

STRIDING OUT

Appendix Two 2007



The History of Goole Viking Striders

Continued.....

By Nigel Warner

As last year, this appendix to Striding Out consists of race reports sent into the Goole Times during 2007, and along with the Annual Awards report at the end, brings the Striders' history up to date. The only thing not included is the Father (and Mother) Christmas fancy dress run from North Cave, on the basis that this is a running club and I don't want anybody getting the idea that we're enjoying ourselves.

One thing we certainly didn't enjoy ourselves at was a camping weekend, which had to be shelved for 2007 because no-one could agree on a suitable date. The Committee resolved to set the date early for the following year.

At the AGM, the same committee as last year was re-elected with the exception of Karen Mitchell who chose to take a sabbatical. The meeting's most memorable suggestion came from Andy Masterman regarding a possible junior section. This was greeted with a mixture of muted enthusiasm from some quarters and scepticism from others, but the decision of the committee to support the juniors was entirely vindicated by their subsequent success.

Membership at the end of the year stood at 76.

JANUARY: NORTH DALTON XC

The North Dalton leg of the East Yorkshire Cross Country League is undoubtedly the least demanding race in the calendar and therefore the least enjoyable, which may explain in part the lacklustre display by the Viking Striders on Sunday. Simon Griffin, Giles Harris and Martin Midgley all fought their way into top 20 positions, but despite the perfect conditions the rest of the team had something of an off day and so slipped a place to fourth in the overall table.

Julie Masterman was well up for the ladies as usual, but the team still languish in 6th position as they continue their ploy of lulling the opposition into a false sense of security. With only two races to go it might be time to go to Plan B.

There were however two causes for optimism in the performances of David Byas and Terry Davies. David has been training with the Striders for some time but this was his first cross country race under their banner, showing an impressive turn of speed as he finished only two seconds outside the scoring positions (the first six in each team count for points).

Terry has been with the club less than a week but is already throwing himself into racing events. After a glittering career with City of Hull he has come back to the sport after a long layoff through injury, but he has a set of personal bests most of the Striders can only dream about and if he can steer clear of further injury he will do very well, certainly in the veteran categories.

Striders' positions and times:

7th Simon Griffin 33.35, 14th Giles Harris 35.10, 16th Martin Midgley 35.22, 34th Dave Hanney 37.37, 42nd Alan Bexon 38.22, 44th Martin Booth 38.34, 45th David Byas 38.36, 53rd Mark Thompson 39.44, 56th Nigel Warner 39.56, 76th Dave Ryan 41.46, 78th Neil Bentley 41.58, 81st Terry Davies 42.45, 89th Richard Anness 44.10, 91st Ray Smith 44.32, 100th Richard Bramham 46.11.

Ladies: 8th Julie Masterman 40.05, 21st Kay Ryan 44.51, 39th Sandy Midgley 52.09, 43rd Michaela Shepherd 54.21, 45th Marina Booth 55.29, 49th Jo Mouncey 59.23.

FEBRUARY: WELTON XC

The penultimate round of the East Yorkshire Cross Country League, held at Welton last Sunday, saw the Viking Striders men's team resigned to a satisfactory fourth place overall, although they can still snatch third at the final race if Beverley AC suffer a monumental collapse in form. Underfoot conditions at Welton were awful, with recent rain turning parts of the course into a mud bath, but everybody had to run the same route so no potential excuses there for a bad run.

As usual Simon Griffin, Giles Harris and Martin Midgley were the Striders' front runners, all three inside the first 14 places but Simon doing particularly well with fourth overall. David Byas had another stormer to snatch the sixth scoring position for the club, while Dave Ryan's improvement suggests he might be challenging for that honour sooner rather than later.

Rob Oldridge battled through the mud to good effect, never troubling the scorers but always with a smile on his face, which means he either loves his running or is still drunk from the night before. Richard Bramham continued his impressive comeback to running, although a disconcerting habit of throwing mud at race marshals needs to be ironed out if his times are to improve.

The Striders' ladies, meanwhile, struggled through only having two runners in their team. Julie Masterman and Kay Ryan both had excellent runs, but unless they get more support the team is ever likely to languish in the lower reaches of the table. To be fair Karen Bexon's long term absence through injury has been a massive factor in the team's decline.

Striders' times and places:

4th Simon Griffin 35.34, 11th Giles Harris 37.02, 14th Martin Midgley 38.19, 24th Dave Hanney 39.15, 36th Alan Bexon 41.28, 44th David Byas 42.23, 50th Neil Bentley 42.49, 53rd Mark Thompson 43.01, 61st Dave Ryan 44.25, 82nd Richard Bramham 47.48, 90th Ray Smith 48.26, 98th Rob Oldridge 54.22.

Ladies: 6th Julie Masterman 43.02, 15th Kay Ryan 48.36.



Martin Midgley tackling the Welton mud - February 2007

FEBRUARY: SNAKE LANE TEN

Last weekend's Snake Lane Ten at Pocklington was keenly contested by nearly 700 runners, including 23 Viking Striders eager to see if their winter's training has paid off. Clearly very well, at least for the seven Striders who came back with personal bests (eight if you count Jo Mouncey who failed by an agonizing three seconds), as well as for people such as Martin Midgley and Ray Smith who haven't run as fast for years.

We have been waiting since 2005 for a Strider to break the magical hour mark in a ten mile race, and then two come along at once. Simon Griffin and Giles Harris, both in a rich vein of form, led the Striders in with brilliant personal best times, but the winner of the PB contest was clearly the rapidly improving Dave Ryan, who knocked nearly five minutes off his previous best. Julie Masterman excelled as always, going under 70 minutes for the first time, while Kay Ryan, Andy Masterman and Marina Booth also knocked appreciable chunks off their PBs.

