

Annual Report

151st SEASON
2018-19



THAMES HARE AND HOUNDS

Thames Hare & Hounds

OFFICERS 2019-20

President	MIKE FARMERY
Honorary Treasurer	GORDON PEARCE
Honorary Secretary & Club Archivist	SIMON MOLDEN
Club Captain & Second Team Captain	ALEX MACKULA
Men's Captain	RICHARD OLLINGTON
Ladies' Captain	JESSICA DAVIES
Men's Vice-captain	JAMES HOAD
Chief Pioneer	EDWARD CATMUR
Fixtures Secretary & Ladies' Vice-captain	CLAIRE ALTMANN
Honorary Medical Officer	Dr DOUG JUSTINS
Carver and Commissary-General	MAUREEN POOLE
Handicappers	DAVID SYMONS NIC GOULD
Committee	JAMES CHETTLE LIZ STAVRESKI
Trustees	MIKE FARMERY, SIMON MOLDEN & GORDON PEARCE
HEADQUARTERS	At the Memorial Playing Fields Wimbledon Common, SW15 3PQ (opposite the Robin Hood Gate Entrance to Richmond Park)



THAMES HARE & HOUNDS

ANNUAL REPORT
2018-2019

Mr President, Ladies & Gentlemen

Any fears that, after the celebrations and performances of our 150th season, 2018-19 would be something of an anti-climax proved comprehensively unfounded: it has been an exceptional season. Without question, the highlight was the ladies' victory in the Southern Championship at Parliament Hill in January. This was a historic day for the club, securing the club its second victory in this event, after the men in 2001. However, not just content with this, our ladies retained the Surrey League Division 1 title and took silver in the Surrey Championships. In the men's Surrey League, we finished third in a very strong first division behind Hercules Wimbledon and Kent A.C. Jamie Parkinson won the third fixture, bringing us our first individual success in the league since 2011, and he followed this up with an exceptional 28th in the National in February. On the veteran front, we continued to produce many performances of note, including victories in the men's V45 cross-country and road relay championships.

Away from the championships, we secured the double in our mob matches against Ranelagh and South London for the first time since 2012-13. Eclipsing this, however, was our victory in the Green Belt Relay in May. The full details of that day can be found later in the report and our thanks must go to Matthew Jones and Jess Davies for all their efforts in co-ordinating the team. These performances were no doubt due in part to the current strength of the club at the top end on both the men's and ladies' side. However, they can also be attributed to the growing numbers at all levels, which has been fuelled by the growing popularity of the Second Sunday 5 race, the 50th of which was held in July. Our thanks go to David Symons and his team for the time and commitment they continue to give to it.

In addition, there was the usual array of other events we host throughout the season, including the University Race, the Alumni Race, the Dash for the Splash and the Parkland Relays, as well as the Annual Dinner, Summer Wine Party, Outlying Run and other important social events. Our thanks go to everyone who helped with these, but particularly David Jenkins, David Symons and Maureen Poole.

Finally, sadly the past season did witness the passing of two of our older members, Syd Norris (1963), who died in November 2018, and David Fuller (1970) in January 2019.

Simon Molden
Hon. Secretary
September 2019



THAMES HARE & HOUNDS

AWARDS
2018-19

Short Distance Challenge

Ladies' Short Distance Challenge

Short Distance Handicap

Long Distance Challenge Cup

Ladies' Long Distance Challenge

Long Distance Handicap

Cheshire Tally-Ho

(Fastest Thames on the Roman Road)

James Ryan Trophy

(Fastest Thames Veteran on the Roman Road)

10 Mile Challenge

Ladies' 10 Mile Challenge

10 Mile Handicap

Road Running Challenge

Clough-Whittome Handicap

Kensit Trophy for the Aggregate Handicap

Midsummer Handicap

Harry Hall Award

Memorial Trophy

(Best aggregate finish in the Southern and National)

Fitzpatrick Trophy

(Most appearances during season)

London Marathon Veterans' Handicap

(Silver plate donated by Malcolm Thompson)

