

## Archive Race Reports 2007

**7th January ~ Ropsley Raid** nr Grantham, Lincolnshire approximately, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ Ropsley Road Runners

Sunday 7th January saw the re-emergence of the Raid. 2002 was the last year it took place and despite a reduced distance of 13.1 miles, the course over a mixture of roads, farmer's tracks and ploughed fields still proved to be challenging for the hardy runners who lined up on the start. A good turn out of runners braved a windy showery day, although temperatures were unseasonably warm for the duration of the race. Paul Freemantle and Angie Harvey from Sleaford Town Runners would line up at the start with Graham Potter from Sleaford. A brisk start was soon to settle as runners jockeyed for position for the best footing on the slippery terrain. Gusting winds on exposed high ground together with the soft ground only added to the challenge. Paul Freemantle would come home in 1.58.31, pleased to break the two hour mark. Mean while Angie Harvey would produce an excellent run coming home as the second lady overall in a time of 2.02. Graham Potter still returning to fitness after an injury layoff would still produce a respectable time in 2.23.

**21st Jan ~ Folksworth 15** Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Yaxley Runners & Joggers

On Sunday 21st January two Sleaford Town Runners would travel south of Peterborough to compete in the Folksworth 15 mile Road Race. This is one of the many excellent races ideal if you are building up to the London Marathon. If you are not competing at London? it still offers the challenge of racing that extra few miles on top of Half Marathon distance. The race limit was closed to entries well before the deadline for entries was reached, despite the challenging two lap course taking in various inclines or hills if you prefer? Sunny mild weather with gusting winds would provide the runners taking part extra thought for their race strategy. Angie Harvey & Paul Freemantle travelled without Pat Riches who sadly was unable to travel with them and compete. Experienced runners would take the first lap steady, together with favourable gusting winds making the final stages of the race a brisk run into the finish. Paul Freemantle would clear three minutes of last year's time in crossing the line in 1.54.35. Angie Harvey battling the gusting winds would also run an improved time from 2006 in 1.55.44. Dave Tilley who also travelled from Sleaford would record a superb time of 1.34.41. A delighted Dave would finish 16th overall, 4th in his vet Category.

**11th February ~ Stamford 30k** Stamford, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Stamford Striders

Four members of Sleaford Town Runners made the journey south on Sunday 11th February to Stamford to compete in the Stamford Striders St. Valentine's 30k road race. Sadly Alex Hetherington did not travel and had to withdraw due to injury, in the hope of recovering in time for the Belvoir Challenge in two weeks time. Stamford 30k road race is famed for its tough course and its relentless hills throughout the race. Popular amongst runners building up for the London Marathon and those just wishing to take part in this well organised race hosted by Stamford Striders. As always a sizable field would line up on the start for what again was an unseasonably warm day, and thankfully dry without the rain that had gone before days earlier. With a difficult course ahead judging your pace early on in the race would be vital for the latter stages. This year Stamford Striders introduced pace setters to help runners pace themselves through the race. A great idea and certainly a benefit to the many runners running alongside the pace setters carrying their target time pace sticks! Angie Harvey would run a personal best over the course and was delighted in clocking a time of 2.27.49. Paul Freemantle was pleased to also record a course PB in 2.29.54. Mike Folland comfortably beat his pre race target of 2.40 in finishing in 2.39.32 and Chris Smith building up to a summer of distance running (a training run with a t-shirt at the end) would still return a respectable time of 2.42.31.

**24th Feb ~ Belvoir Challenge** Vale of Belvoir & Belvoir Escarpment in north east Leicestershire, Multi-Terrain.

15 miles of hilly, muddy, wet terrain would be the Saturday morning entertainment for the Sleaford Town Runners courtesy of the wonderful Belvoir Challenge Saturday 24th Feb. The weather was kind in respect to the warm mild winter weather. The down side to this would be the very soft muddy conditions under foot! The race starts and finishes in the village of Harby close to Belvoir Castle, with the option to run or walk 15 or 26 miles in and around the fields, hills and woods surrounding Belvoir Castle. For the ten Toonies lining up on the start the challenge was the 15 mile course. Chris Smith had to withdraw late in the week with a badly blistered foot however travelled to give support, alas Alex Hetherington remains injured and was unable to travel on the day. A mass start at 9.00am of both runners and walkers competing in both distances was promptly started and it wasn't long before the muddy conditions were apparent to all competitors. With a map, the occasional marker and reams of red and white tape tied to bushes and trees, going in the right direction was as important as your endurance levels. For Dave Tilley head down and competing at the front of the race this would provide an extra 5 minutes of running after the lead pack missed a turning. However despite this minor inconvenience Dave would recover to finish 4th overall in an excellent 1.55.27. Dave Taylor a veteran of the 26 mile route would compete over 15 miles this year finishing again in an excellent 2.23.45. Paul Freemantle 2.29.39, Mike Folland 2.30.53 and Angie Harvey 2.31.27 would swap places many times during the race and were well satisfied in their times. Running together in support of each other was Barbara & Sinead Johnson, Pat Riches, Samantha Lester and Catherine Simpson. The Girls would all finish

together in a creditable 4.17 with much amusing antics along the way with Catherine's skiing technique and Sinead's downhill sliding to name but a few!

**9th March ~ Abu Dhabi Half Marathon** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Abu Dhabi Striders

Mike Folland would take on the challenge of the Abu Dhabi Half Marathon while on a family visit to Dubai, in what would be the first overseas outing by a Club member in a Sleaford Town Runners Vest. Mike would be up before 4am for a record early start 4.45am for the 90 mile drive from Dubai to Abu Dhabi down the motorway travelling at the 100 mph speed limit. A small field of about 50 runners would compete in the Half Marathon and the 10k race starting at 7.00am just after sunrise. 17C felt nice and cool when walking around but soon felt hot when racing, even later when the sun got going it wasn't really hot but coming from UK winter one simply isn't used to it said Mike. The lovely surroundings at the Golf and Equestrian Club was a great backdrop to the really fast, flat course. Mike just managed to scrape under 1.40 in an excellent time of 1.39.47. The £12 entry fee included use of luxurious changing facilities at the Golf Club, towels and gels provided and a great open air brunch. Mike didn't win a proper prize but was lucky to win a spot prize of bag, towel and drink bottle thanks to Pocari local energy drink.

**Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

**11th Mar ~ Newton's Fraction Half Marathon** Grantham, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Grantham AC

A brisk chilly wind in bright sunshine greeted the six Town Runners who travelled to Grantham to take part in the Newton's Fraction Half Marathon on Sunday 11th March. This is a lovely scenic course taking in views of canal locks and pleasant landscape that surrounds the splendid Belvoir Castle. However amongst the route there were two demanding hills at six and ten miles respectively. These would have a major impact on race times for the competitors that took part. Dave Tilley would once again lead the chase at the front of the field and crossed the line in 7th position overall and in doing so winning his Vet 40 category in an excellent time of 1.22.37. Paul Freemantle set a target time of sub 1.40 and was delighted to cross the line in 1.37.04. Not far behind in 1.39.07 was Chris Smith fit again after recent foot problems. Angie Harvey running in her 25th Half Marathon produced an excellent run in finishing as the 5th lady overall and second in her Vet Category in a time of 1.40.23. Julie Porter accompanied her Mum Pat Riches around the course both crossing the line in a satisfying time of 2.23.20. In doing so Pat would win the ladies Vet 65 category. Thanks go to Catherine Simpson for her support and taking some fantastic photos before and during the race. Thanks also to Alex Hetherington who though still injured travelled to give much valuable support at the all too intimidating hill at mile 10~11. Another great day's racing and much thanks to Grantham AC for hosting the race.

**18th Mar ~ Lisbon Half Marathon** Lisbon, Portugal, Road.

Chris Smith & Catherine Simpson travelled to Lisbon to run the half marathon on 18th March. To say the start was chaotic was an understatement (Imagine the Great North Run with 10 signs in total all foreign!) we finally found our way to the start with many other lost runners. The temperature by 9am was about 19 degrees this was to rise to 23 degrees during the race. The atmosphere on the start line was electric with salsa dancing warm ups. Five minutes to the off and we could see hundreds of runners still trying to get to the starting area crossing a jammed bridge half a mile away. I am sure the Portuguese Prime Minister who also ran arrived at the start much fresher. The elite runners and wheelchair entrants were penned at the front, the rest was a free for all! No start gun, no warning, we thought we were jogging to the line but no we were racing along the spectacular "25th April Bridge". Chris decided to keep Catherine company on the race and although it was a flat course the heat took its toll and we were happy to finish in 2hr 17mins. We received very nice medals, Adidas T-Shirts and even the free hats and bandanas were in club colours. All in all a very nice weekend and a fun race, although not one for your first foreign run!

**Thanks to Chris for the Report.**

**25th Mar ~ Lincoln 10k** Lincoln, Lincolnshire, Road.

Seven Sleaford Town Runners travelled the short distance to participate in the Lincoln 10k on Sunday 25th March. Sadly Rachel Howard was unable to travel and participate due to injury. Barbara & Sinead Johnson also had to withdraw late from competing and did not travel with fellow Club members to Lincoln. None the less over 3200 runners would line up on a chilly start line close to the Yarborough sports centre and after a short delay of the 11 o'clock start time the race began, and with the emergence of the sun a warm race would follow. The race itself takes you around the houses and estates of Lincoln with the final one kilometre of the race taking you around the magnificent Lincoln Cathedral and into Castle Square before finishing within the Castle grounds to massed crowds. Paul Freemantle was pleased with his time of 42.14 as was James Roulston who ran an excellent race in finishing under 45 minutes in 44.39, Angie Harvey also finished under 45 minutes in 44.47. Julie Porter came home in a steady 56.16, Amanda Hoyle returning to running after a long layoff following an operation ran a creditable 1.01.17. Pat Riches thoroughly enjoyed her run in 1.03.33, as did Julie Stapleton who was returning to running after many years came home in 1.08.54. Once again a great day's racing with the welcome warmth of Spring sunshine. Great support and team spirit once again displayed by all Club members.

**1st April ~ Friskney Half Marathon** Friskney, Boston, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Boston & District AC

Sunday 1st April saw three Sleaford Town Runners travel to another Lincolnshire race to compete in the Friskney Half Marathon. Potentially this is a superb fast PB course out on Friskney Fen. Today started with glorious sunshine but high winds hurtling across these exposed fens would make runners dig deep to make their times. Up to seven miles the winds were generally side winds, slightly head on and a short burst of following wind. From seven to eleven miles would test all those competing today as the wind was head on and relentless. After mile eleven a kind following wind helped runners pick up their pace all the way to the finish. 120 runners in total took part. A good course, marshals were very supportive and encouraging with the atmosphere at the start and finish relaxed and friendly, with a 'Commemorative Cup' as a race memento. Dave Tilley ran a consistently good time of 1.21.39 which earned him 9th place overall and a 2nd place Vet category prize. Dave didn't get lost this time but did have technical problems at the start with his stop watch! Angie Harvey was pleased with her time of 1.39.26, second lady overall and 1st place Vet Category prize. In his first outing for Sleaford Town Runners a pleased Dave Raynes completed the course in 1.44.02. This was several minutes faster than his prediction en route to the race. Well done all. Well done also to Boston & District AC for hosting this well organised and fun event.

**Thanks to Chris & Angie for their Reports.**

**1st Apr ~ Mud Sweat & Gears** Sherwood Pines near Nottingham, Multi-Terrain.

Christopher Smith opted for the challenge of a Duathlon when travelling to Sherwood Pine on Sunday 1st April to participate in "Mud, Sweat & Gears Duathlon". The off road Duathlon takes place at Sherwood Pines near Nottingham with the event consisting of a 6k Trail Run, 18k Trail Bike Ride, 3k Trail Run. Chris finished in an excellent 36th place (out of 125) in 1hr 43m 15sec.

**8th Apr ~ Belvoir Half Marathon** Hose, Leicestershire, Road.

On Sunday 8th April, Chris Smith and Dave Raynes travelled to the small Village of Hose near Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire to be among over 700 runners who competed in the 25th Belvoir Half Marathon. A glorious Easter Sunday, which drew a large field of over 700 entrants, the conditions were very warm with a slight breeze and just small hills (1000ft in total) so fast times were the order of the day. After a little confusion at the new start line the big field got away quickly for the length of the playing field where the course bottle necked through a gateway enough to make everyone walk for a few meters. At least that would give the London marathon hopefuls a taste of things to come in two weeks time. The course was as lovely as ever through the lanes of Leicestershire, Chris crossed the line in 146th place recording a time of 1:35:12 with Dave 326th in 1:48:38. although Dave was a little disappointed with his time however he really enjoyed the outing and a well organised event.

**Thanks to Dave & Chris for their Reports.**

**8th Apr ~ North Tyneside 10k** Whitley Bay, North Shields, Road.

On Sunday 8th April 2007 whilst visiting my Mum in Whitley Bay over Easter Weekend I took part in The North Tyneside 10km Race. 1393 Runners would set off on this warm and sunny Easter Sunday morning from North Parks Sports Centre in North Shields. The first three miles of the race took us through the still working North Shields Fish Quay and coastline to the stunning Tynemouth Priory and Castle. The course was undulating with a few surprise hills and a very warm sun shone down on already hot runners. Turning into Cullercoats Bay brought a very strong cool headwind which runners would fight all the way to the finish line at St Mary's Lighthouse. I completed the course in 45.20 and thoroughly enjoyed the run. To say this course was stunning is an understatement. Picturesque and dramatic scenery and historic buildings lined this route. Great atmosphere and very well organised. That's not all this great Geordie 10km offered! After the run we all received the best Goodie Bag ever! Umbro Baseball Cap, Reebok Juice Bottle, Nike Breathable T-shirt and two Go Energy Bars! Bonus!

