

## ST ALBANS STRIDERS – AGM MINUTES

THURSDAY 03rd OCTOBER 2019

8.15pm – Sea Cadet Hut, Westminster Lodge, St Albans, AL1 2DJ

### **1. Acceptance of Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 AGM**

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Robin Newby and seconded by Katie Bunting.  
There were no actions from the previous minutes.

### **2. Chairman's Report – Mike Martin**

Club Achievements in the Past Year

#### **Midweek League**

This year was another difficult year with some tough competition especially from North Herts and Trent Park. North Herts were unstoppable this year with some dominant performances, which was demonstrated in the final league fixture when they had all 12 of their scoring men in the top 22.

Overall we finished 3rd by half a point from Trent Park. Effectively the difference between us came down to one position at the Royston fixture, showing the potential importance of that sprint finish at the end of the race.

The men finished 2nd and the women 3rd. In the vets competition we also finished 3rd. In the mob match we had another close battle with Trent Park but finished in 2nd place

A total of 191 striders took part in the race series and this was by far the most represented club across all the leagues. There were some standout individual performances during the series

Steve Buckle - 3rd Male overall

Jenny Maddocks - 1st V35

Gary Warren - 1st V50

Next season promises to be another tough season with Watford Joggers and FVS joining us in Division 1.

### **Chiltern League**

In the Chiltern League as a combined team with St Albans AC we came 5th out of 14 teams in Division 1 after five fixtures.

Notable individual performances across the series from:

Wendy Walsh – 2nd V45

Dierdre Heydecker - 4th V55

Martin Halling - 4th V60

Our Top placed senior woman was Jen Conway in 7th and senior man was Tom Halling in 22nd

### **Sunday League**

In the Sunday League the women's vet team finished in 1st place across the series. The senior women's team finished in 3rd place.

The standout individual performances for the series included

Jen Conway - 4th Woman overall

Helen Cartlidge - 3rd V35

Wendy Walsh - 2nd V45

### **Track**

On the track this year we had a great set of results in the Masters Athletics League ending the season with a strong performance in Hemel to finish a respectable 4th in both the male and female tables.

We also had several runners able to help the Athletics Club in the Southern Athletics League Division 2. Unfortunately the competition was tough and we were relegated to Division 3 for next season.

Thanks to all our captains, Andy and Brian for their hard work organising us this year

### **Other Notable performances**

We performed well in our club champs races and thank you to Clair for organising these. At the last count there had been 279 different striders either race or volunteer at one of the events.

Results so far include:

- Hatfield 5 – Paul Adams took victory with Will Bowran only a short way behind in 3rd place. Steve Buckle also took a great 5th place. Jen Conway, Jenny Maddocks, Wendy Wash and Helen Cartlidge top 10 spots in the women's race. The men's and women's teams also won both the open and county team competitions.
- Berkhamsted Half Marathon - 65 Striders took part. Paul Adams was the top male strider in 4th place, with Jonathan Scott in 8th and Stephen Hosty just outside the top 10 in 11th. Lucy Jones and Jenny Maddocks had a great battle finishing 5th and 6th respectively in the women's race.
- St Albans Easter 10k – Jen Conway won the women's race and Doug Hobson was the top male strider in 4th place.
- Bristol Half Marathon – 39 Striders took part, with plenty of PBs. Steve Buckle was top Strider finishing 25th in 1h15m. Lucy Jones was the top female strider finishing in 1h27m. Dierdre Heydecker also finished 1st in her age group.

This year we hosted the county cross country championships in the park. We had 49 striders take part. Stacey Ward and Paul Adams had fantastic races and were crowned the county champions. In the team competition we finished 2nd in the women's competition and 4th in the men's. There were also brilliant performances from Jen Conway and Phill Evans who both finished 6th and qualified for the county team alongside Stacy and Paul.

At the Southern cross country at Parliament Hill, Jonathan Scott and Wendy Walsh were our top male and female finishers.

For the first time in a few years we entered both men's and women's teams in the 12/6-person Southern Road relays which took place in Milton Keynes. The teams had a mix of Striders and youngsters from the AC. Everyone done a great job against some very fast very teams.

In the London Marathon we had at least 46 striders taking part. There were some superb

performances. Our top finisher was Kurtis Gibson who finished in 63rd place in a time of 2.28.41, narrowly missing out of Paul Adams club record. Our top female finisher was Anna Buckingham who finished in 3.17.59. There were 11 others who went under the 3-hour mark.

