

Archive Race Reports 2013

6th January ~ Lincolnshire Cross Country Champs London Road, Louth, Multi-Terrain.

Only 4 members of STR made it to Louth for the County Championship and only two were running in Town Runners red and green. Matt Blunden, running for the RAF had an amazing run, just missing out on 6th place due to the racing line. He finished in a time of 31.09 in 7th. Iain Bailey, the first official counting Town Runner, also had a brilliant run, finishing 13 in 33.37. Greg Southern, started the year on his supers form from last year. He finished 15th overall however winning the vet 40 class in a time of 34 dead. Greg was also running for the RAF. Andy Taylor brought the team home finishing 24th in category in a time of 37.23. A brilliant run despite the boggy conditions.

Thanks to Andy Taylor for his Report.

The venue was London Road Louth on a mild dry day with little wind but very muddy conditions. The course is challenging with lots of hills and short steep rises typical of major international courses. The day saw a good contingent of Sleaford Town Runners Matt Blunden, Ian Bailey, Greg Southern, Andy Taylor and Cathy Taylor. The first event was the men's senior/vet race which saw an exceptionally strong field with 5 runners all capable of 30 min 10k's. The first back in 7th with a strong performance was Matt Blunden in a time of 31.09, next in 13th was Ian Bailey 33.37, Greg Southern was 15th 34.00 and 1st vet and finally Andy Taylor came in 27th 37.23. The Women's race unfortunately clashed with the men's race so Cathy was unable to participate. This is an excellent event but does seem to attract the performance athletes with few club standard runners.

Thanks to Greg Southern for his Report.

29th Jan ~ Brass Monkey 10k Rockingham Speedway Circuit, Corby, Northamptonshire, Road.

Well woke up to rain and lots of it cold damp and miserable. However our car journey to Corby was anything but miserable, Dean (fluffys hubby) drove with me and Jess, picking up Shaun Louth and Lou McCauley on route. There was a porridge delay as was supposed to pick them up at 8.30 however need to eat my big bear bowl of porridge oh and couldn't find my sports bra which is essential !!!!! SO after a time delay we were well on our way. We had to beep the car horn as we past Lou's sisters house on the A1 !!! Got lost a little as we got near to the stadium but soon found our way with help from Karl Brown.

So we arrived, it looked a little dismal !!!!!!! Very cold windy and very wet. I was really not looking forward to 4 laps round the track mainly due to the weather!!!! We met Karl and Claire Brown and then Cathy and Andy Taylor with the very cute Emily. After a few wee's and moans about how awful the cold wet windy track was going to be we made our way to the start. We all started together, my comment to Shaun was I'm never gonna get a PB today. off we set. It was actually quite fast and running on the track was very comfortable. Dean was soon way off in front then Jess and Lou then me and Shaun. I lagged behind Shaun (who was flying round) the tangerine shorts could soon be seen in the distance, after half a lap as we ran into the head wind, however caught him up again on the down hill back wind part of the track, Ended up doing the first mile in 10.28!!!!!! then Shaun started pulling away. Too fast for me today, However I was quite happy soon warmed up and started to quite enjoy myself. I seemed to keep a good pace for me anyway and consistent too. Believing I was last just carried on head down and watched as the fast runners lapped me !!! as the laps went by I was feeling really comfortable all my winter running was paying off, still keeping a consistent pace Andy Taylor lapped me for the 2nd time !!!! he was going so fast !!!!! so soon i was on the last lap no watch no idea how i was doing time wise, i asked the man at the only water station what the time was he said a few minutes to 12 so I thought I can actually get a PB out of this !!!! Oh my I need to keep going head down. so on I went, got a bit further round now obsessed with getting in under 1.12 I asked another person "anyone got the time? it was 12.02 right i know I can do this also realizing I wasn't last I pushed even harder puffing and panting 3 very lovely gentleman who were obviously on their warm down I've finished lap cheered me on I said I was ok and trying desperately to get a PB they ran with me giving me lots of encouragement ran with me. Jess and Dean Lou and Shaun Claire and Karl all cheering me on !!!!! my male entourage running with me all the way to the finishing line to actually get my PB.

I loved every minute of it. My only downer was the Marshalls who did not once give any words of encouragement, Unlike me and Lou at our Rauceby Ripper last week who even did some little dances as runners went past. I would do the race again its a good PB course. Goody bag was ok nice medal. Journey home was fun again in car entertainment Jess and Fully singing. Lots of chat. All in all a fab day good toonies turn out nice to get together. Thank you Shaun , Lou Claire and Karl my fab hubby and Cathy Andy and Emily xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx its not a glamorous race but a good one but I'm sure that it also the people you are with that makes the day !!!!!!! Love my STR buddies, here's to the next race. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx and aiming for a good Great North run time this September xxxxxxxx

Andy Taylor 35.35, Karl Brown 46.30, Lou McCauley 60.34, Shaun Louth 64.46, Jess Bergner 64.56 & Clare Bergner 69.15.

Thanks to Clare Bergner Aka Fluffy for her Report.

2nd February ~ The Rauceby Ripper Rauceby, Lincolnshire, 8.5 miles, Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ Sleaford Town Runners

Andy Taylor finished second in 56:46.

10th Feb ~ Market Rasen 10k part of the West Lindsey Running Series, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

The Market Rasen 10k marks the end of The West Lindsey Run Series, a series of three local runs including two 5k's in Saxilby and Gainsborough. Postponed from November the event remained popular with 188 local Runners taking part in the final run.

The scenic route which includes lapping the famous race course enjoys both road and woodlands areas – making it one of my favourite multi terrain 10k runs. A well organised event with a great medal at the end.

Paul Ray 45.20 PB

Shannon Baxter 1.08.04

Helen Barker 1.12.47

Thanks to Helen Barker for her Report.

17th Feb ~ Stamford 30k Stamford, Lincolnshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Stamford Striders

Stamford was buzzing with the highly anticipated 30k race hosted by Stamford Striders. The day was sunny & calm which was ideal for this demanding course. The race attracts a large number of people preparing for the upcoming London Marathon so a quality field is guaranteed. Sleaford Town Runners was well represented by Ian Bailey, Greg Southern, Beth Fray, Cathy Taylor and Jayne McArthur. The scenic course undulates throughout its 30k route which although has no single hill that is insurmountable the cumulative effect of the sheer number of them takes its toll. First back was Ian Bailey in 4th in a great time of 1hr 47 which bodes well for his upcoming London Marathon, next was Greg Southern in 8th (1st Vet 40) 1hr 50, Cathy Taylor came in a credible 3hrs, Beth Fray in her first attempt at a longer distance produced an excellent 3hr 2 and last in was Jayne McArthur in another speedy time of 3hr 16. This is well organised event on an excellent course which should be a must in anyone schedule in preparation for a marathon distance.

Thanks to Greg Southern for his Report.

23rd Feb ~ Belvoir Challenge Vale of Belvoir, Leicestershire 15 & 26 Miles, Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ Friends of Harby School & Vale Striders

I was originally talked into this race by Alex Daniels and Mike Folland, both of whom backed out due to lame excuses of injuries and other engagements. It seemed to be the best weather for the route that they had had for quite a few years, although they still managed to find some muddy bits. Overall this is a great low key local race with plenty of yummy food at the check points and finish. With two distances, 15 miles and 26 miles for both walkers and runners it is a good race for all club members to get into trail running. If you like Spires and Steeples you will love this one.

In the 15 mile race, Iain Bailey flew the STR flag by not only going wrong a couple of times but getting back on route to win in a time of 1:43:31. Meanwhile in the real mans race Dave Taylor was the first STR runner in in 32nd place in a great time of 4:12:36, closely followed by Gary Britnell in 75th place in a time of 4:36:03.

Don't be put off these great races by the times as there were 5 people taking over 9 hours to complete the courses.

The race profile can be seen on the Sleaford Town Runners Garmin site at: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/276640409>

Thanks to Gray Britnell for his Report.

