

The

No 61 Feb. 2011

SOUTHERNER



THE MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHERN
COUNTIES VETERANS ATHLETICS CLUB

www.thefunnyblog.org

From the editor:



At last- *The Southerner!* Beset by lack of contributions, we had to miss the Christmas edition! This hasn't happened before in my ten years as editor! Many thanks to the "usual suspects" who have written in this edition: **Arthur Kimber, Carole Derrien, Tom Phillips, Walter Hill and Ann Bath.**

Where are the rest of you? Without your help, there will be no *Southerner!* There must be someone out there who would like to be the next subject of the **Club Cameo?** Don't be shy. Don't forget- we would like to hear about your life / achievements in general, not just athletics. In fact, a short autobiography.

Closing date for the next *Southerner* is Friday April 29th 2011.

This will give everyone a chance to write reports from the Indoor season etc. It may be a little late to include an entry form for our SCVAC Track & Field Championships. However, you will be able to download it from www.scvac.org.uk

SCVAC Track & Field Championships, Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford, June 5th 2011. Closing date: May 14th.



"On reflection maybe we shouldn't have held the race at altitude."



Inspirational coaching method?



Mrs Derrien's Diary,
by Carole Derrien, Jersey Spartan A.C.

Last season came to an abrupt end – back from Hungary and nothing to look forward to – it had

been a hectic year one way and another, so once the annual battle between Jersey and Guernsey athletics clubs had taken place, we decided it was time for a 3 week break. Of course this meant catching up with all the gardening, car cleaning, housework and just going out on long walks to blow the cobwebs away.

One bright spot was the fact that my son has admitted his age – at last, or maybe was brow

beaten by certain athletes who persuaded him to give the British Masters Decathlon a go. Suffice to say he was impressed with the standard, and managed a creditable silver in his age group – I looked at the photographs on Tom’s site – Paul looks like he suffered for his medal, but well done him, he is primarily a thrower, and the thought of more than once round a track must seem like an ultra distance race.

Life then decided to deal a series of events which needed my undivided attention, as bereavements tend to do, so once again training had to go on the back burner, but the November weather was just wonderful and my thoughts turned back to athletics and the outside possibility of getting down to some sort of fitness training which might be good enough to see me through the Indoor season, I had no excuses any more, gird the loins and off we go! Should have been easy, but the fates took a hand once again – I was playing bowls when a heavy firing bowl was aimed into the head – I jumped the first ricochet and caught the next



square on the bottom of my leg – the bit with no flesh – ouch – a large black lump and obviously I was still walking, so it couldn’t be serious could it. It isn’t that serious, a sliver of bone has been dislodged and it will weld itself back at some point without having to be plastered but it isn’t comfortable wearing trainers and throwing shoes—here we go again.

I think I was pleased to see the snow as it meant I wasn’t the only athlete side lined – I have to tell you that it brings the Island to a standstill – we don’t do snow! Living on the highest part of the Island means that we get the lions’ share of the weather and having a long drive to get out of my property with any kind of vehicle can be difficult. I managed to clear a way down to the

road only to find the bit I had cleared had turned to sheet ice just as soon as my back was turned. I went back to the house extremely tired, rosy cheeks and still not able to get out – hadn’t thought where I might have gone even if I had managed an escape. We certainly didn’t have it as bad as you did, but it meant no mail or newspapers came into the Island as your airports closed and ours had a few blips as well. Thankfully the weather cleared and the family were able to travel to Jersey for the festive season, it was wonderful to see them but of course Granny was needed for Granny duties, and I am not sure that playing on the Wii counts for much in the way of training – and it does nothing for my confidence either! 4 year old James told me – ‘Granny, watch and learn’ – he was right of course, but he turned into a super star beating all comers and I just didn’t improve at all. It was a week of early mornings, housework and general chores to do before children appeared wanting attention, and the time passed very quickly.

Could things improve – of course not! I immediately went down with one of the dreaded lurgies that is doing the rounds, missed New Year, it must have passed me by somewhere along the line. So here I am, still not fit to face the world in general, wondering how it could all have gone so wrong. I have been blessed with friends who have come calling with soup, hot bread and loads of sympathy, I just wish they could do some training for me! I guess I am going to have to scrub the Indoor season and am even now thinking that the summer might not be within my grasp either. Must start thinking positively, I have just had a sick bed visitor who is going to



take me out cycling just as soon as I am able – just round the block (she says) – nothing too much (she says)! I know her ‘block’, she runs marathons – watch this space.