Rob Spencer took victory at the Fred Hughes 10. Gary Warren, Nigel Aston and Richard Butler also picked up individual medals in the County vets' championship.

There was a large Striders turnout at the St Albans Half Marathon where Paul Adams took victory in 1h13m. There were also top 10 performances from Jen Conway (5th), Anna Ward (6th) and Catherine O'Connor (9th) in the ladies' races. Also, Chris Wrighton (4th) and Jonathan Scott (8th) in the men's race. A special mention to Clair Drage who finished 2nd in the walking half marathon in 2h35m.

At the Summer Solstice 10k 98 Striders took part. Jamie Sinclair (3rd), Shane Seagreen (4th) and Doug Hobson (8th) finishing top 10 in the men's race. Anna Ward (2nd) and Lucy Jones (5th) finishing at the top end of the women's race.

The Stampede produced some brilliant performances. Firstly, the remarkable achievement by Jack for completing his 500th marathon and going the extra distance over 40 miles just to make sure.

Richard Evans took a superb 2nd place overall and 1st place male completing just over 70 miles in the 12-hour time limit. Rose McGuinness also had a brilliant race to finish as second female and 8th overall about 60 miles. Striders also dominated the Teams of 4, with the top 4 teams all coming from the club. Steve Buckle was keeping his latest team on their toes and took a 5th straight victory and also treated himself to fastest lap.

Andy Mckillop put in some big mileage throughout the year completing in numerous marathon and ultra-marathon events in the lead up to what is considered by many as the toughest of all, the UTMB. Macca still looked fresh after finishing the course in 44 hours 22 minutes.

More recently we had a number of runners take part in the Hatfield 5k series. There were some fast times. We had several people win series trophies including Steve Buckle, Gareth Parker, Garry Warren, Wendy Walsh and Ruth Kent.

## **Club Records**

There have been a few road records. Deb Steer and Gary Warren have both moved up an age group in the last year. Deb Steer has taken the 5k, 5m and Half Marathon V55 records throughout the year and I'm sure will start working her way through the others over the coming year. Gary Warren also took the mens V50 5k and 20 mile records.

There were also new records set on the track by Jen Conway, Eileen Sindole, Martin Halling, Seb Rowe, Gary Warren, Steve Bowran and Nigel Aston.

There have been many personal achievements from across the club on almost a weekly basis. These achievements range from competing in your first race, completing a distance you've never done before, getting a PB or a course best, do that event you never thought was possible, coming back from injury or beating that person you always end up racing against. The list is huge and as much I would like to remind you of everyone's achievements, we would be here all night!

Thanks to our brilliant publicity team who report our successes every week.

So, well done to all for a fantastic year of racing and may it continue into next year.

## **Other Highlights**

### **County Cross Country**

In January it was our turn to host the annual county cross country championships in Verulamium park. Robin Newby volunteered his services as race director on the day. This event is a tricky one as it involves multiple races across all the junior categories, all running different distances. There was a total of 502 runners across the 12 races. Thanks to expert planning by Martin Halling, Robin and team the day went without a hitch.

### **Fred Hughes**

Onto our races, and our flagship event the Fred Hughes 10 was once again the biggest yet, with all 1000 places being sold well in advance. There were 842 finishers. Luck was on our side and we were able to use the traditional course for the second year in a row. There was also a huge amount of support for the charity collection which raised a huge £1000 for the Bone Cancer Research trust on behalf of Jim King's fundraising efforts. Congratulations to race directors Ben Scott and Amy Heap for a highly successful event.

## **Midweek League**

In May we hosted the opening fixture of the division 1 midweek league. The race had another large turnout with 129 of the 505 runners being from Striders. Thanks to Michelle who took the reins as race director for the day and Marc who took the lead as Volunteer manager.

## **Summer Solstice 10k**

Our fourth Summer Solstice 10k actually took place on the Summer Solstice this year. It was another huge success and the numbers continue to grow. We had 550 finishers this year, an increase of 150 over last year. Congratulations to race directors Stuart Middleton and Steve Alexander. Thanks also to Sue, Sandra and the catering team for a sterling job with the BBQ.

## **Stampede**

The fifth running of the St Albans Stampede was another huge success for the club, with race directors Bernadette and Robin Newby taking the reins for the second year. The entries for the race continue to be at a consistent level. The event has a great atmosphere which was helped by the ideal weather conditions. It was also great to see so many striders come out to support Jack completing his 500th marathon. It was a special day.