**Thanks to Angie Harvey for her Report.**

**14th Apr ~ Caythorpe Canter** Caythorpe, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

The 10th Caythorpe Canter took place on Saturday 14th April with eight Sleaford Town Runners making the short journey to support this locally organized event. You have the choice of either running a 14 or 26 mile course on minor roads, tracks, bridlepaths and footpaths around rural Lincolnshire. The warm weather of the previous weeks had firmed up the course, this made for some hard rutting on some of the tracks making it tricky to navigate. Both race distances started together at 9.00am prompt in rather chilly misty conditions. Seven Town Runners took on the challenge of the 14 mile distance with Dave Raynes opting for the more demanding 26 mile course. The weather conditions held for the first hour of the race making for comfortable running conditions, but once the sun came out to burn away the remaining mist the conditions changed to what felt like a warm mid summers day. Dave Taylor competing on his favoured terrain would finish 7th overall in an excellent time of 1.46.49. Chris Smith running with his young son Matthew running for Grantham AC Juniors finished 8th in 1.50.04 with Matthew just a second behind in 9th in 1.50.05 a fantastic result. James Roulston took a huge step up from his previous race to compete for the first time at

this distance, and appeared comfortable at the finish in a creditable 1.56.11, Angie Harvey followed James in finishing in 1.56.14 followed in by Paul Freemantle 1.56.16. Catherine Simpson ran with Pat Riches for the majority of the race enjoying the scenic route and warm weather coming home in 2.43.16 with Pat not far behind in 2.46.13. Still out on the course with another 12 miles to run was Dave Raynes and with the sun now fully out and a small field competing in the 26 miles, Dave would have a lonely run to the finish. Despite this Dave would complete the course in a respectable 4.37 despite having sore feet from the hard terrain for the latter part of the race. This is one of Lincolnshire's secret gems of a race, well organised and thanks to the team of people who supplied the fantastic food.

#### **15th Apr ~ Stephen Unwin 10k Memorial Race, Cumbria, Road.**

I was very, very nervous as I stood on the start line for this my first race since August last year. Nervous for a number of reasons: 1 - At 2.00pm the temperature was 22 degrees in the shade (we guessed 27 in the sun),

2 - The first person I met in the car park (who looked like a hardy fell runner) greeted me with "it's gonna be a tough one this is lass",

3 - I was unsure if the Cumbrian description of "undulating" was going to be the same as the Lincolnshire description

4 - There was no map of the route

5 - I'd given myself a target of 46 minutes to aim for.

Still, off we went, a small field of just 46 runners. Through the pretty village of Dalston and out into the countryside. I tried hard not to go too fast and settled into my running quite easily. The first mile was fairly flat and steady then we began to climb a little and the course then definitely became undulating. Despite this I was running well and with lovely views and warm weather I was thoroughly enjoying the race. At 3 miles and after a much needed drink I was on target for a good time, clocking 22.33 - were things going too well? Of course they were! A few days earlier 2 of my children had a sickness bug and that morning my husband, John "I can drink the water in Africa and not get ill", had a dodgy stomach. Yes, it was inevitable. At 3.5 mile the stomach pains began and by 4 miles I could barely run upright. The fact that I had great support from another runner, Alan Hodgson, and the course was now downhill made no difference at all. I was now faced with a dilemma, do I pull out and ask one of the marshals to drive me quickly to the finish, do I knock on the door at the next farm and ask to use their toilet or do I jump over the next gate and go in the field? Well actually there was no time to choose - I jumped over the next gate! This stopped the cramps but I still felt awful. I tried just to keep running and get to the finish however best I could. The village finally appeared again and I completed the longest last 2 miles ever. I ran straight though the finish and straight to the toilets. Unbelievably I finished in 47.41 knocking 2 mins off last year's PB and was the 2nd lady home. The race was won by Richard Mace of Border Harriers in 33.44. In summery, this is a super race, quite challenging, excellent facilities(!) - toilets, showers, parking and a lovely friendly atmosphere. On a day not quite so hot and without a stomach bug this would be a really enjoyable run - a real no frills runners' race.

#### **Thanks to Fiona Robertson for her Report.**

#### **22nd Apr ~ Ranby 10 Mile Ranby, nr Retford, Nottinghamshire, Road.**

**Host Club ~ Ranby Prison Running Club**

With thousands of London Marathon runners still out on the streets of London, three Sleaford Town Runners would be lining up on the Ranby 10 mile Road Race start line at the unusual time of 2.00pm. The eighth running of this race on Sunday 22nd April starts and finishes outside Ranby Prison near Retford, Nottinghamshire. The weather conditions were warm and humid with the occasional sun glinting through the clouds at various times during the race. Mainly a road race which does however incorporate a one mile off road section at mile seven to eight. Undulating throughout the race with some deceptively challenging inclines in the final two miles of the race. A good field of runners competed in the race with Paul Freemantle pleased to come home in 1.11.54, Angie Harvey was also delighted to finish in 1.14.10. Dave Raynes having run the 26 mile course of the Caythorpe Canter the previous week would just dip under 1hr 20 finishing in 1.19.57. An excellent run and as you would expect from Ranby Prison Running Club, well organised and marshalled throughout.

#### **28th Apr ~ Dambuster 10 Mile Derwent Reservoir, Peak District, Derbyshire, Multi-Terrain.**

April 28th a sunny although chilly Saturday morning in Derbyshire was the venue for the Dambusters 10 mile multi terrain race. The start was below the impressive wall of the Derwent water dam, the location where 617 squadron from Lincolnshire tested the bouncing bomb before its famous dambuster raid in Germany during the second world war. About 150 runners were at the start, although the course description was relatively flat, the course proved to be quite undulating to say the least. First five miles were on unsurfaced tracks, while the second half was tarmac road circumnavigating the Derwent water Reservoir. The scenery was breathtaking, as was the climb to the five mile turning point, first time this year I managed a negative split race with a much stronger second half giving me a time of 1hr 19mins 55 secs. No medals t shirts or certificates for this one, the whole £10.00 entry was straight to the challenge cancer charity, so I did not mind in the least. That finishes the race running for April, 5 weekends of racing 2 half marathons, 1 full marathon and 2 10 milers total 72miles in all.

#### **Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

#### **29th Apr ~ Shakespeare Half Marathon Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, Road.**

With the mass supporting crowds of the London Marathon but a memory, five Sleaford Town Runners would travel the following week to the scenic town of Stratford-upon-Avon to compete in the Shakespeare Half Marathon. With the attraction of a full marathon starting at the same time as the half, the entry limit of 3500 was filled weeks before. An early start time of 9.30 meant an early start to the day for the Town runners. With the predicted warm weather somewhere else! replaced by grey overcast clouds and a chilly wind to boot, the walk from the car-park to start line was brisk one! Thank you to young Matthew for looking after our sweatshirts that we removed before the start. With a crowded start under way there then followed a small loop of the town before heading out into the fantastic rural countryside that surrounds the town. Guilt would soon set in as my description to my fellow Club members of a flat course with a hill at mile seven was a little inaccurate as the course soon became undulating. Oh what a difference a year makes to the memory! Despite this it's a wonderful race and there is a great flat three mile run into the finish. Paul Freemantle would just edge Chris Smith to finish in 153rd place 1.36.27, with Chris, carrying a niggling leg injury still producing 1.37.36 (174). Angie Harvey running her 6th race in as many weeks finished an excellent second in her vet category in 1.38.17 (187). Catherine Simpson not feeling 100% going into the race was none the less pleased with 2.19.06 as was Pat Riches who knocked some five minutes off her time from two years previous in finishing smiling as always in 2.23.34. A superb race with great atmosphere, with thanks to 'The Rotary Club of Stratford-upon-Avon' for their race organization.

**3rd May ~ Langtoft 10k** nr Market Deeping, Peterborough, Road.

A fine warm day temperature about 17 degrees but quite overcast. The Langtoft 10km is an extremely flat course, out and back with a loop at 4km which rejoins the outbound course at 6km. Plenty of water for a 10km course and well marshalled on very quiet roads around the village. As always these days the short courses seem just as hard as the half and full marathons, although the agony is much shorter to endure. I was pleased to complete the course in 45mins 20seconds a nice medal was awarded to all finishers, anyone thinking about this one for next year, there is also a fun run on the day for anyone looking for a shorter distance.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**6th May ~ Caythorpe Duathlon**, Lincolnshire, Duathlon, Multi-Terrain.

Christopher Smith switched from Road Running to Duathlon to compete in the Caythorpe Sprint Duathlon on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May. Consisting of a 5k off road run, 17k road bike then 3k road run. Chris finished 26th out of 63 competitors in a time of 1.10. His best section being 19th place in the cycle due to an injury on the first run, however he was not going to be stopped by a pulled hamstring! On finishing the competitors were presented with engraved glass blocks. This was the second running of the event and was seamlessly organised by Caythorpe Playing Field group and Grantham Tri.

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

**8th May ~ Silverstone 10k** Silverstone, Northamptonshire, Road (Silverstone Circuit).

**Host Club ~ Silson Joggers AC**

As a F1 nut (how sad!) I had long wanted to do this race on the Grand Prix circuit, especially as the flat wide course has the potential for good times. The only concern was a windy day on an open old airfield so I was studying every forecast obsessively. The settled period had passed so not only the actual weather but also the forecast for Tuesday changed twice daily. Come race day the forecast was for blustery showers - not good. On the way down Jan and I visited the Swiss Garden near Biggleswade, which I had spotted near the start of the Henlow 10 mile race last November. The garden was delightful and sheltered from the wind; the sun even came out. However, I watched the wind neurotically and gloom set in seeing the high trees swaying everywhere in the near gale. The windsock on the nearby airstrip remained obstinately horizontal. It was hard not to get fed up as I knew I was in reasonable shape and had even had a mini taper for the race. At the circuit the course was revealed : 2 laps of the Grand Prix circuit of almost exactly 5k and with the finish in the pit lane. And, praise be, the wind had dropped to a fresh breeze. The race itself went really well. Even with over 900 runners, on the wide track it took all of 2 seconds to reach the start line and never a hold up after that. Despite much scepticism of all km and mile markers, even my own, the splits were looking good - going through half way in 22 minutes exactly. Thinking of Fiona's report, was it too good to be true? Yes, but only a little. A good 8<sup>th</sup> k into the wind gave me delusions of grandeur and a time under 44 minutes and that was too good to be true. A mini blow up in the final 2 k made it a struggle to hold the pre-race plan of 4:30 per k and there was certainly nothing left for that real burn over the last 500 m. Still, I was delighted with 44:07, the best 10 k time for 9 years and way under the target of 45 minutes. **Thanks thanks thanks** to STR, my speedwork buddies and, of course, Dave and Angie, who have trained with me for years on longer runs. It was your help and encouragement in the training that led to that time. I can't wait to see what times all of you are in the speedwork group are going to achieve in this summer's races - starting with the Eye 10k next weekend. Also thanks to Anna in Dubai, advising on the speedwork programme that we are all benefiting from. It certainly was a long way to drive for an evening race and those having to work the days before and after doubtless made the right decision not to go. I wouldn't say never again but I won't be doing it every year, excellent race though it is.

**Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

**13th May ~ Eye 10k** Eye, Peterborough, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Eye Community Runners

The famed Eye horse brass was enough incentive for some of the Town Runners who travelled to Eye near Peterborough for the Eye 10k. With the injured Candy Louth duty Sat Nav and the also injured Chris Smith duty Chauffeur supplying great team support for the six Club members competing. The race itself is flat with a 2k off road trail section at around the 7k mark, incorporating some open gates to weave around, which would just be enough to take the edge of your pace as you approached them. The weather is usually warm for this race however on the start line the clouds were grey and threatening rain, together with a stiff breeze that would be present for the first 5k of this race. 530 runners entered the race which made for a congested start weaving around a housing estate before heading out to the surrounding fields. Dave Tilley dropping down from his favoured half marathon distance produced an excellent time finishing 22<sup>nd</sup> overall in 37.01. Paul Freemantle had a steady run finishing in 43.00 (127), ever consistent Angie Harvey finished in 44.46 (168) 3<sup>rd</sup> in her Vet category. Fiona Robertson leaving it to the morning of the race to decide weather to race produced a PB of 45.06 (178), Caz Burrows returning to racing after many years produced a strong second half to her race to finish in an excellent 45.49 (200). Catherine Simpson would also have a great run in surpassing her pre race target in finishing in 58.59 (424). Before the 10k race Chris Smith's Son Matthew representing Grantham AC produced a storming run in finishing the 3k race 6<sup>th</sup> out of 132 in 12.03, in doing so winning the 12~13yr old category. As we massed in the school hall for the presentations the heavens finally opened to leave us with a wet journey home. However a great day's racing was had by all the Town Runners, many thanks to Candy & Chris for their much appreciated team support. With thanks also to Eye Community Runners for hosting this superb race, and please keep the horse brass as a race memento for 2008.... I need one more for my belt!

**13th May ~ Long Bennington 10k** Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire, Road.

Dave Taylor more familiar with competing on his favoured off road terrain opted instead to make the short journey from home, and travelled to Long Bennington near Newark to compete in the third running of the Long Bennington 10k. This is a one lap, flat rural road race with Dave completing the race in 43.38.

**19th May ~ Luxembourg Marathon** Luxembourg, Road.

After driving across via the ferry on Friday 18th May, I manage to get registered at about 4.00pm for the race the following day. First thing that struck me whilst at leisure in the city of Luxembourg apart from its outstanding beauty was the amount of hills that I was about to face the following day. Race Day Saturday, a late breakfast then drive the car to the stadium where I could park free of charge for the remainder of the day and jump on the shuttle bus in to town. At 4.00pm I travelled back to the stadium leaving Mari to wander the shops in Luxembourg. All 3 races the 21km, the 42km and the relay race for the 42km all in the same pens started at 6.00pm, the weather was about 20 degrees and to be quite honest by body was saying its time for dinner and a few beers not a 42km race. The course was very good we arrived for the first tour of the city centre at about 15km where the streets were lined with huge crowds cheering on the runners, managed to spot Mari who was not by this time too laden down with shopping, the route then took in several climbs around the city before heading back towards the centre. At a drinks station about the 28km point one of the relay runners decide he needed to have the very first cup of water, unfortunately I was between him and the table as he lurched across me legs entangled and a pile up was inevitable. The relay runner who caused the collision came off the worst of us and needed medical attention, the others and me meanwhile shook ourselves down and headed back towards the city if a little shaken. After the second tour of the city centre we had the climb back towards the stadium, it was now quite dark and the stadium was aglow with lights and lasers. The last kilometre was lit either side of the road with burning oil torches which looked like the runway of an airport, into the stadium for the big finish, lights and a very loud music system and a huge cheering crowd awaiting family and friends. It was a fantastic run although my time was somewhat disappointing due to a problem with my foot after the 28km fiasco. I was home in 4hrs 26mins to receive a very nice goody bag, medal, t-shirt. and towel. I managed to find Mari in the crowd who then told me the whole of the city transport system was closed during the race and she had to walk the last 4km of the race route up hill to the finish, good practice for the predictor I told her. After a fantastic Sunday afternoon cruise on the Rhine in Germany we travelled home on the Monday, a great weekend we can highly recommend for a club outing.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**19th May ~ Moonwalk 26.2 Mile** Hyde Park, London, Road.