Nick Altmann

Anri Cohen

Heather Statham

James McMullan

Anri Cohen

David Jenkins

Paddy Roddy

Mike Farmery

Gordon Pearce

Mara Yamauchi & Rebekah Edgar

Gordon Pearce

Amy Aronson

Andrea Buchanan

Mike Farmery

Karen Farmery

Matthew Jones

Bethanie Murray

Jessica Davies

Toby Meanwell



**THAMES HARE
& HOUNDS**

TROPHIES

Short Distance Challenge

Two handled Silver Drinking Cup

Long Distance Challenge

Silver Victorian Claret Jug

10 Mile Challenge

Silver Plated Rose Bowl

Memorial Trophy

Silver Goblet

Road Running Championship

Bronze Running Man

Hardy Willcock Memorial

Silver Salver by Gerald Bennie

James Ryan Trophy

Silver Plated Bowl

Cheshire Tally Ho Trophy

Silver Plated Tankard

Ladies Short Distance Challenge

Silver "Irish" Cup of 1936

Ladies Long Distance Challenge

Pewter Tappit Hen



THAMES HARE & HOUNDS

SECRETARY'S REPORT

September

After the excitement of our 150th season, the 151st started off with our 41st Second Sunday 5 race. Neil Chisholm (29:33) and Matt Jones (29:53) secured a Thames one-two with Nick Altmann in fourth (30:49).

The following weekend, we were in the familiar surroundings of Wimbledon Park and the Surrey Road Relays. Seven Thames teams enjoyed the unseasonably warm weather with some fine performances. The ladies team of Sarah Randles, Amy Aronson, Anri Cohen and Jess Davies were a strong fifth in the senior women's competition with Sarah Randles the fastest Thames leg in 17:34 (and eighth fastest overall). Cherry Wang, Heather Statham, Denise Barnett and Diane Neil-Mills were tenth and Joanna Shillington, Claire Altmann, Andrea Stehlikova and Laura Hall were close behind in 11th. For the V35s, Denise Barnett, Annette Gould, Vikki Filsell and Rebekah Edgar were fourth with Rebekah running the ninth fastest leg overall.

The senior men had two teams in action with Gordon Pearce, Matthew Jones, Martin Shore, James McMullan, Andy Weir and James Hoad running remarkably similar times to miss out on a medal by 51 seconds in fourth. James Hoad was our fastest man with 15:07 (17th overall). Chris Hutber, John Bull, James Meiklejohn, Charles Morris, Nic Gould and Nick Altmann were 11th. The V60 team broke the run of fourth places with Richard Pitt, Rick Turner and Mike Farmery taking home bronze medals. Richard Pitt ran the fastest Thames leg with 19:09 (fourth fastest overall).

A week later, Thames fielded two teams at the fiercely competitive Southern Road Relays held for the second year over a fast course at Crystal Palace. The men's team of James McMullan, Martin Shore, Paddy Roddy, Luuk Metselaar, James Chettle and Tom Greenwood battled hard for 35th and the ladies went one better with Bethanie Murray, Anri Cohen, Vikki Filsell and Amy Metselaar-Groeneveld finishing 34th.

The following weekend it was the 138th Short Distance Challenge and Handicap. Heather Statham took the first tankard of the season, with a net time of 23:20. She was followed by Tom Greenwood in 24:00 and Gerard Hasson in 24:37. There were 25 finishers and the Ladies' Short Distance Challenge was won by Anri Cohen in 34:15 followed by Annette Gould in 34:49 and Vikki Filsell in 35:12. The men's Short Distance Challenge was won by Nick Altmann in 28:00 with Neil Chisholm (28:04) and Andy Weir (28:08) very close behind.

On the same day, Simon Baines (second V45) and Anna Garnier (third V60) were in action at the England Masters Inter-Area Cross-Country Match at Bury St. Edmunds.



