4,723.00. £3,000 was transferred from the current account to the Nationwide account in 2004 to allow that money to gain interest.

The Treasurer pointed out that during 2004 the club made extra-ordinary purchases on tents and had to provide outdoor facilities because Haughley Barn could not be used.

The club made £338.96 from the Haughley Cross County.

Including a donation of £200 to SHIMS, the club made a loss of £11.57 from the Joe Cox 10. The Treasure highlighted that £78.63 was made from refreshments and £27 from the Massage service.

£550.87 was made on the Friday 5.

But the Scenic 7 race was very successful; the club making £1,061.18. The Treasure put this down to the large amount of entries received this year.

The Treasurer noted that the club made a small profit on the Christmas Party.

The Treasurer thanked Kirsty Denwood for auditing the 2004 accounts and asked if she would be willing to audit the 2005 accounts.

In conclusion, the Treasurer believes the club is going well, and therefore proposes that providing there is no change to charges for training night facilities etc., the annual subscription should remain as follows:

£12 if paid before or on 31<sup>st</sup> March. £15 if paid on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April. £6 for new members joining on or after 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### Election of Offices

Position	Proposed
Chairman	Richard Nash
Vice Chairman/ Race Director	Chris Chaplin
Secretary	Les Basham
Treasurer	Rose Norris
Men's Captain	Chris Starmer
Ladies Captain	Sue Garrod
Social Secretary	Tracey Lee
News Editor	Chris Gladwell
Club Kit Officer	Les King
General	Lorraine Phillips
General	Anne Fellingham
General	Chris Oliver
General	Jenny Relph

The management of the Stowmarket Striders are in the hands of the committee members who meet on a monthly basis. Positions are up for election every year at the AGM.

## CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

The handicap race is held every Last Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm from the Leisure Centre:

Leg 1: Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2005

Leg 2: Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2005

Leg 3: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Leg 4: Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Leg 5: Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2005

Leg 6: Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2005

There are 6 handicap races a year.

The course is the two-lap 5k route, starting and finishing at the leisure centre.

The start is staggered with the slower runners starting earlier and faster runners later so that all runners should finish about the same time!

The winner of the Club Championships will be based upon their handicap race performance.

The handicap race is being run by Chris Starmer assisted by Chris Chaplin but a few helpers are always welcome to marshal the course for safety and security reasons.

### Explanation of the Handicap System

Runners start at staggered 15 second intervals so that all runners finish at the same time. This nearly always does not happen as some runners improve or have better days than others.

Points are awarded for finishing position and bonuses. The Strider with the highest accumulated score at the end of the year will be awarded the Club Championship. There will be a prize for the top Male and Female.

New runners will be given a scratch time and will be weighted for the first 6 runs to allow for their natural improvement in running for the first few months. This will mean that new runners who previously have been high contenders for previous club championships will not have a disproportionate advantage over longer term runners.

Race No.	% Load
1	10
2	8
3	6
4	4
5	2
6	1

On top of this, there is Position Loading for those who finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

Position	% Load
1st	1
2nd	0.5
3rd	0.25

The loading is aggregated so that after a 1st place and a 3rd place, the runners start time will be increased by 1.25% and so on in any one year. The reasoning is to spread the opportunities for other runners to finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

### Point Scoring

Points are awarded in two categories, position and bonus.

Position points start simply at 20 for the winner, 19 for second place, and 18 for third and so on down to a minimum of 1 point which everyone scores for completing a race.

Bonus points are awarded depending on how close a runner gets to their PB. If a runner equals or exceeds their PB, then a bonus of 12 is awarded. A time over 99% of their PB scores a bonus of 11, and so on down to 90% that scores a bonus of 2.

Please also note that the finishing times are aged-graded to a 5k time to ensure that veterans do not miss out on the bonus point awards.

There will always be debates on how to run and score a handicap race system and these rules may be changed subtly from time to time. However we hope they are reasonably fair to the runners, including veteran runners and also take into account the natural improvement of new runners. Any suggested changes are open to discussion and can be raised with Chris Starmer or any other committee member.

NOTE: This year you need to complete five of the six races to qualify for the championship.

