



Up and Running

17th August 2022

Issue 14

Dates for the diary

4th September 2022 - **Oakley 20**
- **Entries open**

16th October 2022 - **Amphill Trophy Trail 10K** - **Entries open**

Club Championship Races

10 mile – Sandy 10 - 11th September 2022 - **Entries open**

Half marathon – St Neots - 20th November 2022

XC – first Three Counties race of season

Multisport Club Championship Races

Sprint - Box End Sprint - 3rd September 2022

Aquathlon – *Standard Distance* - Hever Castle – 25th September 2022

Cross-Country Races

Watch this space! To be confirmed shortly!

Blisworth 5 Miles Road Race – Club Championship Race – by Jazz Clark

On the Friday the 8th of July 2022, 18 Bedford Harriers made their way to Blisworth to take part in the 5-mile road race. It was my first race in over 2 years, so I was very nervous plus I don't enjoy the heat. Seeing loads of Harriers there made me feel so much calmer and I then felt ready to race.

On the start line I felt ready to go and enjoyed the lovely countryside views, and despite the heat, I was raring to go. When the start klaxon sounded I remembered what Cint and Angie had both advised me about not sprinting off and taking it at my own pace. For once I actually listened to them and didn't speed off at the start.



The first mile was very lovely, and I thoroughly enjoyed the scenic route and lovely atmosphere that was present throughout the whole race. Then I got to 'that' hill at the beginning of the second mile and I felt like I could never run all the way up it without stopping. Anyone who has ever coached or ran with me knows my feelings towards hills! Remembering all the tips that all my coaches had given me I then started running up it. The hill seemed to go on for a long time but a few moments later I had done it!

After that hill the rest of the race seemed so much easier to complete and I had a new found confidence and a smile on my face. Running around the county roads with such lovely support from all the marshals felt amazing. Having not done the race before I was unaware of how undulating the course was and seeing more hills I felt ready for them.

When I could see the finish line I was so happy. Having been out of the running game for over 2 years I never thought I could get back to a finish line again. I am so grateful to all the coaches who have got me to this point, and I am now looking forward to doing many more races in the future.

Oakley 20 - Volunteers/Marshals Needed!

We are now recruiting for volunteers and marshals for the Oakley 20 on Sunday, 4th September. There are also volunteer opportunities on Saturday, 3rd September which include van loading, Race HQ set-up etc.

A lot of the feedback we get from our races is about how wonderful, friendly and supportive our marshals are. You, the members, allow our own events to take place and make them a popular choice for participants.



Sandy 10 is a Club Championship race and there are still spaces. Enter using the following link - <http://www.sandy10.org.uk/> . It will take place on Sunday, 11th September and starts at 9:30am.

My Marathon Challenge in 2022 - Part 1 - by Chris Leigh

In the beginning

As the New Year arrived, I had a plan forming to finally get to my 100th marathon. I had started running in 2004 when I was lucky enough to get a place in the London Marathon and that is where the marathon bug also bit me. But it had been a slow process from there. I was running 4-5 marathons each year but when I started coaching and leading runners at my club from 2006, I could not get to races at the weekend as often. Progress slowed but nevertheless I had reached the completion of 73 marathons or ultra-marathons. Joining Bedford Harriers in January 2022 gave me a new impetus and also enabled me to get to more races as I was no longer coaching runners during the week or weekend. The Club's training was a perfect way to support what I was aiming to do.

The first step was to work out a schedule to get me from 73 marathons to the magical 100! I also knew I wanted to run my 100th at a more local race where some of my running friends could join me. This set a very sensible timetable of the 100th marathon being in July 2023. Less than 2 marathons a month. I reckoned I could do that!



The next step was to get my marathons validated by the 100-Marathon Club in readiness of joining and attaining the coveted 100 Marathon Vest and Presentation Medal. I updated my list of marathons and ultras and sent those in for vetting. Then the bad news arrived; 13 of the marathon distances I had run would not meet the 100-Marathon Club criteria. Three of the 13 were not officially long enough (even though I had run nearly 27 miles on each occasion), while the other 10 had been run during the pandemic as 'Anytime' events where the runner would run a specified course of at least 26.2 miles (some were 30 miles) and submit time and course details to the organiser. Even though they were run on the actual course (I travelled to Norfolk for some) they did not meet the criteria. The result was I had a fully verified list of 62 marathons (including the 4 I had run in January to March 2022). It was a big disappointment, but I now had a very firm base to work from. So, 38 marathons to run by 18th July 2023. Still doable at 2.5 marathons a month.