On Saturday 19th May three members of Sleaford Town Runners made their way to Hyde Park in London to take on a challenge of a different kind. The 26.2 mile moonwalk takes place through the night in aid of Breast Cancer Pat Riches, Patsy Hunt and Julie Porter were all looking forward to the event and thanks to Julie's sister Karen and Patsy's sister Thelma we all had fantastic decorated bras to wear for the walk. We arrived at the hotel early afternoon and tried to get some rest but only managed an hour. We had to be at the start very early, three hours before our walk commenced, When we got there the atmosphere was brilliant. 15,000 wearing decorated bras and a few brave men!!!. There was a live band playing, action photo were there to capture the pictures ( I am sure you will see them soon ) it was very well organised with pasta and banana muffins provided for everyone and rain macs and space blankets given out too. There were three different start times, Ours was at 11.20 pm. The celebrities set off at midnight and we were a little disappointed that we didn't get a glimpse of any of them. As we made our way to the start line the bands were still entertaining us as we set off so spirits were high. The first few miles took in lots of the sites of London. The crowd

were really enjoying singing and the traffic were constantly beeping their horns and waving at us. We encountered quite a few stops and starts with the huge numbers of walkers and traffic and the toilet stops of course! so we couldn't keep a constant pace. The weather was kind to us and was very mild. As we reached the half marathon point lots of the walkers headed for home and the rest carried on with our marathon challenge. Patsy had gone through a bit of a tired stage which she coped well with, Julie on the other hand had a few aches and pains by the 14 mile point and was feeling rather soul destroyed at the lack of miles we were covering each hour, Unfortunately this meant Pat and Patsy had to put up with a bit of moaning. Sorry ladies!!!!. As you would expect by 3 am the temperature had dropped and the walkers were very quiet due to this and the lack of sleep kicking in. As morning broke we were blessed with beautiful sunshine and renewed energy levels. The last hour meant it was warm enough to walk with our bras on show which we were very happy about especially when we passed the good looking men!!!!. We crossed the line at 7.22 am a total of 8 hours walking, no wonder Julie was moaning!!!!. A good experience was had by all and our medals and goody bags were very pleasing. I don't think Julie will be rushing back next year.

### **Thanks to Julie, Pat & Patsy for their Report.**

**20th May ~ Sleaford 10k** Screddington, near Sleaford, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club ~ Sleaford Striders AC**

Sunday 20th May saw two Town Runners travel just outside Sleaford to the village of Screddington to compete in the first running of the Sleaford 10k from this new location. The sun was out to give the runners a warm race around this one lap mild undulating course. Starting and finishing in Screddington the run would take you around the scenic back roads and accompanying fields of Lincolnshire. Dave Tilley was delighted in coming home 7th out of the 107 finishers in his best 10k time for three years in 36.50. Caz Burrows competing after a hard week of running combined with a eight mile Club run the day before would still run an excellent 46.34 (38th) In the 4k Fun Run Fiona Robertson would complete the course with her son's Robert and Ewan completing the course together in 24.48. Fiona's Husband John would accompany their Daughter Flora in finishing in 29.24. Anne & Abi Tilley were persuaded to travel with Dave on this lovely warm Spring day also taking part in the 4k Fun Run, both crossing the line together in 28.58.

**23rd May ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 1** Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

**Host Club ~ Lincoln Wellington AC**

The Yarborough Leisure Centre in Lincoln was the destination for the eight Town Runners who travelled to compete in the first race of four, in the Lincoln Wellington AC 5k Road Race Series on Wednesday 23rd May. Despite clouds hiding away the evening sun it would remain a warm, wind free evening for the 19.30 start. A good turn out of Club runners would line up to race the three and a half laps of the cycle track that surrounds the running track and adjoining playing fields. As always a fast and furious start to the race with runners jockeying for position before the end of the half lap which precedes the three full laps. The last lap catches out the runners who have gone off too fast on the first two and half laps with much chasing down of runners in the final 400m, making for some great racing over this short distance. Paul Freemantle just missed out on breaking 20 minutes though pleased with 20.05, the ever improving Fiona Robertson just adrift of Paul by seconds in 20.19 finishing first in the Women's Vet Category. The deceptively quick with more to come Robert Hodgson 20.21, Chris Smith fresh from Hospital and the Doctors!! somehow eased home in a steady 20.28. Angie Harvey set 21.30 as a target cruised home in 21.04 (4th in the Women's Vet Category) just edging Dave Taylor in 21.06. Mike Folland 21.20 was trilled with his race well under his pre race target, as was Caz Burrows 21.41 taking almost a minute of her 5k Club Time Trail a few weeks earlier and finishing 3rd in the Senior Women's category. A great start and plenty of PBs to aim for in race two next month! Catherine Simpson though not running and unable to stop Chris donning his training shoes, travelled all the same to support the team effort which was greatly appreciated by fellow Club members.

**27th May ~ British Sprint Tri Championships** Strathclyde Country Park, Motherwell, Scotland.

**Organised by** Glasgow Triathlon Club

The scene was set on arrival at 7 am by a hearty Scottish voice on the PA saying that the loch was "a balmy 14°C". At least there was just a little drizzle in the air and not too much wind but it was **cold, cold, cold**. I was in Heat 1 with all the women and the really old men starting at 8 am with a 750 m swim in Strathclyde Loch. My aim, as ever, was survival and not to lose too much time. Thanks to a new wet suit, my body stayed quite warm but there was soon little feeling in the hands and feet. After a short run from the loch, shedding my wetsuit on the move, I came into transition after 18:04 followed closely by an age group rival. So I set out briskly on the bike to hold him at bay, which worked until halfway round the 12 hilly miles. Then my chain came off and he came whizzing by just as I was getting going again. It was hard work to stay in touch but after 45:20, with hands and feet getting steadily worse, we both came back into transition together. Thanks to STR and all the support and training in the speedwork group, I was fairly hopeful of getting ahead on the final 5 k run. The next hiccup came as my cold, numb, non-functioning fingers simply couldn't undo my bike helmet. By the time it eventually came off, my rival was well down the road. "Don't panic, don't panic" I kept saying. Anyway, not to worry, after a few hundred metres he started coming back and I caught him at the 1 k mark. Surprise, surprise after 2 k I overtook another age group competitor – one can tell by the age group code letter written on the back of everyone's calf. Were there any more? Well, the only competitors in sight at the turn were women, so it was a steady run back, with constant checks over the shoulder that I wasn't being caught by someone's late burn, taking 23:17 for the 5 k including a few little hills. Thanks to timing chips, our results came up on the large screen as we finished and yes, I had managed to win Gold in the

65 - 69 Age Group by 51 seconds in 1:29:14, coming 186th of the 248 finishers. It was a really well organised event but a bit spoiled by conditions – triathlon is most definitely a warm, summer sport!

**Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

**1st June ~ Holme Pierrepont 10 Mile** West Bridgford, Nottingham, Road.

Happy birthday to me! What did you do on your birthday this year? Chris Smith ran the famously flat Holme Pierrepont 10 Mile on Friday 1st June in very hot and still conditions. The course is 3 laps of the National Watersport Centre and is one of the quickest in the country. Chris ran 1:09 which he was very happy about. His PB for this race was in 2001, also on his birthday, in a time of 1:02 so 7mins down in 6 years that will have to do!

**Thanks to Chris for his Report.**

**3rd June ~ Woodhall Spa 10k** Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, Road.

Sunday 3rd June was awash with blue skies and warm sunshine for the twenty two Club members that travelled to Woodhall Spa, as they prepared for the 10k road race that lay ahead. Alas Caz Burrows & Candy Louth were unable to travel but sent their support to Club members as did many via text and email together with great vocal support from family and friends at the race. With so many goals to achieve there was a real buzz of excitement and team support within the ranks of Club members. A large field of over 800 runners would line up on the start line, for a route that would take you in a loop away from the start at Jubilee Park, and out into the rural countryside surrounding Woodhall Spa finishing back at Jubilee Park to great crowd support. Most competitors would struggle in the heat, not so Dave Tilley who produced a storming run in finishing 19th overall in a time of 36.40. Chris Smith would just edge out the ever improving James Roulston in 42.12 with James just adrift in 42.13. Paul Freemantle was pleased with 43.19, as was Stephen Brown in his first 10k finishing in an excellent 44.15. Fiona Robertson ran down Angie Harvey just breaking 45 min's in 44.59, to Angie's 45.00, however both Fiona and Angie would finish second in their respective vet category. Robert Hodgson more used to the challenge of distance swimming would produce a great time in 45.04. Steve Roulston not long back from working abroad ran a creditable 45.06 as did Dave Raynes 47.00 and Simon Lunn 48.04. Samantha Lester came home with Denise Jackson running her first 10k in 59.11. Catherine Simpson ran another consistent race in 1.02.55 followed in by an ever smiling Pat Riches 1.06.54. Next home Julie Porter running with Rachel Howard and a delighted Pasty Hunt again on her first 10k outing in 1.07.38 just adrift was Julie Stapleton and Lynn Ellis on her first 10k in 1.08.03 completing the Club runners were Katrina Sorrell and Jane Mayers running in support of each other in their first 10k race, and completing their pre race goal, of enjoying the race atmosphere and running non stop coming home in 1.10.40. Well done to all Club Members in producing great Club results and for cheering home each and every Club member to the finish. Many thanks to our local supporter Hillary Newton for producing our locally made Club flag.

**6th June ~ Ropsley 6** Grantham, Road.

**Host Club ~ Ropsley Road Runners**

A warm summers evening saw a good turnout of Club members despite many running at Woodhall Spa three days earlier. It was also a good turnout of competitors for this local race, with entry numbers up from the previous year. A challenging course for this 6 mile road race with plenty of uphill sections most notably at the start! None the less some excellent performances and times from our Club members.

Nigel Wilcock 38.38, Chris Smith 38.48, Paul Freemantle 41.56, Keith Boseley 42.34, Dave Raynes 42.55, Stephen Roulston 44.36, Angie Harvey 44.39, Danielle La Roche 47.13, Candy Louth 51.36, Alistair Whitaker 55.08, Catherine Simpson 58.03, Julie Brown 59.56, Pat Riches 59.56, Shaun Louth 59.56, Carolyn Crocker 1.01.00 & Julie Stapleton 1.01.00.

**8th June ~Seabank Marathon** Boston to Skegness, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

This year's Seabank Marathon was to be the fifth time I had run this event, but this year was different because this time we were running from Skegness to Boston. The previous times I had run from Boston to Skegness. On a multi-terrain course running along sea bank, minor roads and farm tracks (so direct that even Dave Tilley can't get lost), approximately 400 runners and walkers set off at 9 a.m. Three runners made a very fast start, with a good lead after just 3 miles. I had a plan – to take it easy early on, hoping to be stronger later. Settling into fourth position, it took 11 miles to catch 3<sup>rd</sup> place (trying to get a conversation going as I passed him, he seemed to be ignoring me - he had his i-pod on!) Second place was taken at 17 miles. After 2½ hours the pain was starting to take hold. A lucozade gel pack and a couple of verses of Fratellis 'Chelsea Dagger' soon got me back on track. Coming into Boston and past Skirbeck Church, the clock struck noon. I had missed breaking 3 hours, but would have only three more minutes to run. Finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in 3-03, my plan had almost worked – only I hadn't planned on the winner turning up! Result! Good morning's work. Try again next year.

**Thanks to Dave for his Report.**



## **9th June ~ Stockholm Marathon** Stockholm, Sweden, Road.

On Saturday 9th June at 2pm Chris Smith ran the 29th edition of the Stockholm Marathon along with 14,318 other starters. As 17,600 entered I can only assume that the other 3,682 thought 30 degrees in the shade was a tad warm for a Marathon. It was warm! The course is a two lap on town roads, not too hilly but many long ups and one nasty uphill onto a bridge that seemed to never end - it was worse the second time. Not a bad first half 1:54 but then things got worse and despite taking full advantage of the energy drink every mile the heat just wiped me out, several walks later and a Garmin that ticked past 42,195 way before the finish (half a mile) I finished with a run and was very happy to not DNF like 1,884 others. I finished in 4,723rd position as First English runner called Smith! That was good enough for this race. Ok the time was 4:23:39 a worst for many years but such is life. I can't tell you how glad I was to see Catherine and my mum at 10k and Half Way, waving the Toonie Colours and shouting encouragement. They had to stand on the sunny side of the street to get enough room for the flag, everyone else was in the shade.

Hints for a happy life in Sweden.

- 1 - Don't fly SAS, trust me on this one. Oslo is nice but not when you should be in Stockholm!
- 2 - Hotel Adlon Very nice, clean, great food, perfect location etc.
- 3 - Arlanda Express. Buy tickets at Information desk at airport. Fast train from airport to city (50m from hotel) costs a bit but half the time and very nice, if only aircraft were like this.
- 4 - Take far too much money, this place is costly so don't bother working out what you are spending.
- 5 - Food. Try "Restaurang Droninggatan" very nice Reindeer Steaks! very high quality food at not a bad price, 100m from Hotel Adlon.
- 6 - A Concrete Dougal mean its a pedestrian area.

