

The Runs

The Occasional Newsletter of Yeovil Town Road Running Club !!



**Create a caption...
we're all ears!!**

Sorry Martin, I couldn't resist placing this on the front page!

Email your 'caption' to:
Julie Green
adventuregirl40@hotmail.co.uk
to appear in next month's issue!!

See page 9 for Martin's article

RUN... JUST RUN!

Chairman – Nick Brooke

Secretary – Martin Chaffey

Treasurer – Pete Jakeman

Men's Captain – Tim Hawkins

Beginners – Deb Neal

Asset Manager – Phil MacQuaid

Web Site – Nigel Moysey

Minutes Secretary – Deb Stanfield

Or see any other committee member as follows: Katie Pearce, Lisa Gunning, Tina Cullen, Lee Holloway, Terry Byrne, Paul McNeill, Donna Smith,

Newsletter address:

runningmatt@mypostoffice.co.uk

or

adventuregirl40@hotmail.co.uk

Club Details

Yeovil Town Road Running Club is a club for those who wish to run on a regular basis. We meet at Yeovil Town Football Club on a Tuesday at 6:30pm (unless Yeovil FC have a home game) for group runs over varying distances, from 3 to 9 miles, whereby we cater for all abilities, including a beginners group, all stopping when necessary.

Other runs include Pub runs on Thursdays, Track training on Fridays, and Hash runs on occasional dates.

Club membership is £20 and includes a club vest.

For more information please visit our website below, contact our club secretary, or come along to a run.

Website – www.yeoviltownrrc.com

Secretary – martinchaffey@hotmail.co.uk

Paul Rose and his London Olympic Marathon Test Event

At 5:50am on Monday 30th May I was jogging along the Queens front drive attempting to warm up before taking part in the first of the 2012 Olympic test events – the Marathon. I hadn't expected to run another road marathon this year, but the chance of being one of the first to run the Olympic Route was just too tempting to turn down.

I was joined on the start line by 44 other club runners and we were given a final briefing and held a moments silence for Olympic Champion Sammy Wanjiru before the start. The plan was for us to run each mile at 6.51 pace to bring us all home as a group in just under 3 hours with the organisers testing the technology and timing all the way round. The event was being run on the same morning as the Bupa London 10K which follows much of the same route so the roads had been closed for the whole morning. The course consists of 3 laps of eight miles with an extra small lap added at the start to make the 26.2 miles. It has been designed to showcase the city, starting and finishing on the Mall and taking in most of the landmarks including Trafalgar Square, St Paul's Cathedral, The Guildhall, Tower of London, Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace, together with some hidden gems such as Leadenhall market.

From the start I settled at the back of the pack enjoying the banter and not having to worry about the pacing. The first short 2.2 mile lap being the first occasion I've been able to fully appreciate running along the embankment and passing the Houses of Parliament, normally when running in London it's hurting so much by then I just want to finish. I was surprised how busy London gets so early in

the morning; it must have seemed strange for the people who watched us running by. It amused me that a queue waiting for a bus all applauded as we ran past and we had some helpful advice delivered in a broad cockney accent "get proper jobs" by a young man who looked as though he was on his way home from a good night out. After completing the second of the eight mile laps a few of the pack dropped out and there was noticeably less chat on the final loop. The final miles of a marathon are always hard even if not running flat out; I was certainly regretting racing in the Egdon Easy 10K on the Saturday evening by this point and working hard to maintain the pace. Even though we were following instructions to run together we had been struggling throughout to hold a few of the quicker guys back and I was expecting them to race the last mile for the 'glory' of a course record. As we ran along the Embankment for the final time someone came up with a great suggestion that one of the group – Chris Finill should cross the line first. Chris has run in every London Marathon completing each one in less than 3 hours. So as we approached Buckingham Palace we all slowed allowing Chris to run ahead and cross the line first, the rest of us crossed the line together in 2:58:40.

The course is not a particularly quick one with lots of sharp turns, there's a small hill up to the Monument to climb (3 times) and also some cobbled streets to test the Olympians. It should however make for a good tactical race and brilliant for spectators and television. I thoroughly enjoyed the whole day (apart from getting up at 3:30am) and plan to come back again to watch the race next year.

Terry Byrne on Tour

In case you forgot, Terry is still on tour, just have had no time for reports, among my events have been the Lychett Manor 10, I like this as last 2.5 miles are down hill, but you know what that says about the rest of it!!, The Mad March Hare (10 not the 20), the Bournemouth 1/4 Marathon and the YMCA 5 in Reigate Surrey (My home town). I am delighted to say I was the 1st Yeovil runner in every one of these events, outstanding!! Unfortunately, I was also the last Yeovil runner in each of these events!

On Sunday I made the return to Alton for the Alton 10, this is considered a very tough 10 mile road race, undulating is an understatement, the uphill are long, the downhill short and sharp! Determined to beat last year's 86 minutes and continue my training for a 'longer' event later in the year, I set off for Alton early Sunday morning, in my Green 'n White with the number 185 already attached.

A good sized field set off, the atmosphere was good with some quality athletes, I placed myself near the back and off we went, slight down hill first, then at about 1 mile we start to climb, some steep some less steep, but all up hill to just past 3 miles, then undulating, then a sharp downhill. Just before 5 miles on to a horrible part of the course. A straight mile, long and undulating, like a roller coaster. Then a turn and a sharp uphill, at top of the hill turn right across the top of some fields and back down to Alton for the slight climb to the finish. Good field, good atmosphere and nice weather. And I beat last year by 3 minutes. From when I went through the start I made it 82m 53secs, official time 83.41. Well pleased!

If you want a tough 10 mile work out and don't mind a drive, give this a go next year, it is well organised and well marshalled.

Club Shirts on Holiday

Here, as promised, are photos of me in a club shirt on holiday in Monument Valley, Arizona. I had a



brilliant one taken with a classic view of Monument Valley as a backdrop, but unfortunately the woman who took it later deleted it because it was taken into the sun and not very good! Argh! So, I'm afraid this is all I've got, sorry. The shirt, by the way, was excellent for riding in – airy, light, I loved it, unfortunately, so did any flying insect within flying distance. They loved the green strips. Our horses were fearless, sure footed and had amazing endurance, but comfortable they were not. See you soon – now I'm back from my travels.