The challenge changed

Then it all changed! Russia walked into Ukraine and started a war. Watching millions of people suffering every day was painful. My family was not in a situation where we could consider taking in refugees, so I decided I would fundraise for aid to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the surrounding area. I set an initial fundraising target of £2,000 by the end of the year. I was hoping the war would not last but, even so, the aid horizon would be measured in years rather than months. I also knew that July 2023 was now too long a time frame, so I had to up the ante! I would now plan to reach my 100th marathon on 20th November at the Sundon Saunter, a self-navigating trail marathon. It was a local event for me and one in which I had very fond memories of over the years. Self-navigating trail marathons are my favourites. You are required to follow a set of detailed route instructions and check in at various route checkpoints along the way. Never flat, but always very pretty, navigating a trail marathon is a challenge!

The challenge was now to run another 38 marathons from 14th March 2022 to reach 100 on 20th November 2022. Just over 8 months to do it in with a total of 42 for 2022. Now I had a challenge!! My fundraising page can be found at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/coachleighruns

What follows is a summary of the first 10 marathons I have run in 2022 to meet the challenge. Further updates will follow as the challenge progresses.

Marathon 1 – The Wrangler

The race was organised by Zig Zag running and consisted of 8 x 3.4 mile off road laps at the Horseheath Park. A trail marathon and definitely not very flat! I love running on trails but when it has been raining heavily the week before the run changes!! Much of each lap was a quagmire and it only got worse each lap as more runners chewed up the ground. Not a day for PBs but a very nice medal!



Marathon 2 – The Devil's Punch Bowl Ultra

On 13th February I completed the LDWAs self-navigating ultra-marathon in Surrey. The route covered a total of 30 miles and took us around the edge of the beautiful Devils Punch Bowl. Unfortunately, it became a much bigger challenge when I tripped on a tree root just after 7 miles and fell awkwardly. I suffered a deep cut to my left knee which eventually did stop bleeding. Getting medical aid at each of the next two checkpoints helped me reach the finish battered and bruised but still in one piece!

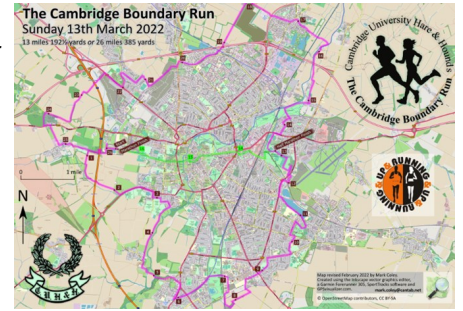


Marathon 3 – The Hannington Hike

This one was another event organised by the LDWA and started from the west side of Wellingborough. Very much off road and another self-navigation challenge to follow the very mixed 27-mile route. The weather had been both wet and cold in the couple of weeks before the event so that meant – lots of mud!!! No more trips and falls and with a meal provided at the end. I thoroughly enjoyed this one!

Marathon 4 – The Cambridge Boundary Marathon

This was held on a beautiful spring day from the University Sports Centre near Coton on the west side of the village. The race was held on a route that consisted of about 70% road or pavements/tarmac and 30% off road on good trails. Predominantly flat (although there was a wicked climb at 24 miles) the route was marked with a mixture of safety tape, signs and flour! Yes flour!! It's a good job it never rained. Highlights on the route included the areas around Grantchester, the airport and running alongside the guided bus route.



Marathon 5 – The Essex Walker

This was a beautiful trail marathon that was in Essex but didn't involve any walking! Its name originated from the fact it was organised by the Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA) but actually has more runners in it than walkers. I first ran this one in 2016 and was determined to come back this year to do it again. Another challenge of self-navigating around the 26.4-mile route. Although the weather was good on the day, the previous days had been wet and this led to a fair bit of standing water on the course. In fact, at one point I put my left foot down and finished up to my knee! The pretty scenery, well supported checkpoints and food made this a great event. It is staying on the 'must repeat' list but unfortunately only takes place every two years.