Keith Wilson didn't get a PB but has worked harder than most to come back from injury, and his time in the low eighties was a fantastic effort. Patsy Fenelon didn't get a PB either but was more than happy to collect third prize in her age category. Not surprising really that Patsy was the only Striders prize winner, in view of the unfeasibly high standard of athletes attracted to the race. To give two examples, the race was won in a record time of 49.22, while the winner of the Over 70 category romped home in 64.50!

As a footnote, the Striders' own Collette Leetham actually won the race, but was cruelly foiled in her moment of glory by an over officious marshal who invoked the little-known law regarding the use of bicycles.

Striders' times:

Simon Griffin 58.35, Giles Harris 59.38, Martin Midgley 62.08, Andy Masterman 62.58, Neil Bentley 67.11, Nigel Warner 68.32, Julie Masterman 68.55, Mark Thompson 69.27, Dave Ryan 70.13, Ray Smith 74.19, Richard Anness 77.22, Kay Ryan 78.14, Patsy Fenelon 80.30, Keith Wilson 81.47, Graham Walker 82.11, Dave Pullman 82.27, Sandy Midgley 84.25, Alison Hogarth 85.26, John Kaye 88.37, Debbie Andrew 90.59, Marina Booth 91.00, Dot Pullman 91.53, Jo Mouncey 97.30.

MARCH: SEWERBY XC & DONCASTER HALF

Last week's leg of the East Yorkshire Cross Country League at Sewerby concluded a series which, from a Viking Strider point of view, was satisfactory without being particularly memorable. The Striders men's team finished a very creditable fourth place in the final league table, headed by three strong teams who take their running very seriously, but the overall impression was that it could have been better.

Nobody can be faulted for lack of effort, but on the days when performances are restricted by absence, injury or plain old lack of form, a small club like Goole does not have the strength in depth to be able to paper over the cracks. That is not to say there weren't any outstanding individual performances. Simon Griffin, Giles Harris and Martin Midgley have been the Striders' front runners all season and finished impressively high in the final standings. Dave Hanney was second in his age category, while Alan Bexon, Neil Bentley and Mark Thompson all worked their socks off in the team's cause. David Byas and Dave Ryan made excellent progress during the series to get into point scoring positions.

While the men's team might have done better, the ladies' team could hardly have fared worse. Their problem was not one of quality, more of quantity. Julie Masterman and Kay Ryan ran brilliantly, both winning their age categories, but too often they ran unsupported, leaving the team unable to field the minimum three counters. It can only get better.

Meanwhile the Doncaster Half Marathon on the same day provided twice the distance but half the degree of difficulty as Sewerby. Andy Masterman had a good race to lead the Striders in by over 20 minutes from the evergreen Keith Wilson, and Dot Pullman did well to beat her target time, but the real stars of the day were Jo Mouncey and Alison Hoggarth who both came away with excellent personal bests.

Cross Country positions and times:

4th Simon Griffin 33.43, 13th Martin Midgley 36.21, 28th Dave Hanney 38.28, 35th Neil Bentley 39.17, 37th Alan Bexon 39.24, 49th Dave Ryan 40.54.

Ladies: 3rd Julie Masterman 39.43, 11th Kay Ryan 45.51.

Overall Standings (five races out of the six need to be run to qualify):

4th Simon Griffin, 9th Giles Harris, 13th Martin Midgley, 22nd Dave Hanney, 25th Alan Bexon, 33rd Neil Bentley, 39th Mark Thompson.

Ladies: 5th Julie Masterman, 10th Kay Ryan.

Doncaster times: Andy Masterman 84.07, Keith Wilson 105.29, Richard Anness 108.15, Dave Pullman 108.22, Patsy Fenelon 108.37, Alison Hoggarth 110.53, Dot Pullman 123.21, Jo Mouncey 134.39.

MARCH: SPEN 20

Unfortunately for the nine brave Viking Striders who contested the 20 mile road race at Spenborough in West Yorkshire, the race wasn't last Sunday, when conditions were positively pleasant for running, but the Sunday before, when gales blew and snow, hail and sleet lashed anybody daft enough to be out in it.

So far as most of the Striders were concerned, the race was supposed to be a relatively gentle training run in preparation for the big one next month, the London Marathon. The undulating Spen course is never easy at the best of times, but throw in the weather conditions and it becomes an ordeal of gigantic proportions. On a day when everyone was a hero for just surviving it, it seems unfair to pick out individual performances, but Simon Griffin's 5th place in a field of nearly 200 was simply exceptional, as was Julie Masterman's victory in her age group by over eight minutes.

Everyone else ran so well it points to the best overall London performance for years, none of it achieved without a great deal of hard work, especially when you consider that many of the Striders have had to battle through injury problems to get here. Sandy Midgley and Richard Anness deserve a special mention in this regard, Richard in particular celebrating his return to form with an excellent personal best at the very tough Ackworth Half Marathon last Sunday.

Striders times:

Simon Griffin 2.10.24, Martin Midgley 2.22.49, Julie Masterman 2.32.51, Dave Pullman 3.05.27, Richard Anness 3.07.09, Sandy Midgley 3.10.00, Alison Hoggarth 3.11.08, Karen Mitchell and Dot Pullman both 3.19.34.