Book now for the Cross Country Winter Season!

Following the success the club had last year, we are advertising early for the cross country events for the coming winter. *Don't look away thinking you're not good enough* – YTRRC had the biggest club turnout last year and could easily take 1st, 2nd and 3rd team prizes just for turning up! Cross Country is a low key affair and all are welcome. It is a good reason to get you out running on those colder weekends and is good training as it toughens up your knees and ankles for the road. These are the proposed dates for the cross country leagues this coming winter, but please be aware that 'Proposed' is an appropriate word especially with the Wessex League!

Many thanks to Dave Stanfield for this information.

Gwent League:

- 8th / 9th October 2011
- 12th / 13th November 2011
- 3rd / 4th December 2011
- 11th / 12th February 2012
- 3rd / 4th March 2012

Wessex League:

PROVISIONAL DATES FOR 2011-12

- Oct 30th 2011
- Nov 27th 2011
- Jan 22nd 2012
- Feb 26th 2012

SW XC Relays:

- Oct 23rd 2011

Auntie Maud's problems & advice column



If you have a problem that needs sorting, or have some advice to pass on, let Auntie Maud know and she'll put you right!

Auntie Maud, Help! I am having trouble with my running at the moment – I have just returned from foreign parts but find it difficult to run without tripping over my crutches! What do you suggest? Please Help – AA
Dear AA – How did you do that? I hope it wasn't doing anything daft like dancing in high heels at a ceilidh?! I suggest that you do the sensible thing and only go to the Club's pub runs, and you can prop up the bar with that nice Mr Jakeman until the runners get back! – Best wishes from Auntie Maud.

Auntie Maud, Help! After 12 years, I suddenly find myself at a loss of what to do on Sunday evenings, or when the Apprentice/Strictly is on. Can you help? – Mixy
Dear Mixy – You must be bored – writing to an agony aunt!! You could always stop typing stuff and go for a run – or find some DIY to do, I'm sure your other half will be pleased – Auntie Maud

Auntie Maud, Help! I find that on long runs my gert big thighs rub raw and feel like they're on fire; what can you suggest?
Dear Chafed of Somerset, I must admit that I have been a sufferer in the past, and I've had more than one bush fire started by sparks from rubbing thighs. Find yourself a good pair of lycra shorts and a big tub of vaseline; grease yourself up and off you go – that should sort you out! – Auntie Maud

CREWKERNE 9

Sunday 22nd May

So another successful race day for Yeovil Town RRC. The Crewkerne 9 is a challenging, undulating course. Runners gather at the Town Hall and there is a mass walk to the start in Abbey Street. The race itself takes you through Hinton St George, past Dinnington Docks and you double back on yourself – so the first 3 miles are the last 3 miles! The race has an early start, 10am, which is much better as it means that you're not running at the hottest time of the day. This year was slightly colder and there was a downpour about 10 minutes into the race but thankfully it soon passed. Lots of people lined the route to support the runners (including young children with baskets of jelly babies!)

The race is very friendly, well organised event with plenty of marshals, signs and distance markers. A t-shirt, banana and drink are waiting for you at the end. There is also a 3 mile fun run/junior race which starts just after the main race.

Luke Scott (Taunton AC) set a course record this year when he finished in 48:52. First lady home was Hannah Bridger in 58:23.

Yeovil Men won the team prize. Paul Rose was 5th overall and first Yeovil man home in 53:20. Lee Holloway had a great race to be 2nd Yeovil man home in 56:58. Lee Harwood (58:00) and Mike Harvey (59:16) completed the men's team and got in just before the clock struck 11am. Other Yeovil men completing the course were Dave Stanfield and Richard Boulter, who just missed out on the hour mark in a time of 1:00:26 and 1:00:36, then Chris Fendt (1:02:08), Sam Harvey (1:05:21), Jack Frost (1:14:54) and Andy Windram (1:14:55).

The Ladies didn't let the side down either winning the team prize! Rosemary Harvey was first Yeovil lady home in 1:06:52 – a PB for the course. Second Yeovil lady was Rachel Hayton in 1:14:15 and third was Michelle Lane in 1:23:22. Michelle was especially pleased as this was her first running prize – so well done Michelle! Other Yeovil ladies taking part were Deb Stanfield (1:34:49) and Sadie McClelland (1:38:55). Val Hales took part in the 3 mile run which she completed in 33:46.

So well done to all Yeovil Town RRC members for putting on such a good show! I forgot to mention in the race report that Paul Rose won his age category (Male 40V) and I won my age category (Female 35V) – *Forgot ? or just too modest???*

Mendip Mashup – Martin Chaffey

Saturday 18th June saw the Mendip Mashup, a cracking little event up on the Mendips which is a mix of hashing, orienteering and running and really good way of spending the afternoon. It was a shame that it clashed with Glastonbury Festival as that meant the Yeovil team was restricted to Mel Dodge and Tina Cullen, and Ellen Chaffey (Lynda and I had to accompany her).

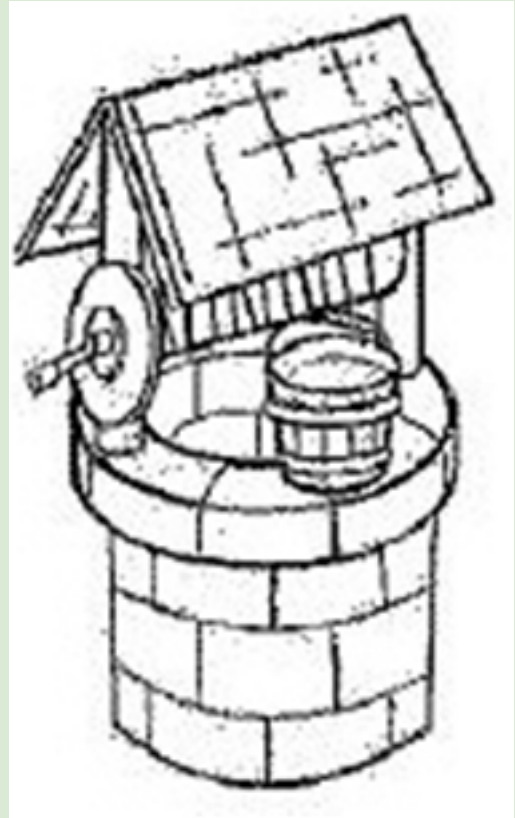
Points are awarded by visiting flags of different colours – those in further flung places are worth 30 points, the easy ones only 10 – but then penalties for finishing beyond the 5pm finish time. Ellen managed 140 points in the 1 hour walk – but unfortunately docked 80 points for late finishing (you try running with a baby back pack on!), but did visit Flag 6 named "Chaffey Time". Mel and Tina excelled themselves – securing 180 points in the 2 hour run, getting slightly lost in the woods and crossing the line 27 minutes after the deadline, meaning that after penalties they were left in minus figures!