*Thanks go to the Serpentine Running Club, London, who have provided the material for the setup of our handicap race and its rules.*

That was the annual explanation of the club championship handicap race system. This is the third year that I've put this in the newsletter and each year I understand it a little better.

## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED...

**An occasional item for the many newer members.** There are some events and actions that existing members take for granted. So here are a few FAQ's (frequently asked questions).

### **What are the Club Standards?**

The club standards are a list of times that each runner can aim to achieve over set distances and based upon your age. The faster the time the higher the award. A full list of the Club Standards and details on how to claim are on the club's website and were in the last newsletter. To claim your award give Chris Oliver a printout of your race time from a certified distance race and he will then arrange your award to be presented to you.

### **What are the Club Championships?**

See page 9 of this newsletter

### **Where do I get race entry forms from?**

From the Blue Folder.

### **What is the Blue Folder?**

The Blue Folder is brought to the club house on each club night. It contains race entry forms for future races, membership forms and the accident book. There is also a random array of other information that may be of interest.

### **What are guest runs?**

On Thursday evenings during the summer we do not always meet at the Leisure Centre. Willing members invite the club to run their favourite 5 to 6 mile training runs. This is a great way to enjoy and explore the local countryside around Stowmarket.

Keep an eye out for the list of guest runs on the notice board to ensure that you know where the Thursday Club Night will be.

### **Is my membership card worth the paper it's printed on?**

It certainly is.

You can get up to 10% discounts at certain sports shops on production of your membership card: The discount should be available from:  
**Sportskit**, The Meadow Centre, Stowmarket.  
**Shoe Boks**, 14 Brentgovel Street, Bury St Eds  
**Mick McNeals**, Upper Brook Street, Ipswich  
**Sweatshop**, The Next Generation Club, Ransoms, Ipswich

## PLYOMETRICS

And finally, in response to a three-minute conversation I had with someone about four months ago, here's a brief (!) resume of the exercise form that is Plyometrics.

### **Introduction**

Speed and strength are integral components of fitness found in varying degrees in virtually all athletic movement. The combination of speed and strength is power. Improve power and you improve performance. The method of training for power or explosiveness has been termed plyometrics. The term describes the method of training which seeks to enhance your explosive reaction through powerful muscular contractions as a result of rapid eccentric contractions.

### **The technical bit**

The maximum force that a muscle can develop is attained during a rapid eccentric contraction when the muscle lengthens. However, muscles seldom perform one type of contraction in isolation during athletic movements and when a concentric contraction occurs (muscle shortens) immediately following an eccentric contraction then the force generated can be dramatically increased.

If a muscle is stretched, much of the energy required to stretch it is lost as heat, but some of this energy can be stored by the elastic components of the muscle. This stored energy is available to the muscle only during a subsequent contraction. This energy boost is lost if the eccentric contraction is not followed immediately by a concentric effort.

To maximise this greater force the muscle must contract within the shortest time possible. This whole process is frequently called the stretch shortening cycle and is the underlying mechanism of plyometric training.

The golden rule of any conditioning program is specificity. This means that the movement you perform in training should match, as closely as possible, the movements encountered during competition. As runners, leg plyometric exercises are obviously important.

## Warm up

A thorough warm-up is essential prior to plyometric training. This should include jogging, stretching (static and ballistic), striding and general mobility especially about the joints involved in the planned plyometric session. A warm-down should follow each session.

## How many?

It is wise not to perform too many repetitions in any one session and since it is a quality session, with the emphasis on speed and power rather than endurance, split the work into sets with ample recovery in between.

## Where to do it and what to wear

For bounding exercises use surfaces such as grass or resilient surfaces. Avoid cement floors because there is no cushioning. Choose well-cushioned shoes that are stable and can absorb some of the inevitable impact.

## Summary

Plyometric exercises have been used successfully by many athletes as a method of training to enhance power. In order to realise the potential benefits of plyometric training the technique used during the drill or exercise must be right - The rate of stretch rather than the magnitude of stretch is of primary importance in plyometric training. In addition, the ground contact time must be as short as possible.

Above average forces are put on the musculoskeletal system during plyometrics so you must have a good sound base of general strength and endurance.