APRIL: LONDON MARATHON

Running 26.2 miles is hard enough in ideal conditions, but throw in 23 degrees C of heat (well into the 70's in old money) and it can become an unimaginable ordeal. Just ask the 5000 or so runners in London on Sunday who had to seek medical assistance as the heat took its toll, or indeed the other 31,000 who ran without help but who were denied faster times by the unseasonably high temperatures.

Fourteen Goole Viking Striders started the race, the largest ever turn out from the club, and thankfully fourteen finished, with the slowest time a very creditable 5 hours 2 minutes, which on the day was a quite magnificent achievement. For the first time since 1993 two Striders cracked the three hour barrier, Giles Harris (2.56.40, just outside his best), and Simon Griffin (2.59.08, at last beginning to fulfil his marathon potential). Andy Masterman (3.08.36, ten minutes off his previous best) and Martin Midgley (3.13.09 despite less than ideal preparation) weren't far behind, but the bragging rights belonged to the sub-3 boys.

Alison Hoggarth (4.33.22) and Marina Booth (5 hours dead, or at least that's how she felt) were doing the distance for the first time, and both were an absolute credit to the club. It is easy to run out of superlatives describing the superhuman effort these times represent, in terms of training beforehand and on the day. A more recent recruit to the Striders ranks, David Byas, was also making his marathon debut and recorded a very impressive 4.01.58.

Julie Masterman (3.32.29, only four minutes outside her best) was the first Striders lady, with Sandy Midgley (4.30.25, well outside her PB) an excellent second. Richard Anness (4.09.02) knocked 12 minutes off his PB, but even that performance was eclipsed by a rejuvenated Keith Wilson (4.02.42), despite his knees being supported by more bandages than the Invisible Man

Dave Pullman (4.20.14), Dot Pullman (4.44.00) and Karen Mitchell (5.02.29) were never in danger of recreating the past glories of their personal bests, although strategic use of the London Underground might have helped, and in Dave's case not stopping for a cigarette on Birdcage Walk would definitely have been an advantage. Whatever their times, everybody who did the race on Sunday in those conditions can be very proud indeed of that 2007 London Marathon medal.

MAY: BEVERLEY 10K

Last week's Beverley 10k was the first in an exhausting series of three races in eight days for those of the Viking Striders brave enough to tackle all three. As a mouth watering starter, Beverley leaves a bit to be desired, with an undulating course and warm temperatures ensuring that personal bests would be few and far between, or indeed in the Striders' case, non-existent.

All the Striders finished comfortably inside the hour, but only one went under 40 minutes, Andy Masterman running magnificently to snatch 25th place out of nearly 1000 finishers. His wife Julie, just to make sure the bragging rights were shared in the Masterman household, came home with 2nd prize in her age category, as did Terry Davies, who doesn't look over 60 and certainly doesn't run like it.

Mike Harvey, making his debut for the club, had no problem in going under 50 minutes at the first time of asking and looks an excellent prospect, while Graham Walker wasn't far off his best despite the

difficult course. Richard Bramham, making a road racing comeback having dipped his toes in the mud of the cross country league last winter, was an excellent prospect years ago and did enough at Beverley to suggest he might be again. A prospect that is, not necessarily a success.

Striders' times:

Andy Masterman 37.56, Neil Bentley 40.17, Martin Booth 40.18, Mark Thompson 41.59, Julie Masterman 43.11, Terry Davies 44.31, Ray Smith 45.38, Keith Wilson 47.44, Richard Bramham 47.54, Richard Anness 47.55, Graham Walker 47.59, Mike Harvey 49.52, Debbie Andrew 53.16, Alison Hoggarth 54.09, Marina Booth 55.29, Carren Taun Jackson 56.48, Jo Mouncey 57.39, Barbara Dykes 59.35.

MAY: ASKERN 10K & DRIFFIELD MUCKY DUCK

The 466 finishers in last Wednesday's Askern 10k, the middle race of three in eight days for the Viking Striders, were treated to cool wet conditions ideal for running. 38 Striders were in the field, the best turnout since the club took 46 to Askern in 1993, including nine intrepid souls making their debut in club colours.

Personal bests were as plentiful as they had been scarce at Beverley the previous Sunday. Giles Harris and Andy Masterman, in 22nd and 31st places, both recorded PBs but even they could not catch Simon Griffin, close to his all time best with a superb 11th place. Mike Harvey and Richard Bramham continued their impressive progress, while other PBs came from more unexpected sources. Rob Oldridge, Carol Bugg, Michaela Shepherd and Caroline Walker were all on target, while John Kaye, Jo Mouncey and Graham Walker were only seconds outside.

All the debutants did well, particularly Gill Wilson who won her age category in her first race, which might be some sort of Striders record. The quickest of the first time racers were for the men Ashley Andrew, who certainly has youth on his side, and for the ladies Sandra Brooks, who along with sister Linda has clearly inherited plenty of ability from father Dave, well known in local athletic circles for many years. A warm welcome also for Brian Cook, making an effortless transition from Rugby Union and proving he can run well with or without a ball in his hands.

Four days later the Mucky Duck eight and a half miler in Driffeld presented a different challenge, with warm temperatures and an undulating course providing a stark contrast to Askern. Julie Masterman won her age category, but the performance of the day has to be that of Dave Ryan. Once he'd got over the embarrassment of searching high and low for his shorts only to find he'd already got them on, Dave's storming finish secured third club place behind Andy Masterman and Martin Booth.