We didn't stay to share the only prize – the winner's weight in beer – and the wind meant that the proposed post-race barbeque took place safely in our own kitchen!

Jack n' Jill's Challenge

This was a new race which replaced the Cowpat Canter – being a farmers' daughter I never fancied doing that race as I have spent a life time surrounded by cowpats! As you would imagine there was a Jack and Jill connection to this race. The hill that the nursery rhyme is based on lies in the village of Kilmersdon. Now my geography is not very good so the village is somewhere near Radstock/ Midsomer Norton and is half way into the race.

The hill itself is a steep narrow lane and there are 6 headstones along the way with the words from the nursery rhyme. At the top of the hill is a school which has a wall plaque with the nursery rhyme and of course the well where Jack got his pail of water! Hopefully on the day nobody fell down and broke their crown – although Sam Harvey did run with a broken arm, Jo Whaites fell over and grazed her leg what is it with Jo and falling over) and I have a bruise on my knee where I almost didn't make it out of the water!



The event itself is 10km of challenging off road running, virtually no tarmac to be seen. The course takes you through beautiful countryside, rolling fields, hidden valleys, an old railway track, a slag heap, footpaths and woodland tracks, over styles and the odd river or two! It starts and finishes at Pratten's Social club, Charlton lane, Midsomer Norton, although there is a mass walk from the Social Club to the field where the actual start is.

As the organiser said at the beginning of the race – its tough, but not because of the hills, but because technically it is difficult with all the different surfaces.

The event was well organised and very friendly. Some of the marshals were dressed as Jack and Jill (a bit different from The Black Death race where everyone was dressed as Grim Reapers) and the one drinks station was at the top of the hill, although thankfully they didn't make you dive down the well to get your pail of water!

There was a very small Yeovil Town RRC turnout. Congratulations to Mark Wills, who was 3rd (40.40 mins) picked up his first running trophy. Mike Harvey was 5th (42.59 mins) which meant he picked up 2nd Male Vet 40. Rod Appleby was 17th (46.26 mins) and Sam Harvey was 18th (46.55 mins). This meant that they won the men's team prize, beating off opposition from Somer AC and Frome Running Clubs! This success was put down to the lucky penny that Rod found when we were walking to the start – that lucky penny is going to be taken to every race.

Other Yeovil Town RRC results included Shaun Marshall (new to the club) 50.07 mins, Rose Harvey 51.52 mins, Crispian Macpherson 53 mins, and Jo Whaites 59.15 mins. Prizes were glass plaques and a bottle of cider or ale. Also provided were a good selection of rolls, cakes, tea, coffee etc. There was also success in the junior race where Crispian's son, Luke, picked up a prize.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable race which was a challenge but a fun one. Hopefully the race will be run again next year because I would highly recommend it. It's a challenge and brings out the inner child in you!

Forde Abbey race report



T MIGHT have all been a bit last minute, but on Thursday I made a late decision to head down to Forde Abbey for the 10km; I am doing this short report as the designated reporter was in full kit, ready to run, but threw his back out doing his shoelaces up (didn't you Terry?!).

The Forde race is always a good one, and is well supported. There were more than 30 Yeovil vests milling about, which made a good team photo (and other Clubs jealous!). The start had been changed this year, meaning that we had to run right up the stepped lawn in front of the house before heading out round the gardens – the Yeovil green and white visible at regular intervals throughout the field. Many runners were doing the race for the first time and the stories were going about of monster hills and the famous river crossing – but very few had mentioned the long drag out of the Forde Abbey grounds that seemed longer than ever this year!

After several weeks of sporadic running due to calf injuries, I had joined the numbers of people making pre-race excuses before the start, but pulling away in the first km with Hazel Dodge, Jo Whaites and

Cath Elsworth, the legs felt fairly good. Not having a camera in my hand (the batteries having packed up before the start) meant that I didn't have an excuse to stop on the hills and had to keep going! I kept Steve Griffiths and Simon Rowbottom in sight, just about (both of them had detailed tales of injuries and poor recent running to keep expectations of times down!), and I trailed in their wake up and down, through woods and across fields. At the 5km mark, reached in 29m30, I was feeling quite good still and safe in the knowledge that the second half of the course is more downhill than up – I commented to those around me that I must be running faster than usual as no-one was talking; little reply! I did have a good chat with Paul from Axe Valley and we kept each other going for a bit until the downhill at which he shot off at Gareth Ashmeadian eyeballs-out pace and I couldn't stay with him, and despite my best efforts I couldn't catch up to Steve and Simon – indeed the only Yeovil vest I saw was that of Rod Appleby who had twisted something halfway round the course and was limping back in. Subtle