24th Feb ~ The Hereward Relay Peterborough, Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ March AC.

After the race being rescheduled for the New Year. The four teams the club had entered were whittled down to just 1. Well 3/4. The original team of Andy, Matt B, Iain B and Greg, had to be changed due to the date clashing with the National Cross Country. The replacement for Matt was going to be John S, who after a frustrating couple of months was really making a superb comeback. Unfortunately, the injury reoccurred and John was forced to withdraw. Due to late notice, all alternatives were in available, so Greg volunteered to run the first and last leg.

So, race day. Greg started off the race finishing in 4th. I then took the baton, for the second leg. I had caught 3rd within seconds after bizarrely the runner went the wrong way on the best marked part of the course. 2nd was in my sights and was reeled in by about the third mile. Unfortunately, the team in first, were off in the distance. I handed the reigns over to Iain for the 3rd leg. He

maintained the position even after a wayward marker sent him of on a half mile detour. Greg, amazingly, readied himself for the final leg. The leaders, were well ahead at this stage, but second was ours/ Greg's for the taking. The 11 mile leg, Greg ate up in under 66mins. Which on top of the 6.5 from earlier, gave him a good long run. The Team finished second overall with Greg taking the vet prizes for both his legs. I can feel a return this year, with full strength, to claim back our club title.

Thanks to Andy Taylor for his Report.

24th Feb ~ Sleaford Half Marathon RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire, Mainly Road / Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ Sleaford Striders AC

It was a bitterly cold morning for the 400 runners who decided to run the Sleaford Half Marathon this year. As we left the start and ran across the sports field the icy wind was evil and the air was blue with runners cursing the weather and joking about turning round and going home. The run soon split up and I, Lou McCauley and Jo Calver were pretty much on our own with Helen Barker not far behind us. The rest of our runners were long gone and well up the pack. Once we left the RAF base and hit the open roads Gary Britnell, Yvonne Fox and Claire Bergner all kept appearing at certain points and cheering us on which is always welcoming. On the long road from Wellingore to Leadenham Lou and Jo pushed on in front of me but I wasn't alone for long what with the cheerleading squad and even a drive by toot and cheer from Claire and Karl Brown. By the time I was heading back towards RAF Cranwell my legs were beginning to tighten up a bit but with the sight of the college in the distance I knew exactly where the finish was and kept the legs turning over. I finally crossed the line in 2 hours 33 mins and 46 seconds. After the finishing we waited for Helen to finish and sure enough Helen crossed the line smiling as usual and looking very strong and comfortable considering the previous 13 miles. Our other runners were John Lawlor 1.30.19, Chris Balfe 1.37.49, Paul Green 1.42.56, Simon Lunn 1.45.12, Jayne Macarthur 2.05.08, Louise McCauley 2.15.07 (PB), Stan Thornton 2.19.38, Joanne Calver 2.27.00, Shaun Louth 2.33.46 and Helen Barker 2.54.11.

The course was very well marshalled and there were three water stations and a couple of Jelly Baby stations too. Apart from the weather this was a very enjoyable half marathon and because of the cold the off road section were solid and not too muddy at all. Thanks and well done to Sleaford Striders for putting on an excellent Half Marathon.

Thanks to Shaun Louth for his Report.

10th March ~ Newton's Fraction Half Marathon Grantham, Lincolnshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Grantham AC

Another freezing cold snowy morning and yes we are off to a race !! As we arrived at the Grantham Sports Stadium they were still sweeping the snow off the track for the start and the finish areas which made me think "what are we doing here"? Once the run got under way I soon warmed up as we ran out of Grantham over the A1 and through Barrowby to the Grantham Canal. The canal path was quite muddy and there were some very large puddles on it so the occasional side step on to the grass verges was in order.

There are two mountains in the Grantham area and this run goes up both them! At 6 miles the first one arrived and with the best will in the world to run up it I got about 100 yards and thought I'll be quicker walking so I did. 4 miles later the second mountain was conquered with a walk as well and I knew it was flat or downhill to the finish. The last 3 miles seemed to take an age but that is probably because I was sick of the snow and the cold wind and just wanted to be thawing out in a warm bath. I finally crossed the line in 2 hours 44 mins which was a lot slower than I had hoped but at least I got round, not all runs can be good ones !!!

Thanks to Shaun Louth for his Report.

Simon England 1.32.14, Michael Baxter 1.32.17, Paul Ray (new Personal Best) 1.43.18, Karl Brown 1.44.22, Lou Mccauley 2.14.22, Yvonne (Foxy) Fox 2.16.49, Jo Calver 2.32.00, Shaun Louth 2.45.59 & Helen Barker 2.57.51.

Thanks to Paul Ray for forwarding our Club member's times.

10th Mar ~ Retford Half Marathon Ordsall, Retford, Nottinghamshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Retford R.U.F.C. in association with Retford Athletic Club

Why Angie Harvey wanted to venture over to Retford for a Half Marathon neither of us had trained for in the sleet and snow was beyond me and why I was talked into it, also remained a mystery. Even Derek our trusted Greyhound looked more enthused for his morning walk in the biting cold than we did leaving the house at an ungodly hour for a Sunday morning, however it felt like we were coming out of retirement with Angie having not raced at all in 2012 and my last race back in March of last year. A short journey north on the A1 and we were soon at Retford Rugby Club familiarising ourselves once more with the delightful scent of portaloos, whilst the tea ladies in the Clubhouse tortured our senses with the whiff of bacon lingering in the air. Having waited in the warmth of the car until the last possible minute we made our way to the start to partake in the ritual hurdle with 350 fellow runners trying to shelter from the wind, yes what could be more fun on a Sunday Morning! We chose Retford as it was a few years since we were last there competing and I quickly remembered why, it was undulating and never once did I feel like we were going

downhill. Angie was long gone as the race progressed on a mission to dip under 1.50, I however settled into my rhythm running without a watch and happy to go with how I felt and without inducing pain. How nice it was to once again grasp at cups at the water stations as I accidentally threw cold water into my face missing much of my mouth, the dulcet sound of runners clearing their throats not to mention those heavy breathers that sit on your shoulder for mile upon mile, arh yes the joy of running! Angie eventually crossed the line in 1.48.37, well under her target time and delighted to set a marker down for the year ahead, I made it to the finish with my dodgy right knee still facing forward and satisfied with my effort of 1.54.35. Beth Fray who we didn't see at the start, lost in the medley of runners, portaloos and queues for the bacon butties came in just behind me in 1.57.17. It was great to be back in the thick of competition competing in a Town Runners vest, but I must remember next time to keep up wind of those runners clearing their throats!

Report by Paul Freemantle.

17th Mar ~ Mizuno Reading Half Marathon Reading, Berkshire, Road.

I headed down to Reading for the Mizuno Half Marathon on Sunday. 12,000 runners braved the cold and rain to run the race, which was the first of the Run Britain Grand Prix. The race took you in and out of the town, finishing at the Madejski Stadium. A couple of hills at 2 & 7 miles would not be enough to call the race hilly, but they were large enough to make your legs and lungs start screaming. I did feel sorry for the Wheelchair racer who I passed on the hill at 7 miles. My legs were burning so I would hate to think how his arms were. Whilst calculating paces and times in my head, as I'm sure every runner does, I worked out that the pace I was going I could be on for a couple of results. The first came about 3/4 of the way through when I broke the hour for 10 miles for the first time 59:35. A target that's been eluding me for a few years. By this point, the pace was beginning to hurt and the mile splits starting to slip. The 12 mile point was torture as the route takes you down a road for 1/2 a mile, around a round about and back up the other side. At which point you see runners, looking much better and quicker than yourself, minutes from finishing. A final drag up and into the stadium showed the finish line. The stadium was packed with running spectators all covering from the rain, but all in good spirits to give a cheer for every new runner entering the stadium. I crossed the line in a new PB of 1:18:37 and finishing 133 overall. A run well worth doing, especially if you wear a pair of Mizuno shoes, which after registering gets a limited place in their VIP lounge. This gives you a free massage, photo, refreshments and most importantly a warm and dry family to come back to!!