The quality of exercise is far more important than quantity.

## Examples of leg plyometric exercises.

### Bounds

- Jog into the start of the exercise
- Push off with your left foot and bring the leg forward, with the knee bent and the thigh parallel to the ground

- At the same time, reach forward with your right arm. As the left leg comes through, the right leg extends back and remains extended for the duration of the push-off
- Hold this extended stride for a brief time, then land on your left foot
- The right leg then drives through to a forward bent position, the left arm reaches forward, and the left leg extends backward
- Make each stride long, and try to cover as much distance as possible
- You should land on the sole of the foot (flat footed); allowing energy to be stored by the elastic components of the leg muscles, and immediately take off again
- Keep the foot touch down time to the shortest time possible
- Do one to three sets over 30 to 40 metres
- Allow a full recovery between each set

### Single Leg Hopping

- Stand on one leg
- Push off with the leg you are standing on and jump forward, landing on the same leg
- Use a forceful swing of the opposite leg to increase the length of the jump but aim primarily for height off each jump
- You should land on the ball of the foot, allowing energy to be stored by the elastic components of the leg muscles, and immediately take off again
- Keep the foot touch down time to the shortest time possible
- Try to keep your body vertical and straight
- Perform this drill on both legs
- Beginners will use a straighter leg action where as advanced athletes should try to pull the heel toward the buttocks during the jump
- Do one to three sets over 30 to 40 metres
- Allow a full recovery between each set

### Tuck Jumps

- Begin in a standing position
- Jump up, grabbing both knees as they come up your chest
- Return to the starting position landing on the balls of the feet
- Try to anticipate the landing and spring up as quickly as you can
- Keep the feet touch down time on the ground to the shortest time possible

- Do 1 to 3 sets with 5 to 10 repetitions in a set
- Allow a full recovery between each set

### **Two legged Hops or Bunny Hops**

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart
- Lower into a squat position and jump as far forward as possible
- Land on the balls of both feet
- Try to keep your body vertical and straight, and do not let your knees move apart or to either side
- Try to anticipate the landing and spring up as quickly as you can
- Keep the feet touch down time on the ground to the shortest time possible
- Use quick double-arm swings and keep landings short
- Do 1 to 3 sets with 5 to 10 repetitions in a set
- Allow a full recovery between each set

**These following exercises need additional equipment and involve jumping over things and off things. Only do these under the direct supervision of a qualified UK Athletics coach. (Don't try these at home).**

### **Hurdle Hopping**

- Jump forward over low barriers with your feet together
- The movement should come from your hips and knees
- Keep your body vertical and straight, and do not let your knees move apart or to either side
- Tuck both knees to your chest
- Use a double arm swing to maintain balance and gain height
- You should land on the balls of the feet, allowing energy to be stored by the elastic components of the leg muscles, and immediately take off again
- Keep the feet touch down time between hurdles to the shortest time possible
- Do one to three sets using 6 to 8 hurdles

- Allow a full recovery between each set
- Hurdles should set up in a row, spaced according to ability
- The height of the hurdles should be in the region of 12 and 36 inches high

### **Box Jumps**

- Assume a deep squat position with your feet shoulder width apart at the end of the row of boxes
- Keep your hands on your hips or behind your head
- Jump onto the box, landing softly in a squat position on the balls of the feet
- Maintaining the squat position, jump off the box onto the ground, landing softly in a squat position on the balls of the feet
- Jump onto the next box and so on
- Keep the feet touch down time on the ground to the shortest time possible
- Do one to three sets using 6 to 8 boxes
- Allow a full recovery between each set
- The height of the box should be in the region of 30-80 cm

### **Depth Jumps**

- Stand on the box with your toes close to the front edge
- Step from the box and drop to land on then balls of both feet
- Try to anticipate the landing and spring up as quickly as you can
- Keep the feet touch down time on the ground to the shortest time possible
- Do One to three sets using 6 to 8 boxes
- Allow a full recovery between each set
- The height of the box should be in the region of 30-80 cm

**Something to look forward to.....**

**I'm sure our club coaches will be adding some of these exercises to our Tuesday night sessions**