October

After a blank weekend, our Surrey League campaign opened on 13th. There was a dominant victory for the ladies' team and a fine third place for the men's. Due to other events the same day at our end of the common, we 'hosted' the ladies' contest over the Belgrave course. Our team registered an impressive score of just 48 points, being led home by Lauren Major in a fourth, followed closely by Victoria Barthelmess in fifth, Bethanie Murray in sixth, Katy Hedgethorpe in eighth and Amy Aronson in 25th. Second-placed South London Harriers were a distant 87 points behind. Showing our strength in depth, our second team was the first B team (13th overall) with Rebekah Edgar 40th, Anri Cohen 59th, Claire Altmann 62nd, Denise Barnett 75th and Jess Davies 76th. They were well supported by Emily Hogg in 107th, Diane Neil Mills 154th and Esther Huntington 210th.

The men were in action just across the A3 on a new Ranelagh course in Richmond Park. The team ran in unseasonably sweltering conditions and the standard set by Hercules Wimbledon and Kent A.C. was extremely high. Thus, third was a very encouraging performance. Jim Allchin was first Saltire across the line in a breakthrough performance of 12th and he was followed by James Hoad in 16th, Paddy Roddy 32nd, Simon Wurr 33rd, James McMullan in 35th, Simon Baines in 39th, Martin Shore 41st, Matt Jones 48th, James Chettle 49th and Neil Chisholm 54th. It was good to be able to field enough runners for a second team who were fourth B team overall. Andy Weir was 68th, Nick Altmann 72nd, Tom Greenwood 92nd, Petter Johnsen 119th, John Bull 126th, Rory Spicer 132nd, Nic Gould 161st, Gerard Hasson 185th, Matt Beaney 204th and Derry Lozano-Hoyland 209th.

The following day was the 42nd Second Sunday 5 and David Symons was first Saltire home in second (33:48).

On Wednesday 17th, our final 150th celebration took place, appropriately 150 years to the day since the first run of the club. 24 Saltires ran over, as close as possible, the 8-mile course from the King's Head used for the very first run of the club in 1868. Afterwards we repaired to our former headquarters for dinner.

The following Saturday was the Surrey Masters Championships in Richmond Park. Martin Shore was first V40 with Matthew Jones taking the silver. Together with Petter Johnsen they won team gold. Anna Garnier won gold in the V60 race and Rebekah Edgar bronze in the V35 race. Rick Turner won silver at V60 and Rick, Andrew Lennon and Richard Pitt won the team silver.

On the final weekend of the month, Luuk Metselaar finished 27th place (and fifth in the Dutch Championships) in 2 hours 23 minutes at the Amsterdam Marathon and a Thames team travelled to Sandhurst and came third in the Terry Lewins Trophy competition, hosted by Milocarians.

November

November opened with the match against the Bank of England at Roehampton. A Thames quartet of Jim Allchin, Tom Greenwood, Alex Mackula and Tom Greenwood took the team honours, with a further nine Saltires backing them up. Jim and Tom were first and second respectively.

The second instalment of the Surrey League took place on November 10th. In two keenly contested races, Thames were once again at the forefront. The ladies ran in the morning sunshine at Nonsuch Park and finished a good second, not far behind a very strong Herne Hill Harriers squad. The result



left us 83 points clear of them in the overall standings after two fixtures. Victoria Barthelmess was first Saltire home in eighth, followed by Katy Hedgethorne in tenth, Mara Yamauchi 14th, Rebekah Edgar 34th and Claire Altmann 45th. The second team were second B team with Amy Aronson 49th, Anri Cohen 59th, Jess Davies 85th, Vikki Filsell 87th and Andrea Holt 117th. They were well supported by Anna Garnier 120th, Heather Statham 124th and Rachael Davies 169th.