Thanks to Andy Taylor for his Report.

23rd Mar ~ Charnwood Marathon Quorn, North Leicestershire, Multi-Terrain.

Dave Taylor talked me into this marathon saying it was a good testing course. It would be a great course with great views of the Leicestershire countryside with over 760m of climbing in total, encompassing the highest point in Leicestershire and quite a few of the nearly as high ones as well apart from the fact that the day had snow, wind, zero visibility in places and blizzards and did I mention the snow and ice and hills and in the more remote areas there were bears, abominable snowmens, wolves and wimpy runners. Luckily it had been so cold there were very few muddy bits and it was difficult to go wrong as you just followed the tracks in the snow and the roads were quiet as most of the backroads were impassable.

Overall though it was a great race, with all the marshals being great with loads of encouragement and cakes and hot drinks at the checkpoints.

This is definitely a race to test your up to marathon running off road. I will be there again on a nice day, another good friendly race with plenty of people to chat to on the way round.

This was a new personal worst time of 5:47, but considering the hills and the conditions I was really happy.

The race profile can be seen on the Sleaford Town Runners Garmin site at: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/287846863>

Thanks to Gary Britnell for his Report.

6th April ~ Caythorpe Canter Caythorpe, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

Another great race that I was talked into by Alex Daniels, Dave Taylor and Mike Folland, all of who had lame excuses for not turning up. The only bit of advice was that there was a bit of a hill at 14 miles. It was a lovely day for the race and I was flying along the first half in 1:55 so was thinking I was on course to crack 4hrs for the first time in a marathon. The problem came just after the 14 mile checkpoint and the hill from hell!!!!!! it was horrendous and seemed to go on and on. Then after that it seemed to be up hill all the way to the finish, apart from a little downhill bit into Ancaster. This was a great race with good marshals and great food and drinks at the check points. I did a new marathon PB of 4:12 and probably a new PB of all you can eat at the finish with free cake, crumble and sandwiches washed down with a lovely cold cider!!! Definitely one for next year. Plus it was my first ever top ten finish!!!! 10th overall, and before you say it, yes there was more than 10 people in the race. There was a low turn out due to the Lincoln 10k and a few other local races though.

The race profile can be seen on the Sleaford Town Runners Garmin site at: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/294053783>

Thanks to Gray Britnell for his Report.

7th Apr ~ Belvoir Half Marathon Hose, Leicestershire, Road.

Another Sunday morning lay in and subsequent fry up was shelved for the... ahem love of running as Angie Harvey and myself set off for our second Half Marathon of the year, heading this time to the village of Hose and the Belvoir Half Marathon. It was at least warmer than it was at Retford weeks earlier in Siberian March, that fact was confirmed when Derek our greyhound showed enthusiasm for his early morning walk and the only barometer reading needed that Angie and I could abandon our long sleeved tops and wear just a vest. Having familiarised ourselves with the aroma of the portaloos as we queued with the masses a sharp wind made us re-think our attire, both deciding to don short-sleeved t-shirts under our vests. A few miles into the start of the race and it became clear a vest would have been suffice as the sun began beating down and with it the race took on the look of the film 'The Full Monty' as competitors began removing the excess layers of clothing they had hastily donned prior to the start. Our race strategy was simple to better our outing at Retford with Angie having trained and I had not, only managing one Club run in two weeks by way of training. Not to be deterred I set off running with a watch this time and determined to keep Angie in my sights, all well and good but after six miles Angie was all but out of sight and my over optimistic mile pace I had set myself was taking its toll. After eight miles my mile pace was dropping, by ten miles my legs were running a different race to my upper body with my target time now but a distant memory and finishing my prime objective. I crossed the line slightly disappointed in 1.55.51 with Angie lowering her season's best time to a satisfying 1.47.47. The course itself is slightly undulating but scenic with it and well supported by both competitors and supporters alike making for a great atmosphere, however the advice is to pre-enter next year if tempted to run as on-the-day entry is pricey! With Angie's times now going in the opposite direction to mine there is only one thing to do? Start training!

Report by Paul Freemantle

7th Apr ~ Blackpool Half Marathon Blackpool, Lancashire, Road.

Host Club ~ Fylde Coast Running.Org

There was a change of venue this year from The Hilton to Bloomfield Rd the home of Blackpool FC. It was a lovely sunny morning, the air was still and the sea was like a mill pond. Perfect running conditions. The race entry had doubled to 2000 runners and had filled up a month before race day. The run was the usual loop of the sea front which is from the Pleasure Beach all the way up to Bispham and then back into town and back to the football ground. The run is partly on the road and partly on the promenade and is completely traffic free. Yet again this run was very well organised and seems to have gained popularity. I can imagine a lot of runners have already pencilled it in for next year.

Shaun Louth 2 Hours 51 mins and Tania Addlesee 2 Hours 33 mins.

Thanks to Shaun Louth for his Report.

7th Apr ~ Bourne Woods 10k Bourne, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

Simon England and Alistair Whitaker decided against the busy streets of Lincoln for the quieter more scenic trail paths of Bourne Woods, for the Bourne Woods 10km organised by Rotary Club of Bourne. The route was mainly slightly uneven paths with one or two muddy areas but only enough to break your stride pattern for a few seconds. The second half of the race was definitely hillier than the first half. 82 finished the race with Simon England finishing 4th (39:49) and Alistair Whitaker just under the hour (just!) 71st (59:59)

The benefits of the race, is the beauty of Bourne Woods. The negatives were that the marshalls seemed disinterested and despite being sponsored by Tesco and Sainsbury only bottled water was available at the end, but with all proceeds going to local charities it is always difficult to grumble.

A medal for all finishers was nice, but very generic with the wording 'Fun Run', there was nothing fun about the second half of the race (from my perspective!)

Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for his Report.

7th Apr ~ Friskney Half Marathon Friskney, Boston, Lincolnshire, Road

Host Club ~ Boston & District AC.

Friskney Half was a small race with just 102 local runners taking part. It's a beautiful course that takes you out on a circular loop through the Lincolnshire Fens. A lovely run, however there is no shade or shelter therefore can be affected by strong winds and a beating hot sun. Known for being a flat and fast run it's a highly competitive amongst the front runners attracting some very fast people! Good for a PB, regrettably not the case for me however happy to have completed the course with a smile & medal in a time of 2.57 hrs.

Thanks to Helen Barker for her Report.

7th Apr ~ Lincoln 10k Lincoln, Lincolnshire, Road.

This year proved a pain with parking and actually meeting up with other club runners due to 2 different car parks and them being quite a distance from each other. The weather was a bit chilly to start but perfect running weather. Some pretty good results by all! The results were as follows: Greg Southern 34.14, Andy Taylor 35.31, John Lawlor 38.51, Chris Balfe 40.44, Yvonne Fox PB of 55.30, Louise Mccauley 55.39, Lou Henderson 55.53, Stan Thornton 58.12, Anne Barwell 1.12.35 and Shannon Baxter 1.13.38.

Thanks to Yvonne Fox for her Report.

14th Apr ~ Edinburgh Rock & Roll Half Marathon Scotland, Road.

We had a very wet and windy morning and we were cold and damp before we had even started running. The location of the race start was in Holyrood Park and there was nowhere to shelter from the elements before the race. The wind was so strong it had blown some of the port-a-loo's over!! Once we had found our corral, we spotted the 2:30 pace team leader. We chatted with him a bit and found out that unlike the US pace teams we were used to, who keep a consistent pace throughout the race this leader was just planning on finishing by 2:30. Based on this we decided that we would just try and keep him in our sights!!