Askern times: (Debutants marked *) Simon Griffin 34.51, Giles Harris 36.10, Andy Masterman 37.05, Martin Midgley 38.42, Neil Bentley 39.17, Dave Hanney 40.30, Mark Thompson 40.38, Nigel Warner 40.53, David Byas 41.48, Julie Masterman 42.33, Ray Smith 42.52, Ashley Andrew 44.10*, Richard Bramham 45.32, Dave Pullman 45.52, Keith Wilson 46.20, Craig Taylor 46.56, Graham Walker 47.46, Paul Hoggarth 47.53*, Mike Harvey 48.16, Jed Stone 48.58, Brandon Harman 50.05*, Debbie Andrew 51.14, Brian Cook 52.13*, Rob Oldridge 52.14, Dave Christison 52.15*, Karen Mitchell 52.28, John Kaye 52.30, Sandy Midgley 52.46, Steve Mallinder 53.03, Carol Bugg 54.00, Sandra Brooks 54.12*, Michaela Shepherd 54.25, Dot Pullman 54.44, Jo Mouncey 56.04, Gill Wilson 56.47*, Caroline Walker 59.16, Linda Cook 60.14*, Rebecca Hunter 62.17*.

Driffield times: Andy Masterman 53.30, Martin Booth 56.45, Dave Ryan 59.09, Mark Thompson 59.39, Julie Masterman 60.40, Nigel Warner 60.53, Ray Smith 63.58, Keith Wilson 67.08, Kay Ryan 68.24, Debbie Andrew 77.42, Karen Mitchell 78.46, Gill Wilson 85.48, Jo Mouncey 87.41.

JUNE: RIVERBANK CHALLENGE

The Viking Striders' annual Riverbank Challenge was run on Sunday in warm but overcast conditions which may have been fine for spectators but probably far too hot for most of the 200 competitors. The course is flat and not too long at a third of a marathon distance, but riverbank running is deceptively difficult, with short road sections along Hook Road and Westfield Banks providing the only relief, and the word Challenge in the title is an indication of how hard this event is.

The one runner not to find it a problem seems to be Pumlani Bangami of Salford, whose comfortable victory was his third in succession. Most of the Striders were assisting Race Director Dave Hanney with marshalling duties, but of the ones who did run Simon Griffin and Andy Masterman stood out with great performances in 6th and 13th positions respectively.

Beverley's Carrie Milson won the ladies' title, with Julie Masterman fourth overall for the Striders and second in her age category.

The two and a half mile Fun Run, which preceded the main event, exceeded all expectations in terms of turnout, with 135 mostly youthful finishers. The winners were Joshua Rowe and Chelsea Walker, with Goole's Alex Binnington the leading local runner in an excellent fourth place. A large number of the newly formed Striders' junior section ran the race with an enthusiasm that is a credit both to them and to organiser Andy Masterman.

Many thanks to everyone who made the event possible, in particular the various sponsors including Boyes and Bonsor Recruitment, also the local constabulary and the ever reliable St Johns Ambulance, neither of whom fortunately had to deal with any emergencies.

First 3 men: Pumlani Bangami (Salford AC) 46.14, Paul Marchant (Rothwell) 47.45, David Meeson (Rothwell) 47.46.

First 3 ladies: Carrie Milson (Beverley) 58.21, Julie Barley (Leeds City AC) 59.12, Lorna Young (Leeds City AC) 60.23.

Striders' times: Simon Griffin 52.21, Andy Masterman 55.07, Mark Thompson 61.28, Julie Masterman 62.23, Richard Anness 70.00, Keith Wilson 70.00, Craig Taylor 71.19, Rob Oldridge 78.23, Mike Harvey 78.44.

Goole Youth AC times: Jeremy Price 60.40, Claire Leake 63.40, Steve Walsh 67.21, Adam Fawcett 75.01, Richard Mainprize 76.54, Liam Fawcett 77.06.



Riverbank Challenge race start - June 2007

JUNE: HUMBER BRIDGE HALF & WINTERTON 10

Keeping in mind the atrocious weather during this alleged summer of ours, the Viking Striders have been very lucky in their recent outings, dodging downpours at both the Humber Bridge Half Marathon a couple of weeks ago and also at Sunday's Winterton Ten, which if anything was too hot for running - although nobody was complaining.

Both courses are undulating and quite hard work, which goes some way to explaining two sets of largely below-par times, although Giles Harris would argue with that having come away from Humber Bridge with a personal best. Giles doesn't run half marathons very often but on this occasion was over 10 minutes ahead of his closest Striders rival.

David Byas did well in his first half in club colours, as did Michaela Shepherd and Caroline Walker who may have found it heavy going but can be proud of their debut efforts. The same can be said of Mike Harvey at Winterton. Mike has only started with the club this year, but this was a very promising start to his long distance career.

The Striders usual front runners went AWOL at Winterton, in fact no-one went under 70 minutes in a well organised but poorly attended event. Richard Bramham had the biggest smile of the day, as he did at Humber Bridge, with both performances exceeding expectations by a considerable margin. Richard hasn't run these distances for four years but has dropped back effortlessly into a training regime that is sure to bring even more improvement.

Humber Bridge times: Giles Harris 83.42, Neil Bentley 93.52, Nigel Warner 96.41, David Byas 97.12, Richard Bramham 99.21, Ray Smith 101.16, Dave Pullman 106.20, Patsy Fenelon 120.00. Jo Mouncey 136.59, Michaela Shepherd 138.00, Caroline Walker 141.12.

Winterton times: Nigel Warner 72.30, Richard Bramham 75.38, Mark Thompson 75.41, Ray Smith 76.24, Dave Pullman 80.10, Keith Wilson 82.30, Dot Pullman and Mike Harvey both 93.08.

