



**Fairlands Valley Spartans
Running Club**

Affiliated to UK Athletics and the Association of Running Clubs

News Release

25th February 2018

12 SPARTANS IN MUDDY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS Champions Night * Beast Beaten



After an amazing year BRIAN WHITE was awarded Club Champion and Spartan of the Year at Fairlands Valley Spartans presentation evening, dinner and disco on Friday evening. SUZY HAWKINS was women's champion for 2017.

Last year's Chair and Vice-Chair NICK WITCOMBE and JAMES KILROY presented the awards which were:

In the Male Open Short Distance Championship CRAIG HALSEY beat SIMON JACKSON by a margin of 1.8% (78.6% to 76.8%). GRANT RAMSAY was third with 75.3%.

Short distance awards are for the best three performances out of 1500 metres, 5 kilometres, 5 miles and 10 kilometres.

Age grading recognises those who keep running into their 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s and maybe beyond. In the Male Age Graded Short Distance Championship BARRY OSBORNE won by the narrow margin over 0.3% (85.7% to 85.4%) over BRIAN WHITE. JOHN HARRIS was third with 81.9%.

Turning to the women ALISON WOOD won the Female Open Short Distance Championship with 73.3%; SUZY HAWKINS was second with 69.3% and ISABEL GREEN third with 65.7%.

Age Graded JULIE SIMMONS won with 79.4% followed by IRIS HORNSEY 77.8% and CATHY CRAIG on 70.3%.

Moving up to the long distance Male Open Long Distance Championship CRAIG HALSEY won with 78.9%; GRANT RAMSAY was second with 76.2% and JASON ANDERSON third with 72.1%.

Long distance awards are made for the best three performances out of 10 miles, half marathon, 20 miles and full marathon (26.2 miles).

Age Graded Brian White was the clear winner with 81.6% with PETE SMITH edging out STEFFAN FORD by 73.2 to 73.1% for second place.

SUZY HAWKINS followed up her second in the short by winning the Female Open Long Distance Championship with 68.3%. NICOLA KENNEDY was second on 63.1% and ISABEL GREEN third on 61.4%.

Age Graded CAROL PAUL won with 66.3% with JAN FRY and CATHY CRAIG having a tussle for second with 63.9 and 63.8%.

Combining the long and the short Brian White was the overall male champion and Suzy Hawkins the female champion. Either a woman or a man can win the overall club championships but for 2017 it went to Brian White.

Most Improved Male

STUART HAYWOOD was the most improved man over 2017 with CRAIG HALSEY second and RICHARD KENNEDY third.

Most Improved Female

RUTH REILLY was the most improved female with JO BOWDERY second and CLAIRE HYDE third.

The Spartan Photo of the Year was submitted by TIM SABAN.

The club participation award went to SIMON JACKSON with ten out of ten. CLAIRE EMMERSON and SHARON CROWLEY tied as top women with eight out of ten appearances in league events.

Starter of the Year - Trevor Broom

Chair's Award for services to the club went to immediate past secretary Karen Palmer

The President's Award went to the Crowley Family – Sharon, Mike, Elizabeth and Nicholas – for their consistent help at events such as the Relays in the Park, Mid Week League, Cross Country League, Fairlands Valley Change and Stevenage Half Marathon over many years.

The Spartan of the Year is voted by club members. After his huge successes and encouragement as a club coach BRIAN WHITE was nominated.

English National Cross Country Championships

The national cross country championships are an amazing event to take part in. More than 2,300 men and 1,100 women attacked the first hill from the Lido in Parliament Hill Fields



on Saturday. This year twelve Fairlands Valley Spartans raced, six women and six men and the club finished with counting teams in the men's and women's events – a tremendous achievement.



The women were first off at 2.20p.m. for their eight kilometre race and 44 minutes 27 seconds later LAUREN ING was over the finish line; soon HAZEL

SMITH was back in 45 minutes 6 seconds. SHARON CROWLEY came back in 50 minutes 49 seconds with a smiling PENNY SCHENKEL just 20 seconds behind in 51:09. Next came PETA WILSON in 55:49 with CALLIE CHAPMAN not far behind in 56:47.

At 3p.m. the men set off for their 12 kilometres of hills and gooey mud. DAVID RIDDELL got round in an excellent 56 minutes 15 seconds and TODD GRAY also beat the hour with 57:18. THOMAS SAUKA was back in 1:02:18. Then came the three Spartan Musketeers. Despite TIM ROBINSON doing a spectacular muddy roll at five kilometres, JIM BROWN sliding off course and the general effort of it they with PAUL WHYTE kept together and joked, shouted and encouraged each other round and then managed a sprint finish to entertain the spectators. Paul was 2,289th in 1:19:41; Jim 2,290th in 1:19:43 and Tim 2,291st



also in 1:19:43. Six finishers needed and six Spartans in.