The weather broke a little just around the start of the race, but soon came back with a vengeance. The wind and rain intensified from around mile 6 and along with the hills on the course made the race extremely challenging. There were plenty of marshals on the course, lots of support and the water stops were well organised and manned despite the terrible weather. However the race finish wasn't very well organised, I don't think they had planned for the wind and rain!! Tents had blown down, the band due to play was cancelled as it was too dangerous to be on the stage!! There was no foil wraps at the finish line, we had to hunt around and then found someone handing them out randomly. There were queue's everywhere and nobody knew what people were queuing up for. Anyway we just jumped on a queue and hoped for the best. This was only the second time this race was held in Edinburgh and I'm sure they will have learnt lots of lessons from the experience.

I had hoped to finish in under 2h.30, but the weather and hills got to me and I finished at 2h.36. This is a great race if you want the challenge of unpredictable weather with lots of hills, Edinburgh is also a brilliant city to visit and do some sightseeing.

Thanks to Jo Calver for her Report.

14th Apr ~ Grantham Cup Belton Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ Grantham Running Club

This is a great family day out as you get the family in for free to the Belton Horse Trials on the day. A great race with a few boggy bits and a couple of killer hills. Great overall though. Dave Taylor was the first STR runner home in 34th place in a time of 53:13, followed by me in a time of 57:50. Big thank you to Steph Atherton who was marshalling who was giving loads of encouragement while trying not to laugh too much at us running passed covered in mud!!!

The race profile can be seen on the Sleaford Town Runners Garmin site at: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/301051013>

Thanks to Gary Britnell for his Report.

20th Apr ~ The Derwent Dambuster Derwent Valley, Sheffield, Multi-Terrain.

Well after a little confusion around the location my own fault lol thinking it was at Derwent Water in Keswick. Need to know my geography and history. We set off early for the Peak District. Beautiful morning blue sky and sunshine. Quite cold but perfect running conditions. Arrived at 9.30 collected my number. Beautiful scenery at the edge of the reservoir. Race organisers very friendly good parking too and nice toilets. I was there with my hubby Dean and Son Dan. Only 200 runners so a small run in terms of numbers. Race started at 10.30 still lovely and sunny and blue sky.

So off we set just what I needed uphill start!!! Quite a steep incline too x so from I was a back marker very early on (no surprise lol) Anyway the first part was through pine trees and very sheltered woodland path. Undulating with varying degrees of inclines and downhills. However such beautiful scenery sunlight on the water rolling hills took my mind off the nasty uphill parts. Then onto quite a stony path not easy to run as lots of loose stones ensuring I didn't trip and twist my ankle (have been quite good at doing that on the past). Lots of Marshall points to show the way all if which had water in case a drink was needed. My pace was quite interesting varying from very slow to quite quick depending on the hills ha ha xx After the half way point it became a little easier still tough but Tarmac smooth path again lovely running through the trees around the water. I seemed to pick up my pace got into my stride and headed for the finish. About 1/2 mile from the end I was met by my husband who ran the last bit with me and my sister and brother in law who cycled over to cheer me on. Fluffy had quite a reception coming into the finish flanked by 2 bikes and my hubby and Dan cheering from the finish line I crossed the finishing line in 2 hours 1 min and 13 seconds I was last xxx

I was greeted by a very nice gentleman who asked me to choose a prize I said was that for coming last ? He said no a thank you for taking part xx I chose a fab craghoppers shirt for my hubby. Then it was straight for the yummy cake stand x beautiful cakes and hot and cold drinks xx very friendly race organisers lovely atmosphere a really nice run. It was a tough trail run but well worth the journey for such a beautiful place to run. I would highly recommend this run xx hope to rally a few from the club to join me next year xxx Oh and a nice pub just up the road where a fab pint of Guinness and black went down very well, 10 miles official time 2.01.13.

Thanks to Clare Bergner Aka Fluffy for her Report.

21st Apr ~ Virgin London Marathon London, Road.

Firstly, well done all club members who finished this amazing event and, of course, Matt, Iain and Greg with their Championship performances. I hope the London newcomers appreciate it as much as I did!

Well, this is a very personal account of how not to do it and sort of get away with it in the end. All was going well in mid-January until a calf injury in a silly skiing incident meant next to no running until March. The resulting drastic training program was potentially suicidal but there was nothing else for it - like going up from 4 miles to 20 in 10 days - if UK Athletics had caught me imposing the programme on anyone else I'd have lost my coaching qualification. There were plenty of aches, pains and niggles but nothing serious and then a really good taper for 2-3 weeks got rid of all the niggles.

The race day conditions could not have been better. The atmosphere and crowds seem better every year. Anyway, I took it really steady, crucially easing back between 10 and 20k when it is so easy to get carried away. Things were still relaxed and easy at 20 miles but then progressively the missed training made itself felt. The last miles were as awful as ever! In the end it was 4:41, 22 minutes slower than last year, and I just missed a negative split but 40 seconds positive was close. Going to give Brighton a go next April then looking forward to London again in 2015.

Matt Blunden 2:32:49, Iain Bailey 2:39:10, Greg Southern 2:42:42, Paul Green 3:59:29, Mike Folland 4:41:10, Sarah Whatton 5:03:04, Stan 5:07:31, Bethan Fray 5:09:21

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.

28th April ~ North Lincolnshire Half Marathon Scunthorpe, Road.

Well up at 5am on a Sunday!!! Soo early. Had to be done as needed porridge before the run. Lou McCauley very kindly picked me up just after 6am then off to collect Lisa our official cheerer and Al. Good journey to Scunthorpe no problems finding the race HQ. Well organised number collection with good toilet facilities (always a bonus for the ore race nervous wee's!!) The actual start line was quoted as being 3/4 mile from race HQ so off we set for the start line. It was actually a bit further than that and no toilets at the start line. Which some people were not happy with however there was a wooded area either side of the road and as long as you took care with the nettles (especially the ladies) nervous runners could have a sneaky wee. Lou Al Lisa and I met up with Helen Barker and Chris Balfe at the start and had a pre race team picture. Then it was ready for the off!!!

Off went the starter and away we went. Out of Scunthorpe towards the motorway fly over. Quite windy but lovely and flat until the fly over but only a steady gentle incline. It was nice steady flat and fast course just as it was described by the organisers. So I started off nice and steady mindful of me pre race advice from Paul Freemantle. It was head wind for the most part of the race which at times was quite tough. The water stations were well organised as were the Marshall points lots of encouragement from marshals too all very friendly. Half way I was at 1.15 so knew if I kept a steady pace I might get 2.30'ish. I tried hard to keep up my pace and was under 2 hours for 10 miles which was fab really was enjoying the run. After 10 though it got harder to keep up my pace legs were tired and the head wind took its toll. I slowed down but was happy with my progress.

Heading for home the last mile was tough especially the sharp hill just before the football ground but there were quite a few people cheering which was a welcome site to tired runners. Then I spotted Lisa Harmon and Al Whittaker who gave me a huge cheer and a big booster such a welcome site. The race finished in the football ground. Crossed the finish line with a fab PB. Very happy. Lou and Al and Chris. Had already finished so we met up and Lou and I queued up for a fabulous post run sports massage which was lovely x then we cheered Helen Barker in. Post race brownies at the finish line were lovely x nice goody bag good t-shirt. Even better post race mars bar from our fab cheer leader Lisa Harmon who very kindly came with us and cheered us in thankyou Lisa and who very kindly carried our jumpers and hoodies from the start and then had them ready at the end so we didn't get cold, and big thank you to Louise McCauley for driving xxxxx All in all an excellent well organised half marathon would recommend it xxxx

Chris Balfe 1.31.39 (PB?), Paul Ray 1.39.28 (PB), Louise Mccauley 2.04.37 (PB), Alistair Whitaker 2.11.44, Claire Bergner 2.36.05 (PB) & Helen Barker 2.57.03.

Thanks to Clare Bergner Aka Fluffy for her Report.