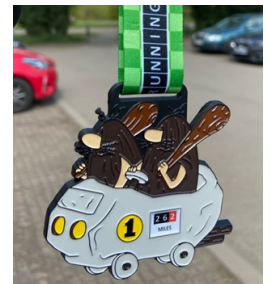
Marathon 6 – The Zig Zag Easter Challenge



My next trail marathon took me to the lovely Hinchingsbrooke Park with Zig Zag Running. The marathon consisted of 8 x 3.3-mile laps but this time the ground was dry and firm under foot! The section of the route around the lake was particularly pretty with plenty of wildlife. As the race progressed the park filled up with more and more members of the public who were using the park at the same time. Weaving in and out of families often with dogs after running 20 miles became progressively harder!! The very colourful medal at the end together with a bonus Easter egg and cake made the event very worthwhile.

Marathon 7 – The Ricky Races Marathon

Travelling to Rickmansworth Aquadrome, I didn't know quite what to expect! This marathon was another 8-lap trail-based run organised by Running Miles. This was the first of 4 events I was going to run with them, with three being in the Ricky Races Series. Ricky Races is a play on the popular kids cartoon series Wacky Races and that was just what we got in the medal at the end! The park gave us another beautiful 3.4-mile circuit. Once again the run became more challenging as the day progressed and more of the public started to use the trail network. Much of the park was based on tarmac pathways so this was truly a multi-terrain run. At the end we received our lovely medal based on Rock Slag and Gravel Slag in the Boulder Mobile. An additional bonus was a chocolate goody bag with 10 bars of different chocolate!! I am so looking forward to the next Ricky Races event when the medal will be another Wacky Races character!



Marathons 8, 9 and 10 – Phoenix Free Friday, Milton Keynes and Phoenix May the 4th Be With You

I ran the next three marathons over a six-day period. The first on 29th April was my first Phoenix Running event and this took place from their usual base at the back of the Weir pub on the Thames towpath at Walton-on-the-Thames. This was another 8-lap marathon going out and back in a westward direction along the towpath. Very flat and surprisingly pretty. The scenery along the river was constantly changing as were the very large houses on the opposite side of the river. As I finished each lap, I was offered a selection of goodies from Phoenix Running's treats table. By the end of the marathon, I was totally addicted to fizzy cola bottles!



Three days later I was at Milton Keynes for the road marathon. This was the third time I had completed the run and it was the marathon where I had set my pb in 2014. I had really been focussing on getting ready for this race and wanted to give it my best shot, despite all the recent marathon action. On the day it was a little warmer than I would have liked and difficult to get into the right area of the start. Nevertheless, I got off to a decent start and settled into a 8:45 min/mile pace. It was great to see my wife and daughter just before the 10k point and that spurred me on through the Willen Lake section of the course. I always struggle with the route between 12 and 17 miles but this year there was more support that kept me going. The tough part was getting between 20 and 23 miles where the route seems to go backwards and forwards on itself. Seeing my wife again at the mile 24 marker was the push I needed for the final couple of miles and the stadium finish. I managed to just scrape inside the 4-hour barrier in a time of 3 hours 58 mins and 26 seconds.

Two days later I went back to Walton-on-the-Thames to run a marathon along the westward section of the towpath from behind the Weir pub. Whilst this was towpath route again, it felt different because the section of the river included Sunbury Lock where we could run alongside the boats using the lock and see it in action again. The difference in water levels either side of the lock was also very striking. Being held on the 4th May, the theme for the race had to be Star Wars – *May the 4th be with you!* At the end I got Phoenix Running's usual cake based booty but also a double themed medal bonus!



Tune into Issue 15 for the next instalment of this epic challenge!

Ironman 70.3 Maastricht – Eva Kovacs

It wasn't an easy one, but I enjoyed it, with special thanks to many of my 'old' friends (too many to name) who were out on the course cheering for me. It was highly appreciated.

The 1.9km back and forth in the river Maas went reasonably well, except for when at the turnaround I got kicked first on my head (luckily goggles stayed in my place) and then on my dodgy shoulder - ouch! It took me a moment to recompose myself. Because of the rolling start, my start was almost 1 hour after the start of the early swimmers, which meant being at the back of the pack for the entire race, which had some disadvantages, e.g., less support on the second bike loop, more wind as it was picking up over time, more cars & bikes on the bike course, and more self-service at the aid stations ...