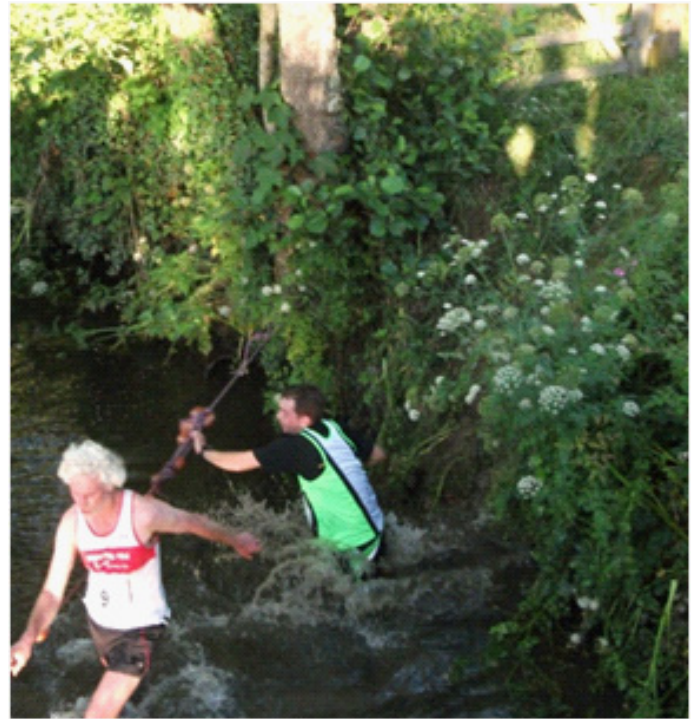
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changes to the course nearly confused me and there was a shorter lead up to the river crossing – one minute it was just there, and had a quick slide into the river water, deepened by the recent rain and under the bridge, before scrambling up the other side. I overtook a couple of people in the last km, including the two ladies from Crewkerne just before the final run in, and was starting to up the pace as I approached the finish when the elder of the two Crewkerne ladies decided to take me on in a sprint – she came up on my shoulder, started to pass and then we both had to check as there was a set of steps, and a final surge would have taken me past her right at the death.. but what can I say, I'm a gentleman so we crossed the line together!

Finished in 58m30, which would have been negative split – had the course been full 10km!

Warming down gave an opportunity to see Cath and Hazel finish – I hadn't been entirely sure whether they were ahead or behind me, and on their recent form I expected to get beaten by both – and to shout support to Claire Pomeroy of Chard (so she knew I'd beaten her too!), before heading back across the



second river crossing to shepherd Karen Edwards past the herd of cows!

Drink afterwards at the Squirrel Pub – what is it about the pubs round there that we still haven't found a decent one to go to?! (I resisted the temptation to take a photo of the sausage and chips offering served to Matt – hopefully tasted nicer than it looked!). Still, a cracking event at a lovely location and one to head back to again and again.



Right Royal Romping - Martin Chaffey

IT WAS nice of the government to take a bit of time off from fiddling their expenses at the end of April to give us a Friday day off to do a bit of extra running (and it worked in well, as it meant that some wedding or other – Wills and Kate, was it? – could take place in peace). Taking full advantage of the day off, Deb Neal kindly organised a pub run to take us away from it all – 14 miles, 3 pubs. It was good to see so many members of the Club turning up and embracing the spirit of the thing by donning patriotic fancy dress; Hazel Ford stole the show with her full wedding dress, but there were various Union Jack themed outfits and flags aplenty. I settled for



St George's Day shorts and Prince Charles ears! I thought of the Royal Family and took two punnets of fruit with me to the start so that we could all begin with a plum in our mouths (again everyone entered into the spirit of things!).

We set off in a whirl of red white and blue towards Tintinhull – although en route there was a split off

by a group of four to the Carpenters Arms at Chilthorne (for mixed intentions – Sian and Mel wanted to see “the” dress as Kate arrived at the church – Fred and I hoped to get a cheeky extra pint in! Whilst the pub was closed, they let us in to watch the TV – but not serve us!) – and the first official (royal themed) pub



was the Crown & Victoria. Deb brought out the hot cross buns and sweeties to accompany the first beer of the day.

Pub number 2 was the Prince of Wales atop Ham Hill and there was an interesting run across the fields between pubs, heading first to the Cartgate – unfortunately I injured my ankle by taking a photo; jumping into a field over a potato ridge and tweaking it by a poor landing and this was to make the remaining 8 miles interesting (and I wouldn't run for the next week). On the way we went on a footpath that goes right through the garden of a very nice house (though personally I wouldn't want to live right next to Cartgate roundabout) and then over a bridge that was infested by a nasty looking troll (see photo) and on to Stoke. A bit of elopement from Kate and her Father in Law followed, which had it happened in real life would have been so much

continued on page 10...

... continued from page 9

easier, and then we all climbed up past the Pinnacle. Here we were joined by Adam Hawkins – had he got his wedding fix before meeting us?! At the Prince of Wales they were serving a number of themed beers – whilst others enjoyed “Royal Celebration”, I had a pint of “Kate Loves Willy”! Luckily they weren’t serving the very nice dark lager so there was no incentive simply to settle in for the day and miss the whole Wedding thing, and so instead we cracked on, and here the group split into two for those who wanted to take in the sights of Tinker’s Bubble and those of us who didn’t – we had the sight of Hazel Ford, resplendent in her wedding dress, leading the group around the ramparts of Whitcombe Valley (I will be sending that to Runner’s World as a suggestion for the Rave Run!).

Meeting at the King’s Arms in Montacute for a final beer of the day, we tried everything to work a way to get another one in – the “Prince” Phelip’s Arms was closed and we couldn’t think of anything remotely tenuously royal in “Mason’s Arms” to justify a diversion to Odcombe – so we enjoyed the run back to Yeovil, ready to thank Deb Neal for organising the



day – and to join Lynda and her Mother for the final 10 hours of Royal Wedding coverage!!

It was a really good day out and the sort of thing this Club is really good at. For those who say that they can’t drink and eat on the run, I would just say that it comes with practice! We might not be doing the Midsummer Dream en masse this year, but there is the Blackdown Beauty coming up and the monthly hash runs so plenty of opportunity for us to train you up!!

THE WESSEX RIDGEWAY

The general narration is by Matt Driver who organised our teams; the other comments are by the competitors themselves as indicated by their name in **BOLD** before their report. Thanks to Richard Dodge for the photos.

Phil MacQuaid – When God made the world it was flat and rather boring. So after a while he clapped his hands and the earth moved, with the result that the land was now full of hills, mountains, valleys and seas. It stayed that way for millions of years till a guy called Phillippides ran to Athens from somewhere called Marathon. For a while everyone had the running bug, but as no one could spell Phillippides' name, he was soon forgotten. That is until the advent of computers and his name could be cut and pasted and so the running bug was resurrected and very soon everyone was running everywhere. Then it was only a matter of time till some clever Dick came up with the silly idea of running The Wessex Ridgeway!