4th May ~ Endurance Life Coastal Series - Stage 11 North Yorkshire Moors Ravenscar, North Yorkshire, Multi-Terrain.
Hosts ~ Endurance life

“Who fancies running the Whitby Half Marathon”? asked Tania. Foolishly I said “Go on then”! So Tania signed us both up. A day or so later I decided to investigate this run as I hadn’t heard much about it before. As I was reading all the information on the event all became clear and as what first sounded as a nice road run around Whitby turned into a monstrous 13 mile run from Ravenscar to Robin Hoods Bay and then out across the North Yorkshire Moors before returning to Ravenscar. Endurance life hold a series of races throughout the year called the Coastal Series. At each event you can choose Ultra Marathon, Marathon, Half marathon or 10km.

On the day of the run the weather was perfect conditions. We parked up in Ravenscar and went to registration to find out what was going on. We were given a tag to put on our wrists to use at checkpoints, a T-shirt and some energy products. We listened to the race briefing and went down to the start with everyone else. Once the run started the majority of runners went flying off and left a few of us at the back. The first stretch of the run is along The Cleveland Way which is the coastal path from Ravenscar to Robin Hoods Bay. It is extremely scenic and picturesque which helps as it take your mind off the tough terrain. Once at Robin Hoods bay the run moves in land and cuts through fields, farms and woodland. The last 3-4 miles are across The North Yorkshire Moors and if you have any energy left by now the moors will happily drain you of it. The final distance was 14 miles in total and we crossed the finish line in 4 hours 4 mins. The winner of the half finished in 1 hour 56 mins, I asked him what his road running times were like and he claimed he can run a road half in 1 hour 15 mins!!

At no point on the run are you running on level ground. You are always either running up or running down. It is an awesome route and I would recommend it to anyone to challenge themselves on it. As much we hated parts of it at times and have gone on about how tough the route is. We are going back next year to run it again because once you’ve finished and you are sat in the car on the way home you start thinking to yourself “what a great event”! I hope some more of the club want to come and give it a go next year.

Thanks to Shaun Louth and Tania Addelee for their Report.

12th May ~ Sleaford & District Lions Club 10k RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

9 members of Sleaford Town Runners, family members and friends showed their support for the locally organised Sleaford Lions 10k starting at the Qaboos at Cranwell. It was heart warming to have such support for STR runners of all abilities out supporting local running and the man in the orange shorts (Shaun) who had helped organise and deliver the event. The multi terrain run headed out over the gliding field where a few of us realised early on that we had set off too quickly (rookie mistake that many of us fall for in the smaller races for fear of been left behind) and so we settled down in to a more normal 10K pace. Dougie admitted he thought he was 15 again and despite his suggested 10 min mile pace he shot off somewhere in the 8.30s however thankfully for Jayne and I this meant we could pass him and say hello! Sarah had gone on ahead at this point (I swear been taller helps her far too much hehehe) Jayne and I sat at a happyish pace and battled against the head winds as we crossed a field and was thankful when we turned on to the road. At this point I was feeling quite happy and chirpy in my running however as we continued on to the road my legs just decided they had had enough and I ended up stopping around 4.5 miles. I couldn’t even use the excuse that I had competed in two sprint triathlons at that point because Jayne had ran in a marathon only on the Monday! Just as my legs were wobbly we turned back on to an off road section and the end was in sight however some lovely up and down sections and then a wonderful hill in to the woodland reminded you that you weren’t quite there yet! Just as I was shouting at myself for hurting I saw the orange shorts and their wearer coming in to sight and telling me to move my arse so that is indeed what I did and loved crossing the finish line with everyone still there supporting (although I think Greg was only there still so he could collect his winnings after coming first in 34.46) From what I could gather, most people had ran a good race and the results seem to suggest that however, it appears the course may have been slightly less than 10k so this has to be taken in to consideration. Overall this was a great race, the changeable weather made it challenging at times, registration was a little slow but well organised and it is definitely one for next years diary!

Greg Southern 34.46, Simon England 38, Michael Baxter 39.14, Paul Green 44.19, Sarah Whatton 53.07, Jayne McArthur 55.24, Lou Henderson 56.44, Dougie Culpan 58.34 & Shannon Baxter 67.00.

Thanks to Lou Henderson for her Report.

19th May ~ Deepings 10k Deeping St James, Peterborough, Road.

Only club runner there 45.36, 65th overall. Pleased with that only 16 secs off my best time of 45.20, conditions a bit warm for me.

Thanks to Paul Ray for his Report.

26th May ~ Bupa Great Manchester Run Manchester, Lancashire, Road.

Sunday 26th May was the Bupa Manchester 10k, so I thought I would turn up and show me face along with 40,000 other runners / walkers / really slow walkers! The weather was very warm around 18 degrees, which considering recent British weather, this was HOT!! I started off in the first wave along with my good friend Haile Gebrselassie, some of you may have heard of him! Well Haile didn't hang around to run round with me he just sped off, so I was left to run it on my own. After a steady start managed to get in a good group around 3km, and just hung on, we went through 5km in 16:10, so a good time was potentially on, just had to complete the second half around the same speed. (Easier said than done.) Got to the 5 mile point in 26.15 I only know this because there was a random old man stood there who had made his own 5 mile sign and was shouting out the times. The group I was in had started breaking up, with just under 2 km to go, so now it was a case of hanging on to the finish, which I just about did. I finished in 32.48, which I was happy with.

It's a reasonable course, not the fastest and if you are further down the field it can be very crowded. But I would do it again.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

26th May ~ Edinburgh Marathon Edingburgh, Scotland, Road.

The marathon is part of the Edinburgh Festival Weekend which includes a 10k, Half and Full Marathon. The weekend attracts around 28,000 runners so there is a great party atmosphere! I ran the Marathon which was the final event of the weekend. The route takes you though the city and then out on to the coast, its well marked at all key points and there is plenty water/gels and support from Holiday Makers and Locals. For those that finish, you get a very smart royal blue and white T-Shirt and Medal....each shirt states if you did the 10k, Half or Full which is a nice touch. The finish is 8 miles out of the city which means you have to pre order a ticket for the shuttle bus which is £4.50 and a 25 minute uphill walk from the finish line (and it doesn't drop you quite back from where you started !?) My advice is to pre book a taxi. I would rate this 9 out of 10, it was amazing ! I would do it all over again. Time: 6:40.07 hrs.

Thanks to Helen Barker for her Report.

29th May ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 1 Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

Host Club ~ Lincoln Wellington AC

The first of the LWAC 5k race series took pace on Wednesday 29th May. It was a miserable evening, cold, wet and windy not the best for fast times. I was the only Sleaford Town Runner there (where were the rest of you)? I managed to drag myself round in 16 minutes exactly, which I was happy with. 3 more races to go, I would recommend them, a nice low key 5k event.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

2nd June ~ Woodhall Spa 10k & 3 mile Fun Run Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, Road.

Once again Woodhall 10km race proved a well organised and well attended race, with 1054 people running on the day it is definitely a race that has something for everyone. Whether you use it as a first time 10km race or use the flat, fast roads as a potential PB gainer, the marshalls and crowds will make sure you have a wonderful time. Usually a STR heavy race this year we seemed a little thin on the ground but all members had a great day and gained a sun tan as the weather was working in our favour. A massive thank you to Lou McCauley for unknowingly pulling me around! Be aware that this race fills up so don't leave it to 'on the day' applications!

Chris Balfe (39:50), Louise McCauley (54:56), Lou Henderson (54:57 PB), Stanley Thornton (57:37), Babz Cook (1hr 4)

Thanks to Lou Henderson for her Report.

Well after arriving at Woodhall Spa nice and early to enter the 10km race on the day we were left a bit disappointed to be told there were no entries on the day left. So there was only one thing for it, we will enter the 3 mile fun run instead!! Judging by the amount of serious looking runners on the start line I think a lot of people who had been turned away from the 10km race had decided to run it. This is what I would call a fun run !! There were kids dashing about, swerving in front of all the adults, some were throwing up because they were running so hard, there are first time runners being helped along by others and everyone just seems to be having fun and a bit of laugh. Myself and Tania crossed the finish in 31 minutes and very happy with the run in the sun. It is a really nice 3 mile loop and and for £2 it is a real bargain. There is a water stop half way round and more water and a medal at the finish.