The men were in action in very different conditions later in the afternoon with rain so torrential that at times visibility was very poor indeed. This did not affect the quality of the running though, with 27-minute 10km man Alex Yee winning the race for Kent A.C. and Thames recording another strong third team place (behind Kent and the dominant Hercules Wimbledon). Jim Allchin continued his impressive progression with an excellent seventh, followed by David Wilson in 17th, Martin Alvarez-Espinar 33rd, James McMullan 34th, Paddy Roddy 37th, Simon Wurr 42nd, Neil Chisholm 46th, Martin Shore 58th, Gordon Pearce 61st and Richard Ollington 65th. Like the ladies, the second team emulated their performance with third. James Chettle was 70th, Tom Greenwood 101st, Nick Altmann 108th, Joe Gale 116th, Nic Gould 127th, Charles Morris 128th, John Bull 149th, Richard Hewitt 164th, Andy Lynch 182nd and Andy Robinson 235th. They were supported by Matt Beaney in 239th.

This great day of racing was followed by a strong turnout of 46 at the 43rd Second Sunday 5 the following day. Thirteen Saltires were in action, including David Symons in second.

The following Saturday was the London Cross-Country Championships at an unusually dry Parliament Hill and once again Thames produced encouraging results. Victoria Barthelmess was a brilliant second in the ladies' race. She was followed by Katy Hedgethorne in fourth, Claire Altmann 48th and Anri Cohen 79th. This put us fifth in the team competition. Backing them up were Jess Davies in 86th, Vikki Filsell 89th, Anna Garnier 136th, Heather Statham 144th, Diane Neil Mills 213th and Amy Metselaar-Groeneveld 217th. On the men's side, Luuk Metselaar was a superb sixth, Richard Ollington 42nd, Gordon Pearce 61st, Tom Greenwood 96th, James Meiklejohn 100th, Joe Gale 101st, John Bull 140th, Edmund Gazeley 195th and Thomas Westran 360th. We were eighth in the team competition.

Elsewhere, Simon Baines took the individual V45 individual bronze (and team gold) and Michael Johnson the V75 team silver at the Home International Cross-Country Match at Swansea.

On the final weekend of the month, we were victorious in the 46th Mob Match against Ranelagh Harriers. The result could not have been much closer (1,044 points to 1,055 Ranelagh, scoring 32-a-side) and there was high drama as the lead changed several times over the afternoon and on to Sunday. Problems with the Ranelagh race computer led to no official result at the dinner but an acknowledgement from the Ranelagh team that Thames had "probably won." This was reversed on the Ranelagh website when the results were first published later that evening before changing back in our favour again when Ranelagh discovered that two of their runners had accidentally run with Thames numbers. Thames packed well in the top half of the field including the top three positions and six out of the top ten. A holding-back Jim Allchin graciously allowed James McMullan to lead us home and Howard Bristow was not far behind him in third. Rebekah Edgar was second lady in 36th.



December

The first day of December saw the teams of Oxford and Cambridge travel to the common for their annual contest. In the 128th gentlemen's race, Oxford secured a fourth win in five years by the convincing margin of 30 points to 50. Our Jamie Parkinson (Jesus) retained his individual victory (38:36) in a thrilling three-way battle with George Gathercole (Caius) and Tim Lefroy (St. Cross). Luuk Metselaar finished 11th for Oxford in 39:56. The Dark Blues now lead the series by 65 wins to 63. In the 43rd ladies' race, Cambridge overturned two years of Oxford success by 33 points to 46, this being the first contest held under the eight-a-side, six-to-score format used by the men. Nancy Scott (Newnham) took the individual honours in 23:26. Lauren Major was seventh in 24:29. Oxford lead the series by 25 wins to 18.

Earlier in the day, plenty of Saltires were in action in the 27th Old Blues' Race. James Hoad was third and he was followed by Richard Ollington (sixth), Paddy Roddy (seventh), James Chettle (ninth), James Meiklejohn (12th), Katy Hedgethorpe (14th and first lady), Simon Molden (16th), Bethanie Murray (18th), Andy Arbour (19th) and Andy Robinson (20th). Miles Chandler (Lady Margaret Hall) took the individual honours in 21:36 and Cambridge won for the third year in a row by 98 points to 158. Oxford lead the series by 15 wins to 12.