Transition 1 was a slow one, but it was also a long one, and it also included a Dixi (aka portalo) stop.

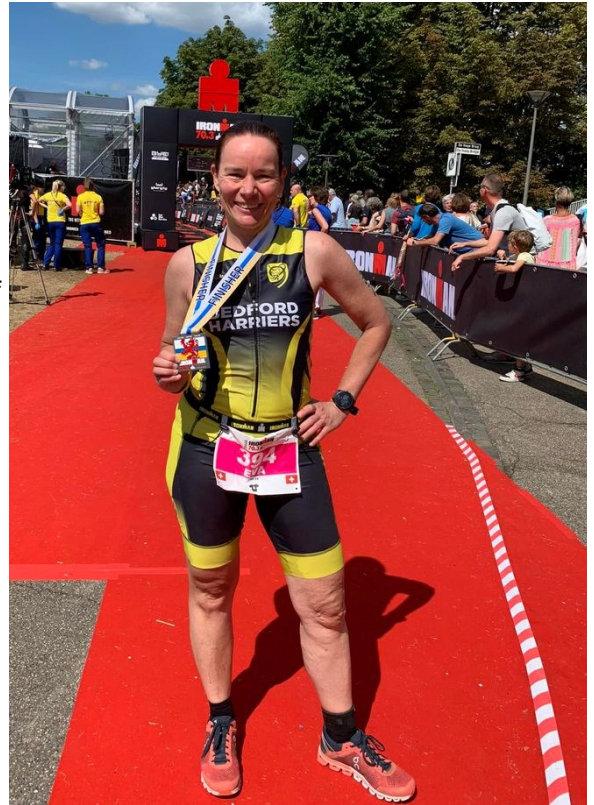
The 90km 2-lap bike ride was very hilly and very technical, including many drempels (aka speed bumps), narrow descents and tight corners. It was safety above speed, so my time wasn't as fast as I had hoped it would be, nonetheless, I am happy with my ride. I loved riding once more on the roads I used to train on many years ago. The elevation was almost 800m, so no, the Netherlands is not flat! Overall, I thought that this bike course was tougher than when we raced in 2018.

Transition 2 was also a slow one, with another stop at the Dixi.

The 21km run was over 2 laps, with a few hills, and lots of cobblestones (my feet weren't too happy). I probably started a bit fast but slowed down eventually. I was able to keep running for the whole run, except for a steeper hill and the aid stations. So I am happy with that!

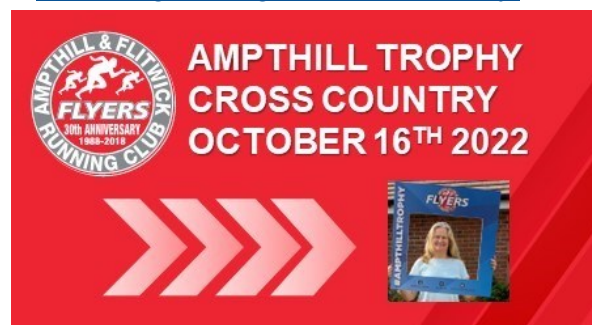
Overall, a good race for me. 8 days to recover for Ironman Ireland! ... 🙄

A special thanks to announcer Ralf Op 't Broek for the 'legend Eva' shout out. You made my day! Thanks everyone for the good luck wishes and for your (live or virtual) support!



October 16th 2022 Ampthill Trophy Trail 10K and Junior Race

The Ampthill and Flitwick Flyers' triple race series concludes in Ampthill Park with their annual Trophy - a tough cross country 10km course suitable for a wide range of abilities. Plenty of hills, grass and muddy / sandy terrain so you'll definitely need your trail shoes for this challenging event! Enter now and share with your running friends too affrunningclub.org.uk/ampthill-trophy/



Up & Running and On the Run Need You!

In order to keep Up & Running going on a regular basis we need articles to publish. We also need articles for the annual On the Run magazine - these articles will be collated and saved for publication in early 2023.

Please send your race reports (with photos) to hello@bedfordharriers.co.uk .