Highly recommended as a 3 mile run, after which we went to the 10km finish line to cheer in all the STR runners taking part.

Thanks to Shaun Louth and Tania Addlesee for their Report.

7th June ~ Notts 10 Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, Road.

Host Club ~ Notts AC.

On Friday 7th June, I went to The National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham for the Notts 10 mile road race. It was a very warm but windy evening, the course was 2 and a bit laps around the Water Sports Centre. It was a boring course for me, however it was flat, and I suppose a fast course if you are after a PB. I had a reasonable run, and finished 2nd in a time of 55:33, which was ok, but I was hoping to dip under 55. I was the only Town Runner there, I think, so will someone else turn up to my next race, so I don't have to write a race report!!!! Only joking I love writing them!

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

9th June ~ Potters 'Arf Marathon Stoke-on-Trent Road

I travelled to Stoke-on-Trent to take part in the "Potters 'arf" a 1/2 marathon which, unusually, gave out different medals according to your race time. With this in mind I set myself the target of getting the sub 2hr medal, which I thought I could comfortably achieve. The race was hot and sunny and with the first two miles cruising downhill it was all looking good. I was then introduced, dramatically, to the hilly countryside surrounding the beautiful town of Stoke on Trent. Two very large hills later and I was working hard but still on for around 1:53ish. A nice long flat straight, and a drink, later and I was feeling positive. That was until at 11.5mi I took a sharp right turn onto "heartbreak hill", the steepest hill I have ever seen, going on for a full mile! That put paid to me and I managed to crawl in to finish in 2:02:16. Don't tell anyone but they still gave me a sub 2hr medal - I think I deserved it.

Thanks to Cathy Taylor for her Report.

**15th June ~ Three Lakes Classic 15 Rother Valley Country Park, Killamarsh, Sheffield, Multi-Terrain
Host Club ~ Killamarsh Kestrels Running Club.**

With Angie Harvey and I having talked Iain Bailey & Greg Southern in running this event it would have been rude to have opened that bottle of wine on Friday night and accidentally slept in on Saturday, tempting though that thought was! A mixed bag of weather greeted our arrival, cool and breezy when the sun was behind the clouds and warm when it appeared, thankfully though the sun remained hidden for large parts of this 15 mile multi-terrain race, with a nice downpour to refresh us half way round! Ian and Greg were soon out of sight not seeing them again until around mile seven as the race doubled back on itself for about half a mile. By now Iain was looking comfortable at the front of the race with 2nd and 3rd close by and Greg also running strongly not far adrift in the chasing pack. Angie was about 50 yards or so ahead of me but waited at a water station around mile seven as her sciatic nerve started to niggle on the steep uphill sections. We ran together for the remainder of the race enjoying the scenic splendour of the lakes, woodlands and surrounding countryside which makes for an enjoyable event. Iain Bailey held onto his lead to win the race clocking a superb time and new course record of 1.29.53, with Greg Southern also impressive with his time of 1.37.29 and 10th overall. Angie Harvey would grimace through the uphill sections to finish the race with some rather amusing yelps when her sciatic nerve was stretched through some of the woodland sections and finished in 2.21.31. I was to tire around mile 12 with my favourite excuse of lack of training began to tell, but with a sneaky raid of Angie's bum bag at a stile for some jelly babies I had a second wind and followed Angie across the line in 2.21.32. Yvonne Fox was also running the event and crossed the line in a respectable time for this multi-terrain distance event in 2.36.15 and was rightly pleased with her day's efforts. All in all a superb event and if a lover of multi-terrain events, then this is one to pencil into your diary for 2014.

Report by Paul Freemantle.

16th June ~ Cross Bay Challenge Half Marathon Morecambe Bay, Lancashire & Cumbria, Multi-Terrain.

I wasn't quite sure how my legs would feel for this HM with running the Classic 3 Lakes the day before (Double booked by mistake)! Anyway when I got up I was surprised that my legs didn't ache at all! Off we went to the start, which should have been at 11am. It was delayed by half an hour due to one of the gully's being too deep. We eventually got started running on very soggy sand, my legs felt good and not heavy at all. The run was across Morecombe bay... you had to beat the tide! The majority of the run was through very wet sand splashing in the sea with occasional gullies where the water came up to my knees. At around 6 miles I suddenly felt a bit light-headed and my breathing went a bit heavy. I just ran through it and soon felt ok again. Round about mile 8/9 there was the 'deep' gully. This was hip deep with a strong current. Where we all started to cross in a straight line soon became apparent how strong it actually was as we were then wading diagonally. That crossing was about 300 metres! The last few mile markers were short to my garmin which actually made the race distance 12.23 miles. My time was 2hrs 13.11 with an average pace of 10.53 min mile. Really pleased with this and my previous days run as I never in a million years though I would be able to run 2 races of these distances in the same weekend!

Thanks to Yvonne (Foxy) Fox for her Report.

**21st June ~ The Summer Solstice 10k Long Bennington, Lincolnshire, Road.
Host Club ~ Grantham Running Club**

A great result for the club with an impressive one-two from Iain and Greg. Conditions were about as good as you could hope for - light winds, the showers stayed away and it was pleasantly warm without being too hot, although it felt pretty hot as we've had little chance to acclimatise. There were good steady performances from Simon and Ian, who'd come all the way down from Leeming. Further down the field Lou, with an event PB, Stan and Mike came in under the hour. It's a great local event quite close to home at Long Bennington. The gently undulating course might feel hilly when racing but isn't really - all the ups come in the second half, which makes it feel harder, before the nice final k downhill.

Results: Iain Bailey 33:52, Greg Southern 35:13 (best age graded result of the field), Simon Lunn 44:58, Ian Swinscoe 48:52, Mike Folland 56:38, Lou Henderson 57:03, Stan Thornton 58:54, John Siddons racing for the RAF 36:23.

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.

26th June ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 2 Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

Host Club ~ Lincoln Wellington AC

Iain Bailey and Greg Southern competed in the second race of LWAC 5K series, Iain ran 15.54 and Greg 16.48 (a new PB for Greg) Well done Iain and Greg.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

30th June ~ Humber Bridge Half Marathon Hull, Yorkshire and the Humber, Road.

Organised by the Rotary Club of Hull

Alistair Whitaker 2:10:34

Lou Henderson 2:13:05

Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for the times.

7th July ~ Chesterfield Spire 10 Chesterfield, Derbyshire, Road.

Host Club ~ North Derbyshire Running Club.

At the start all the runners were searching out any shade at all under the clear blue sky and scorching heat. No other Sleaford Town Runners seemed to be at the race, although a couple of others had entered. The gun went off right on time and then began the long 3 miles of up hill in the blistering heat, with a welcomed water stop at the top! There was then 5.5 miles of undulating country roads with another water stop at the 6 mile point. The final mile and a half was again up hill with a water stop just before the hill. Happy with my time of just under 1:32 in the conditions but definitely one for next year, nice country park for the family to play about in while you run. Great day out. Marshals were great, enough water stops and a t-shirt and a bottle of beer at the end.

The race profile can be seen on the Sleaford Town Runners Garmin site at: <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/338759984>

Thanks to Gary Britnell for his Report.