## **Thanks to Chris for his Report.**

## **17th June ~ Ranby 10k** nr Retford, Nottinghamshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Ranby Prison Running Club

On a warm Summer evening seven Sleaford Town Runners gave up the temptation of a Sunday lunch in preparation for the Ranby Prison 10k which had the unusual start time of 18.15. The race starts and finishes directly outside Ranby Prison near Retford, Nottinghamshire, with a good field of runners lining up for this evening race. The course is one of the more challenging 10k races on the running calendar locally, predominantly climbing with some sharp calf burning inclines, combined with a tricky one mile off road section, and making PBs rare. None the less Chris Smith running only seven days after competing in the Stockholm Marathon produced a quick time in finishing in 42.25, Paul Freemantle pleased with 43.03 as was Angie Harvey in 44.07. Another consistent time from Dave Raynes 46.59 as was Simon Lunn time in a creditable 48.14. Ever present Town Runner Catherine Simpson came home in 1.01.09 shortly followed by Candy Louth frustrated by injury of late and competing in her first race in many years and delighted to complete the course free of injury in 1.02.40. Sleaford Strider and second claim Club member for Sleaford Town Runners was Graham Potter happier with longer distance races however producing a solid time in 49.00.

## **23rd June ~ Dambuster Triathlon** Water, Leicestershire.

Dambuster Triathlon, Rutland Water 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2007

Olympic Distance, World Championship Qualifier

At last a perfect day for triathlon despite a pretty dire weather forecast – the lake was calm and not too cold, it was warm enough with no wind on the bike but not hot running – the sun even came out afterwards. Most notably Fliss Hart of Sleaford Wheelers had a fantastic race being first female by over 2 minutes, 42<sup>nd</sup> overall out of 625 in a time of 2h 10 mins. She showed than not only is she a top cyclist but a very good swimmer and competent runner. I look forward to reading how she goes in the Age Group World Championships in Hamburg in September. In my 74<sup>th</sup> triathlon I managed to find a new way of messing things up by turning at the wrong swim buoy then having to go round and continue to the correct one. Anyway the 1500 m swim was less of an ordeal than usual and I tried hard on the bike ride going round Rutland Water on the roads averaging 18 mph for the 26 miles - with 2 really good hills, 2 nearly good hills plus various drags and undulations adding up to 500 m of climbing. With the Nationals in 2 weeks time, the plan was to take it steady running. This was on the footpath/cycle track beside the lake. I probably tried harder than planned so the nominal 10k, probably nearer 6 miles, took 45:30 and left me in Age Group 2<sup>nd</sup> place just 50 seconds behind the winner. Overall my time was 2:50:34 in 525<sup>th</sup> place out of 625 finishers.

## **Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

## **24th June ~ Stathern Festival 10k** Stathern, Vale of Belvoir, Leicestershire, Road.

Chris Smith and Catherine Simpson ran in the Stathern Festival 10k on Sunday 24th June. The course was not flat but better than we expected for Belvoir Vale and a nice simple route except for a narrow start and strange winding uphill finish, 4 drink stations and plenty of race marshalls were also very welcome. Conditions were perfect for running, drizzle/rain and 13 Deg not so good for the spectators though! Chris finished in 42m:29s and Catherine achieved 60m:22s both were happy with good times for the course.

### **Thanks to Chris for his Report.**

**24th June ~ Three Lakes Classic 15** Rother Valley Country Park, Killamarsh, Sheffield, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ Killamarsh Kestrels Running Club

Rother Valley Country Park just outside Sheffield was the destination for a contingent of Sleaford Town Runners on Sunday 24th June. The event was the second running of the 'Three Lakes Classic 15', a fifteen mile multi-terrain race 80% being off road. A wonderful scenic run taking you around three lakes and surrounding woods of the Park. A humid day that mostly remained dry despite the threatening heavy rain clouds that lingered for the majority of the race. Hills within the woods and road sections added to the challenge of the race, combined with navigating by means of limited marshalling, red & white tape and a map. Around eighty runners competed including the seven Town Runners in what was to become an eventful race. Dave Tilley ran his usual confident race, running at the front of the field for the majority of the race, Dave would finish 2<sup>nd</sup> in the race in 1.43. Behind him Paul Freemantle, Angie Harvey and Caz Burrows would struggle with the directions adding a further mile to their race in taking a wrong turning. Angie would however recover well to finish fourth lady home and winning her Vet Category in 2.11.18. Paul Freemantle some 32 seconds adrift of Angie finished in 2.11.50. Caz Burrows also recovered well from her extra mileage crossing the finishing line together with Graham Potter of Sleaford Striders and second claim Club member to Sleaford Town Runners and Dave Taylor in 2.16, with Dave Raynes following them home in 2.18. Great race and one that I'm sure will just grow in size. Well done Killamarsh Kestrels Running Club for organising a superb race. Many thanks also to Graham for being duty driver albeit with a strange choice in music!

**26th June ~ Holme Pierrepont 10k** National Watersports Centre, Nottingham, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Pierrepont Running Club

Tuesday 26th June. Chris Smith ran the Holme Pierrepont 10k road race, the first event in the Nottingham Grand Prix Series of 4 races over 2 weeks. The course is very flat just one tiny hill the you run twice. The weather was dry and just a light wind so great for a fast run. There were 500 runners mostly club standard. The start was fast and frantic with everyone trying to get into a clear space. Chris had a good run and finished strongly in 41m:49s which was 40 seconds faster than Stathern 10k just 2 days ago. Next race LWAC 5k tomorrow night! Time to recover. Then the next race in this Series the 5k at Wollaton Hall on Thursday. It's nice to get out the house!

### **Thanks to Chris for his Report.**

**27th June ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 2** Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Lincoln Wellington AC

Wednesday 27th July was the date for the second race in the Lincoln Wellington AC 5k race series. A sunny evening with a brisk fresh wind, that would provide a head wind for half of the three and a half laps to complete. As always a good turnout from local Clubs boosted by the seven Town Runners taking part. James Roulston and Chris Smith would start at a brisk pace near the front for the first part of the race, however James would gradually stretch away from a tiring Chris as the effects of the previous evening 10k race took its toll. Behind was Paul Freemantle & Fiona Robertson running a steady race as was Angie Harvey, Mike Folland and Caz Burrows. James Roulston came home looking relaxed in an excellent time of 19.30, Chris Smith dug deep to finish strongly in 19.58. Fiona Robertson chasing a sub 20 min race would just miss out in 20.06 however for the 2nd race running winning her Vet Category. Paul Freemantle again pleased with 20.10. A leg weary Angie Harvey was comfortable in 21.29 as was Mike Folland 22.03 and Caz Burrows in 22.08 who finished one place up from the previous race in the Senior Women Category finishing 2nd. Next race Wednesday 25th July.

**28th June ~ Holme Pierrepont Series Race 2** Park, Nottingham, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ Holme Pierrepont Running Club

As you will see from the picture the hall is on top of a hill, we started at the bottom and had 3 laps (Hilly). You will also note that it's a Deer Park so they churn up the grass, like the meadow/swamp we started the race on! real ankle breaking stuff, followed by a muddy corner then gravel tracks, paths and finishing on a downhill sprint on grass all of which was wet as it was throwing it down all the time. I ran in the shoes I drove there in as nobody told me it was cross country, OK I didn't ask or probably read the details well enough. I managed 21m:23s and was very happy with this time for the course, it really was one to get your teeth into. Very much looking forward to the other races in the series. [www.hprcrun.co.uk](http://www.hprcrun.co.uk) for more details.

### **Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

**1st July ~ Mansfield Half Marathon** Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, Road.

Despite the forecast of heavy rain three Town Runners travelled inland to Mansfield on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July to compete in the Mansfield Half Marathon. Place the Nursery Rhyme 'The grand old Duke of York' in your head and you have a feel for the course. Yes its true when they were up, they were up, and when they were down, they were down and er well then up again!!! Constant hills but

thankfully the weather held off with no major rain or wind to contend with. Caz Burrows, Angie Harvey and Paul Freemantle would use the race as build up to their marathon later in the year, a training run with a T-shirt as Chris Smith once said. The usual brisk start for a sizeable field of runners that instantly descended downhill that belied the course that lay ahead. Twelve miles later and the tanyo to be heard booming away at the finish and another hill to contend with! Finally descending for the last 400 metres to finish on a running track, PBs out of the window with just a feeling of contentment to finish this challenging of races. Paul Freemantle running his favoured distance was delighted to complete the course in 1.38.57, as was Angie Harvey also running a sub 1.40 race in finishing in 1.39.26. Caz Burrows increasing her race distance and returning to half marathon distance after many years, produced a great time in 1.46.35. Despite the hills a great race, well organised and marshalled throughout. Many thanks to Caz for being duty driver for the day.

### **3rd July ~Holme Pierrepont Series Race 3** Rushcliffe Country Park, Nottinghamshire, Multi-Terrain.

The 3rd race in the Holme Pierrepont series was a 4 mile cross country on an undulation course at Rushcliffe Country Park Tuesday 3rd July. Chris finished in a steady 27m:53s so an average pace of 6m:51s mile slower than normal but I might have saved something for tomorrows 5k ? maybe not! The course was very wet and was a challenging grass and gravel path mix. The rain started at the same time as the race and we finished in to a rainbow. A nice outing. Only one more race in the series, the Colwick Park 5mile on Thursday then a nice new T-Shirt!

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

### **5th July ~Holme Pierrepont Series Race 4** Colwick Park lakes, Nottinghamshire,Multi-Terrain.

Thursday 5th July last of the 4 races in the Holme Pierrepont 2007 series. Job Done!  
A 5 mile two lap course around Colwick Park lakes (lakes have water in them) Following a full speed wipers drive to the venue, the very wet start and course were predictable! All 4 races have had varying degrees of water. The course is a nearly flat(ish) two lap route on gravel paths which seem to have more than a fair share of holes, puddles and mud. Very good fun though and the last in the series so that helped me keep going, the grass finish was a nasty tough, someone has a sense of humour like me! I finished 81st in 34m:42s Series Result 49th Position with a total time for all four events of 2:05:59 there were 4 women in front of me and 244 people in total ran all 4 events, may others picked just a few. After a quick wash down in a muddy puddle (It was much less muddy than me) then headed off to collect my series T-Shirt which I now wear with pride and muddy memories. Actually it's a very wearable red and black design. I would have stopped for the sack of spot prizes but it was STR Club Beer Night so I hot-footed it back for a real shower and a pint with the STR team. A good night was had at the Barge and Bottle. Next year a dry series please.

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

### **8th July ~ Notfast 10k** Newark, Nottinghamshire, Road.

It was on, it was off. It was short, it was long again. The organizers of the Notfast 10k had had a very difficult week due to the floods but they managed in the end to pull off a great race. Warm (22 degrees), sunny, dry weather and a lovely light cooling breeze could not have been predicted a few days ago when we were all running in the cold rain on club night. The difference in temperature made it feel quite hot. The race began on the long grass of the rugby pitch then out onto the road. Catherine, Chris and Fiona all began really close to the start line but let all the super fast people past and settled into the race. Due to the flooding a small loop down Kelham lane and back was added at the 3 mile point which everyone seemed to enjoy - it was nice to see other runners' faces rather than staring at their backs all through the race and you could see where you were in the race. None of us really struggled with the small hill at 3.5 miles but did enjoy the long downhill stretch to 4 miles – wheeeeeee! As ever being able to spot the rugby club does not mean that you are near it and the last mile was long and hot. Chris was first STR home in a time of 43:11, sub 7min/mile so happy, next was Fiona with 44.07 (PB and 1<sup>st</sup> vet 35 also 8 mins quicker than last year) followed by Catherine, feeling the heat, in 1.02.12 All received an etched Notfast glass as a race memento. Fiona was also very happy with the £20 Lincolnshire Runner Voucher she got for winning her group. Although numbers were down on last year, this was a very friendly well organized race with lots of encouraging marshals right round the route. Good for a pb and good for a first 10k.

### **8th July ~ Spilsby Show 6** Spilsby, Lincolnshire, Road/Bridleway.

Dave Taylor and I ran the Spilsby Show 6 miler on Sunday. The weather was warm with a mixture of sun and cloud. There were about 100 or so runners representing most of the local clubs. The course was a mixture of trail and road and was surprisingly undulating. Dave crossed the line in 43:25 and I crossed in a disappointing 46:10 (although I was treating it as a training run). Each finisher received a glass engraved memento.

**Thanks to Caz Burrows for her Report.**

### **8th July ~ National Triathlon Championships** Pugney's Country Park, Wakefield.

550 competitors came to Wakefield for the Age Group Nationals. Conditions were ideal with sunny skies, light wind, warm lake and pleasantly mild air for the typical early start with 9 different waves going off between 6.30 am and 7.30 am. No lying in bed on Sunday morning if you want to be a triathlete! There were 11 entries in my Age group and at last I managed to a good swim and, more importantly, avoided messing anything up. The only tiresome feature was that the long middle leg was straight towards the rising sun. It was my best swim time for ages 34:55 (swim position 456<sup>th</sup>) for 1500 m and I came out just behind the 2<sup>nd</sup> man of the group leaving the 1<sup>st</sup> transition before him – it is always a great feeling to reach the parked bikes and see those of your immediate competitors still there. I had practised the mega-hilly 25 mile bike course a few weeks before so tried to pace things for the second half of the ride with 2 tough, steep climbs and a long drag. I was pleased to catch the age group leader, who I knew was no runner, three quarters of the way through. My bike time was 1:26:17 (bike position 418<sup>th</sup>), 17.3 mph with all those hills. It was even better to return to transition with not a bike parked in the area of our age group – and with the run still to come. The 10 k run was 4 laps of the shale path round the lake and passed fairly uneventfully. It is hard to know what is going on with loads of overtaking and lapping by and of runners of widely different pace who had started at different times. My legs certainly knew about the effort put into the bike ride but the run time was a steady 48:27 (run position 335<sup>th</sup>). Including the relatively long transitions, this gave a total time of 2:55:07 (overall position 412<sup>th</sup>) and my first ever age group Gold at the main Nationals. Fliss Hart of Sleaford Wheelers showed great fitness, strength and race craft to win her age group and be fastest female overall. Although primarily a cyclist, Fliss contented herself on the bike with merely catching up the 48 seconds she had lost on the swim and exhausting her rivals. The two leading girls came flying past me on their bikes as close as drafting rules permit. They were to leave T2 together and when they lapped me at half distance on the run Fliss was 20 or 30 metres behind. However, even though not normally a runner, she was to show superb pace judgement and win by 56 seconds.

**Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

**13th July ~ Branston Dash** Branston, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ Lincoln & District Runners

Friday the 13th July was the date for the 3rd running of the Branston Dash at Branston Lincolnshire. Despite heavy rain from late afternoon the race would still go ahead on this multi terrain 3.5 mile course, however Sat Navs would confirm the course at 4.1 miles in distance. Despite the bad weather a good field of runners boasted by 14 Sleaford Town Runners would line up at the start for the 7.30 evening start time. A wet muddy course that took you close to field hedgerows, along farmers tracks and a mile or so of road. First Town Runner home and an excellent 7th in the race was James Roulston in 26.46, ever present in a Club vest Chris Smith 28.14. Running on her Birthday and 1st lady home in the race was Fiona Robertson 29.03, following next Paul Freemantle 29.17, Steve Roulston 30.17, 2nd lady home overall Angie Harvey 31.07, Simon Lunn was delighted with 31.19 as was Samantha Lester 33.25. Catherine Simpson 40.30 would just edge out Lynn Ellis 40.31, Catherine would win her Vet Category. Candy Louth soon to follow in 41.03. Julie Stapleton crossed the line with our friend of Sleaford Town Runners Carolyn Crocker in 50.07. Clair Bergner and Vicky Greenhalf running in their first race in Sleaford Town Runners colours finished together in a creditable 52.50 on a wet and difficult course. Special mention to Pete Hayward of Sleaford Striders AC continuing his return to form finishing in 48.47. Many thanks to Lincoln & District Runners for hosting this superb event, and for their post race comments of support to Sleaford Town Runners.

**14th July ~ Sherwood Pines 10k** Sherwood Pines, Clipstone Forest, Nottinghamshire, Multi-Terrain.

A very warm and humid day for this challenging 10k trail race in the beautiful setting of Sherwood Pines, Clipstone Forest. I recently competed in the Mud, Sweat & Gears Duathlon at this location so knew what to expect. The trails were wide and good condition allowing for overtaking and puddle avoiding. I finished in 42:59 (14th Place) Catherine Simpson ran 1:03:00 feeling the night before run in her legs.

Note - Matthew won the 2k race by about 200m clear. He sprinted ahead at the start and kept in front all the time. Finishing in 6:51.

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

**21st July ~ Burton Beer Bash 5** Burton Coggles, Lincolnshire, Road.

PJ'S Pie pub at Burton Coggles was the venue for the Burton Beer 5 mile, the race was billed as a 5 mile cross country run and I had my doubts as I drove towards Corby Glen in the torrential rain that the race would go ahead. Fortunately the organisers realised there was no chance of getting on the flooded course, so rearranged the course to be an out and back road race so as not to disappoint the 50 or so brave souls that turned up to run. The new course was undulating to hilly with just one water hazard which of course had to be negotiated twice, there was little point in trying to navigate around the 4 or 5 inches of standing water as by this time runners were already soaked through by the downpour. My time was a respectable 36 minutes 16 seconds, runners received a pint beer glass at the finish which if taken in to the pub was immediately filled with ale of your choice, or you could just have a cup of coffee if preferred. Well done to the organisers, I am sure if they decide to run it again next year and the cross country course is somewhat drier, this could be a very good Saturday morning race for local clubs.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**22nd July ~ St Ives 10k** St Ives, Cambridgeshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Hunts AC

It was a warm dry summers day, yes really. The early start and long drive were well worth while as you will see! The St Ives 10k is not scenic it's a town road then country lanes then 5k round an RAF Airfield then back, good thing then that's not the whole story. This route is undulating but kind there is a real chance of a PB (as two of our team got today). The course is well marshalled and safe. Better than that is the start/finish area, there are all the facilities of a sports centre with extra toilets, drinks & food tent, massage, baggage store and more. Add to that an over the top prize list, clock on lead vehicle, clock at the finish, finishing arch and a darn fine shiny medal and yes it was worth the drive. Dave Tilley came home 13th overall from 466 finishers with a PB in an amazing 36:08, taking 15 seconds off his previous best. James Roulston 49th was next also with a PB taking an insane 2:26 off his previous best of 42:12 to achieve 39:46. Next home was Chris Smith 88th in a "normal" 42:11 followed by Catherine Simpson 412nd in 1:01:39 then a very happy Pat Riches 413rd just yards behind in 1:02:00. The prizes were elusive but I am sure James will be back next year to claim one!

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

**25th July ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 3** Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Lincoln Wellington AC

The penultimate race in this four race series took place in thankfully dry conditions in this summer of rain, although a strong breeze would be present at various points of the three and a half lap circuit. Alex Hetherington, Dave Tilley and Steve Roulston competed for the first time in this race series, alongside fellow Club members having already competed in the previous two races. A larger field of runners lined up on the start line for the 7.30pm start, with many local Clubs taking part. As always a fast start for this 5k race with little time to settle into your stride. Dave Tilley, James Roulston would make a quick start with the other Club members jostling for position in the main pack behind. Chris Smith with a slight cold would chase of hard as always followed by Fiona Robertson opting also for a quick pace in chasing her target time of sub 20 minutes. Dave Tilley first home for our Club would produce a very quick time coming home 4th in his Vet category with a PB time of 17.22, James Roulston taking some 30 seconds of his previous time again producing a PB in an excellent time of 18.57. Chris Smith would again break 20 minutes in 19.56. Fiona Robertson would just miss out on her Sub 20 minute target, however produced another consistent time of 20.11. In finishing 3rd in her race category she cannot now be overtaken in the final race and set to win her Vet Category for the four race series. Paul Freemantle next 20.26 followed by Alex Hetherington and Angie Harvey both chasing down the line together both crossing in 21.18, only just adrift of Alex & Angie Steve Roulston crossed in 21.34. Steady runs from Mike Folland 21.59 and Caz Burrows 22.32 third in her Vet category, would complete the Town Runners competing. We now roll onto the final race of the series on Wednesday 29th August with still plenty to compete for.

**28th July ~ Heckington 10** Heckington, Lincolnshire, Road.

The rain cleared and summer arrived just in time for the Heckington Show to take place, and with it the Heckington Show 10 mile Road Race on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July. Fiona Robertson sadly had to withdraw from the race due to an injury niggle, however Sleaford Town Runners would field a strong team of 12 runners. This two lap course is a relatively flat course starting in the main show arena before heading out into the village and surrounding country roads. With an increase of competitors on previous years, the runners would have a warm race and some brisk head winds to contend with on the 10 mile course. Dave Tilley continues his purple patch of running in finishing 5<sup>th</sup> overall, winning his Vet Category in a PB time of 1.00.25, equally impressive was James Roulston again finishing in a PB time of 1.07.48. Chris Smith eager to chase down the clock returned a time of 1.09.09, well adrift of Chris however pleased with 1.13.06 was Paul Freemantle, Angie Harvey would dip under 1.15 in finishing in 1.14.20 and winning her Vet Category. Alex Hetherington ran a strong race in 1.15.38 as did Dave Raynes 1.17.50 and Steve Roulston 1.18.40. Caz Burrows clocked a sub 1.20 race in 1.19.10, with Simon Lunn not far adrift in 1.22. Paul Pocklington was pleased with a steady run in 1.29.29 as can be said of Candy Louth who would dig deep to produce a determined run in 1.45, her longest race distance for many years. To cap a great day's running the Club would pick up its first Trophy for the first three Club runners home. A fantastic achievement for our Club in its maiden year competing at races, and a huge thank you also to all our members who helped in marshalling the race and turned out to support their fellow Club members competing.

**12th August ~ Newark Half Marathon** Newark, Nottinghamshire, Road.

**Report from Candy Louth:**

Consider this the report from the rear!!!! (First Half Marathon in 19 long years)

Having woken up to an overcast day with the pavements wet from the rain last night, all looked well. I was assured by Catherine that it was going to be cooler than of late so thought there was no good reason that I could come up with not to attempt this run. All appeared well until I got closer to Newark. The outside temperature gauge on the car had started to creep upwards and the sun was shining. No sign of that rain they had promised! Well to the start line and what a crowded one it was. Mike had already forewarned me of the potential of a "hidden" bollard or two!

The start was slow - so far so good! It took a while for a pace to form and by mile one the runner's had started to thin out nicely. Catherine and I had settled into a nice, even pace. Things seemed to be going well. At 6 miles, Jelly Babies and carbo gel consumed and onto the second half. The weather showed no signs of that promised rain but that dreaded hill beckoned. I remember somebody (I won't mention any names!) promising that there was only one and it was about the 9 mile mark. Oh how they were fibbing!!!! By now we started to catch those that had set off a bit too quick which gave such a buzz. Slowly and evenly always seems to win the day! Enjoyed the downward bit at about mile 11 to 12 miles but by now the legs were starting to feel tired ... however not far to go ... My trusted Garmin reassured me that the finish was not too far away after climbing what I thought to be the last uphill bit over the bridge toward the town centre. Oh how wrong I was ... some bright spark had decided to put the finish up one of those slope things but at last it was in sight! The promised rain now started to fall, something I could have done with about 5 miles previously! Approaching the finish line, it was great to hear your name called and the support of the rest of the club, not to mention the other finishers and organisers. All I have left to say is that it was a fantastic feeling crossing that line ... and at least I have my T-shirt to avoid Mike's time penalty for the next Predictor!!!! Well done to everyone!

### **Report from Dave Raynes:**

An excellent race in very warm conditions, there were plenty of water stations of which all were required by myself, a steady first half as I knew I would require plenty of energy from 7 miles onward on this course. The marshalling and the drinks stations were very well organised and the usual welcoming finish in the old market square. Well done to the organisers, the only race I can think of that has a finish line so close to the doors of a Weatherspoon pub.

### **Full Club results:**

Dave Tilley 1:22:33, James Roulston 1:34:35 **First Under 20**, Christopher Smith 1:34:35, Mike Folland 1:41:23, David Raynes 1:47:44, Angie Harvey 1:49:29, Caroline Burrows 1:49:30, Simon Lunn 1:56:09, Candy Louth 2:18:28, Catherine Simpson 2:20:16 & Patricia Riches 2:27:35.

### **17th August ~ Blisworth 5** Blisworth, Northamptonshire, Road.

Overseas Club members Nick and Anna Berrill ran their only UK race this summer at Blisworth. Nick was 14<sup>th</sup> overall out of 263 finishers and 2<sup>nd</sup> M40 with a time of 28:21. Fortunately for him, the race winner was also M40 so Nick picked up the Vets prize. Nick also gave the club another mention in Athletics Weekly, if only with the pithy description "Slea". Anna ran at time of 33:51 to come 75<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> F35. Next week they return to Dubai and the joys of training at 44°C!

### **Thanks to Mike Folland for the Report.**

### **18th August ~Race the Train** Tywyn, Wales, Multi-Terrain.

What a perfect way to end a wet week camping in Wales! The race started on the crest of the main railway line bridge at Talylyn railway station. The first of two steam trains gave an almighty blast from it's whistle and off we all set. It was 14.75 miles of great fun and a lot tougher than I thought it would be. Ploughed fields, gates to climb over, a bog to squelch through, never mind the STEEP hillsides with narrow sheep tracks! Running across the face of the hill just has to be seen, especially when your legs are feeling like jelly after the ploughed field and your not very keen on heights! Needless to say, I didn't beat either of the trains that set off twenty minutes apart but what a brilliant experience, with only a couple of miles to go, hearing the second engine approaching from behind, knowing it's catching you up and about to over take any second, with everyone on the train hanging out of the windows shouting and cheering us on. Just the boost I needed at that point to spur me on to the finish line. I couldn't think of a better way to spend a Saturday afternoon, roll on Belvoir Challenge.

### **Thanks to Alex Hetherington for her Report.**

### **27th August ~ Grimsthorpe Castle 10k** Grimsthorpe Castle Estate, Bourne, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

A cool windy start was promised to the Grimsthorpe 10k, this run is quite hilly and hard work so that would have been good, anyway out came the sun so hats on and bandannas out! The down hill start was worse than ever as horses had made a mess of the ground, ah well. Then on to the little roads that make up the course, these have been "repaired" with huge lumps of limestone, it moves and hurts your feet so kept the eyes and brain working just to keep upright. After some more grass and a long road we finished back over the meadow and up the start hill which was as normal very hard work. Despite the hard route or perhaps because of it this is a good race which makes you smile at the end. Even the T-Shirt is wearable green rather than bland white. After checking if Dave Tilley got his V40 cat (Missed out just) we have Ostrich burgers said bye to the Owls and headed home. Other Club members times: Dave Tilley **0:37:35**, Christopher Smith **0:41:44 SB**, John Hodgkison **0:48:28** & Dave Raynes **0:48:44**.

### **29th August ~ LWAC 5k Race Series Race 4** Yarborough Leisure Centre, Lincoln, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Lincoln Wellington AC.

Lincoln Wellington AC played host to the final race in their 5k race series. This series would be their best supported race series to date, with the majority of local Clubs fielding runners. With three of the four races counting in the overall score there was still plenty to race for, from overall race positions to PBs. With repair work under way to the running and cycle track, an adjustment to the course turning it into a four lap race as opposed to the three and a half of previous races. A good field including six Town Runners lined up in favourable weather conditions for the 7.30pm start. Dave Tilley and Chris Smith would again set off at a brisk pace with Fiona Robertson also chasing her own PB time also setting off at pace. Trevor Brown competing for the first time in this race series together and with Mike Folland and Paul Freemantle competing they completed the line up of Club runners. Dave Tilley returned an excellent time in crossing the line in 17.29, 3rd in his vet category. Chris Smith was delighted with his PB for the series in a quick 19.27. Fiona Robertson was so close in chasing her sub 20 minute time, just missing out in 20.02. Paul Freemantle crossed in 20.37, closely followed in by Trevor Brown in 21.38 and Mike Folland 21.58. In the overall race series results Fiona Robertson won her Vet Category with Angie Harvey picking up third prize in the same category. Caz Burrows not running but having competed in three of the four races would finish 2nd in the senior women category. Another good night for the Club, many thanks to Catherine Simpson, Candy Louth and Angie Harvey for travelling to support Club members, and Candy once again for taking the superb photos.