This year efforts continued in relation to sustainability and again we ended the day with very little landfill waste being generated. Bernadette has been taking the lead on making us as environmentally friendly as possible, not only at the Stampede but also our other events.

Thanks to all the marshals and helpers from all the races. Everyone's efforts to support these events is greatly appreciated. Special thanks also to the race directors along with Peter, Marc, Martin, Sue, Sandra and Andy.

## **Training**

The club has continued to offer a variety of sessions both on and off the track throughout the year. This has been due to the valiant efforts of our coaches and run leaders. Thanks to the training team for your efforts on organising the sessions and rotas.

There have been some issues with the track over the past year with several closures. Due to the closures at the end of last year we had to resort to having various run interval runs at different locations in the local residential roads. These seemed to work well and were still

popular. However, we hope that track issues are now behind us.

The club now has 33 trained Coaches and run leaders. At least half of them regularly lead runs. There are also a number of others who also help out but have yet to do the training. The club will continue to fund training courses where people have shown a commitment to helping out.

Over the last year the club invested in providing the Run leaders with hi vis t-shirts to help make it clear to everyone who the run leaders are and so that people know who to come to for assistance. Thanks to Joanne for making this happen.

Towards the end of last year, we started the Race with striders training group. Initially targeting the faster end of the club. It involved an 8-week training schedule with a variety of sessions run by Andy Auld and Mike Bridge. The group was very popular especially on the Tuesday sessions. It also was a great way for newer or quieter members to get to know people who run in a similar pace group. Another 8-week course has been running for the last few weeks (for the same group) and is going well. We have also just seen the start of the next group being run by Steve and Caroline.

### **Run with Striders**

This year we had 33 participants sign up, of which 29 completed the course and at least 20 are now regulars at the club.

Massive thanks to Andy Normile, Linda Green and Paul Cremins for running the course with support from Bernadette Newby, Ian Kelly and many others from the club.

It was also great to see a full team of RWS graduates enter a team of 4 at the Stampede. Well done Suzi Alexander, Becky Kelway, Ellie Morris and Mike Trotman.

Congratulations and welcome to all our Run with Striders graduates.

### **Striders Weekend Away**

This year's Weekend Away was at Wilderhope Manor in Shropshire. We pretty much took over the youth hostel, with 62 Striders in total. The weekend was fully catered, and everyone enjoyed a great weekend of runs, cycle rides and other activities.

Thanks to Stuart for his first class organisation of the event.

### **Social Events**

This year saw the first Summer BBQ which was hosted by member Dave Worcester at the Lower Red Lion. It took place on the afternoon of the Summer St Albans 10k. The event worked very well and we plan to make this a regular event.

We also held the other regular events including the Annual dinner, Christmas pub crawl and post marathon social. Thanks to Amy for your fantastic organisational work and making it all happen.

### **Ridgeway Relay**

This year we entered two teams into the Ridgeway relay. This was the first year that we have entered the event. It involves mixed teams of ten running varying distances along an 86-mile section of the Ridgeway national trail from Ivinghoe Beacon to Marlborough. We made a very respectable debut finishing 7th and 27th. As it was the first time we have run the event, it was a bit of a nightmare to plan. Thanks to Katie and Peter for sorting us out.

### **Runsketeer Quiz Night**

Although not strictly a Striders event, almost all of the 130 people who attended were striders. This was held to raise money for the Bone Cancer Research Trust in support of Jim King and his family. Jim's son Ethan was being treated for a rare form of bone cancer. Thanks to the generosity of everyone we were able to raise just over £4000 which went to Jim's fundraising efforts. Jim eventually raised £17,280. I know that Jim was overwhelmed by the support he has received from members of the club.

### **The year ahead**

#### **Races**

The Fred Hughes opened a few weeks ago and I'm sure it will sell out again. This year will be Amy and Ben's final year as race directors. I'm sure everyone will help them put on another fantastic event.

The Summer Solstice 10k and the Stampede will return in 2020.

### **Website**

We continue to look at improvements for the club website. Hopefully everyone is now used to how it works. Over the coming year we hope to have several improvements that will make

things easier for both users and those who maintain the site.

### **Race with Striders - Orange**

This week saw the start of a new Race with Striders group. This group offers an 8-week training schedule aimed at 44 to 52 minute 10k runners. This is to complement the existing Race with Striders (green - Sub 44-minute 10k) group that started towards the end of last year. The purpose is to encourage runners to run in groups of similar pace so that everyone in the group can push each other to improve. We hope that over the coming year we will be able to set up the third and final group. The group color is still to be decided!