JULY: RAY SMITH

Last weekend provided final proof, if any were needed, that Ray Smith has finally taken leave of his senses. Ray has been an enthusiastic and hard working stalwart for Goole Viking Striders ever since the club formed in 1985, and he used to be such a sensible lad. On Saturday however, at Costello stadium in Hull, his last remaining brain cells took flight and switched off the light.

How else could you explain his participation in this endurance event where you run round a track for 24 hours, unless you drop from exhaustion earlier? How else could he ignore his legs screaming for mercy? And how else could he cope with the mental demands of such an event, including crushing boredom only alleviated by the occasional change in direction?

In all seriousness, Ray has form for this sort of thing before. He has completed 40 and 50 miles in similar ultra distance events, but this one took him to a new level. Taking into account sustenance breaks and the odd wink or two of sleep, Ray's total track time was 19 hours, during which he covered a staggering 77 miles, or in other words, nearly three back to back marathons. And then he drove home as though nothing had happened.

It takes a very special type of person to contemplate, let alone complete, a gruelling challenge like this, and Ray is that man. But I still think he's crazy!

In comparison, the Idle 10k on Sunday was hardly worth putting running gear on for. The difficult course, a mixture of road and trail, is not one for personal bests, and so it proved for the Striders. Even Simon Griffin struggled to go under 40 minutes.

Idle times (literally): Simon Griffin 39.25, Julie Masterman 45.26, Keith Wilson 51.14, Kay Ryan 52.23, Mike Harvey 54.08, Gill Wilson 63.41.

JULY: WALKINGTON 10K

This time last year Walkington was bathed in glorious summer sunshine for the annual 10k, and the runners had high temperatures to contend with as well as the undulating course. Last Friday Walkington was bathed again, not in sunshine of course but in torrential rain, which only eased off as the last few finishers splashed their way to the line. Hypothermia was the order of the day for marshals and spectators, but in fact heavy rain isn't a bad thing to run in unless, like the writer, you have to battle with waterlogged shorts which refuse to ignore the pull of gravity.

All the Striders did well just to turn up in these conditions, especially Steve Crabtree making his debut, a baptism not of fire but total immersion, and also Ray Smith who had a blinder considering it was less than a week since his 77 mile epic the previous weekend. You have to feel sympathy for Neil Bentley, getting drenched on his comeback run after being flooded out of his house in Gilberdyke, although he ran very well to lead the Striders in. With that amount of natural ability at his disposal Neil could do even better, if he ever finds the time or the inclination to do a mile or two of training.

Striders' times:

Neil Bentley 41.16, Mark Thompson 43.11, Nigel Warner 43.49, Richard Bramham 45.37, Ray Smith 47.04, Dave Pullman 47.06, Mike Harvey 50.47, Graham Walker 51.13, Patsy Fenelon 52.17, Dot Pullman 56.01, Steve Crabtree 57.28.

JULY: DAVE HANNEY

The East Yorkshire Cross Country League takes the form of a series of six races averaging about six miles each. The venues range from Welton in the south of the region up to Scarborough in the north, and all involve punishing uphill, thick mud, overgrown tracks, and generally anything else to make the average runner's life a misery. This is not just cross country running, this is big boys' cross country running, in other words not racing round a grassy track like they do in the National Championships.

The League hasn't started yet, of course, it allegedly not being winter, but last Saturday Dave Hanney, the Striders' cross country captain, drove to Welton and ran the course there. Nothing unusual with that, you might say, and you'd be right. Except that he then went on to South Cave to do that course as well. And then on to North Dalton for that one, and then to Bishop Wilton, then Sewerby, finally finishing at the toughest venue of them all, Langdale End near Scarborough.

In total Dave completed over thirty seven miles in around six hours of running time, although taking travelling time into account the whole exercise took exactly ten hours. He had company all the way from different club colleagues at various stages, but Dave saw this as a personal challenge and he rose to the occasion magnificently. Running conditions were just as bad as they are in the winter, if not worse, which made it even more remarkable a feat of endurance.

Well done Dave, although personally I thought it a bit lazy to use a car to get from place to place.

SEPTEMBER: ROBIN HOOD HALF AND FULL MARATHON

As always the runners in the Robin Hood Marathon and Half Marathon in Nottingham at the weekend were treated to hot weather and the usual undulating course, but again as always the Viking Striders laughed in the face of adversity and came away with some cracking performances. These were both at the front of the field and some more towards the back, but the front runners will be mentioned first in order to feed their enormous egos.

Giles Harris is rapidly becoming one of the Striders' best ever marathon men with yet another sub three hour performance. In his third race at the distance this year Giles was 29th overall out of more than 1000 finishers, which in such a quality field including several African internationals, was a bit special. In the Half Marathon, Simon Griffin's position was even more impressive. It wasn't a personal best by any means, but nevertheless Simon was 44th out of over 6500, which again is quite brilliant.

Mike Harvey chose a difficult venue for his half marathon debut but passed his test with colours if not flying at least fluttering, he has the talent to do much better than this as his stamina increases. Alison Hoggarth and Debbie Andrew made successful comebacks from injury, Debbie in particular deserving a medal for her courage in tackling the distance after being in plaster not so long ago.

All these performances were eclipsed however by Jo Mouncey. Jo may not be the fastest runner in the world but is certainly not the slowest, and her personal best by nearly ten minutes in these conditions was a magnificent achievement.

Marathon times: Giles Harris 2.59.36, Dave Pullman 4.33.16 (probably a personal worst, but Dave is well past worrying about such things!).