If you studied Geography at school you will know that a ridge rises and continues above the plains. Its simple really, the 1st runner starts at Tollard Royal, runs up hill and passes the baton to the next runner and so on till the last runner runs downhill to sea level. Wrong you've just failed your GCSE!

The Wessex Relay goes up hill, down hill, along paths, tracks and the odd road but mainly up and down. Up and down, up and down, with the occasional field with uncut long grass that seems to drag ones feet, tripping up the unwary and tired.

Matt Driver – After loads of phone calls, texts, e-mails and we appear to have two teams for the Wessex Ridgeway 100km relay race across Dorset. We probably can't challenge for an outright win so Matt used his skill and expertise (guessing) to try to even out the team's ability to create a YTRRC challenge within the race, also managing to make one team eligible for the mixed team entry. So it will be "Men's" (Gareth Ashmead, Mark Wills, Richard Dodge, Phil MacQuaid, Austin Luke and Rod Appleby) versus "Mixed" (Nick Brooke, Jesse Hiles, Kat Jones, Nick Marsh, Matt Driver, Jill Harrison)!



An early start at 5:00am for breakfast before collecting our runners in Yeovil with a minibus at 6:00, and Pete Jakeman is manning our cover car in case we need to be somewhere in a hurry.

Having done the lead legs in previous years **NICK BROOKE**, in the Mixed Team, was well prepared for Legs 1 and 2:

Tollard Royal was a picture with a hundred runners milling around in their glitzy finery, and their finely sculpted legs catching the dappled sunshine, their conversation subdued as strategies were prepared for the day ahead, though whether the hush was for the sake of the Tollarders or for the sake of secrecy will never be known! Only a couple of dozen of these athletes would actually form the first wave that would disappear over the first horizon, and after that never again would there be such a congregation that day...

There's a lot to be said for going off first: the sociability, the feeling of a race, being able to see the opposition rather than having to imagine it, on this particular day the best of the weather – sunny but cool and the wind still not too strong – not having to wait for the preceding runner... But there are the downsides too: having to get up before 4:30 in order to get breakfast down in time, and the day before's food flushed away (!), and feeling the responsibility of getting one's team off to a reasonable start.

At seven thirty in the morning I'm not very sociable anyway and with a big race coming up the following weekend I was doubting my sanity in even doing this relay; and then I thought it's not often enough we get a chance to run as a team, but nothing motivates quite like being part of a team. Just keep the competitors in sight and maybe you can catch them, and I was hardly aware of any of the countryside I was so determined to get ahead, to keep ahead, every second could count!

The wind strengthened, I did notice that; it was perfect for running down the steepest slopes. You could just lean forward into it and let go without fear. At the bottom of one hill I did briefly come out of my dream. There was the minibus and no Yeovil runners (Sorry Nick, we all went off to find a loo)! I hope they know I expect to be met at the end of my leg by Jesse's outstretched hand...

Confession time – I did walk a bit of the hill up out of Shillingstone, but faster than the Trotters on my heels – and to my relief the Yeovil crowd were present at the



checkpoint, running done for the day and now I could enjoy the spectacle of others sweating it out, putting up with the deteriorating weather and digging in for their respective teams. It was a great fun day and for the two green, white and black teams to be so close at the end was a great way to finish it.

Unfortunately, in the last week or so before the event we had two runners drop out through injury, so with a day or two notice, an unprepared **GARETH ASHMEAD** was drafted in for Legs 1 and 2 on the Men's Team:

Or...How not to prepare for 14miles of cross country!! Well, I advised Matt I was prepared to help out if anyone dropped out, but by the day before I thought it would be safe to say I'd escaped the call. Wrong!!

- *Is four and a half hours of sleep sufficient? Thought not!!*
- *Is hosting a party on the night before, a good idea? Perhaps not!!*
- *Is not recce-ing a route without marshals or special signs a wise move? Well, it's adventurous ...*
- *Should you make use of the facilities (or nearest field) before setting off? I would have, except Matt and Nick were trying to explain the route to me; It was quite a lot to take in ...*
- *If you don't do your shoes up properly, you may well get a blister!*

So, that left me with a woozy head, suffering from sleep deprivation, hoping the call of nature wasn't so strong that I had to stop, worrying about probably losing sight of other runners who might know where they were going, and yet to get my ankle supports into

my shoes and do my shoes up. Then that Matt told me that everyone would be off at 7:30 (sharp) and I had about two minutes if I was lucky!!

It would be an understatement to say I was in a bit of a state; blimey! With a few seconds to spare I managed to get the start line, but I certainly wasn't ready.

Unfortunately, but inevitably, for all the aforementioned reasons I had to stop a couple of times along the way; once to consult the map (by the time I worked which way to go, I needn't have bothered, as others came along who knew the route). And another time to inspect the bushes (so for a second time a cluster of runners caught and passed me).

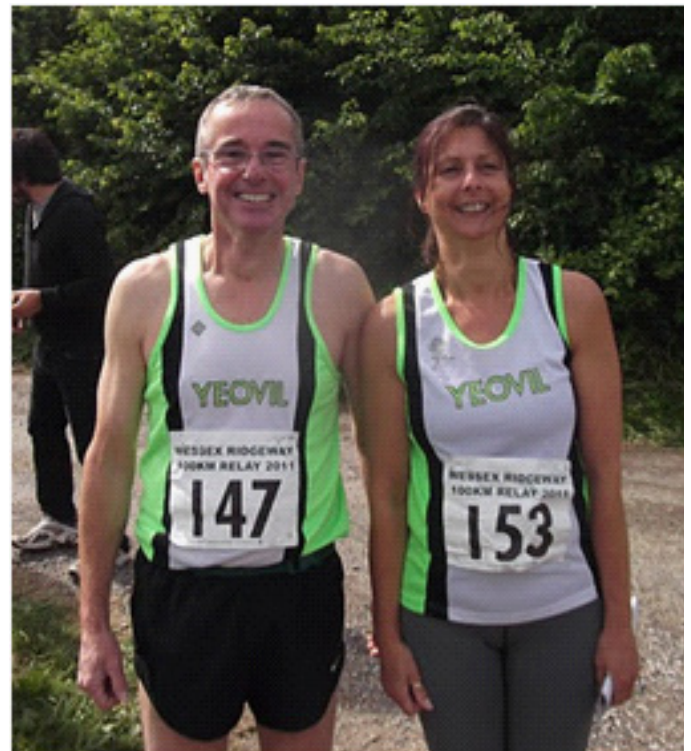
Following the second unscheduled stop things went much better and I regained the lost places and finishing strongly, albeit in a fairly modest time. I am sure the team were relieved to see me get to the end of leg two; I was.