Southern Counties Veterans Athletic Club Committee 2010/2011

OFFICERS

Chairman Arthur Kimber 22 Asquith Road, Wigmore, Gillingham Kent ME8 OJD Dartford Harriers. 01634389554 arthur.kimber@talktalk.net

Vice chairman Eric Shirley 2 Ladbrook Close, Pinner, , Middlesex, HA5 5LB. 020 8868 3209

Treasurer Tom Richards 59 Dinsmore Road, London SW1,2 9PT. Tel: 0208 673 0073. email: tfrichards@btinternet.com

Assistant Treasurer Ken Crooke, 8 Rylandes Road, Selsdon, South Croydon, Surrey. CR2 8EA. Croydon Harriers. 02086574269. ken.crooke@talktalk.net

Club Secretary David Lipscomb, 120 New Road, Croxley Green, Herts.,WD3 3EP. 01923448852. lippy@serpentine.org.uk

Membership Secretary David Lipscomb as above.

Asst. Membership Secretary Vilma Thompson 18 Albury Road, Boyfield Street, London. SE1 OSB. Belgrave Harriers 020 7928 9577 020 8871 7542 (Day) villy18@hotmail.co.uk

COMMITTEE

Minutes Secretary Ron Franklin 23 Boundary Road, Wood Green. London. N22 6AS Barnet and District AC 02083768452 rgfranklin@blueyonder.co.uk

Road Running Secretary Walter Hill Tain Cottage, Ifield Road, Charlwood, Surrey. RH6 000. Crawley AC 01293 862327 walterhelen@tiscali.co.uk

Walking Secretary Dave Sharpe 56 Bonham Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 3BD. 02085995153.

Cross Country Secretary Ann Bath, 61 St Mary's Road, Long Ditton, Surbiton, Surrey. KT65HB. 26.2 Road Runners. 02083982775. madshus@btinternet.com

T & F League Secretary Arthur Kimber (as above)

Newsletter Editor Rosemary Champion 6 Woodlands Park, Bexley, Kent. DA5 2EL Dartford Harriers A. C. 01322522934 southern.veterans@ntlworld.com

Officials Secretary Arthur Kimber as above

Entries Secretary Steve Connolly 64 Goddard Ave., Swindon, Wiltshire. SN1 4HS. Swindon Harriers 01793 538245 steve.connolly@ukgateway.net

Club kit & medals- VACANCY.

WEBSITE INFORMATION:

Webmaster: Mike Peel - mike@mikepeel.co.uk

Veterans website is: www.scvac.org.uk

Contributions for the May 2011 edition of The Southerner should be sent to Rosemary Champion by Friday April 29th.

Club Records. Records may be set anywhere and claims should be sent to: Jeanne Coker, 210 Chaplin Rd., Wembley, Middlesex. HA0 4UT. jeanne.coker@hotmail.com

The Southerner "200 Club"- if you would like to buy shares, please contact Ken Crooke, Assistant Treasurer, tel. 020 8657 4269; 8 Rylandes Road, Selsdon, South Croydon, CR2 8EA.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE Southerner Magazine are welcome, preferably emailed in Word format. Otherwise, typed copy will be fine, and can be sent via the post to the above address.

Southern Counties Veterans Athletic Club

Membership Renewal Form - 2011

IMPORTANT! THIS FORM IS ONLY FOR EXISTING MEMBERS . New members should use the membership application form.

This is for members who did not receive a form through the post. To retain membership please pay by 30th April 2011.

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER.....TITLE

.

SURNAME:
.....:

FORENAMES

.

ADDRESS

.....

DATE OF BIRTH

TELEPHONE NO

.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

.

FIRST CLAIM CLUB

.

OTHER 2nd CLAIM CLUBS

.

I agree to abide by the clubs rules & regulations

Signed

.

Date

2011 Veteran Womens' Track & Field Rankings

Book:

This is available from early February.

The cost is still £3.50 together with an A.5 self - addressed envelope, with a large 2nd class stamp. The book is expected to be heavier this year with around 6,500 performances.

Please make cheques payable to Mrs S. Gandee. Her address is 4 Westfield Road, Hertford, Herts, SG14 3DJ

Cross Country with Ann Bath.

British & Irish Masters Cross Country International Santry Park, Dublin November 13th

Seven SCVAC members competed at this popular event. The team Hotels were opposite the venue, which was a flattish, but very muddy short circuit which was very good for spectators. The organisers provided each country with a large marquee for changing and leaving kit. As usual there was an excellent dinner and prizegiving, followed by lots of dancing and meeting up with old friends.