Half Marathon times: Simon Griffin 80.38, Martin Booth 91.43, Julie Masterman 94.49, Keith Wilson 106.52, Richard Anness 113.56, Alison Hoggarth 121.13, Jo Mouncey 125.36, Mike Harvey 127.04, Dot Pullman 128.47, Debbie Andrew 134.37.

SEPTEMBER: GREAT NORTH RUN

The Great North Run is the country's most spectacular Half Marathon, with 50,000 runners, joggers and walkers filling the road between Newcastle and the finish in South Shields. Many club runners are put off by the high entry cost and the impossibly congested start, but for some the race is an irresistible magnet, an atmosphere second to none and the chance to run in the same field as Paula Radcliffe. Incredibly Steve Durose was running his 19th consecutive Great North, finishing as fresh and full of running as in his first despite nearly a year out with injury.

Andy and Julie Masterman dominated the race from the Viking Striders point of view, Andy being first in with an excellent personal best and Julie being first lady with a season's best. Martin Midgley did well, but not as well as he can, in second place for the men, while Keith Wilson and Richard Anness were justifiably delighted with their times, Keith in particular running his best Half for years.

Julie apart, the ladies' stars came from further down the field. Jo Mouncey pulled another PB from her locker and will surely break two hours next time out, while Michaela Shepherd knocked a full six minutes off her previous best. On the subject of ladies' stars, Sandra Brooks completed an excellent debut half marathon recently at Nottingham in 121.13, a fact totally ignored by this ageing reporter.

Striders' times:

Andy Masterman 81.19, Martin Midgley 84.30, Martin Booth 91.00, Julie Masterman 92.03, Kevin Sipling 102.21, Keith Wilson 103.02, Steve Durose 107.11, Richard Anness 109.29, Dave Pullman 110.37, Paul Hoggarth 118.00, Graham Walker 122.00, Jo Mouncey 124.01, Karen Mitchell and Marina Booth both 127.00, Barbara Dykes and Carren Jackson both 131.00, Michaela Shepherd 132.00, Mike Harvey (struggling with injury) 135.56.

Guesting for the Striders on the day were Richard Drifill and Benny Moore, better known for their exploits (on and off field) with Goole RUFC but proving they can run a bit too with very creditable times of 121.00 and 127.00 respectively.



Great North Run - September 2007

OCTOBER: CLUMBER PARK 10K & SELBY HALF

The frantic activity of the previous weekend's Great North Run was replaced by more tranquil surroundings on Sunday as the Viking Striders contested the annual Clumber Park 10k. In perfect conditions on a generally flat course (and scenic to boot), times should have been half decent and they were.

Whatever Jo Mouncey's started having for breakfast should be compulsory fare for all runners. Having been running for years, suddenly Jo can't stop getting personal bests, a two and a half minute improvement here being a massive amount in 10k terms. Sandra Brooks must be joining Jo at the table, continuing to go from strength to strength with two minutes clipped off her previous best.

Earlier Simon Griffin was first in for the club, with Andy Masterman not far behind, only ten seconds outside his all-time PB. Martin Booth, Dave Pullman and Richard Anness all came up with seasons best performances, as did Marina Booth for the Ladies, who were led home in fine style as usual by Julie Masterman.

A fixture clash on the day meant that only two Striders ran the Selby Half Marathon, and one of them was running for Drax Power Station. Martin Midgley led his team home with an excellent 85.46, while Dave Ryan flew the Striders flag with a superb PB in 92.03.

Clumber Park times:

Simon Griffin 36.40, Andy Masterman 37.15, Martin Booth 38.54, Julie Masterman 42.37, Dave Pullman 45.50, Keith Wilson 47.02, Richard Anness 47.40, Sandra Brooks 52.18, Jo Mouncey 53.31, Karen Mitchell and Marina Booth both 54.00, Dot Pullman 54.55.

OCTOBER: HALTEMPRICE 10K, BISHOP WILTON XC & BRID HALF

October is always a good month for running events, supposedly giving runners the chance to compete in cool weather after what should have been a long hot summer. There was certainly plenty of refreshing rain about at last Sunday's Haltemprice 10k, with several rather damp Viking Striders exceeding expectations. Jo Mouncey, Rob Oldridge and Sandra Brooks all achieved personal bests, Jo by nearly two minutes, as the three of them battle to be first past the 50 minute barrier.

Andy and Julie Masterman were as consistent as usual, with Andy 10th overall and 1st in his age category, and Julie 4th overall in the ladies section. Honourable mentions go to Richard Bramham, Dot Pullman and Nigel Warner for their season's best performances, and to Julie Barker and Ann Kirkby who coped with their 10k debuts admirably despite the testing course.

The previous weekend had seen the first leg of the East Yorkshire Cross Country League at a surprisingly dry Bishop Wilton. The superb Simon Griffin and Julie Masterman apart, both Striders teams found it difficult to compete with the larger clubs in the league, although David Byas had a great run to finish 4th Strider home. Steve Lund may not have scored any points for the team but continued his quite magnificent return to fitness from what could have been a devastating back operation.

Earlier in the month the Bridlington Half Marathon was remarkable not just for Simon Griffin and Andy Masterman's top 20 finishes, and Kev Sipling's relentless march towards his century of halves, but also for the fact that the winner of the ladies' race was disqualified for allegedly not starting with everybody else but sneaking on to the course in the finishing straight. It certainly saves a bit of energy doing it that way.