The following weekend saw an impressive Thames domination of the Southern Masters Cross-Country Championship at Horspath. We took the men's V40 and V50 team golds and individual golds in men's V40 and V45, individual silver in the men's V50 and team bronzes in the women's V60 and men's V60. Simon Baines and Martin Shore were the victors in the V40 and V45 races and Matthew Jones closed the V40 team victory in sixth. Andy Weir was second V50, followed by Ben Reynolds (fifth V50) and Ian Harkness (47th V50) and they held off Colchester to win by a single point. The V60s were not to be outdone, and Anna Garnier won a fine individual silver and Richard Pitt, Andrew Lenon and Mike Farmery finished the medal haul with a great team bronze.

The next day saw a bumper turnout at the 44th Second Sunday 5 with 121 finishers including 19 Saltires led home by Tom Greenwood in third.

On December 15th, we successfully hosted the 66th Alumni Race in some of the most challenging weather conditions for race organisation we have ever witnessed. All the volunteers are to be greatly thanked for their help and especially the pioneers and start/finish helpers who braved the freezing rain for hours to ensure everyone made it around. William Ryle-Hodges (Eton) won the race and from Thames we had two in the top ten (James McMullan in fourth and Richard Ollington in sixth). The King Henry VIII Trophy for the open competition and the V40 Old Brentwoods' Trophy were won by Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, Rochester. The V50 competition for the Chataway Cup was won by Eton and the V60 competition for the Old Denstonian Cup was won by Winchester. This was on the second time in the eight years of its existence that it has not been won by Denstone, the donors of the trophy. The Old Coventrian Cup for the first lady home went to J. Cram of Malvern and the Wyndham Halswelle Trophy for the best age-adjusted performance went to the race winner, William Ryle-Hodges.

On December 19th, ably organised by David Symons, the club came together for its final pre-Christmas fixture, the 5 miles and Carols.



January

January 2019 was to prove a historic month for the club, and in particular for our ladies' team. It opened on 5th with the Surrey Championships at a chilly Lloyd Park. The ladies secured a team silver with Katy Hedgethorpe in sixth, Nathalie Seymour 11th, Rebekah Edgar 19th and Victoria Barthelme 29th. They were well supported by Claire Altmann 39th, Vikki Filsell 64th and Jess Davies 66th. The men were a strong fifth team in their competition with James Hoad running well for sixth, James McMullan 23rd, Neil Chisholm 27th, James Meiklejohn 44th, Andy Weir 54th and Tom Greenwood our sixth scorer in 61st. Behind him were Nic Gould 100th and Ed Catmur 103rd. Elsewhere there were impressive top ten finishes for Paddy Roddy (fifth at Warwickshire/Worcestershire) and Jim Allchin (sixth at Kent).

On January 12th, the third round of the men's Surrey League took place at Mitcham and surpassed expectations. As with the previous two rounds, the racing was of a high quality and hard fought. Jamie Parkinson made his Surrey League debut with a brilliant victory, a full 22 seconds clear of second place, making him the first Thames winner of a men's race since 2011. He was backed up by superb runs from Jim Allchin in ninth and Luuk Metselaar (also making his League debut) in tenth. The strong performances kept coming with Paddy Roddy 17th, Simon Baines 24th (first V40), Howard Bristow 26th, James McMullan in 33rd, Neil Chisholm 43rd and Martin Shore 46th. Simon Wurr was our tenth scorer in 48th. This resulted in an excellent second team position, beating Kent A.C. on count back and not far behind leaders Hercules Wimbledon. The Thames second team also made the podium as third B team with Richard Ollington 62nd, James Chettle 67th, Ben Reynolds 71st (first V50), Matthew Jones 75th, Paul Cheetham 96th, James Meiklejohn 98th, Joe Gale 117th, Richard Hewitt 138th, Anthony Doolittle 150th and Ed Catmur 154th. John Bull was 180th, Andrew Crichton 182nd and Brian Lynch 182nd, giving us 23 finishers in total. We remained third in the overall league standings

Sunday 13th as also a successful day for Thames with 132 finishers at the 45th Second Sunday 5, including 24 Saltires who were led home by Nic Gould in fourth.