**2nd September ~ Major Stone Half Marathon** Beverley & Driffield, just north of Hull, Road.

**Host Club** ~ East Hull Harriers.

On Sunday 2nd September Chris Smith ran the Lockington "Major Stone Half Marathon" just north of Hull. This is a spectacularly beautiful area and a great place to run. The village is a conservation area and is well worth a visit. The whole event was staged in aid of the RSPCA so donating a few pounds for a pre-race massage seemed a good idea! The course was said to be Flat/Undulating, it is just Undulating (with two hills). As it was quite windy and there was a little rain Chris just missed his possibly insane target time of sub 1:30 and ran 1:31:54 this was still 2mins 34 second better than his previous best this year. Lots of opportunity to improve though as next week it's the Grunty Fen Half then Robin Hood Half the next week then East Retford Half the week after, that should make him work! The idea of this punishing schedule is getting a good run at the Luton Marathon on 2nd December.

**Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

**8th Sept ~ Brit Long Distance Tri Championships** Rutland Water, Leicester.

Mike Folland of Sleaford Town Runners was among the 800 entrants in this event at Rutland Water and completed a clean sweep of Gold Medals in the M65-69 Age Group in all three National Championships this year.

**Times :**

1.2 mile lake swim **44:15**

51 mile hilly bike time trial **3:07:11**

Half marathon run **1:52:55**

Total time including transitions 5 hours 49 minutes 28 seconds

Position **537<sup>th</sup>** overall out of **689** finishers

**Thanks to Mike for his Report.**

**8th Sept ~ Lincolnshire Wolds 10 Mile** Rothwell, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Wolds Veteran Runners Club

The weather was warm and humid for this tough 10 mile road race, the race starts in the scenic Wolds village of Rothwell. The race as the name suggests is tough. 10 miles at least a climb in every mile. This climbing start from the gun a really tough hill for the first 3/4 of a mile no chance at all to settle in to your breathing. The scenery is excellent through out, if only you had time to take it all in, the problem is most of the way your heading up hill or recovering before the next one starts. Only 2 drinks stations, and it was hot and muggy but an excellent pub at the finish the Blacksmiths Arms in which to rehydrate on good beers. This was the 25th anniversary of this race and to commemorate this for your £5.00 entry you not only received a good quality sweat shirt, but for the occasion a free buffet was laid on at no cost. Thanks to the Wolds vets team for the hospitality and a great race. My finishing time was 1hr 23mins 40secs and it was hard earned on this Tough 10 miler.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**9th Sept ~ Grunty Fen Half Marathon** Grunty Fen, East Cambridgeshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Ely Runners

A near perfect day and a fast course. It was dry and sunny 15 degrees with just a breeze perfect conditions. The course was a small loop then a larger loop, this area is very flat and there was just one small hill that we ran twice it was even hard to see it was so gentle. We started on time at 10:30 before the sun was at full power, the field of 535 gave a big race feel with plenty of people to hunt down and more to keep behind us. Dave Tilley got a little too fast on the flat course but finished 19<sup>th</sup> overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vet 40 in 1:22:00 a valiant run. Chris Smith worked very hard to improve on last weeks seasons best of 1:31:54 to finish well ahead of his

sub 1:30 target in 1:28:16 in 45<sup>th</sup> position. The venue was a school and it was very well prepared with good marshalling, refreshments, start/finish area etc... Even the race medal was worth having. The only slight niggle was that my Garmin got the course to 13.20m but that could be partly the Garmin 205 for you. We shall be back but we need 2 more runners for a team prize, this means You.

### **Thanks to Chris Smith for his Report.**

#### **16th Sept ~ Nottingham Half & Full Marathon** Nottingham, Road.

The Experian Robin Hood Half & Full Marathon at Nottingham was the main attraction of the weekend for those Club runners who travelled to compete. Yet another course change from that of 2006, although those hills remained prominent for the Half Marathon course. With both races starting on Victoria Embankment the course would wind itself through the streets of Nottingham taking in the scenic sights of Nottingham Castle, University Lake and Wollaton Park. A brisk wind throughout with broken sunshine accompanied the 6500 Half Marathon Runners who completed the race.

Chris Smith would again run a sub 1.30 race in finishing in 1.29.44 (194th), Simon Lunn struggled on the undulating course as the hills took their toll in the final third of the race, however Simon dug deep to finish in 1.52.45. Julie Porter was thrilled to record 2.11.44, as was Sinead Johnson in her first Half Marathon recording an excellent time in 2.13.38. Candy Louth bettered her Newark Half Marathon time finishing in 2.17.22, with Barbara Johnson also pleased with 2.20.01. Catherine Simpson almost didn't start due to an upset stomach and was pleased to complete the course as the stomach pains returned finishing in 2.23.13, with Pat Riches producing yet another creditable time of 2.24.13 on this challenging of courses. Sadly James Roulston starting off at a brisk pace had to retire at the six mile point with stomach pains, similar to those that prevented his Dad Steve Roulston from starting the race. Meanwhile the Club's three Marathon runners headed out for another 13 miles as the course flattened out taking in the National Water Sport's Centre as part of the route, which though flat was more exposed to the gusting winds. Angie Harvey chasing a sub 3.45 race would PB in finishing well under in 3.42.34, Caz Burrows running her first Marathon summoned up all her strengths to finish in an excellent 4.11.35, Paul Freemantle completed the trio of Club runners and was more than pleased finishing in 4.20.59. Another great day's racing for the travelling Toonies, combined as always by our superb Club team spirit.

#### **16th Sept ~ Mablethorpe Half Marathon** Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire, Road.

In the second year of the running of this race, Dave Tilley would smash his personal best time for a Half Marathon finishing 6th overall in the race in 1.21.02.

#### **16th Sept ~ Ponton Plod** Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

7.30am was registration for this second Ponton Plod, 27 miles of cross country using either OS maps or the descriptive map issued at registration. The route is 90% off road some of which is freshly ploughed fields, bridleways and footpaths, taking in villages such as Stoke Rochford, Skillington, Croxton Kerrial and Harlaxton. There are 4 feed stations all of which were well stocked with sandwiches, cakes chock bars and hot & cold drinks. The conditions were good with sunshine and a cooling breeze, the terrain however is quite hilly and the dry weather had made the cultivated fields hard to cross without turning an ankle. The event is for both walkers and runners and is well organised and friendly event, I completed the course in 5hrs 46mins finishing in 5th position overall.

### **Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

Dave Taylor would also compete in this race but over the 17 mile race distance instead of the 27 mile route. Competing over his much favoured multi-terrain, Dave would finish in an excellent 3rd position overall out of 59 Runners. His finishing time of 2.40 only 3 minutes adrift of the 1st and 2nd place finishers.

#### **23rd Sept ~ East Retford Half Marathon** Ordsall, Retford, Nottinghamshire, Road.

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

For the five Club members that travelled to Retford this was to be another weekend of distance running. Dave Raynes, Dave Taylor, Paul Freemantle, Chris Smith & Angie Harvey had all competed between 13 ~ 27 mile races the pervious weekend. So with heavy legs to start with this was to be a 'training run with a T-shirt!' Described officially as a slightly undulating course taking you through the surrounding countryside in a figure of eight. Well yes for the first 6-7 miles then some large inclines take over with one continuous climb of over a mile between miles 8 & 9, a nice drop down to mile 12 before one more calf burner of a hill, levelling out for a short run into the finish in the Rugby Club grounds. Chris Smith running his fourth Half Marathon in as many weeks ran a well deserved 1.30, Paul Freemantle was pleased with 1.40 as was Angie Harvey 1.43, winning for the second year running at this event her Vet Category. Dave Raynes finished strongly in 1.45 as did Dave Taylor 1.48. This is a well organised event with plenty of well managed water stations, excellent and enthusiastic marshalls, and some of the best bacon butties to be had on the racing circuit.

#### **29th Sept ~ Akron Marathon** Ohio, USA, Road.



Malcolm East, Sleaford Town Runners former International Marathon Runner, competed in the Akron Marathon in Ohio USA on 29th September. He finished what was to be a very hard course in 2hr 57m 21sec. 51 year old Malcolm finished 37th overall and 1st in his class, something we can only dream of. All the more impressive as the course was so hard the winner was some 15mins behind a normal marathon time!

**30th Sept ~ West Pinchbeck 10k** West Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Spalding Triathlon Club

A nice flat course in near perfect weather conditions was the order of the day for our Club members who made the trip to Spalding to support this local event. Hosted once again by Spalding Triathlon Club this was to be the second year of the running of this event, and with numbers up on the previous year a friendly yet competitive atmosphere was present. Dave Tilley would lead home the Club members finishing 4th in the race in another consistently fast time of 36.16 and winning his vet category. Fiona Robertson unsure whether a slight injury would prevent her from finishing the race would storm home in a PB time of 44.02 and winning a trophy as the second lady home. Chris Smith struggling before the race with a hip injury could not resist running through the pain barrier and finished in a decent time of 45.25 Angie Harvey came home third lady overall in 46.02. New Club member Keith Boseley surprised himself with a great time of 46.46, Candy Louth was delighted with her time of 57.11 as was Catherine Simpson finishing in 58.49 Alistair Whitaker just missed out on breaking the hour mark, however well satisfied with 61.15. A thrilled Carolyn Crocker running her first ever 10k with Julie Stapleton as company would cross the line together in 70.37. Well done to everybody for their achievements on the day, and also their enthusiastic support as always to your fellow Club members.

**30th Sept ~ Berlin Marathon** Berlin, Germany, Road.

Over in Berlin, Germany Alex Hetherington and Paul Pocklington competed in the Berlin Marathon on Sunday 30th Sept. This huge city marathon as with the London Marathon attracts runners from all over the world. This year the men's world record would be broken by Ethiopian Haile Gebrselassie in 2:04:55. Although not quite as quick Alex Hetherington would still be delighted to run an automatic London Marathon qualifying time of 3:37:38. Accompanying Alex to Berlin was fellow Town Runner Paul Pocklington. With no real training prior to the race Paul would bravely run the marathon at a steady pace soaking up the big race atmosphere, crossing the line in 5: 49:51.

**30th Sept ~ The Great North Run** Newcastle, Tyneside, Road.

Ok, so I didn't break any records but what a fantastic day. After a very restless night beforehand it was now time to put all that training into practice. The warm up began at 10.30am with a Mr. Motivator look-alike. Then as we all stood clad in our bin liners making final adjustments to our laces and ipods the gun was fired by Sir Bobby Robson and we were off! The sun was now beginning to burn through the mist and things are warming up nicely. There were some great costumes around: fully grown men dressed as fairies, monkeys, Elvis, sunflowers, trees, Sponge Bob Square Pants. But my favourite had to be the two men that had nothing on but a blue wig and an electric blue "G-string"! They did attract some attention. The people of Newcastle were fantastic. They had come out to support and cheer in their thousands. So many of them were handing out biscuits, ice pops, oranges and jelly babies. One man had climbed on top of a bus shelter and ran his garden hose pipe from his house so that he could shower people down as they ran by. Finally after descending a steep hill and a sharp left turn we reached the sea front. Those final 200m, 100m markers seem to take forever to pass but the Red Arrows performing over the sea helped. Everyone is really cheering now the finish is in sight: it helps to have your name on your vest as well, such a boost to hear your name being called out. And there it is the finish line. Arms up and a smile for the photographers. 2 hours and 28 minutes. After collecting my goodie bag complete with medal, T-shirt, food and water I find my way to the Breast Cancer Campaign tent in the Charity Village for some more food and drink and a well deserved massage.

**Thanks to Karen Gwynne for her Report.**

**7th October ~ Clumber Park 10k** Clumber Park, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, Road.

The morning was bright and fresh and seemed perfect for running in this picturesque location. Having arrived we decided to wander down towards to start to get our bearings. Catherine had driven us there in fine style but Alistair and I became worried about her eyesight when she exclaimed "look at that chicken sitting on the top of that fence!" ... it was a grey squirrel!! Alistair had to get in touch with his feminine side once again - a girlie call of nature, now a staple part of any race! Arriving at the start line it was nice to see markers for estimated finishing times, an indication of the large number of runners taking part. There was also a couple of low posts which we needed to be mindful of if we weren't going to be making an early exit from this race!!! Having made our way back to the car to dump our warm gear and take part in the Toonie Photoshoot, we were eagerly anticipating the start of the race. No sign yet of any of our fellow Toonies. Back to the start for a second time. Fellow Toonies now in tow. It was crowded but cosy. The sun was out and it was starting to warm up. The start was delayed by about ten minutes but no-one seemed to know why. Once underway, the narrow lanes of Clumber Park made it difficult to pick your way through the field. Posts avoided though and onto the first kilometre. My theory of what goes up, must come down was right. The course was beautiful but most definitely undulating. The biggest up came just before the water station at the five kilometre mark, followed by a lovely down. My new

pacemaker (a cheeky grey squirrel) was doing a sterling job. Onto the final stages. The nine kilometre mark seemed a long while coming into view but at last it was there. Downhill, a sharp left hand bend, a bit more downhill, right turn to the finish. The inflatable gantry now in sight. Crossing the finish line in a PB time of 55:42, I was delighted. My happiness at my time was soon overshadowed by my disappointment at the diabolical poor management of the finish. Never before, have I had to queue the minute I crossed the line. This was no ordinary queue, it resembled Tesco's on Christmas Eve!!! It took me fifteen minutes to make my way to the cup of water that was awaiting me at the finish. A marshall was recording numbers of finishers but these were taken in no particular order as runners finishing behind me had somehow ended up in front of me (I think they'd been learning queue jumping from their Grandma) and ended up with their number preceding mine on the list! Not a major problem ... the frustrating part was making sure that you had taken note of your finishing time because if you didn't, no-one else was!! The queuing made it impossible for me to make my way back to the finish line to cheer in my fellow Toonies, primarily because I was still queuing when they crossed the line! Having finally received my water, I waited for the others before making our way to the Organiser's Tent to receive our well-earned, momento T-shirts. Pre-entry guaranteed we'd get one that fitted. Passing the Nike stand, the cheerful bloke, stood on the top of the bus, was announcing to runners who had entered on the day not to queue for their T-shirts as they had run out of small and medium sizes. As we had all pre-entered, queue we did, ever hopeful that our T-shirts would be waiting for us. All that was waiting was disappointment ... The large number of entries on the day that had finished before us had snaffled the small and medium sizes but we were promised that they would be posted on to us. Toonie on Tour team spirit was not to be marred by this set back. Everyone had enjoyed this beautiful race. Ann Mason was delighted with her finishing time of 59:29; closely followed by Catherine Simpson in 59:36; Lynn Ellis was the next Toonette home, just missing out on the hour, still happy with her time of 61:00; Julie Bumby was absolutely thrilled to be competing in her first 10k, and made it across the line in 63:00; Alistair Whitaker ran a good race to cross the line in 65:00. Well done to everyone who took part - must remember the picnic next year!!