Teams of 4 raced, with 3 to count, distances 6K for women and men 65+, and 8K for men 35 – 64. Although a

flattish circuit, the thick mud and slight drags were surprisingly tiring! The open race for reserves and other vets was run first, which helped churn up the mud which was even worse when the last men's race was run.

Tina Oldershaw team Gold W40
England

Sharon Hawkins team Gold W45
England

Ann Bath team Bronze W60 Scotland

Tad Dicker team Silver M45 England

Stephen Male team Silver M45 England

Bill Foster team Gold M50 England

Des Michael team Gold M60 England

Well done to everyone and

commiserations to those not selected.

Full results are on Power of 10

Next year's race is at Bellahouston Park,
Glasgow Saturday 26th November 2011

Those keen to be selected are strongly advised to enter the BMAF Cross Country on 12/3/11 as the results are used at the selection meeting along with other results.

BMAF open Cross Country

Championships

Saturday 12th March 2011

**Alexander Stadium, Perry Barr,
Birmingham**

This race is reasonably accessible, being less than 1 mile from Perry Barr Station for those travelling by train, open to all vets male and female 35 years and older. Closing date is March 1st 2011. Details are on www.bmaf.org.uk

This should be a "must do" race for those wishing to be selected for the British and Irish Masters International Cross Cross Country being held at Bellahouston Park, Glasgow, Scotland on Saturday November 26th 2011.

An Apple a Day....

Tom Phillips applies some technology to his training.

I thought I might share with you some experiences and thoughts that are a little out of the mainstream for “The Southerner”, but which may be of interest to some of you, including those to whom Santa was very kind.

Several months ago, my mobile phone decided it needed replacing, and gave way to an Apple iPhone4. As the nation’s top selling smartphone, many of you may have one of these, or be thinking about buying one. If tempted, do succumb. What you will get is a very capable training aid. You may not have realised that.

The true power of the iPhone, beyond being a very capable mobile phone, is in the additional applications (or “apps”) that can be downloaded, much as computer programmes, and run on the iPhone. These cover a vast array of topics. This includes a small group of extremely useful health and fitness-related apps, and I want to describe my experience with three of these. They are all available from the formidable Apple App Store, but are perhaps to be found down the dustier ends of their shelves, and less likely to be found by casual browsing.

“Ithlete”

First up is **“ithete”** – like “athlete, but with an “I”. You can find out a whole load about ithlete here, on the website for the company behind it <http://www.myithlete.com/>

Ithlete works a little bit like a heart rate monitor, but it measures HRV – heart rate variability. Heart rate variability is a relatively new method for assessing the effects of stress on your body. It is measured as the time gap

between your heart beats that varies as you breathe in and out. Research evidence increasingly links high HRV to good health and a high level of fitness, whilst decreased HRV is linked to stress, fatigue and even burnout. ithlete measures your HRV, as well as your resting heart rate, every morning during a 1 minute test. After you have built up a baseline over a few days, the ithlete software algorithms compare your daily readings with baseline to determine if any significant changes have taken place. These are reflected in traffic lights for today's training and a chart to help you track trends.

Key to the system are an iPhone (not necessarily the latest model either!) or an iPod Touch, an ordinary heart rate monitor chest strap (which you probably have) and a small “dongle” which plugs in to the headphone jack of the iPhone. The dongle costs about £32, and the app itself cost £5.99.



It’s used for a minute a day, first thing, just after getting up, and before your morning tea or coffee. All you do is plug in, and breathe deeply for 60 seconds. No running about, nothing. The assumption is that you did that the previous day, or thereabouts. What HRM is measuring is

your adaptation to training stress, and helping measure your growing fitness (hopefully). As the website says:

“Most fitness enthusiasts know that you don't get fitter during exercise, you get fitter recovering from exercise. The key point is that we are all individuals, and respond in our own unique way that cannot be force fit into a standardised training plan. Judging the right balance of training load and recovery is a challenge even for the most experienced athletes. Measuring and tracking your daily fatigue and recovery level using HRV is the scientific principle behind ithlete.”