### **EA Club Run**

The club successfully applied for the England Athletic Club Run program. This means that EA will send a coach out to deliver three training sessions to members. We hope to arrange this in the coming months.

### **Club Champs**

Best of luck to those running in the final club champs at the weekend at the Standalone 10k. Clair is finalising the club champs schedule for 2019/20 and more information will be circulated very soon. This year's winners will be announced at this year's dinner.

### **Membership**

A massive thanks to Denise for your commitment of time and energy that nobody sees. I know that you have had a lot of headaches over the last year. Thank you.

### **Club Finances**

Another big thank you to Julie for all your hard work. Julie does a lot of unseen work making sure everything and everyone is paid quickly and the club is on top of everything. Thank you, Julie.

As you can see from the accounts we have a good amount of money in the bank. If anyone has any suggestions for how we could use that money then feel free to mention it to anyone on the committee at any time.

### **3. Membership Update**

#### **Summary of the past year 2018-2019 – Denise Tinant**

Club membership has increased this year. There were 580 Striders taking up membership compared with 509 last year. Of these 580 members, 500 were renewing, while 80 registered as new members, down from the 101 new members in the previous membership year.

New members – Run With Striders make up 33 of the 80 new members.

The membership comprises of 436 who paid the full membership fee and 114 who were entitled to pay the reduced fee of having volunteered during the previous membership year. Again, the number of volunteers has increased significantly from last year. The £10 incentive seems to be effective.

A further 30 members serve as executive or associate committee members and we have 12 lifetime members.

The balance of men/women members has evened out a bit since last year with 44% of females – a slight rise from 41% last year.

#### **England Athletic Membership**

This has been going down consistently over the past 3 years and is currently at the lowest it has ever been.

281 members took up England Athletic membership (compared to 296 last year). This is 31% of members.

***It was suggested that when signing up as a member, there should be an 'opt out' button for EA to encourage more people to have EA membership. However, after discussion, the consensus was that there was no benefit to the Club in doing this.***

### **4. Treasurer's Report – Julie Curtis**

Overall financial position is very healthy with a surplus of £14,920

This is largely a result of the increased surplus from races:

- FH10 £12,396

- Stampede (two races) £11,993
- Solstice £2,020

Membership has increased.

RWS income has remained steady, with the course being very well received as in previous years.

Training and development costs have reduced reflecting a lower number of people attending the LIRF course, this is following a push to train run leaders last year.

Social events made a loss again this year, increasing by £1,780 to £7,187, most of this increase was from other social events such as the Summer BBQ and pub crawls. The Annual Dinner was subsidised by the club by £5,251

Other club expenses are made up of cost of website, the storage locker and miscellaneous expenses incurred by members.

### Balance Sheet

Debtors are made up of a deposit for the Annual Dinner, income for the Stampede received after year end.

Creditors relate to membership fees paid in advance and Stampede fees received in 2019-20 that relate to the 31<sup>st</sup> August.

We have a very healthy bank balance of £72,363 at year end, the bulk of this being in a restricted access account.

***Several members queried how we use the funds and how the funds are distributed. A point was made in respect to how we can prevent the balance from continually rising and suggestions were made in respect to increasing charity donations, putting on a free race and providing a free vest/sustainable bottle in a membership pack when new members join.***

***The chairman stated that unless there was a significant need to spend the excess funds, we should not just eat into the money. However, the Committee will look into ways we can reduce the yearly income so that the amount does not increase every year. One way of***

*doing this may be to subsidise kit and/or other social activities.*

*The treasurer pointed out that the balance is much higher this year as we have had two Stampede races within the same financial year.*

## **5. Club Constitution – Michelle Martin**

**(All those present had access to the previous copy of the Club Constitution)**

As some of you will remember from last year, the Club Constitution was revised, updated and pretty much re written to make it clear and concise and to list the boundaries and rules that the Club abide by as well as how we choose to run the Club and the role of the Committee.

One of the elements in the Constitution is that of “Financial” and an issue has arisen that needs to be raised and if agreed, amended.

Every year, the Club Treasurer prepares the financial statements and reports showing all income and expenditure by the Club for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August. These are to be made available on request of any Club member, Inland Revenue, any governing body, etc. to which the Club is affiliated and accountable or to any other relevant statutory body.

At present, our Club Constitution states that these financial statements are audited and after agreed by the auditors, they should be made available to every member etc. However, this year, our auditor, Ben Walsh has not been contactable and so the accounts have not yet been audited.