Haltemprice times: Andy Masterman 37.46, Nigel Warner 40.36, Mark Thompson 43.03, Julie Masterman 43.04, Richard Bramham 44.19, Ray Smith 45.59, Dave Pullman 46.51, Keith Wilson 48.20, Richard Anness 48.26, Patsy Fenelon 49.55, Rob Oldridge 50.55, Jo Mouncey and Sandra Brooks both 51.33, Graham Walker 52.34, Debbie Andrew 54.20, Dot Pullman 54.23, Karen Mitchell 55.03, Linda Cook and Julie Barker both 64.07, Ann Kirkby 77.39.

Bishop Wilton times: Simon Griffin 39.32, Martin Midgley 41.55, Martin Booth 42.18, David Byas 43.30, Dave Hanney 43.34, Nigel Warner 45.59, Julie Masterman 46.59, Richard Bramham 47.54, Ray Smith 50.48, Dave Pullman 53.35, Steve Lund 54.05, Kay Ryan 54.11, Richard Anness 55.59, Rob Oldridge 56.49, Dot Pullman 61.22, Karen Mitchell 61.39, Sandy Midgley 61.48, Jo Mouncey 66.36, Marina Booth 67.12.

Brid times: Simon Griffin 81.42, Andy Masterman 82.19, Nigel Warner 92.15, Kev Sipling 102.25, Ray Smith 104.23, Keith Wilson 104.29, Patsy Fenelon 111.05.

NOVEMBER: DREWTON WOODS XC

If the Viking Striders could field a full team for the East Yorkshire Cross Country League, they might, just might, mount a serious challenge for leadership of the table. However, in South Cave on Sunday as with previous legs, the absence of two or three of their top runners made all the difference between challenging for the title and settling for fourth place.

The good news is that fourth place for the men's team is still a very creditable result. Simon Griffin was as impressive as ever, while Martin Midgley came to the race straight off the night shift but managed to stay awake long enough to snatch second club place. Dave Hanney looked to be back in form with another top 20 placing, and David Byas showed there was no fluke about his strong performance last time out. Alan Bexon made his long-awaited racing comeback looking as enthusiastic as ever and scoring valuable points for the team, while both Mike Baggott and Simon Greenwood made their debuts for the Striders, Mike having had a long and glittering career with City of Hull.

For the Ladies team, the ever reliable Julie Masterman led the way with Kay Ryan and Patsy Fenelon providing point-scoring support to consolidate their mid table position. Four races to go and all to play for.

Giles Harris and Martin Booth both excelled at the previous week's Guy Fawkes Ten, with times of 63.43 and 67.36 respectively, but sadly neither were available for the cross country.

Cross Country times: 6th Simon Griffin 41.04, 16th Martin Midgley 43.34, 17th Dave Hanney 43.37, 37th David Byas 46.05, 43rd Nigel Warner 47.12, Alan Bexon 48.23, 53rd Richard Bramham 48.59, 57th Mark Thompson 49.25, 58th Mike Baggott 49.29, 90th Ray Smith 54.02, 94th Steve Lund 55.44, 105th Rob Oldridge 59.15, 106th Dave Ryan 59.52, 109th Simon Greenwood 61.34.

Ladies: 8th Julie Masterman 50.37, 20th Kay Ryan 56.55, 26th Patsy Fenelon 60.00, 29th Sandy Midgley 63.55, 35th Karen Mitchell 65.29, 36th Dot Pullman 65.38, 39th Michaela Shepherd 67.47, 42nd Jo Mouncey 69.50.

NOVEMBER: JUNIORS CROSS COUNTRY

If the recent cross country event at Beverley Westwood is anything to go by, the Viking Striders junior section is going from strength to strength under the guidance of Andy Masterman. At a time when young people generally receive a bad press, this was emphatically the other side of the coin, the Striders and their fellow competitors turning out to run in driving rain and a freezing wind with the same enthusiasm that most of us reserve for turning the central heating up.

The junior team came away with two well deserved awards. The first was in the Under 15 Girls, when Philippa Oldridge, Robyn Masterman and Beth Holroyd took 2nd place. Beth and Jennifer Paxton were making their Striders debuts and both coped incredibly well with the horrible conditions.

Charlie Stead, Jacob Oldridge and Harry Lloyd sprinted in together to snatch 2nd place in the Under 11 Boys, while Anna Tyson, with a top ten placing, and Faye Masterman were as consistent as ever in the Under 11 Girls. Nicole Masterman was the club's sole representative in the Under 13 Girls but ran an excellent race to round off a great, if cold, day for the young athletes.

DECEMBER: LANGDALE END XC & RUDOLPH'S ROMP

Sunday's Langdale End leg of the East Yorkshire Cross Country League was once again one of the highlights of the Viking Striders' calendar, although only a much depleted squad was there to enjoy it. Some of the team used a holiday in Barbados as an excuse, but a truly committed Strider could have come back for the race and been back on the island sipping Pina Coladas by teatime.

Recent rain had turned much of the Langdale course into a quagmire. Most of the underfoot conditions were difficult, but some were impossible and others were downright dangerous. A Health and Safety inspector doing a Risk Assessment would have worn out his clipboard in the first mile, yet all participants survived despite some being bloodied and all being muddied. Wading through a swollen stream near the end was good for washing some of the mud off, although Richard Bramham took this to extremes by choosing total immersion as the best way forward.

Dave Hanney continued his rich vein of form by leading the Striders in, with Mike Baggott in an excellent second place despite falling flat on his face and coming in looking like a refugee from the Black and White Minstrel Show. A politically incorrect move if ever there was one.

While the men struggled to find the minimum six counters for their team, the ladies were even harder hit by absenteeism. In trying to look like their minimum three people, Julie Masterman and Kay Ryan performed heroically although in the treacherous conditions Julie in particular took more dives than Cristiano Ronaldo.