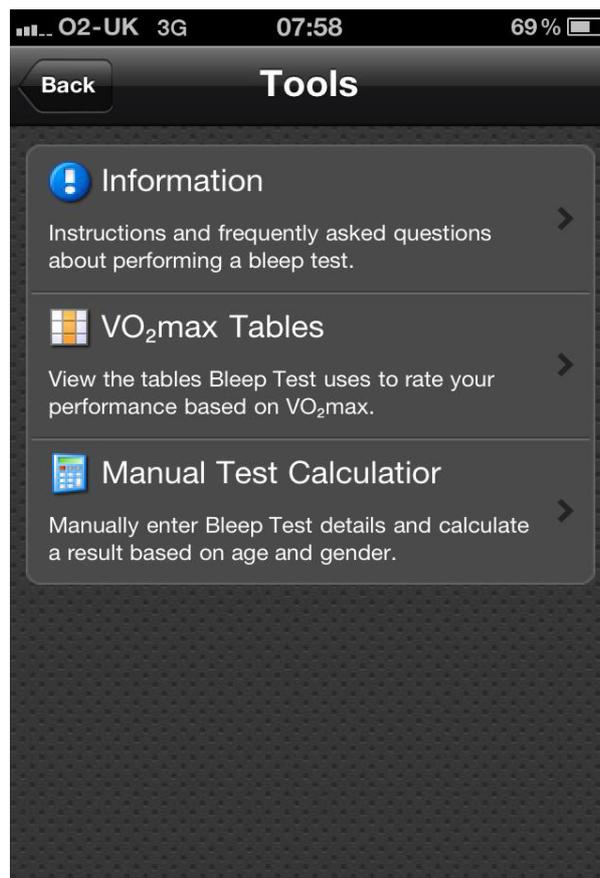
I am several months into using this package, and can vouch that it is very sensitive to how your body changes due to training, daily life and stresses, etc. I was a bit sceptical that the software might have been normed in some way for that mythical “average” person, and raised this concern with ithlete’s Simon Wegerif. His reply:

“HRV does in fact decrease with age in the general population. This used to be considered a direct consequence of the ageing process, but after studying Masters athletes (which at 47, I include myself!), researchers concluded that the association was really with fitness, which does tend to decline with age. I have friends who are competitive cyclists, who still score high 80s & 90s on the ithlete scale, and find it very useful as an objective indicator. To be clear, ithlete makes no assumptions about the user's age or fitness level - it establishes a baseline over the first week, and looks at the amount of variation in order to tell what is a significant change from one day to the next.”

Convincing enough for me. I’m regarding this as potentially money very well spent.

I’ve included some screen shots from ithlete to

give you a general idea.



Ithlete HRM

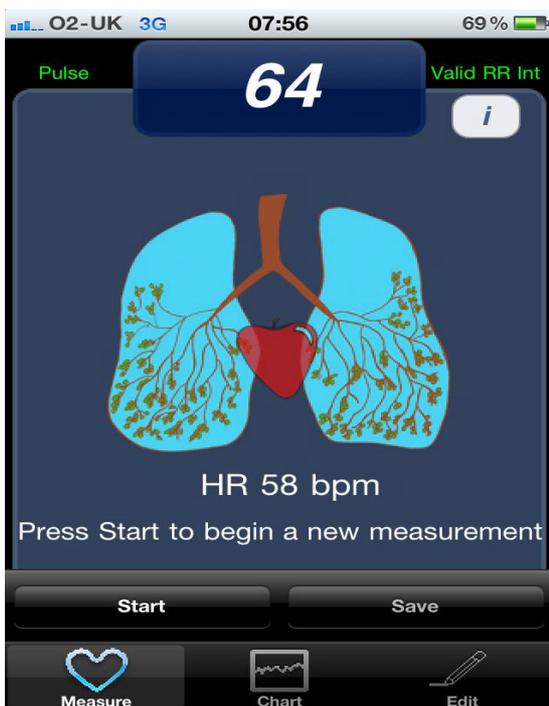
Next up is the ithlete HRM app. No surprise, same company, same equipment (dongle, chest strap and phone/iPod Touch). This app also costs £5.99 as a download. This is a fully specified heart rate monitor, with some really clear and helpful displays. These are so much better than what you get on a HRM wristwatch, being large and in colour. Sure, it can be a pain carrying a smartphone when you train, but many of us do already, for example, to listen to music. Mine lives on an armband, or occasionally a waistband. A nice touch with the ithlete/HRM dongle is that although it plugs in to the phone’s headphone socket, it has a 3.5mm socket itself, into which you can plug your own headphones. Great, not only for still getting music, but also to give you some of the audio feedback from the app. This isn’t something as sophisticated in detail or potential output than, say, the computer software

available for using with the better specified Polar HRMs, but how many of us really get the best out of that anyway? I've tried, and found that it all just took too long.