If the Club constitution states that the accounts should be audited, then the Committee has an obligation to ensure this happens. The cost of a full audit can be very expensive. In the past, Ben has completed this for free, but he is not linked to the Club anymore and was doing this as a favour to us and as such is hard to contact.

I have taken advice from EA on this matter and Mike has discussed this with other Hertfordshire Running Club Chairs. The advice is that Not For Profit Sporting Clubs are not required by law to audit their financial accounts unless they are registered as a limited company and have a turnover of more than £6.5million, over £3.25m of assets etc. (We are a

great club, but not yet that great!)

The accounts should, however, be verified by an independent person. An independent examiner is defined as a person who is independent of the management and administration of the Club and to whom the Club believe has the required skills and experience to carry out a competent review of the financial statements e.g. someone with a recognised accounting qualification. It would be wise therefore, to have someone who is local and known to members, whilst not necessarily a Club Member.

As a Committee, we are therefore proposing to lower the threshold and amend the wording of the Constitution to “The Club Treasurer shall prepare financial statements each year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August and **after being verified by an independent person, with a recognised accounting qualification and not attached to the full Club Committee**, make these available on request from any Club Member, Inland Revenue...etc.”

As per the Constitution, no alteration can be made to the Constitution itself unless it is brought before members at an AGM and it must receive a majority vote of at least two thirds of those present at the meeting. If agreed, the Committee will seek to get the accounts reviewed ASAP.

***Members present were invited to comment on this and concerns were raised in respect to the independent person having any link to the Club at all and whether this would be a conflict of interest. Suggestions were made as to the independent person being from another local Club but again, this may still be too close as they would still be a running club member.***

***The cost implications were pointed out in respect to having the accounts fully audited and those present with relevant accountancy qualifications made the point that they would risk their qualification if there was any wrong doing. Currently, the Club has two signatories to control any transactions, which acts as a safety net.***

***In light of the members concerns, it was agreed that the amendment would specify that the independent person would not be attached to the full club committee.***

Agreed - Michelle asked for a show of hands to agree that the amendment to the Constitution is put in place. A majority of two thirds of all those present agreed for the Constitution to be formally amended as of 3rd October 2019.

## **6. Election of Officers – Mike Martin**

This coming year almost all of the committee will be staying in their current roles, with one exception.

Amy will be standing down as social secretary after the annual awards night. Amy has contributed so much to the club over the last few years and will be missed. Amy will remain as a committee associate as Fred Hughes race director. Thank you Amy.

The committee didn't have to go far to find a replacement. Stuart Middleton has volunteered to take over as social secretary.

Acceptance of the election of Stuart Middleton was proposed by Andy Normile and seconded by Clair Drage.

### **Committee Associate Changes**

There will also be a small number of changes to the committee associates for the coming year. This includes:

- Seb Rowe will Step down from running the Handicap after 2 years.
- Tony Barr will be stepping down from Publicity but will take over the Handicap.
- Andy Normile will stand down from catering but will remain as a committee associate in his role as one of the Run with Striders leaders.

So, this means that Seb is the only person leaving. Thanks, Seb for your help over the last couple of years.

Also, thanks to Tony and Andy for everything you have done in the roles you are standing down from.

These changes will take effect after the Annual dinner on 9th November.

This does mean that next year we will be looking for quite a few people to step up as there are likely to be a number of changes. So maybe now could be a good time to start thinking about

any roles that you might like to take on in the future.

There are still vacancies for publicity and the blog.

***It was suggested that we have a social media team, including someone who looks after Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. A member has come forward in respect to this and the Committee are looking at progressing this role.***

## **7. Any Other Business**

The role of Welfare officer was brought up and the Committee is currently in the process of identifying some. We are still in the process of confirming the role specifics.

It was mentioned that there are not many under 30 year old members and that as a club, we should try to encourage this group. Suggestions included having a separate group, similar to RWS to encourage people in the Club to run together and meet each other.

The chairman acknowledged that this is a tricky area that affects many clubs. The Committee will look into opportunities to enhance this age group within the club.

It was suggested that as there was only a small proportion of the Club present, all members should be asked their views. An email will be sent around encouraging members to give their views and ideas on the specific topics raised.

## **8. Chairman's Parting Remarks – Mike Martin**

Before I close the meeting, I would like to thank Michelle, Denise and Julie for your hard work helping prepare for the AGM. I would also like to thank the committee and committee associates for all of your hard work and dedication throughout the year in helping make the club so great.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual dinner so that we can celebrate the year in style.

AGM close at 9.25pm