So, Nick came in ahead of Gareth by about 10:30mins meaning the Mixed Team was ahead and we were about to find out how the good natured banter between Jesse and Mark would pan out. But the baton was already in **JESSE HILES'** hand:

The first 3 or 4 miles were reasonably flat and thanks to the large lead our esteemed chairman had provided the Mixed Team, very few other runners were seen, although I was aware of the pressure of Mark somewhere behind. There were great views approaching the ramparts at Rawlesbury Camp and this led downhill to a quick dash through a stream (which luckily was shallower than experienced on the recce run!). The next couple of steep hills had to

be partly walked, though the leg finished on a fast downhill, a bit of a sprint finish and a frantic handover! It was an excellent day and without wishing to plan too far ahead, I'd be happy to do it again next year.



Pete and Nick Brooke took the car to the mid-point to offer water to Mark and Jesse and to check on their progress, meanwhile, Matt has drove the minibus past all the slow Sunday drivers, the tractors, the herd of cows, missed a few turnings and reversed, and finally got Richard and Kat to their start point. No-one is at all nervous as can be seen in the picture...

Meanwhile **MARK WILLS** is charging towards them: *Gareth had done a sterling job of running his 14 mile section with only a days notice, no recce and a party the night before! Nick ever the ruthless racer had pulled out a 14 minute lead. Could I make up 14 minutes on Jesse in 14 miles? ...Probably not but I'd give it a really good try, running the first few miles at a speedy 10k pace rather than 10 mile pace, whoops! Luckily I didn't suffer too much for it, although running through the mid check point at 10k with other teams having fresh legs waiting was very tough. The rest of my race was pretty lonely, with only cows for company, but then with a mile to go in the distance I could see a figure, Was it Jesse?.....Ummmmm [eyes straining].....red top....No! I ran the last (down hill) mile at an alarming/wobbly speed with tired legs, nearly catching the*

phantom runner in red before handing over to Richard with the gap down to 3 minutes.

Jesse is indeed the first into view, but the racing Mark Wills has closed the gap such that the Men's Team are now just 3 minutes behind. Jesse comes down the hill to cross the road and hand over the lead to **KAT JONES**:

After telling our lovely Phil Macquaid (!?!) that I was too unfit and slow to do the Wessex Relay, I soon discovered he wasn't going to take No for an answer and I found that I had been allocated Legs 5 & 6, only to also discover that Matt had put my name to a different face, that one being of a Triathlete!! So, not having Anna Lewis's Age, beauty and running ability on my side I feared I may let the side down, so was determined to give it my all.

Legs 5 & 6 started with a hill, ended with a hill and with a few more hills in between. So first hill, a tough start but ok, then some nice flat and downhill bits so managed to pick up speed. So far, so good until the long long drag up a farm track with the wind against me and then it decided to rain! Feeling cold, wet and exhausted, it was just a dash across a field and along a track to meet the rest of the gang with water and lot's of support. Phew, I survived one leg.

Leg 6 started off fairly flat along a track. I then had to turn into another track and after running for about half a mile I started doubting my sense of direction and was made even more worried when I saw Rich Dodge running towards me, but on consulting our written directions we carried on. All was well and very enjoyable until the final hill which brought us to the end, so near but so far!! Richard was ahead once more and

my brain and legs didn't want to work in conjunction together. The team came to my aid with support and I managed to find some energy to run the final bit to hand the baton over to the waiting marshall, and then collapsed in a heap!!! You'll notice how the "gentlemen" are all helping me and not standing around uselessly, and is Mark hiding a snigger?

My apologies for swearing at Pete when he suggested I do another Leg! But, would I do it again? You bet I would, and I recommend other members consider it next year, it was a long day but great fun.

As mentioned in Kat's report, **RICHARD DODGE** was also running those legs:

Starting at the bottom of a hill and finishing at the top meant this was possibly one of the toughest legs, and with Mark coming in behind Jesse meant I had a bit to catch up. From our recce, I knew Kat might be catchable as the first big hill is really tough straight after leaving the bus. However, once I was in front of her I then had the problem of thinking about the route! Up to Batcombe was Ok, although the heavens opened and the wind blew strongly, but the support crew were on hand to cheer me up.

Suddenly, I realised I was running on a track I had no memory of...was this right? Stop, think, turn round... dunno! Best trundle back and see. Hang on, that's Kat approaching, let's have a chat and see what's what. Turns out I was going correctly, just my memory playing up. So, all the hard work undone and I need to pull out a quick blast up the last hill! Finally reached the top and saw Phil dart off and away! A great team day thoroughly enjoyed.

So, Richard has managed to put the men's team into the lead by just over 3 minutes and away first on leg 7 & 8 is **PHIL MACQUAID**:

I'd been "volunteered" onto these legs and according to the course instructions it was some ten miles. Never, never believe the detailed instructions!

So there I was once again stood at the side of the A37 at Heartbreak hill waiting for Richard Dodge to appear over the horizon when all of a sudden he appeared and I was off at mach 2 down the hill to Maiden Newton past the war memorial and church. On the flat I slowed down a bit & ran along the riverside & on to Chilfrome up a short hill, track left then right, followed by a road



all uphill for the next mile & a half till you arrive at the main road. After that its uphill, down dale, a wet dirty muddy stony track, across a small wood and then its all uphill to Rampisham masts. This is the changeover point for all the other runners but our leader had decided that we would run our two legs consecutively back to back! So a drink, some chocolate raisins a few jelly babies & I was off on leg 8. I was passed by two runners on fresher legs than mine. So heading off towards Hooke (home of club member Lee Holloway, he said afterwards that he cheered me on, but as he lives on a steep hill I never actually saw or even heard him. Again uphill across loads of fields with long ankle grabbing grass the type that trips you up, then hit the road & on to Toller Whelme. Got slightly confused as I couldn't quite remember where the hidden track branched off, eventually finding it was once more uphill until I reached Witcombe Road. A quick left & right onto a minor road which after a mile or so turns into a track fortunately fairly flat. By now I knew I was nearly at the end, even so I was a bit worried because I couldn't remember whether I had to turn left or right! However arriving at the road I looked and could see all the parked vehicles a quarter of a mile away. So turning left a flat out sprint (must always look good for the finish) to the change over point. I was so knackered that I couldn't get the baton out of my rolled up instructions so Austin grabbed the lot and he was off!