The app gives all the usual stopwatch/lap-timer/split functions. I'm finding it easy to use. A lot of these things are designed with the distance runner in mind particularly. We sprinters use HRMs in slightly different ways, but I have yet to uncover any major shortcomings.

Treadmill

Finally, ever done a bleep test? If, like me, a lot of your winter training is done in a gym, you'll have struggled to set one up easily, lacking space away from other gym users, or enough distance to really let rip. Well, the "Treadmill" app is a programmable bleep test designed for use on a treadmill in the gym. I use treadmills as seldom as possible, but I've been very pleased at the new window on their usefulness that this app gives. You set the bleep test settings (there are recommended ones built in, to give you the hang of it) and you can use the



test to gauge your VO2 Max, which is an added plus, especially when used in connection with the ithlete app information on your training adaptation over time.

All the user instructions etc, are built in to all three of these applications, and the ithlete app also has some very useful additional information available for download from the website mentioned.

My disclaimer is, of course, that I have no connection with the makers of any of these apps. I'm just a Masters athlete keen to use the technology to see where it might take me. I am also very fond of the saying a former boss of mine used at work from time to time: "If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got". I might write again, particularly when I have had a longer relationship with ithlete. Maybe later in 2011.

A screenshot of the app's data export screen. At the top, it shows the status bar with 'O2-UK 3G', '07:56', and '69%' battery. Below the status bar, there is a button that says 'Export data by email' with a right-pointing arrow. The main content is a table with four columns: 'Date', 'Time', 'HRV', and 'HR'. The table contains ten rows of data. At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with three icons: a heart for 'Measure', a chart for 'Chart', and a pencil for 'Edit'.

Date	Time	HRV	HR
2011-01-06	07:52	64.0	58.3
2011-01-05	07:22	64.2	56.1
2011-01-04	07:33	68.7	57.7
2011-01-03	09:38	69.1	61.9
2011-01-02	09:37	59.6	58.9
2011-01-01	10:11	62.3	62.1
2010-12-31	08:03	57.1	64.9
2010-12-30	07:51	68.8	62.6

Kingston AC & Polytechnic Harriers
25th Anniversary Open Throws Meeting

9th and 10th April 2011

Kingsmeadow Stadium, Kingston Road,
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 3PB

Entry Form

Closing date for all entries 25th March 2011 – No late entries

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Age group: (open to U17 and above only) U17M / U17W / U20M / U20W Senior / Master age group:

Club:

Event: PB in 2010: Event: PB in 2010:

Event: PB in 2010:

Talk 1: yes/no Talk 2 yes/no Talk 3 yes/no Talk 4 yes/no,

£5 per event and £3 per talk

Talk 1: Psychology in competition Talk 2: Coaching disabled athletes

Talk 3: Strength and Conditioning Talk 4: Nutrition preparation for competition

Please send your cheque made payable to KAC&PH by 25th March 2011 to:
Open Throws Meeting, 72 Stag Leys, Ashted, Surrey, KT21 2TL

Provisional Timetable – the final timetable will be posted on the K&P website on 1st April 2011, if you require a printed version please include a SAE with your payment & entry form:

Saturday 9th April 2011

10am hammer
1pm - 2.30pm talks 1&2 (45 mins each)
2.30pm shot
2.30pm disability throwing: shot and discus
5.30pm End

Sunday 10th April

10a.m discus
1p.m.- 2.30p.m. talks 3 & 4 (45 mins each)
2.30p.m. javelin
5.30p.m. end

This is a graded meeting so people will be throwing in groups according to 2010 PB distances to ensure everyone has a good competition, Everyone will get six throws per event.

Enquiries: camilla.thrush@london2012.com or call 01372 273600 up to 10pm

Please note there will be a full hot food menu on the day and a sale of throws equipment and shoes for more information about the talks and the event please visit the K&P website: www.kingstonandpoly.org



Road running: with Walter Hill

With large quantities of snow dumped on the South East and probably more to come to frustrate all road runners we have to think out side the box to keep fit.

Road Races get cancelled, however Cross Country continues to feed our competitive need to succeed.

Isle of Thanet Marathon Championship.

Raymond Pearce	MV50	2:56:27
Trevor Edgley	MV60	3:14:47
Stephen Suttle	MV50	3:22:34
Ivon Whitmore	MV55	3:49:14
Miriam Dorrity	LV55	3:53:03
James Fitzmaurice	MV65	4:21:35

Unfortunately I was unable to attend on the day and Trevor Edgley stepped in at the last minute to present medals. Trevor ran a sound and solid race and then gave his time to find the SCVAC members who often have to leave before the prize presentation.