After a low-key match against the Bank of England on 19th January, which was won by James Meiklejohn, the month finished on the best possible note with the victory of our ladies' team in the Southern Championships at Parliament Hill. This was without doubt the most momentous performance by a ladies' side representing Thames and the finest achievement by the club as a whole since the men performed the same feat in 2001.

The most fulsome congratulations possible go to Katy Hedgethorpe (17th), Lauren Major (21st), Bethanie Murray (23rd) and Natalie Seymour (25th), who made up the scoring quartet, and to the rest of the team who pushed them along all season. The four were backed up by Victoria Barthelme 48th, Sarah Randles 92nd, Claire Altmann 129th, Sophie Wood 145th, Jess Davies 222nd, Vikki Filsell 241st, Anri Cohen 324th, Anna Garnier 337th and Amy Metselaar-Groeneveld 495th.

The men were not able to match this performance; however, they still placed a strong seventh team (in the six-to-score). James Hoad continued his good form and was first Saltire home in 22nd, followed by another fine run from Jim Allchin in 26th. Simon Wurr was 64th, James Chettle 99th, Nick Altmann 171st, Ben Reynolds 174th, Andy Weir 180th, James Bartram 213th, Gordon Pearce 223rd, Richard Hewitt 401st and Ed Catmur 410th. After the heady performances, many of us were able to enjoy the generous hospitality, tea and cake at the Hauxwells.



February

After the exertions of January and the Southern Championships, the first weekend of February was lacking in competitive action. However, the hiatus was only for a week before the Surrey League came to a conclusion for the men on 9th, with the ladies having one more round to go.

The men's race was at Lloyd Park in Croydon and for what felt like the first time this season there was an enjoyable amount of mud. James Hoad's fine form continued as he led us home in sixth, closely followed by Jim Allchin in eighth (this meant that Jim finished third in the individual competition for the season). Paddy Roddy was 17th, James McMullan was 21st, Simon Wurr 25th (first V40), Martin Alvarez-Espinar 29th, James Chettle 39th, Martin Shore 43rd, Ben Reynolds 46th (first V50) and David Wilson closed our scoring ten in 58th. This put us second to Hercules Wimbledon on the day, beating Kent A.C. for the second fixture in a row. Richard Ollington was 68th, Andy Weir 73rd, Gordon Pearce 95th, John Bull 138th and Rory Spicer 164th. This performance secured us third overall in the 2018-19 league, and with ever improving performances through the season, we can be very optimistic for 2019-20.

The ladies were in action at Richmond Park and finished a solid second to a very strong Herne Hill Harriers. Katy Hedgethorpe had another great run in third with Natalie Seymour fifth, Sarah Randles 23rd, Rebekah Edgar 30th and Claire Altmann 32nd making up the scoring team. They were well supported by Emily Hogg 73rd, Vikki Filsell 89th, Jess Davies 90th, Anri Cohen 92nd, Denise Barnett 95th and Anna Garnier 128th. The result meant we remained top of the league; however, our lead over Herne Hill was cut to only 31 points, leaving all to play for at the final fixture.

The following day we hosted another popular Second Sunday 5 (the 46th) with 85 finishers. This time the Thames versus Milocarians mob match was incorporated into the race and the Milos were victorious by 120 points to 148 scoring 11-a-side. David Symons led the Saltires home in 12th.

The weekend of the 23rd February saw Thames travel to Leeds for the National at Harewood House. The ladies were depleted by injury and unable to repeat their heroics of the Parliament Hill. However, Bethanie Murray ran very well for 48th and Jess Davies for 350th (out of 1,034 finishers). In the men's race, we had our best result in recent years with tenth. We were led home by Jamie Parkinson in a superb 28th. He was backed up by James Hoad in 79th, Jim Allchin 90th, Paddy Roddy 118th, James McMullan 122nd and James Chettle 164th. Further back, there were good runs from Ben Reynolds in 249th, James Meiklejohn 306th, Richard Ollington 344th, Gordon Pearce 353rd, Andy Weir 439th, James Bartram 453rd and Tom Greenwood 626th (out of 2,006 finishers).