Fantastic taking part in such a prestigious event. The standard at the fast end was incredible with the women's race won in 28:33 and the men's in 39:35. A great day out.

Beat The Beast With The Spartan Army – Natalie Second

Clearly needing no rest the Three Musketeers were out again on Sunday but this time they were five and it was the Baldock Beast Half Marathon. JIM BROWN, ERICA GRAYSON, KAREN PALMER, TIM ROBINSON, PAUL WHYTE were together from the start, tackling the cold headwind. Tim dropped off the pace a bit after a cross country section on icy patches around Sandon and Rushden but the others kept a steady rhythm going with good humour which led to the unexpected bonus of Karen dipping under two hours with 1 hour 59 minutes 56 seconds at 251st place. Erica was soon over the line at 254th and 2:00:07. Jim was 250th in 1:59:56, Paul 253rd in 2:00:07 and Tim 266th in 2:02:49.

Nearer the front NATALIE LAWRENCE was second woman, and 40th overall, in 1:34:15; KATY JINKS 171st in 1:50:45; LISA BURGESS 187th in 1:52:50 and CLIVE CANNON 203rd in 1:55:12. KARTIK SHARMA was 318th in 2:12:25.

Tarpley 10

On a lovely bright but cold morning women's captain CLAIRE EMMERSON ran the Tarpley 10 miles around the villages near Bury St Edmonds. Her time was 1:18:54 a new personal best by over 3 minutes.

Brighton

MADDIE PRITCHARD ran the Brighton Half on Sunday in 1:41:58, CLAIRE HYDE beat two hours with 1:58:57 and MARIE HARVEY came in with 2:21:49.

Maverick Jenny

On Saturday JENNY GARRETT took part in the Maverick 8mile tough trail run in Amberley West Sussex, it was a very hilly and slippery course which took her 1 hour 25 minutes to complete

Hillingdon

STUART ARCHER ran the Hillingdon Half Marathon and beat 90 minutes with what would have been a new personal best of 1 hour 29 minutes 42 seconds but unfortunately there was a problem with the course measurement.

Lee Valley Bowker

Not starting until 6.30p.m. **DAVE BOWKER** ran in the 3,000 metres at the Lee Valley Indoor Championships. He finished in 11 minutes 40 seconds.

Coach to London

Do you have an entry to the London Marathon on 22nd April 2018? Have you thought how you will get to London from Stevenage on the big day? Fairlands Valley Spartans have a coach from Stevenage and there are spare places. The cost is just £10. If you would like to join us, please contact Roger Biggs on roger@thebiggs.net.

Parkrun Highlights 24th February

A relatively quiet week of parkrunning with some Spartans no doubt nursing hangovers, facing the National XC championships that afternoon, the Baldock Beast the following day or maybe even all three!

At Stevenage **CRAIG HALSEY** was first over the line in a new course PB of 16:47. **DANNY SCANLON** was 6th in 19:33 and **MARK BEASLEY** had a top 30 finish in 22:16. For the women **KELLY EVANS** was first Spartan finisher, 12th in 26:09, with **VERITY FISHER** 25th in 27:44 and **SALLY PHILLIPS** being third Spartan woman in 33:23. There was also a new course PB for **STEVEN DOBNER** (28:40), and **LORRAINE SAUNDERS** completed her first parkrun in 33:51.

Elsewhere **DAVE SMITH** was one of the runners to test the new trial course at St Albans as they look to find a way to accommodate the growing numbers running there and

MICHAEL O'KEEFE went to Bedford, while **TIM SABAN, RUTH REILLY** and **ANDY JAY** headed to Panshanger and **JOHN ROXBOROUGH** to Great Denham.

Coming Events

Many Spartans will be enjoying a busy programme of races, social and training events over the next few weeks including:

- **UKA Club Run at Fairlands Valley Spartans on Thursday 1st March.**
- **Welwyn Half Marathon on Sunday 4th March.**
- **Big London Half Marathon on Sunday 4th March.**
- **Milton Keynes 5K, 10K, Half and 20 miles on Sunday 11th March.**
- **Finchley 20 miles (including Herts County Champs) on Sunday 18th March.**
- **Oakley 20 miles on Sunday 18th March.**
- **Serpentine 5K on Friday 23rd March (please note change of date).**
- **Orion 15 classic cross country at Chingford (Epping Forest) on Saturday 24th March.**
- **County Cross Country Championships for Veterans at Royston on Sunday 25th March.**
- **Maidenhead Easter Ten on Good Friday 30th March.**
- **Club training twenty from Marriotts on Friday 30th March.**
- **Sandy Ten on Sunday 8th April.**
- **London Marathon on Sunday 22nd April.**
- **Flitwick 10K on Sunday 29th April.**
- **Stirling Marathon on Sunday 29th April.**
- **EMAC track and field event one at Stevenage on Wednesday 2nd May.**
- **County open 1500 and veteran track and field championships on Monday 7th May.**
- **Pednor Five including county championships for veterans on Monday 7th May.**
- **Mid Week Road Race League race one in Epping Forest on Thursday 10th May at 7.30p.m.**
- **Mid Week Road Race League 10K in St. Albans on Thursday 24th May.**
- **EMAC track and field event two at Bedford on Wednesday 6th June.**

- **Welwyn 10K including senior county championships on Sunday 24th June.**
- **EMAC track and field event three at Cambridge on Wednesday 4th July.**
- **Fairlands Valley Challenge off road on Sunday 15th July.**
- **EMAC track and field event four at Milton Keynes on Wednesday 1st August.**
- **Standalone 10K on Sunday 7th October.**
- **Peterborough Half Marathon (GER) on Sunday 14th October.**
- **Stevenage Half Marathon on Sunday 4th November.**
- **St Neots Half Marathon on Sunday 18th November.**

Tables

Full parkrun results for Spartans for 24th February:

parkrun	Pos	Gen	parkrunner	Time	Notes
St Albans	28	27	Dave SMITH	00:21:31	
Bedford	221	163	Michael O'KEEFE	00:29:46	
Stevenage	1	1	Craig HALSEY	00:16:47	New course PB
Stevenage	6	6	Danny SCANLON	00:19:33	
Stevenage	26	25	Mark BEASLEY	00:22:16	
Stevenage	32	31	Martin DUDLEY	00:22:28	
Stevenage	39	37	Nick GILL	00:22:57	
Stevenage	40	38	Chris HOLLAND	00:22:59	
Stevenage	57	52	Lee PICKERSGILL	00:24:24	
Stevenage	58	53	Darren EMMERSON	00:24:30	
Stevenage	85	77	Jonathan JONES	00:25:37	
Stevenage	99	12	Kelly EVANS	00:26:09	
Stevenage	126	25	Verity FISHER	00:27:44	
Stevenage	138	108	Paul HOLGATE	00:28:07	
Stevenage	155	120	Steven DOBNER	00:28:40	New course PB
Stevenage	241	80	Sally PHILLIPS	00:33:23	
Stevenage	246	83	Lorraine SAUNDERS	00:33:51	First parkrun
Stevenage	278	104	Hazel JONES	00:38:39	
Stevenage	293	180	Ian ALEXANDER	01:00:59	
Panshanger	22	21	Tim SABAN	00:21:23	
Panshanger	40	4	Ruth REILLY	00:22:56	

Panshanger	66	60	Andy JAY	00:24:16	
Great Denham	25	23	John ROXBOROUGH	00:21:55	

Join The Spartans

Live in or near Stevenage? Like running? Fairlands Valley Spartans is your local running club and is on the up! The club was voted the UK's Best Running Club in 2010. It now has hundreds of members and encourages participation by all. The Spartans have a varied training programme to suit those who want to run 5 kilometres through to full marathons.

The Spartans weekday training sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Go along to the new sports centre at Marriotts School – a Sports College, Telford Avenue, Stevenage (SG2 8UT) at 7p.m. Up to five running groups go out on training nights – there will be one to suit you!

The Spartan Starter group starts from Marriotts at 7.30p.m. every Monday (except public holidays) and 7p.m. every Thursday.

Most long Sunday morning training sessions start 9a.m. sharp. Spartan track training sessions are held at Ridlins Athletics Track, Woodcock Road, Stevenage most Saturdays from 9.15a.m. There are events to enter every Sunday. Newcomers are very welcome – those who have not yet done very much running might prefer to start with a Thursday, Saturday or Monday session.

Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £41 per year which includes UKA affiliation. Concessions are available. Membership forms are available on the Spartans website www.fvspartans.org.uk Please ask if you would like a paper copy. You can also join online.

If you want to know more about the Spartans please contact Jim Brown (0793 968 7509); Ken Jude (07783 597182); Claire Pullen 0790 001 6094 or visit their website www.fvspartans.org.uk

E N D S

More from Jim Brown (Press Officer) 0793 968 7509; Ken Jude 07783 597182 and 01438 816889 or Claire Pullen (Secretary) 0790 001 6094.

www.fvspartans.org.uk