Well done to Raymond Pearce for his sub 3hr performance on a challenging course and to Miriam Dorrity who remains a very consistent road runner.

For a variety of reasons I think it is time we moved our Marathon Championships to a more accessible location. The Isle of Thanet is at the extreme of our catchment area and I am hoping to find a more accessible location to cater for all members of the SCVAC. Furthermore, I am not convinced that I have included all paid up members within this set of results. If I have made a mistake I apologise in advance. I rely on the SCVAC database and the information I receive from the race promoters.

The Epsom 10 Mile Road Race

Stephen Murtagh	MV45	57:43
Terence Knightley	MV50	59:43
Walter Hill	MV55	65:01
Geoff Newton	MV65	65:50
Trevor Edgley	MV60	68:25
Bryan Newman	MV55	72:52
Patrick Dobbs	MV70	74:56
Keith Scudamore	MV65	75:59
Dave Newland	MV65	79:03
Peter Godbee	MV60	83:52
Graham Williams	MV70	84:43
Richard Pitcairn -Knowles	MV75	88:54

James Fitzmaurice	MV65	124:20
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I was delighted to witness SCVAC members being presented with individual awards. Terence, Geoff and Patrick all won their respective open age category awards. Well Done. Stephen Murtagh ran an outstanding time on a challenging course. The Epsom 10 is a class event and the SCVAC provided a number of class runners. Thanks for turning up. We will be back next year to the Epsom Downs.

SCVAC Road Race Championship Fixtures

The TED PEPPER 10K on 02/05/2011, promoted by Blackheath and Bromley AC will be the first of the series of SCVAC Champs for 2011.

This fixture will be followed by the:

- BURNHAM BEECHES HALF MARATHON. AUGUST
- ABINGDON MARATHON. OCTOBER
- EPSOM 10 MILE. 20th NOVEMBER.

I recommend you check the promoting clubs web site for final details, confirmed date and pathway for entry.

FIXTURES 2011

INTERNATIONAL

Mar 16/20 2011 European Indoor Championships - Ghent, Belgium

ENTRIES CLOSED

May 13/15 2011 European Road Races/Walks - Thionville, France

LOC Entry Form

Please note that both BMAF & LOC Entry Forms MUST be completed & sent to the Overseas Entry Secretary with necessary payment indicated on the BMAF form. Closing date is March 12th.

Jul 6/17 2011 World Masters Track & Field Championships - Sacramento, USA

Apr 3/8 2012 World Indoor Track & Field Championships - Jyvaskyla, Finland

NATIONAL

Feb 5 2011 Northern Athletics Masters Indoor Open Events - Sheffield

Note Closing Date 28th January

Feb 13 2011 BMAF Indoor Pentathlon Championships - Lee Valley

Note Closing Date 27th January

Feb 26/27 2011 BMAF Indoor Track & Field Championships - Lee Valley

Note Closing Date 10th February

Mar 12 2011 BMAF Cross Country Championships - Alexander Stadium, Perry Park, Birmingham

May 21 2011 National Masters Road Relays - Sutton Park

Online Entry Past performances Manual Entry Form

Jun 5 2011 BMAF 10k Track Run/Walk Championships - Oxford

Jun 5 2011 BMAF Outdoor Pentathlon Championships - Oxford

Jun 12 2011 BMAF Throws Pentathlon Championships - Milton Keynes

Jun 19 2011 BMAF 5k Road Championships - Horwich

Jun 25/26 2011 BMAF Track & Field Championships - Alexander Stadium, Birmingham

Aug 21 2011 BMAF Half Marathon Championships - Leek, Staffs (TBC)

Sep 10/11 2011 BMAF Decathlon/Heptathlon Championships - Oxford

Oct 2 2011 BMAF 10k Road Championships - Exmouth

Oct 16 2011 BMAF Marathon Championships - Abingdon (TBC)

SOUTHERN

June 5 2011 SCVAC Track & Field Championships, Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford.

Closing date 14th May.

TRACK AND FIELD LEAGUE FINAL , ASHFORD 2010.