The following day, we hosted the always-popular Dash for the Splash, which had a new record of 274 finishers. Matthew Jones led 17 Saltires home in first with Joe Gale also making the top 5.

March

Our ladies' team had a very successful end to the Surrey League season at the start of March as they retained their overall title. In an exciting head-to-head battle with Herne Hill Harriers, we lost the fixture on the day by 11 points which was enough to secure the overall league victory by 20 points. It shows the strength of both our ladies' squad and Herne Hill that collectively we made up the first eight finishers. We were led home by a brilliant run from Natalie Seymour in third, closely



followed by Bethanie Murray fourth, Katy Hedgethorpe fifth and Mara Yamauchi seventh. Rebekah Edgar had a great race to close the team in 24th. They were well supported by Amy Aronson in 28th, Claire Altmann 31st, Anri Cohen 36th, Emily Hogg 55th, Jo Davies 71st (completing our first-placed B team), Jess Davies 76th, Denise Barnett 81st, Anna Garnier 106th and the third Davies sister, Rachel, in 108th. This achievement took the ladies to nine league victories (one ahead of the men) and the combined Thames total to 17 which makes us the most successful club in the history of the league. Katy Hedgethorpe's consistency across the season means that she was second in the individual standings.

On the same afternoon, David Jenkins comfortably won the 124th Long Distance Handicap with Andrea Stehlikova in second and Richard Ollington the fastest over the course. In the evening, we celebrated our Annual Dinner at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Knightsbridge.

The following few weekends were a little quieter in our calendar. However, there were still plenty of Saltires in action. On March 9th, Ben Reynolds, Andy Weir and Paul Cheetham won the V45 British Masters Cross-Country Championships in Belfast. Individually, Ben won the V55 gold with Paul (V45) and Andy (V50) claiming individual bronzes. Martin Shore won V40 bronze.

The following day was the 47th Second Sunday 5. There were 60 finishers including 15 Saltires, led home by Simon Gardner in fifth.

A week later, Paddy Roddy won the Roman Road Run in Cambridge, with the best performance by a Saltire in the event for many a year. He won the race in 52:50, thus giving him the Cheshire Tally Ho! Trophy for 2019. Mike Farmery won the James Ryan Trophy for the fastest Thames veteran. On the same weekend, Rebekah Edgar had a strong run for Surrey (188th) at the Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championships at Loughborough.

March closed with the 36th Mob Match against South London Harriers, held over home territory. We secured our first victory since 2013 by the margin of 168 points to 340 scoring 15-a-side. James McMullan was first home in 39:43, thus bringing him the Long Distance Challenge title for 2018-19. Anri Cohen, 16th in 51:39, took the Ladies' Long Distance Challenge.

Elsewhere there was more Thames glory at the World Masters Indoor Athletics Championships in Torun, Poland, with a gold for Ben Reynolds in the V55 cross-country and team medals for Ben, Michael Johnson, Anna Garnier, Simon Baines, Paul Cheetham and Matt Willifer. Simon, Paul and Matt made up an all-Thames Great Britain team in the V45 half-marathon and also came away with victory. Across in northern Europe in Aarhus, Denmark, Richard Ollington was part of the winning Oxford University team at the World Cross-Country Championships 4 x 2 km open relay, thus ensuring some useful exposure for the Saltire during the media coverage of the event.

April

April proved to be a relatively quiet month for the club. On the second Saturday, Gordon Pearce did the double at the 92nd 10-mile Challenge and Handicap, navigating his way around the Richmond Park course in 57 minutes. Mara Yamauchi and Rebekah Edgar finished together as the fastest ladies over the course with Rebekah claiming second in the Handicap.



The next day saw 52 runners take on the 48th Second Sunday 5, including 20 Saltires with David Symons in third and Anri Cohen in ninth leading the way.