So as Kat recovered and took a breather in the bus, various phone calls were made as this is a high point in Dorset so signals aren't lost. However, the text from Jill Harrison saying "I'm just having a hot croissant in my dressing gown before heading across to run" was taken in good heart! During the meantime Phil was being chased down by **NICK MARSH**:

I saw Kat finish her leg on one side of the A37, and the marshalls handed me a baton to continue from the other side to save mad dashes across the busy main road. I started at about 12.30 and my route took me through Maiden Newton and along the river where I caught and passed both Phil MacQuaid and a Wimborne runner! The route then took me across the hills of Dorset and up to Rampisham masts which was the toughest part of my run. I then passed though the village of Hooke whilst having a labrador puppy run with me for half a mile! The last few miles were really

tough but I was really glad to see our bus and then everyone at the end of the road, finishing my legs in 1hr 35mins. I really enjoyed my first relay race in the Yeovil colours.

Everyone has seen Kat hand over to Phil first, and then Richard hand on to Phil, however, with Phil being overtaken before their halfway point no-one knows how large an advantage Nick has over Phil. The sun is now beating down although a stiff breeze is keeping the temperature in check a little. By now, most of the bus's occupants have done their stint and are relaxing, the exception is **MATT DRIVER** who is about to have his run:



It's a long run in to this hand over and having seen Nick some way up the road I moved away from him to the hand over point, from Nick's point of view it must have looked like the leg would never end. It was a flying change and I burst off down the steep stony track towards Beaminster. Because of the last minute team changes I was running different legs than those I'd recce'd but I run these two years ago so I only had to check the map once or twice. I'm a bit worried about Phil, who last I saw was struggling up to Rampisham and I'm thinking about whether I'll see the Air Ambulance helicopter!



By the first hill, a competitor was in sight and I rapidly caught him up, and not wanting to look silly, I thought I'd better continue to blast along and away from him – quite difficult to do up Gerrards Hill! Still, I'm away and running and at last I can use that adrenaline that has been saturating me since 5 this morning. Ten

I quickly set off around a farm and then up to Pilsden Pen, along a ridge, down and up then I'm charging down a field to my waiting entourage. Hand over to Jill and job done.

Meanwhile, Phil has handed over to **AUSTIN LUKE** and he's seen the large gap the Mixed Team have: After an agonising wait for the start and finding the gap Matt with his Mixed Team have over me is now 17minutes, I head off into Beaminster, keenly following my previously recce'd route. I walked up Gerrard's hill, unlike the recce in which I killed myself running up it. It was all a bit of a plod and a different experience to what I'm used to; usually its racing with actual people and not just the cows!

The personal battle was long and hard, but the sun stayed out and the day was fantastic. The best parts were the ends of sections where the supporters' energy dragged me through and on to the final check point. Unfortunately I wasn't able to go to the finish of the event as I felt a bit rough (sick as a dog actually), so Pete dropped me back to my car and I headed home for a well earned little sleep. Hopefully I've done my bit OK and the Men's Team can get a bit closer.

minutes later and I'm knackered!

Second wind and I'm closing out leg nine. Remember to smile and look relaxed...there's Phil so he's OK...Mark has some water so I'll just walk for a few yards and drink...hang on, they're all booing 'cos I'm walking!!!



So, it appears Austin has struggled a bit and it's looking like the mixed team have got a decent lead of 29 minutes, although there is still some tough hills and route finding ahead. The wind has picked up nastily on the exposed sections but the rain from the morning has completely disappeared. **JILL HARRISON** is torn between eager anticipation and apprehension:



I think there is something special about a relay, the club members are running for each other. Supporting each runner is essential on the recce of your route and on the day itself. I found running the last two legs a particular challenge as there is nobody to run against, although you know they are out there somewhere. Nobody is there to show you the way or even to reassure you, but I am proud to say I only went off course once, when escaping from a yappy dog. The weather was glorious and the scenery spectacular. I found it a worthwhile challenge and a great day out. Hopefully, from our experiences this year we can encourage other YTRRC members and we might get more ladies to run next year or in other races.

With a time gap of 14 minutes, Austin has handed over to **ROD APPLEBY**:

I'm told to run strongly and to see how well, if at all, I can close the gap. I'm feeling good and well rested having just driven out to the course rather than being driven around all day. My lazy start has paid off as I'm enjoying the hills and don't have any problems keeping to the route. Climbing up to Coney Castle I'm rewarded with a glug of water from the support tem

and I'm even told I've been catching time up on Jill. This is the news I want to hear although there are a couple of other teams close by.

So, we'll just leave you hanging for a moment while **PETE JAKEMEN** describes his day:

So there we are, 15 hours and 205 miles, eight o'clock on a pleasant Sunday evening, the end of my participation in the 2011 Wessex Ridgeway Relay.

Ideal conditions at 0600 as we drove to the start at Tollard Royal, a bit of a shock to the Council Workers who also had got up early to paint some road signs on the hill to Tollard Royal, the stop/go blokes looked quite dizzy with the number of vehicles using that stretch of road early on a Sunday morning.

My first task after we cheered our two teams off was to arrange a loo stop for those team members that needed to, a quick dash to a car park in Blandford, thankfully we all carried 20p, then another dash back to the minibus and onto the next leg. We then decided that I would wait at each midpoint to encourage and offer water to our runners and the minibus went on to the start of each new leg. It all went swimmingly from then on, only one call to say "um, I think I'm lost, this dog chased me", anyway they were soon back on track. A short trip back to take one of our runners to his car, then the dash to the finish to see the team complete the relay. A meal in the pub then whilst the other went for an ice cream at the seaside, I took three members back to their homes/cars.