Striders times:

26th Dave Hanney 44.34, 31st Mike Baggott 45.57, 33rd Nigel Warner 46.31, 49th Mark Thompson 49.00, 60th Richard Bramham 50.16, 85th Ray Smith 56.06, 86th Steve Lund 56.14, 103rd Dave Ryan 65.54.

Ladies: 8th Julie Masterman 49.05, 25th Kay Ryan 70.24.

The previous week's Rudolph's Romp, a 24 mile extravaganza of hills and dales around Brantingham near Hull, seemed like gentle exercise in comparison. A small but select band of Striders finished well up the field of over 300 assorted runners, joggers and walkers, the slowest of whom took over nine hours to complete the course.

Striders times:

14th Simon Griffin 3 hours 28 minutes, 37th Nigel Warner 4.00, 49th Richard Bramham (excellent debut) 4.09, 167th Ray Smith and Colette Leetham 6.18.

DECEMBER: JUNIORS PRESENTATION & BARBADOS RACES

When Andy Masterman first brought up the idea of a Viking Striders junior section earlier this year, his suggestion was welcomed by some but also greeted with considerable scepticism by others, particularly the old stagers (the writer included) who could remember the short lived nature of the last group of juniors over 20 years ago.

Fortunately the Striders committee was far-sighted enough to back the project, and a combination of hard work, determination and enthusiasm has paid dividends. Now Andy and his willing assistants Dave Hanney and Phil Ounsley can look back with pride on an inaugural year of growth in numbers and success in competition.

The Juniors' first presentation ceremony took place last week, and congratulations go to not just the trophy winners but all the young people who have made the Striders Juniors such a success.



The winners in the photo were:

Back Row L to R: **Philippa Oldridge** - Junior Cup for Champion Runner of the Year, **Beth Holroyd** - Dot Pullman Plate for Most Improved Runner, **Harry Lloyd** - Under 11 Boys Runner of the Year, **George Marwood** - Under 15 Boys Runner of the Year

Front Row L to R: **Anna Tyson** - Under 11 Girls Runner of the Year, **Faye Masterman** - Roger Foster Shield for Sporting Achievement, **Jacob Oldridge** - Coaches Award.

Meanwhile a group of senior Striders were in Barbados, ostensibly as athletes to run a series of road races, but if any opportunities arose for fun-filled and booze-fuelled frolics, they were hardly likely to be turned down. Excessive heat and humidity inevitably meant that Personal Worst were the order of the day, although Martin Midgley and Dave Pullman did very well to survive their early morning marathon, and Martin Booth ran a cracking 10k in the heat of the previous afternoon.

Striders' times:

Marathon: Martin Midgley 3.37.02, Dave Pullman 4.45.48

Half Marathon: Martin Booth 1.51.12, Chris Houseman 1.51.12, Richard Anness 2.06.36, Dot Pullman and Sandy Midgley 2.12.13, Karen Mitchell, Marina Booth and Barbara Dykes 2.25.24.

10k: Martin Booth 41.39, Dave Pullman 51.23, Richard Anness 51.59, Caroline Houseman 61.43.



ANNUAL AWARDS FOR 2007

Much better attended than the recent Golden Globes ceremony, the Viking Striders annual Awards Presentation last Saturday provided an opportunity to celebrate the survival of another year's pavement pounding, and also ample proof, if any were needed, that the Striders are just as good socialising as they are running. Some are clearly better, but they weren't the ones going home with the trophies.

Simon Griffin reclaimed his Male Runner of the Year title after missing out last year, and also won the Cross Country award again. Simon was fastest over all three major distances and was rarely out of the top half dozen in a keenly contested cross country league, so these were easy decisions. Similarly **Julie Masterman** showed a clean pair of heels to the competition on the roads and indeed a muddy pair over the country. This was the first time Julie has won the Female Runner of the Year award, but it is unlikely to be the last.

The male section of the Most Improved Runner category took much more deliberation. **Giles Harris'** personal bests at all distances edged him in front of Andy Masterman (of whom more later), with **Richard Bramham** and **Rob Oldridge** also in contention. Richard's consistent improvement brought him victory in both the Handicap League and the Dryden and Kennedy 10k League, while Rob won the Marjorie Firth Trophy for his hard work and determination throughout the year.

The Female Most Improved Runner was a more clear-cut affair, with **Jo Mouncey** discovering a talent she didn't know she had, knocking nearly five minutes off her previous best for 10k and over eleven minutes off her half marathon time. **Sandra Brooks** took the Female Beginner award for some dramatic improvement culminating in just over 50 minutes for 10k, while **Mike Harvey** won the Male section, trying so hard during his assault on all distances up to half marathon that he ended the year injured.

Andy Masterman missed out on the Improved title but deservedly won Club Person of the Year for his single-handed revival of the Striders' Junior Section. Setting it up was hard work enough, but persevering with it and making it a success were even greater achievements and would not have been possible without Andy's drive and determination.

The Invercargill Trophy was won jointly by **Ray Smith** and **Dave Hanney**, Ray for his 77 mile track spectacular and Dave for his conquering of all six cross country league courses on the same day. Some people never know when they've done enough, talking of which the Veteran of the Year accolades were won once again by **Nigel Warner** and **Patsy Fenelon**. Hopefully all the superlatives have been said about these two, because very few spring to mind at the time of writing!

Finally, the first five in the Handicap League were Richard Bramham, Jo Mouncey, Andy Masterman, Julie Masterman and the hardy perennial **Dave Pullman**.



Presentation Night - January 2008



L-R: A ballerina, Female Runner of the Year, Male Runner of the Year