The final Sunday of the month was London Marathon day. Ten Saltires took part with Richard Ollington (2:34) and Sarah Randles (3:03) the fastest finishers. Richard did well to run such a good debut time after an incredibly fast start which treated all of us watching to the spectacle of a Thames vest leading the whole race for the first mile (which he ran in approximately 4:35 before wishing Eliud Kipchoge good luck and dropping back). Second-claimer Chris Finill kept up his ever-present record with yet another sub-three-hour performance (2:59.46).

May

The first weekend of May saw the Outlying Run travel to Swanage and it was a great success with sunny weather, scenic routes and excellent accommodation and meals. Many thanks go to Maureen Poole for the organisation and to Andy Howse and Paul Newby for planning the running routes.

On 12th May, the 49th Second Sunday 5 took place with 79 finishers, including 14 Saltires. Joe Gale led the club home with the individual victory.

However, the highlight of May came on the weekend of 18th/19th when we won the Green Belt Relay for the first time in its 25-year history. Moreover, we did it in real style, running the fastest time ever over the current course, winning with a mixed team, beating perennial champions (Serpentine's men's team) by 52 minutes, taking 17 individual stage victories, winning the men's King Of The Mountains (through James Hoad, James McMullan, Paddy Roddy), winning the ladies' performance of the weekend (Rebekah Edgar), winning the men's performance of the weekend (James Hoad), breaking 9 course records (including Andy Weir's, which had stood since 2007) and claiming first B team (eighth overall). Whilst an awesome running performance, our stellar result was enabled by 22 Thames runners pitching in to ferry each other around, marshalling for other teams, providing water stations, pushing broken down cars and cheering each other on as they ran. In particular, special thanks go to Matthew Jones and Jess Davies for their exceptional organisation and commitment to the event.

Elsewhere, there was even more relay success on that weekend. Ben Reynolds, Paul Cheetham, Andy Weir and Justin Reid secured an excellent silver at the B.M.A.F. V45 Road Relay Championships with Paul running the second fastest leg of the day.

May closed with the London 10km Race. We had 15 finishers with Richard Ollington first Saltire home in a personal best of 31:06. There were also impressive runs from Simon Baines, who won the V45 age category (32:48) and Natalie Seymour who ran 37:03

The Summer

Moving into the summer months and the highlight of June was the 26th staging of our Parkland Relays on 12th. This year, unfortunately we were not able to enjoy pleasant early-summer warmth that has become a custom for this event; however, the rain did not prevent a new record of 114 teams taking part over the usual 2.8-mile course in Richmond Park. In both contests, we reversed Clapham Chasers' victories of 2018 to take the honours. On the men's side, this was our 17th



victory since the event was inaugurated in 1993 and on the ladies' it was our 16th. Fastest legs of the day for the men went to the incoming and outgoing captains, Richard Ollington and James McMullan with 14:28, and on the ladies' side, it was Natalie Seymour (16:22).

On June 9th, the Second Sunday 5 reached the milestone of its 50th running. 84 runners completed the course, with Nick Altmann the first home from Thames in second place. The 51st and 52nd editions took place in July and August with 92 and 77 finishers respectively. In the former, Nick Altmann secured a second successive victory for Thames and in the latter, Richard Ollington finished a very close second to Oxford's and Thames Valley Harriers' Daniel Mulryan.

On June 22nd, another of our events – the Midsummer Handicap – reached its 50th milestone. Karen Farmery who had clearly been benefiting from regular Wednesday night training and a recce of the course a few days prior, defended her victory from 2018, also making it three consecutive Farmery victories. Her margin of victory was a very comfortable four minutes and eleven seconds before Richard Ollington (26:11 and fastest time of the day) arrived at the finish. Third home was David Jenkins.

The final handicap and challenge of the season was the Clough-Whittome, held in conjunction with the Harry Hawkes 10 race in Thames Ditton on July 21st. The handicap tankard was taken by Andrea Buchanan and the Road Running Challenge (for first Thames home) by Amy Aronson.

Thus concludes another season in the life of Thames.



October 17th 2018

The runners who took part in our 150th birthday run outside the King's Head prior to departure.