Many thanks to Pete, especially as he is desperate to get back to running following his recent injury, and I guess it was some kind of torture for him not to join in physically. Without Pete in his backup car the day would have been horrendously stressful and we wouldn't have been





able to support all our runners as we did. Next year, we want you running Pete!

Back to the race then...

The majority of the team runners have travelled in the minibus to the pub at the end of the course and rather than go and get a pint in, they're all too excited about

the result between the two teams. Lot of banter goes on, but the wait seems endless. Who will come around the corner first?

Finally, the shouts go up and a bandana-ed Rod Appleby comes trundling around the corner and down the finish track looking relaxed and comfortable. The men's team have triumphed and again the banter starts up. Worried looks go back up the track as we await Jill who suddenly appears just over five minutes later.

Phil MacQuaid is ecstatic and has earned bragging rights over Matt Driver, which is something he won't forget for months to come. Overall the event is declared a great success by all YTRRC participants who all vow to do it again next year. Although we did make it a bit of a competition between us, the real success is that it remained competitive right to the end with just a five minute gap after ten hours of running!

Wessex Ridgeway results 2011

Both Wimborne and Dorset Doodlers A beat the previous 6 man team course record held by Bournemouth AC in 2000 with a time of 8:08:59, although a four man from Royal Navy & Egdon clocked 7:41:00 in 1997! This year, 24 intrepid teams assembled by the pond at Tollard Royal at 7:30 am on Sunday Morning. The teams had come from as far away as Finchampstead, Middlesex and Marlborough, but included the local clubs of Dorset Doodlers, Frome Running club, Gillingham Trotters, Maiden Castle Running Club, Wimborne AC and Yeovil Town Road Running Club.

At the end of the first 8 mile leg to Shroton a group of 4 teams had broken away, but by the end of the second leg the lead pack was down to two teams, Wimborne and the Dorset Doodlers. These two teams exchanged the lead several times during the course of the day and at the start of the last leg Wimborne were 2 minutes in the lead. The runners were observed halfway through the leg crossing the A35 and Wimborne's lead was less than 20 seconds. Waiting at the finish the tension increased as Wimborne and Doodlers supporters waited for their runner to come into view. In the end Wimborne's runner had put in a really hard effort and opened up a 2 minute gap. Wimborne finished in 8:01:58 and the Doodlers in 8:03:40. Meanwhile, a little further back in the field Dorset Doodlers ladies team had opened up an unassailable lead to take the ladies prize for the third consecutive year.

Notable achievements were two teams of two runners, who individually ran over 30 miles each over some of the hilliest terrain in Dorset. The Axe Valley Runners team managed to finish a very creditable 6th in a time of 9:08:56

Included in the entry fee was a post-race meal for all the runners at the Talbot Arms, which was gratefully consumed by the 140 competitors taking part

The Change over times:

Team	Start	Leg 1	Leg 2	Leg 3	Leg 4	Leg 5	Leg 6	Leg 7	Leg 8	Leg 9	Leg 10	Leg11	Leg 12	Overall time
YTRRC A	7:30:00	8:35:53	9:25:00	9:48:00	10:32:00	11:22:00	12:20:36	13:22:00	14:16:00	15:06:00	15:50:00	16:33:00	17:25:28	9:55:28
YTRRC B	7:30:00	8:26:37	9:11:00	9:42:00	10:29:00	11:25:00	12:23:40	13:12:00	13:59:00	14:48:00	15:31:00	16:19:00	17:30:47	10:00:47

Leg Times

Team	Leg 1	Leg 2	Leg 3	Leg 4	Leg 5	Leg 6	Leg 7	Leg 8	Leg 9	Leg 10	Leg11	Leg 12	Overall Time
Wimborne A	0:54:47	0:41:13	0:38:00	0:29:00	0:37:00	0:38:29	0:44:31	0:38:00	0:45:00	0:31:00	0:42:00	0:42:58	8:01:58
Doodlers A	0:54:47	0:39:13	0:39:00	0:31:00	0:39:00	0:37:31	0:43:29	0:39:00	0:43:00	0:33:00	0:38:00	0:46:40	8:03:40
YTRRC A	1:05:53	0:49:07	0:23:00	0:44:00	0:50:00	0:58:36	1:01:24	0:54:00	0:50:00	0:44:00	0:43:00	0:52:28	9:55:28
YTRRC B	0:56:37	0:44:23	0:31:00	0:47:00	0:56:00	0:58:40	0:48:20	0:47:00	0:49:00	0:43:00	0:48:00	1:11:47	10:00:47

Many thanks go to Chris and Emma Cussen of Gillingham Trotters for their organisation of the event.

The bit at the back...

Apparently, Andy Goodman won't be laying any hashes for a while, mice got in and ate his flour filled bottles!!!

Apparently, there is a place in which is very much like "Rimmer-World" from Red Dwarf – You'll notice that no-one actually lives there! Can't think why not!!!



Apparently, in addition to the above, the organisers of the Mendip Mashup have named one of the position flags "Chaffey Time" on the basis that Martin takes the race clock each year... They obviously don't know the true meaning of "Chaffey Time" which usually means some time after whatever time was agreed!!!

Apparently, Lynda Chaffey visited YTRRC on a club night recently, her first visit for a while, and commented on how professional it all looked, and how organised Phil MacQuaid seemed! It's amazing how easy it is to fool people sometimes!!!

Apparently, this issue of the newsletter would be the best one yet, if Martin Chaffey could remember what it was Ray Chilcott said at the end of Sunday's long run; Ray now can't remember either, but both agree it was something rather good!!!

Apparently, that big Ass that Tina Cullen is sat on, is not as comfortable as it looks!!!

Apparently, Paul McNeill had partner Donna send text apologies on the morning of a hash – as he had only just woken up at 11am; we are told he did get up in time to watch the golf on TV at 4pm!!!

Apparently – there is no point trying to phone through your coffee order from the race entry desk on race night; Phil's phone was in his car, Mike Shead didn't answer his and Sam Jakeman took the order but not the hint; we had to send Pete to chase it up!

Apparently there is a disturbing trend amongst members not to wear Club colours on race night; Tony Watts and Chris Fendt, you know who you are!!