10th July ~ Woodys Toonie Trot 10k Woodland Waters, Ancaster, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

Host Club ~ Toonie Express Adventure Racing Club

The conditions were ideal, with a cool evening compared to recent nights. Sleaford Town Runners were well represented with Ian Bailey, Greg Southern, Chris Balfe, Roxanne Clark, Mike Folland, Simon Lunn, Tania Addlesee, Louise McCauley & Shaun Louth all present. The setting of Woodies Campsite is quite picturesque with a well stocked bar and good outside seating arrangements. The course is multi-terrain with a good mix of road to trail with a dodgy ½ mile of thick grass which hid some fairly uneven ground. The course has a cheeky hill which seems to catch a lot of people out as you are not much quicker running compared to walking. The race saw Adam Baker of Lincoln Wellington setting the initial pace but after about 1.5 miles Ian Bailey, Greg Southern & Alan Oliver lead the way. Ian was toying with the opposition by slowing down then pulling away up the hill. Greg and Alan were having their normal battle with Alan pulling away up the hill only to be pegged back on the rough grass. As the race reached halfway Bailey had extended his lead and southern had a slender lead on Alan Oliver. This order was maintained to the finish ensuring another Sleaford Town 1-2 finish. The big battle was happening further back the field with Addlesee & McCauley going head to head. Tania made a decisive break on the hill section of the course where her strength shone through and this lead was maintained to the finish. It was good to see Simon Lunn back in action. The finishing times for STR members were Bailey 36:32, Southern 36:47, Chris Balfe 41:11, Roxanne Clark 44.04, Simon Lunn 49.08, Mike Folland 58:48, Tania Addlesee 62:14, Louise McCauley 62:34 & Shaun Louth 76:24. The only downside of the day was some uncalled for heckling of Shaun the Roller Louth who was being supported on the home straight when he exclaimed that the 'Tank was empty' when a complete stranger piped up that he didn't think that Shaun's tank was empty.

Thanks to Greg Southern for his Report.

14th July ~ Notfast 10k Newark, Nottinghamshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Notfast Running Club.

I had a good run and the conditions perfect, to my liking no sun. Went with the view of just running with no goal time in mind, ran without a watch. Kept an even pace to just after 6k then raced the remaining 4k. Four PBs this year and I think I can make that five next week, I will be targeting a PB over 5k at Dereham.

Thanks to Paul Ray for his Report.

Despite the low cloud preventing direct heat from the sun for the duration of the race it was still a muggy affair for the 200 plus runners that competed, with a slight change to the course this year for safety reasons and for those hoping that the change of route would avoid the hill they would have been disappointed to see it looming large at around 6k. Greg Southern was unfazed by the warm conditions and ran a superb race by going on to win the race in 35.01, Chris Balfe like many found the muggy conditions tough going but still ran well to finish in 40.35. Paul Ray set a new Personal Best time of 44.59 with Karl Brown not far adrift in 45.47, Caz Thomson finished in just over the hour in 1.01.13 soon to be followed by Mark Ellis smashing his PB set weeks earlier in Singapore with a new PB of 1.04.32, Paul Freemantle also crossing in a time of 1.04.32. Shannon Baxter joined the trend of setting new PB's with 1.07.15, Joanne Calver 1.07.41 returning to competition after injury & Helen Barker notched up another race this year and completed our team racing finishing in 1.17.40. Another well organised race as you would expect from Notfast Running Club, a great course and a must for 10k lovers in 2014.

Report by Paul Freemantle.

21st July ~ Dereham 5k Norfolk, Road.

Host Club ~ Dereham Runners

Town race 2 laps around the roads / streets of Dereham finishing in the park. A flat course great for a PB attempt. Very well organised includes a fun run for the youngsters. After a fast'ish start I ran a good even pace the rest of race achieving my target of a PB of 21.30.

Thanks to Paul Ray for his Report.

21st July ~ Rother valley 10k Rother Valley Country Park, Killamarsh, Sheffield, Multi-Terrain.

It was a warm slightly windy day, set around the main lake in the Rother valley country park. The course was fairly flat with just a few slight hills. 2 laps of the lake and a sprint finish saw me sneak over the line in just under 40 minutes in a time of 39.51, in short, a nice scenic course but very expensive, £16 to enter the race + £3 to enter the park. No goodie bag at the end just a bottle of water.

Thanks to Michael Baxter for his Report.

24th July ~ Notts AC 5 Mile Road Race Victoria Embankment, Nottingham, Road.

Host Club ~ Notts AC

On a very warm Wednesday evening, Greg and Iain, and Sam and Alex (from Striders) travelled to Nottingham for the Notts 5 mile road race. The race started at 1930hrs and the temperature was 26, which is hot for us Brits. The course is a two lapper very flat and pretty fast. Apart from the heat everything was perfect for a good run. Iain was first home for the club in 26.19, followed by Greg (who got beaten by a woman, I say a woman) in 27.42, in Greg's defence the woman who beat him did do 2.34 in London this year, so she was quite good. Then Sam did 29.48 followed by Alex in 30.32. A good run by all, in a quality field, the winner finishing in 24.27. A great fast course definitely one to do for next year.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

27th July ~ Heckington 10 Heckington, Lincolnshire, Road.

Hot, hot Heckington 10, as usual the hottest race of the year. Just to tease the forecast was nice cloud cover and max 22°C - some hope, the clouds were useless and it was up to 27° by the end of the race. There was a good STR entry, Iain being pushed down to an unusual 2nd place, Greg 4th and ahead of Iain on Age Grading and John Lawlor making a welcome return from injury just squeezing out a win in MV55. Ingrid chose a hard day for her longest race to date but came through well.

Results Iain Bailey 56:19, Greg Southern 57:45, John Lawlor 68:00, Paul Green 79:32, Ingrid Williams 86:51, Mike Folland 93:57
Age Grading Greg 83%, Iain 79%, John 78%.

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.

31st July ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 3 Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

Host Club ~ Lincoln Wellington AC

After rain all day, it looked as if it was going to be muggy and too warm. Fortunately, pleasant fine drizzle made for great running conditions. Iain and Mike did their best to book-end the field but it only lasted a few hundred metres before Mike picked up the odd place. Then Iain was overtaken by a young speedster to finish second by 6 seconds. It was good to see Paul Coyne again racing in a club vest.

Results, still provisional Iain Bailey 16.02, Paul Coyne 23.11, Mike Folland 27.03.

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.

16th August ~ Sleaford 10k Scredington, Lincolnshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Sleaford Striders AC

6 Sleaford Town Runners went to the Sleaford 10k on a lovely sunny evening which wasn't too hot, perfect running conditions! Andy Taylor making a comeback from his recent lack of training was pleased to finish 3rd in 36:19. In fact all the Sleaford runners had good runs and were really pleased with their times! Cathy Taylor managed to just scrape under the 50 minute mark in 49:57, closely followed by Lucy Payne who finished in 52:11. Next home for the Club was Stan Thornton looking strong and sneaking inside the hour in 58:17! Stan was followed by Shannon Baxter in 1:05:07 and Helen Barker with a powerful run into the finishing straight in 1:17:28.

Thanks to Cathy Taylor for her Report.

26th Aug ~ Grimsthorpe Castle 10k Grimsthorpe Castle Estate, Bourne, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

I was delighted to see the friendly faces of Babz and Ingrid amongst the crowd at the Grimsthorpe Castle 10k. It's a tough run with plenty of long grass, hills, stony farm tracks and bumpy uneven fields. On such a hot day with little shade, we were all pleased to have finished the course without passing out! A well organised event by Bourne Town Harriers providing great value for money with free entrance to the Festival and Long Sleeve T shirt. Ingrid William 58.38, Babz Cook 1.10 & Helen Barker 1.26.

Well Done Girls!... was tough.

Thanks to Helen Barker for her Report.

8th September ~ Grunty Fen Half Marathon Grunty Fen, East Cambridgeshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Ely Runners.

On Sunday 8th September 5 Sleaford Town Runners travelled to Witchford, Ely for the Grunty Fen Half Marathon. This popular race had sold out a few days before race day, with 800 runners entered. The weather was warm and windy, but it wasn't too bad for running in. It is a very flat course with some extremely long straight roads, but on the right day and in the right company a definite PB course.

Iain Bailey was first back for Sleaford Town, coming 4th overall in 73.05, next home was Greg Southern in a garbage time of 76.27, his words not mine, however he did win the old mans prize, I think you get it for running the whole way without dribbling or falling over!!! Well done Greg. Michael Baxter was 3rd home in a new PB of 90.33, just shy of the elusive 90 minute barrier. (Maybe some longer Sunday runs needed)! Just saying Michael! 4th Home was Paul Ray in 1hour 43 minutes and 21 seconds. That gave Sleaford Town 5th Male team overall, but if the team result was worked out by total time we would have been second. Helen Baker was the only female representative and ran a solid race to finish in 3hours 7minutes and 36 seconds.