Report by Arthur Kimber:-

The annual event took place at Ashford on Sunday September 5th, a warm and sunny day, and provided excellent competition. Herne Hill repeated their 2009 success and won the men's match with a lead of 21.5 points over Blackheath and Bromley, and Epsom and Ewell won the women's match again, beating Winchester and District by 34 points. Herne Hill men dominated the track events. M50 Kwei Sankofa won the 200m. in 25.4 and the 400m. in a fast 54.7, M35 Dave Peters almost got under the two minute barrier to take the 800m. in 2:00.9 and won the 1500m. in 4:21.6. Ben Paviour continued the distance successes with a 9:18.5 3000m. and Valdis Pauzers won the 2000m. walk in 10:16.8. The club continued its track successes by winning both 4x100m. and 4x400m. relays. In the field M50 Akin Oyediran, four events, and M60 Derek Prentice, also four events, scored valuable points over a wide range.

Notable performances from other clubs came from third placed Ashford's Peter Davey, M35, competing in six events and winning the high jump with 1.65, while his team mate Mick Goodall won the M60 high jump with 1.35. Jon Ward won the M35 shot, 12.03, and Wayne Howe the M50 discus, 14.50. Second placed Blackheath and Bromley's distance men M60 Ken Daniel took the 1500m. in 5:08.8 and Bill Foster the M50 3000m. in 9:46.3. Shaun Lightman won the M50 2000m. walk with 10:58.4. The club took a clean sweep in the javelin, M35 Mike v.d. Dobbelsteen 49.06, M50 Steve Langdon 50.06 and M60 Colin Brand 35.74. M35 Sam Bobb won the long jump with 6.19 and the triple jump with 14.36, Allan Williams the M50 pole vault, 3.60, and Clem Leon the M50 high jump, 1.50. Steve Maisey won a fine sprint double for Herts Phoenix, a 12.0 100m. and a 24.3 200m.

In the women's match the Epsom and Ewell throwers were dominant. W60 Liz Sissons won the W50 hammer, 26.42, the W60 shot and javelin, 9.54 and 26.24 and took third place in

the W50 discus, 20.98. W50 Wendy Dunsford won shot, 9.94 and the W35 hammer, 29.23 and Julia Machin threw 10.63 to win the W35 shot and won the high jump, 1.50. On the track Jane Davies won the W60 1500m. in a fine 5:48.2 and the W50 3000m. in 12:07.4, while W35 Liz Neville took the 2000m. walk in 12:31.4. In the sprints Sue Dassie won the W50 100m, 15.3, and Diana Norman the W35 400m, 62.5. The 4x400m. relay team won in 4:35.9 and the 4x400m. team were placed second in 58.9.

For second placed Winchester W60 Moira West was outstanding, competing in eight events, winning four, 100m, 15.6, 400m, 73.7, high jump, 1.10 and long jump, 3.81. She scored a total of 58 points, almost a quarter of the team total.

For third placed Dartford Harriers W50s Teresa Eades won four events and Anne Goad two, Teresa's wins were 200m, 32.0, pole vault, 1.80, long jump, 3.97, triple jump, 8.62, and Anne's discus, 24.31 and javelin, 28.14.

Fourth placed Radley were very successful on the track, W50 Gwyneth Heuter won four events, 400m, 73.3, 800m, 2:49.5, 1500m, 5:59.6 and 3000m, 12:39.4, and Louise Oliver took the W35 sprint double, 100m. in 13.6, 200m. in 28.7, and the long and triple jumps, 4.72 and 10.41. W35 Claire Elms was outstanding for Cambridge Harriers, fifth team, with four wins, 200m, 30.6, 800m, 2:25.0, 1500m, 4:59.8 and 3000m, 10:32.3 and a second, a 64.9 400m.

TEAM RESULTS

MEN

HERNE HILL	294.5
BLACKHEATH AND BROMLEY	272
ASHFORD	250.5
HERTS PHOENIX	183
CRAWLEY	172
BASINGSTOKE/MID HANTS	118
EPSOM AND EWELL	105
OXFORD CITY	104

WOMEN

EPSOM AND EWELL	273
WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT	239
DARTFORD HARRIERS	237
RADLEY	232
CAMBRIDGE HARRIERS	218.5
HERTS PHOENIX	165.5
SERPENTINE	151

“These shoes were made for --- running.”

Tom Phillips does his five -finger exercises!



Think about it for a moment. How many times in your lifetime has there been a true revolution in sporting footwear? I'm not talking about materials, the number of spikes, light weight road-racing shoes or fancy sprint spikes. All

these were just evolution. I'm talking about revolution.