### **Thanks to Candy Louth for her Report**

**13th Oct ~ Ducks & Drakes 10 & Washingborough 5, Lincoln, Multi-Terrain.**

**Host Club ~ Lincoln & District Runners.**

Chris Smith and Keith Boseley competed in this years 10 mile race. Chris still running with his hip injury, and Keith hoping to add to his impressive debut run for the Club at the West Pinchbeck 10k a few weeks ago. The race started 10 minutes before the 5 mile race and under the same grey skies and drizzle. Keith would have another excellent race on this multi-terrain course finishing and delighted with his time of 1.15, with Chris Smith still managing to produce a decent time in 1.21. The **Washingborough 5** is a pleasant low key race organised by Lincoln & District Runners. The day started grey with drizzle but not cold. Seven toonettes lined up dominating the start line in Red and Green club colours following the start of the 10 mile race. We started around the playing field, through some trees and then a bottle neck over a stile. The route then went straight up on to the river bank turning right to follow a cow track for some distance, this was very hard going as the wet grass was long hiding holes and tussocks. We were rewarded at the end of this section by a climb over the fence and a drinks station. The return leg was along the other side of the river on a tarmac track and back over another bridge, a bit more grass bank, a couple of stiles and onto the playing field for a friendly finish. Of course the toonettes were in fine voice as one by one we came in all smiles. Denise Jackson sprinted home first for STR in a time of 57.37, then came Catherine Simpson 59.00 (Second in class), Julie Porter and Patsy Hunt 62.41, Pat Riches 63.44 (Second in class), Julie Stapleton and Carolyn Crocker finished in fine style in 67.32. Host Club Lincoln & District Runners have since corrected the Winning Ladies Team in favour of Sleaford Town Runners, many thanks for their sporting gesture, and well done our Ladies.

### **Thanks to Catherine for her Report.**

**13th Oct ~ Waltham Winder Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire, Multi-Terrain.**

The Waltham Winder now in it's fourth year took place at Waltham on the Wolds just south of Grantham. The race is a 26, 16 and 10 mile race starting at half hour intervals, with the course covering the Vale of Belvoir around the village of Waltham on the Wolds. Six Club Members were in for a damp, misty yet humid start together with all the other runners that would remain for the duration of all three races. The majority of the course comprises of farmers tracks and fields with a few road sections inter linking the various fields. In the 10 mile race Paul Freemantle and Angie Harvey would set off at the front of the field enjoying the off road conditions. With a mile of the race remaining and running 2nd in the race, Paul Freemantle would take a wrong turning picking up the race direction signs from the first part of the race, and run a further three miles in the wrong direction before realising his error. Abandoning his race and ruing his discussion not to refer to the race map! Angie Harvey would also add a further mile & a half to her race in the wrong direction, however regained the correct route having lost ground to other competitors but still finishing strongly in a 1.40. Dave Tilley running his favoured race terrain would win the 16 mile race and was equally delighted with his fast time of 2.02. Accompanying Dave on the 16 mile route was Alex Hetherington fresh from her Berlin Marathon two weeks earlier and coming home in a 2.33, however her wrist GPS would read a distance of 17.8 miles. Still out on a very wet and incredibly sticky course was Dave Raynes and Dave Taylor competing in the 26 mile race. Dave Raynes managed to twist an ankle at about the 16 mile point having taken a fall due to undetected rabbit hole, but nothing too serious and ran it off after the next mile or two. Dave Taylor ran a good race and was pleased with his 4hrs.45min finishing in 7th place, Dave Raynes was happy with 5hrs 9mins

one place behind Dave in 8th place, again however fellow runners wearing GPS would confirm at the finish the course was recorded at 28 miles.

#### **14th Oct ~ The Great Eastern Run** Peterborough, Road.

Broken sunshine accompanied the Club members as they made their way to Peterborough for this wonderfully flat Half Marathon course. The race started right in the heart of Peterborough, and with a mass warm up to the usual heart pumping music, this had all the feel of a big city race. A warm friendly atmosphere was generated by the thousands of runners, family & friends together with an enthusiastic supporting public. The race underway on time and 13 mostly flat miles lay ahead. For Chris Smith, Angie Harvey, Catherine Simpson and Paul Freemantle this was to be a weekend of back to back racing, and for Simon Lunn and Candy Louth another Half Marathon time to chase down. The weather was just about perfect with the sun just remaining hidden for the majority of the race, on a course taking you mostly in and around the housing estates of Peterborough. The Cheering public were fantastic and but for a few frantic filling of cups at the water stations this was to be a well organised event. Angie Harvey had a cautious start after her Waltham winder the day before, however picked it up in the second part of the race to finish in a comfortable 1.41.27. Chris Smith and his dodgy hip ran down Angie and was only a couple of minutes adrift in 1.43.03, Simon Lunn started off at a brisk pace chasing a quick time, and though slightly disappointed with his time, still came home in a respectable 1.51.44. Candy Louth hoping to improve on her season's best time of 2.17 would push herself into knocking an incredible 17 minutes of that time, and just missing out on breaking the two hour mark in finishing in 2.00.17, just behind Candy, Paul Freemantle would cross in 2.00.18. Catherine Simpson fresh from competing in the Washingborough 5 the day before would cross the line in 2.10.03, her fastest Half Marathon time in over 5 years, a tremendous achievement. With a fantastic bundle of race mementoes including rucksack, medal, towel, and T-shirt given to each finisher, combined with great race organisation, this made for a great Half Marathon to compete in, and highly recommended for 2008.

#### **14th Oct ~ Palermo Half Marathon** Palermo, Sicily, Road.

Dubai based STR member Anna Berrill flew back to Europe with 2 friends to take part in the Palermo Half Marathon . The pre and post race organization was "a bit Italian" but the race itself was fine. Anna had her best performance since giving birth to her third child in January and came home in a time of 1:27:10 as 1<sup>st</sup> W35, 2<sup>nd</sup> woman and overall 63<sup>rd</sup> out of 733 finishers.

#### **28th Oct ~ Lincs X Country League Race 1** RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

RAF Cranwell was the venue for the opening race in the Lincolnshire X/Country race series on Sunday 28th October. The Course for all runners was a fast run around the sport's fields and surrounding countryside of RAF Cranwell. Sleaford Town Runners were invited to compete for the first time by Lincolnshire Athletics in what is their maiden year of competing. Eight Town Runners would compete, fielding four runners in the Men's 9.2k and Ladies 4.6k races. James Roulston more at home with road running, switched well to the different race terrain finishing 30th overall in a field of approximately 100 runners, in a quick time 37.23, James was quickly followed in by new Club member Simon England again in an equally quick time of 37.26 (31st). Trevor Brown enjoyed his run and the sporting atmosphere finishing in 41.55, with Keith Boseley finishing in 42.01. In the ladies race Sue Evans would have a competitive start in a Town Runner vest finishing in 20.55, Sheila Honeybun ran a solid race finishing in 25.18. Julie Stapleton and Carolyn Crocker were enjoying the challenge of the X/C course and finished together in 30.09.

#### **28th Oct ~ Worksop Half Marathon** Worksop, Nottinghamshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Worksop Harriers AC.

The 26th Worksop Half Marathon was held on Sunday 28th October, with nine Sleaford Town Runners travelling to Worksop in Nottinghamshire to compete. This is an excellent scenic course taking you through Clumber Park National Trust parkland. Scenic it is, though the course is relentless with its up hill climbs, and the majority of the course climbing straight from the start in Worksop Town centre where the race would also finish. Heavy laden rain clouds with a blustery wind yet warm temperatures for the start of the race, however heavy prolonged down pours would drench the large field of runners for the second half of the race. Nigel Wilcock gradually returning to form was the first Club runner across the line in an excellent time of 1.33.56, Angie Harvey 1.41.03 closely followed by Mike Folland 1.42.12 were both delighted with their times. Paul Freemantle crossed in 1.42.27 with Dave Raynes also having a solid run on this challenging of courses in 1.43.54. Caz Burrows was thrilled to set a PB of 1.45.43, Simon Lunn produced another consistent run with 1.50.17. Julie Porter is once again returning to form and bringing her times down in finishing in 2.00.00 and just missing out on breaking the 2hr mark, and completing the Club members home was Pat Riches who ran a creditable time of 2.26.00.

#### **4th November ~ Lincs X Country League Race 2** Harlaxton Manor, Grantham, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain

In the second race of the Lincs X/C League six Sleaford Town Runners travelled to Harlaxton Manor just south of Grantham on Sunday 4th November to compete. This was to be a challenging hilly race albeit set in the wonderfully scenic location of Halaxton Manor. Another good field of runners lined up for the two lap 9.5k course. Dave Tilley ran another excellent race on his favoured terrain finishing 8th in a time of 33.11, the ever improving James Roulston finished in another fine time of 36.16, 23rd overall. Paul Freemantle was more than satisfied with his time of 39.55, Chris Smith struggling with his persistent hip injury dug deep for his

41.18, soon to follow Dave Raynes 43.03 dropping down from his usual long distance running. Steve Roulston retired after Lap one having just recovered from a life threatening ruptured appendix only seven weeks earlier.

**11th Nov ~ The Poppy Run 5 Mile** Boston, Lincolnshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Boston & District AC

4 "Toonies" made the short journey to the Finnforest Boston Arena for The Poppy Run 5 mile in aid of the Royal British Legion. The weather forecast had predicted a strong cold northern wind, and sadly they were right, so the race was going to tough with the unsheltered roads around the stadium. After seeing Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson and another wheel chair athlete set off, there was a minutes silence for service men who had fallen while serving their country, before the 109 entrants set off. One lap around the track (so bouncy!!) before out onto the roads, with a head wind for the first mile, then more head wind between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> mile before turning back towards the stadium, where the finish involved another lap around the track. First home and 24<sup>th</sup> overall was Simon England with a fabulous time of 33' 02" despite having to stop to 'lose his breakfast' on the back straight of the finishing lap of the track. Alistair Whitaker was next, very surprised and pleased with his time 45'27", Catherine Simpson not too far behind with 47'08" and Pat Riches 47'38" finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in her class. All 4 walked away from the stadium sporting their 'The Poppy Run' T-shirts, happy with their performances.

Thank you to Boston and District Athlete Club for very good organised race, and it was nice to hear your name on the tannoy system both before the race and when entering the stadium. A thank you, also to Dave Tilley, who came to support his fellow club runners.

**Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for his Report.**

**16th Nov ~ Abu Dhabi Half Marathon** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Abu Dhabi Striders

Mike Folland would take on the challenge of the Abu Dhabi Half Marathon while on a family visit to Dubai, in what would be the first overseas outing by a Club member in a Sleaford Town Runners Vest. Mike would be up before 4am for a record early start 4.45am for the 90 mile drive from Dubai to Abu Dhabi down the motorway travelling at the 100 mph speed limit. A small field of about 50 runners would compete in the Half Marathon and the 10k race starting at 7.00am just after sunrise. 17C felt nice and cool when walking around but soon felt hot when racing, even later when the sun got going it wasn't really hot but coming from UK winter one simply isn't used to it said Mike. The lovely surroundings at the Golf and Equestrian Club was a great backdrop to the really fast, flat course. Mike just managed to scrape under 1.40 in an excellent time of 1.39.47. The £12 entry fee included use of luxurious changing facilities at the Golf Club, towels and gels provided and a great open air brunch. Mike didn't win a proper prize but was lucky to win a spot prize of bag, towel and drink bottle thanks to Pocari local energy drink.

**Thanks to Mike Folland for the Report.**

**17th Nov ~ Seagrave Challenge, Seagrave** Leicestershire, Multi-Terrain.

The Seagrave Wolds challenge is a cross country race on footpaths, bridleways and tracks covering 16 miles through some excellent Leicestershire country side. Saturday 17th November was the date for this race and the weather was perfect for the challenge. A large field of runners lined up in front of what looked to be an equally large number of walkers. all starting at the same time by an unusual starter, the local town crier dressed in ceremonial costume. The course was very well marked by arrows and ticker tape and the few road crossings very well marshalled, for the runners in the middle of the field the only drawback was the queues at the styles I clocked up to 3 minutes getting over some these styles. Two very well stocked check points on route kept the runners watered and fed as the sun began to shine on what proved to be an excellent day out. Up at the front of the proceedings was our very own Dave Tilley trying to chase down the leader and missing out by nothing much more than a couple of minutes to finish in second place in a very good time of 1 hour 45mins. Not too far behind in a time of 2 hours 9 mins was our second runner and another Dave, Dave Taylor again with an excellent performance for the Toonies. Bringing up the rear but very pleased with my 2hours 27mins the third of the Dave's me of course. with soup followed by cakes and apple crumble and custard definitely a race I can recommend.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**18th Nov ~ St. Neots Half Marathon** St. Neots, Cambridgeshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Riverside Runners St. Neots

By all accounts a damp and chilly race for the Club members who travelled to compete at the St. Neots Riverside Half Marathon at St. Neots, Cambridgeshire. Five Club members travelled south to St. Neots for this one lap slightly undulating course through country roads. 861 runners lined up for the 10 o'clock start including Dave Tilley who having raced only some 24hrs earlier in the 16 mile Seagrave Challenge, was still keen and some would say mad enough to race again. However Dave would produce another outstanding result finishing 30th overall in 1.22.15. Second Town Runner home and still struggling with injury was Chris Smith in a swift time of 1.35.47. Candy Louth consolidated her excellent half marathon time of the previous month finishing in 2.02.51.