Well done every body a good result by all. I have some very sore nipples from my efforts too.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

Five Town Runners ran the fast, flat, two looped course through the Fenland countryside. A well organised event with ample water and sponge stations. Not quite achieving a PB this time but I still had another good run. Bit of a distance to travel, but well worth it. Thanks to Helen for the lift.

Thanks to Paul Ray for his Report.

15th Sept ~ Grafham Water Half Marathon Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, Multi-Terrain.

Host ~ Amantani

After a couple of road half marathons, decided to 'mix it up' and venture into some mixed terrain and the comment on the website 'Terrain: A combination of hard trail paths, country roads and bridle ways (fields)' did not put me off. The race was well organised

from well marshalled parking, a nice touch of your name printed on your race number, chip timing, Hi-5 energy gels at 2 of the water stations plus staggered starts for each starting pen. Approx 100 runners were doing the marathon (2 laps) and 300 runners the half marathon (1 lap) First half of the race was mainly gravel paths and country lanes, the second half were mainly bridle ways (fields) with the last mile on the concrete road around the lake with the finishing flags in full view.

I was really pleased with my time of 2.08.19, asked if I would recommend the race? If you like a half marathon with loads of spectators, quality medal and a t-shirt/technical top, the answer is NO. If you not bothered about the above, but want a well organised mixed terrain race around some beautiful undulating countryside with some mud, but not enough to that you need trail shoes, the answer is YES! All proceeds from the race goes to Amantani, a small charity who manage educational projects in the Andes of Peru. All runners were treated to Peruvian music, Peruvian dancers in traditional costume and option to buy Peruvian BBQ food.

Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for his Report.

15th Sept ~ Great North Run Newcastle, Tyneside, Road.

Cathy Taylor 1:50:36.

29th Sept ~West Pinchbeck 10k West Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincolnshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Spalding Triathlon Club.

A warm sunny day with a slight breeze saw Iain Bailey finish 3rd in 33.35, 5th & MV40 winner was Greg Southern 35.03, 7th Matt Blunden 36.04, 10th Andrew Taylor 36.52, Michael Baxter 40.18, Chris Balfe 41.10, Karl Brown 44.27, Katja Brausto 44.31, Sarah Whatton 53.52, Alistair Whitaker 54.34, Mark Ellis 55.06 set another new personal best, Paul Freemantle 55.06, Stanley Thornton 57.42, Claire Brown 1.00.12, Louise McCauley 1.00.59 & Shannon Baxter also setting a new personal best time of 1.02.56 completed our team members competing.

13th October ~ Great Eastern Run Peterborough, Road.

All times are chip times: Greg Southern 1.16.50, Andy Taylor 1.18.58, Michael Baxter 1.29.40, Karl Brown 1.38.19, Paul Ray 1.43.50, Ingrid Williams 1.50.39, Alistair Whitaker 2.03.58, Tania Addelee 2.07.14, Louise McCauley 2.07.18, Stanley Thornton 2.16.42, Claire Brown 2.18.42 & Babz Cook 2.23.03.

Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for forwarding our Club member's times.

It was a lovely sunny day with scorching temperatures perfect for a half marathon Oh sorry wishful thinking. I have never run in such cold, damp, rainy and windy conditions it was horrid! The weather did let up about half way in and wasn't so bad.... the course was flat and at times a bit boring as it was mainly through housing estates but a good half marathon PB course. Weather aside it seemed well organised and the race got off on time and I think all runners were off within a 20 min time frame (my gun time was 2.30 so I was 12 mins from the start) My chip time was 2.18.42 – woo hoo!! big PB for me!! A good busy race to get some atmosphere without being overwhelming.

Thanks to Claire Brown for her Report.

Heavy rain and wind before and during the race made for difficult racing conditions and I personally found it tough which was reflected in my time, although I was pleased to beat last years and again around the 1.43 time means at least I have been reasonably consistent this year.

Thanks to Paul Ray for his Report.

13th Oct ~ Spires & Steeples Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

Squelching their way through to finish line and completing the 26 miles course was, Jayne McArthur, Yvonne Fox, Lucy Payne and (me) Helen Barker and completing the 13 mile course through some of the worst mud I've seen was Shaun Louth.

Thanks to Helen Barker for her Report.

20th Oct ~ Abingdon Marathon Oxfordshire, Road.

A really good autumn marathon, flatter than most, very well organised. The bulk of the race is made up of two 9 miles laps but the route is so varied that you don't really notice it. Get your entry in quick though - opens 1 Feb, online closed 4 Feb, race declared full on 27th. There is an official 5 hour time limit but they did let the final runner go on to finish in 5:16.

It was good to see Emily from speedwork before the start. She did a most impressive 3:07:46. I had a PW 4:54. Too much training was missed due to illness and injury so ran steadily to be inside the time limit. It still felt as bad as ever after 23 miles. We were lucky with the weather; there was just a light breeze and only half an hour's rain, mostly light. The forecast torrential rain held off until after the last runner had finished. Don't wear headphones in a race. Someone was DQed for that. First time I've seen it but quite right too!

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.

20th Oct ~ Fenland 10 Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Fenland Running Club

Cathy Taylor finished the 10 mile course in 1:22:05.

3rd November ~ Derwentwater Ten Keswick, The Lake District, Road.

Host Club ~ Keswick AC

Four STR girls braved the Cumbrian elements of pouring rain, howling wind and hail storms (I feel there is a theme here after Peterborough!!). The run was definitely worth it though. 10 miles of beautiful scenery, very undulating (!!!!) but when you get to the top you feel a huge accomplishment of what you have just run plus the amazing views. The downhill are steep and slippery but a slight reprieve from the uphill..... and Keswick has a number of lovely pubs after for you to recover in!! Times were 1.50 for Louise McCauley and Tania Addlesee and 2.14 for Claire Brown and Clare Bergner. We are definitely going back next year!!

Thanks to Claire Brown for her Report.

16th Nov ~ Lincoln Parkrun Boultham Park Lincoln, Lincolnshire, Tarmac paths.

Parkrun finally arrived in Lincoln a free weekly 5km run. The course is 3 laps on flat tarmac paths, only drawback is the narrowness of the path, which caused a bit of congestion at the start. 276 runners completed the first event, with Alistair Whitaker 27:15 and Helen Dawson 29:24, both happy with their times.

Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for his Report.

23rd Nov ~ Lincoln Parkrun Boultham Park Lincoln, Lincolnshire, Tarmac paths.

This weekend I went to do the new Lincoln Parkrun, a great course in a lovely park which I didn't know was there until this weekend! I got 23:50 for 5k.

Thanks to Cathy Taylor for her Report.

24th Nov ~ Clowne Half Marathon Clowne, Derbyshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Clowne Road Runners Club

On Sunday I went to Clowne for the Clowne half marathon, an undulating course, but not too bad. I ran 72.44 which I was pleased with.

Thanks to Iain Bailey for his Report.

24th Nov ~ Heanor Xmas Pud 10k Shipley Country Park, Heanor, Derbyshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Heanor Running Club

Heanor Xmas Pud 10k was very hilly and went through Shipley Country Park with a free Christmas pud for all finishers. I found the course hard work and finished in 50:19.

Thanks to Cathy Taylor for her Report.

8th December ~ Bedford Half Marathon Wootton, Bedfordshire, Road.

Host Club ~ Bedford Harriers AC.

Three club runners made the journey south to blustery Bedford. The course is described, probably accurately, as undulating. When you are running it, it certainly feels properly hilly and the fresh breeze didn't help either. Provisional times: Andy Taylor 1:21:06, Ingrid Williams 1:51:31, Mike Folland 2:06:31.

Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.