Last summer, I came across the range of "FiveFingers" sports and recreation shoes from Vibram. The company will be well known to outdoor types as long-time manufacturers of boot soles. Less well known is their pioneering work with minimalist sports shoe technology. In a brief article like this, I can't do the whole FiveFingers range justice, but you need to see their website at <http://www.vibramfivefingers.com/index.cfm> for everything and more that you need to know. What marks FiveFingers out, apart from almost



“Tell you what- I'm really glad I'm not Imelda Marcos!”

ultimate lightness and economy of design is that all of the shoes in the range encase each toe separately. The shoes have little or no padding,

no rigidity, motion control or stuff like that. Some of the range are, in effect, like having the sole of your foot coated in rubber, and er, that's it.

I was having some foot problems, including plantar fasciitis, and a podiatrist suggested a pair of FiveFingers would be good at strengthening up my weak arches and Achilles tendons. Cautionary note – I then bought a pair from e-Bay and found that the market is rife with fakes. My fakes split after three wearings, though I did get my money back. The problem



is such that Vibram have a web site dedicated to helping would be purchasers spot fakes: <http://www.vibramfivefingers.com/counterfeits/how-to-spot-a-fake.html> Take care with your purchase. I can thoroughly recommend buying from UK based importers www.purekit.com who have served me very well with the three pairs I have bought. I have no connection etc... My first pair purchased were FiveFingers KSOs (KSO standing for "keep stuff out" – the shoes are designed to keep out grit etc). See photo. I wore these almost the whole time I was in Hungary for the European Masters Championships, working as a photographer while not racing. In terms of comfort, they were brilliant, though I didn't ever run or warm up in them.

Not long after Hungary, I learned that Vibram were about to launch the Bikila model (in homage to the barefoot Ethiopian marathon victor of the Rome and Tokyo Olympics). These are effectively stripped down running shoes in the FiveFingers style. I was fortunate to buy one of the first pairs coming into Britain, and they have revolutionised my training.

"In your typical running shoe, the heel is higher than the forefoot. In FiveFingers both the heel and forefoot lie on the same plane, so there is no cushioned heel. If you are a traditional heavy heel-strike runner or walker, you might have a biomechanical change to make, but this change is likely a good one. Humans are not meant to heel strike heavily, particularly when running. Try running without shoes on; you will see what we mean. Running barefoot with a strong heel strike will send you to the sofa to let your bone contusion or fracture heal. One of the goals of Vibram FiveFingers footwear is to encourage forefoot striking, meaning your forefoot will contact the ground first then engage muscles in your feet and lower legs as your heel touches down. This style of running may be safer and lead to fewer injuries, in addition to being biomechanically more sound from an energy and force distribution standpoint." (From the Vibram FiveFingers web site).

Much of my winter sprint training is gym-based. I have found the Bikilas to have altered for the better almost every movement I make. They are light, and encourage agility. They encourage beneficial footstrike when doing drills, lunges, Powerplate work etc. I have had no recurrence of my long term back or knee problems this winter, and my feet feel great! In short, I have found almost everything the manufacturers claim on their web site and in print to be justified. So convinced was I that, as a Christmas present, I got a pair of FiveFingers KSO Trek shoes, in brown suede, for everyday use. These are highly recommended from my own use to date! "Barefoot running" or not, I've always liked to wear at least a thin sock. Ordinary socks are, of course, out of the question. Fortunately, two companies, Lizard and Injinji make a range of socks compatible with the FiveFingers shoes. These fit the bill perfectly, without compromising the size and fit of the shoes. All available from Purekit.

At about 6 ounces, or 200g per shoe, these are seriously light, but seem so far to be remarkably



rugged. They are not going to wear into injury-giving shapes like the heels of my ordinary trainers have done in the past. I'm not using mine for high mileage, so can make no claims regarding durability in those circumstances. My Bikilas show no wear whatsoever after four months gym use. Oh, and here is another great thing about these shoes – they are hand and machine washable and drip dry.

Prices depend on model and sophistication, but are all in the £80 to £100 range. Prices in the USA suggest we're again paying pounds for dollars, and it will be worth looking for bargains in Sacramento at the World Masters. If you are looking to experiment, if you're dissatisfied with traditional training shoes, and if natural biomechanics and, better foot strength are what you are after, why not join the revolution?

(Note – the photos accompanying this article are taken from the Vibram web site, because they are so much better than any photos I can take of my own feet.)



"Alright, wot about my FREE shoes?"

"The Southerner" 200 Plus Club

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Ken Crooke Assistant Treasurer

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