Catherine Simpson was delighted with another pleasing performance in crossing in 2.13.24 as was Pat Riches producing a season's best of 2.14.13.

**25th Nov ~ Clowne Half Marathon** Clowne, Derbyshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Clowne Road Runners Club

Clowne in Derbyshire the venue for what is described as an undulating half marathon, a typical autumnal day, a little sun but quite a cold start. A good field as usual for this tough half marathon with plenty of climbs and dips over the 13.1 mile course. The marshalling was very good, with plenty of encouragement for all runners. The reward for your efforts on the Derbyshire hills was an individual Christmas cake, certainly more use than a medal, although it will not last as long. It was good to see our new member of the club, but a very recognisable face from Ropsley days, Nigel Wilcox who seems to be on very good form once again after being away from the racing scene for a while, turning a very good time of 1hour 31mins., he was still at the finish to see me in 14 minutes later with a pleasing time for me on this course of 1hour 45 minutes.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**25th Nov ~ The Hereward Relay** Peterborough, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ March AC

**Peterborough to Ely 37.6 miles in 4 stages – 135 teams.**

A great event but a very full day out for the 2 STR teams. The course is on tracks, riverbanks, footpaths and roads and, for a multi-terrain event, was very well signposted and marshalled. It helped, but was not essential, that we had experience last year and in recesses of all the stages and especially the road navigation at the start and finish of each stage. Various drop outs (including one of the reserves ill in bed) left only 7 runners for the 2 teams. So Alex was selected for the honour and dubious pleasure for running both Stages 1 & 2 for the A Team along with Caz and Paul. Nigel, Angie, Dave Taylor and Mike, who made up Team NAMD, had done it last year before the formation of the club so knew what to expect. The choice of shoe is critical. Normal trail shoes, or maybe even road shoes, on Stages 1 – 3 would be fine but Stage 4 leaves the runner with an impossible choice. Over half of the stage is road but the last 2 miles are an incredibly muddy rutted track. Deep studded Adidas Swoops were perhaps the best overall choice even if not suited to the 5 road miles. It was a fine day for November with light wind, sun and not too cold. Nigel got off to an excellent start on the 6.1 miles of Stage 1 to Whittlesey, finishing in a creditable 46<sup>th</sup> position out of 135 in 47:29 - 3 minutes faster than last year. Alex was pacing herself carefully before the much longer Stage 2 and came in 64<sup>th</sup> after 49:55. This is a relatively straightforward less muddy stage by the River Nene. Angie, not long recovered from being really ill, ran Stage 2 to March – 11.6 miles and a lot harder than last year with 2 road miles replaced by riverbanks of rough and lumpy grass. Most teams put their best runners on this stage so evenly balanced teams always lose places. Angie did well to take 1:36:39 leaving Team NAMD in 82<sup>nd</sup> place and Alex was amazing with her 17.7 mile double stage, not quite catching Angie; she was now 84<sup>th</sup> with her stage time of 1:34:34, including a change from road shoes to Swoops. Stage 3 of 10.3 miles to Welney again had mixed terrain with lots more rough grass riverbank. Dave and Caz both ran strongly with times of 1:23:32 and 1:26:59 picking up 8 and 6 places respectively. Team NAMD were now in 74<sup>th</sup> place 3:46 ahead of the A Team in 78<sup>th</sup> place. On Stage 4 Paul picked up time on the long road section at the start and soon had Mike in his sights. The terrain then steadily worsened to good track, bad track and appalling mud before crossing the golf course and doing a lap of the pitch to the new finish at Ely Football Club. Team NAMD finished in 5:05:05 for 71<sup>st</sup> place with the A Team close behind in 5:08:03 to come 76<sup>th</sup>. Dave Tilley was 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> Vet on Stage 3 in an outstanding 1:05:59 (6:24 min per mile on that terrain!) to help his team The Lost Soles home in 6<sup>th</sup> place overall. Well done Dave. It was a long day, nearly 10 hours Sleaford back to Sleaford, but a fine, really well organised event and all runners are looking forward to doing it again next year.

**Thanks to Mike Folland for his Report.**

**25th Nov ~ Lincs X Country League Race 3** Lincoln, Multi-Terrain.

On a busy weekend of running only Simon Lunn and Chris Smith travelled to Lincoln to compete in the third Lincs league X-Country race. Not enough for a team of 3 to count. but it was a great course with a mix of hills (some even went down!!), mud and leaves. Chris was 56th in 44:30 and Simon was 78th in 49:56 very close to his road P.B. For just £1.50 it was a very good 9.5k race and the 4 laps did not detract at all, some may say that as the course got worn in and more muddy it got better! We sure had a fine time.

**Thanks to Chris for the report info.**

**2nd December ~ Luton Marathon** Luton, Bedfordshire, Road

**Host Club** ~ Stopsley Striders and Dunstable Road Runners.

It was a cold, windy and very wet Sunday morning when myself and Dave Tilley had decided to run 26 miles. It was a three lap course which took us through urban and rural areas of Luton. As the starting pistol went off and as I was standing near the back of

the 800 strong field soaking wet and shivering, I asked myself why am I doing this!! That thought soon went as I got over the start line and started to warm up. As I ran through the rural part of the course I realised why most people were wearing long sleeved tops. Silly me had only worn my vest and I paid for this by being bombarded with gail-force energised rain drops, it didn't sting much!!!! The weather on the first two laps was horrendous, at one point the wind literally took my breath away. On the third lap I was really starting to struggle, I had passed the half way point at 1 hour 56 mins and realised that I probably wouldn't make the 4 hour barrier, I was only doing one speed and it was getting slower. However the hill training sessions did there job and I found myself overtaking a lot of people without putting any extra effort in, so thanks to Mike for making me do those nasty hills! I eventually shuffled over the finish line in 4h 3m 32sec and Dave Tilley flew over in 3h 1m 59sec. It was a hard run especially with the weather conditions and lack of training but I achieved a PB. We give our thanks to Stopsley Striders and Dunstable Road Runners for a well organised race.

#### **Thanks to Caz Burrows for her Report.**

**2nd Dec ~ Nene Valley 10 Mile** Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Nene Valley Harriers.

A bit of confusion about the registration point was the only negative in what was a well organised and marshalled event especially considering the weather. The course was a 2 lap course full of twists and turns through housing estates, parks, over bridges and underpasses and a very muddy stretch at the 3 and then the 8 mile mark. A heavy rainfall 10 minutes before the start had the 217 competitors running for cover but the rain had eased by the 10:30 start time. A very pleasing 50 minutes for the first 5 miles was met by the heavens opening up again, drenching all the runners and this caused problems with the muddy stretch at the 8 mile mark after more rain and 200 pairs of feet running on it twice. Luckily, the last mile was run in sunshine which lifted my spirits and my tempo to finish 199<sup>th</sup> in a time of 1 hour 41 minutes and 12 seconds (Official Time). A very pleasing time considering the conditions and a morale booster toward my aim of a half marathon early 2008.

#### **Thanks to Alistair Whitaker for his Report.**

**7th Dec ~ Dubai Half Marathon** Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Dubai Creek Striders.

Anna & Nick Berrill were once again racing in the heat of Dubai in the Dubai Half Marathon on 7th December 2007. The race was organised by Dubai Creek Striders and had an impressive 499 finishers. Nick Berrill recorded an equally impressive time of 1:18:14 and was the 3<sup>rd</sup> male and 1<sup>st</sup> Vet. Anna Berrill not to out done finished in 1:26:43, 3<sup>rd</sup> female home and 1<sup>st</sup> Vet, 16<sup>th</sup> overall.

#### **Thanks to Mike Folland for the report info.**

**9th Dec ~ Bedford Half Marathon,** Bedfordshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Bedford Harriers AC.

Bedford Harriers AC was the host Club for their annual half marathon on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December. For the six Club members that entered, a very wet and cold run lay in wait for the duration of the race. An ever increasing field of runners would line up on the start for this popular Half Marathon. Starting and finishing in the village of Wootton, just outside Bedford, the race would take in and around the surrounding countryside and roads of Wootton. Inclines and hills dominate this course until mile 10 when a long downhill stretch would kick in. Only as far though as mile 11 before you climbed to the finish.

With the race underway under heavy rain laden skies, it was only a matter of when rather than if the heavens opened? With 20 minute or so on the clock they duly did, instant soaking and cold to boot and still 10 miles to run.....Joy! The rain eased, and then the wind picked up to provide little comfort for the runners. However you dig in and grind out a result, and that we did. Mike Folland chasing sub 1.40 just missed out finishing in 1.42.31, 2<sup>nd</sup> in his age cat and 470 overall. Simon Lunn and Paul Freemantle aiming for 1.45 would abandon the chase as mile split times began to slip and came home in a more comfortable 1.57.21. Just adrift of Simon & Paul was Candy Louth chasing down 2hrs on her final attempt of the year to crack it. 1.59.44 was her reward for a determined run and setting a PB in the process. Julie Porter's limited training was confined to races before today's run; however Julie had enough distance in her legs of late to set a season's best time of 2.01.22. Pat Riches as with Candy and Julie excelled in the conditions coming home 3<sup>rd</sup> in her vet cat, and a great time of 2.16.26. There were 1385 finishers for this largely rain affected race. A well organised and marshalled race as we have come to expect from Bedford Harriers. Many thanks to them and the enthusiasm there marshals and team of volunteers displayed as the rain came down!

**9th Dec ~ Lincs X Country League Race 4** Skegness, Lincolnshire, Multi-Terrain.

A very cold morning icy winds and black sky was the welcome for runners in the Lincs cross country league at Skegness. The course was testing to say the least with quite a lot of soft sand on the beach and a tough section through the dunes, with a small stretch which was firmer under foot. The race was to be four times around this course which had been slightly altered from its original due to high tides leaving one section about three feet deep under water on the morning of the race. Just two hardy souls from the Toonies, myself and young James Roulston lined up with a strong field for this midday start. The race proved to be every

bit as tough as it looked through the strength sapping loose sand and the cold conditions did not help to loosen the muscles after the first couple of laps, James struggled to get warm but was home in under 40mins I enjoyed the race and had a reasonable time for me of 41mins 55secs but was also pleased to get out of the cold and back in the car. Can I say a big thanks to Jame's Mum Mandy for playing team manager for the day, sorting out the envelopes and entries for James and myself and of course her support during the race.

**Thanks to Dave Raynes for his Report.**

**23rd Dec ~ Lincoln & District X Country** South Common, Lincoln, Multi-Terrain.

**Host Club** ~ Lincoln & District Runners.

Foggy & frosty were the weather conditions for this annual festive running of Lincoln & District Runners Cross Country. Race entry fee of chocolates or a cuddly toy in aid of a local charity was the requirement to take on, what is regarded as one of the more challenging cross country courses around. 3 miles (3 laps) for the Ladies and 5 miles (5 laps) for the Men, competed over Lincoln South Common. With no sign of the sun breaking through the freezing fog, runners lined up in a variety of warm clothing, with both Men & the Ladies races starting together. The usual jostling for position followed the starting gun, however this brisk start would slow as the first calf burning hill duly arrived. 3 times for the Ladies and 5 for the Men, this hill would slow most runners to walking pace! Once up the hill it took a while for the muscles to relax, before a nice albeit slippery downhill section kicked in. Back on the flat and those hills soon approached once more. In the Ladies race Angie Harvey slowly returning to fitness was the first Town Runner home, to be strongly followed in by Catherine Simpson. Lynn Ellis & Julie Stapleton crossed together as did Pat Riches and the heavily bunged up with cold Carolyn Crocker! In the Men's race Dave Tilley produced a strong run to finish 3rd overall in the race, Chris Smith carrying an injury was the next Town Runner home, followed in by an under par James Roulston, next in was Paul Freemantle, Keith Boseley produced a strong finish. Dave Raynes led home Steve Roulston and Trevor Brown. Special mention to our newest Club member Stephen Bett who decided to race at the last minute. With little cross country in his legs, Stephen produced a gritty run to complete the Town Runners home. Well organised as always by Lincoln & District Runners, great atmosphere and nice gesture to give something back to a local charity.

**30th Dec ~ Millennium Runs On 10k** Caythorpe, Nottinghamshire, Road.

**Host Club** ~ Southwell Running Club.

The final race of 2007 for the 13 members that travelled to Caythorpe, Nottinghamshire. First held in 1999 Southwell Running Club who host the race donate all the proceeds to charity, this year supporting Breast Cancer Research. Since its inception, the first 8 races (1999 - 2006) have donated a total of around £30,000. Weather conditions were perfect for running, overcast and mild for the 658 finishers of the race. With so many runners descending on the small village of Caythorpe the start was to be a very congested one. Despite a delay to the 10.30 start time, runners were still rushing to the start as the gun went off. Unfortunately Carolyn Crocker and Julie Stapleton were still in Caythorpe Cricket Club Clubhouse (ahem toilet!!) as the gun went off and joined the back of the field some two minutes adrift! A nice flat course ensured a quality field of runners were present, this spurred on our Dave Tilley in producing an outstanding run in 36.06 a personnel best time at this distance. Chris Smith quietly satisfied with 42.10 as was Paul Freemantle 44.00. Dave Raynes marginally adrift of Paul in a Season's best time of 44.20. Keith Boseley thrilled to PB in 45.57. Angie Harvey 47.58 just edged out Simon Lunn 48.00. Sheila Honeybun returning to 10k distance after many years was pleased with her time of 54.00. Ever improving in times Alistair Whitaker set a PB of 57.02, Catherine Simpson 59.13 closely followed in by Pat Riches in a SB of 59.14. Despite losing time at the start Julie Stapleton 1.07.06 and Carolyn Crocker 1.07.11 enjoyed the race although missing out an actual race time due to their belated start. A great race to end what has been a great year's racing for our Club. Many thanks go to Sam Lunn for her support and for taking the finishing photos at today's race.