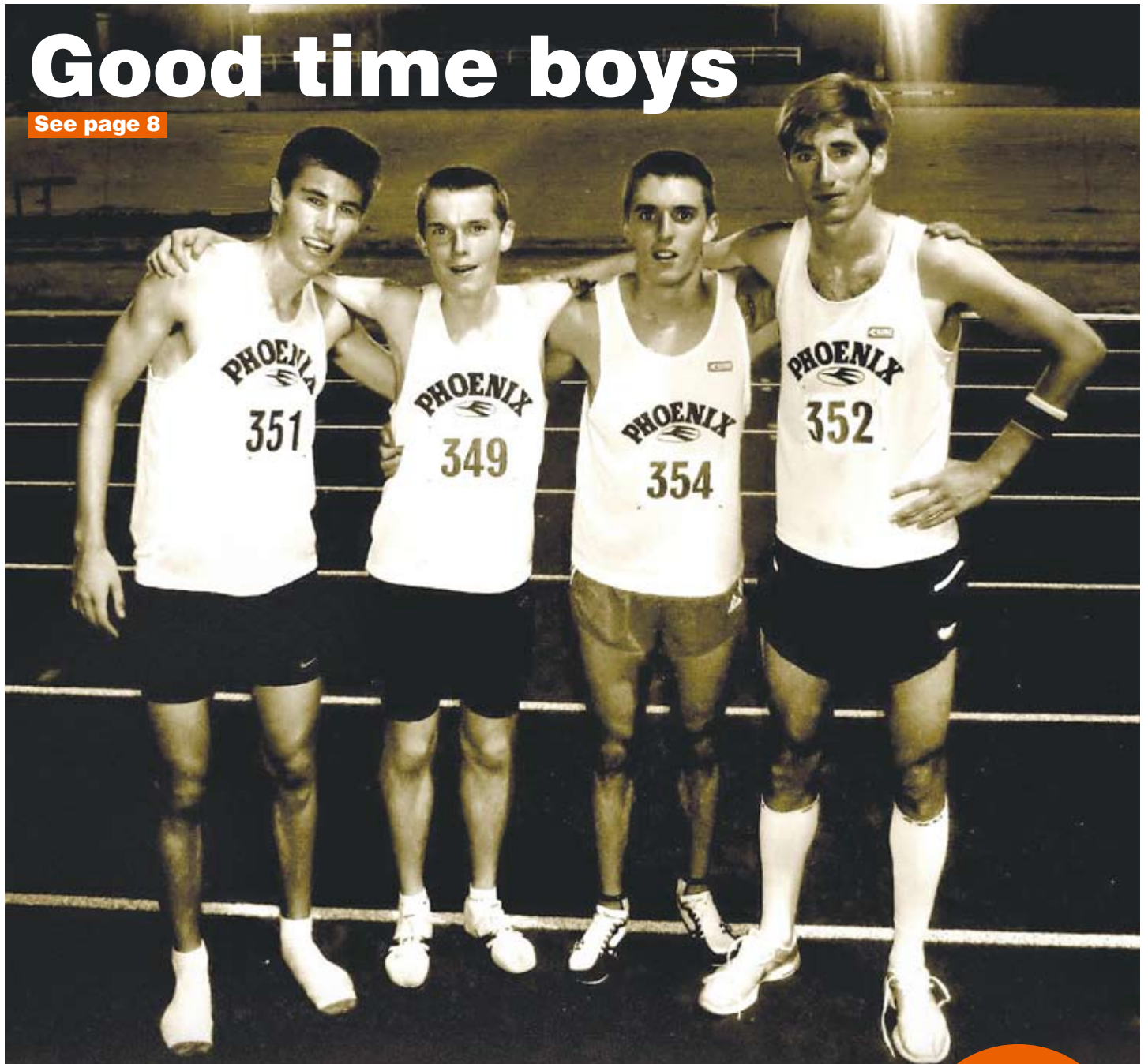




THE PHOENIX FLYER AUTUMN 2011

Good time boys

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This year Phoenix celebrates its 30th anniversary. When we were founded back in 1981 many people felt we wouldn't last more than a few years. Well I am more than happy to say that not only are we still here but we are actually thriving.

We are a small club that tries to do many things. We have athletes regularly competing across a range of disciplines and at all levels. We are also a club with imagination. I don't think we are prepared to accept situations where we blithely carry on doing something in a certain way just because that is how it has been done for years.

A good example of this is how we have changed the Phoenix races. This year they will be focused on providing good exciting competition for young athletes and there will also be a mile race for seniors. We felt the longer senior races needed changing and no longer served the purpose they were intended for. Instead we put on a very successful seafront evening 10k in July.

But we didn't stop there as we also ran our first Open Track meeting in May. We also had visits from the club's founder **Matt Paterson**, the club record holder for most of the women's records (and a world age-best I might add) **Bridget Barber** (née Smyth), and also the club record holder for the 3k chase **Mark Rowland** (Mark's is the the UK record and was achieved when he won an Olympic bronze in Seoul).

Front cover bottom left: Some of the very first Phoenix members, Ronnie D'Arenzo, Chris Oakley, Graham Eaton, Sammy Burchell, John Lassetter, Kurt Hoyte and Paul Collicutt celebrate 30 years of the club they all helped start.

Coaches around the world

Congratulations to former Phoenix athlete **Jeremy Freeman**, who coached Jessica Judd to a world youth bronze medal in the 800m.

Congratulations also to **Priscilla Bayley** who has been appointed as assistant track coach for Harvard University.

Phoenix star **Mark Rowland** is now coaching in the States... he is head coach at the Oregon Elite Track Club.

And let's not forget **Matt Paterson** has been coaching Australian champions for years from his base in Melbourne. At this rate world domination must be on the cards!

As we were putting together this newsletter we received the very sad news that one of the very first members of Phoenix, **Susanna D'Arenzo**, passed away recently after a long battle with cancer. Our sincere condolences go out to her family.



Phoenix Flyer is for and about you. It relies on contributions from coaches, managers and athletes as well as friends and families. Why not send us your contribution for the next edition. The deadline is **31 Feb 2012**.

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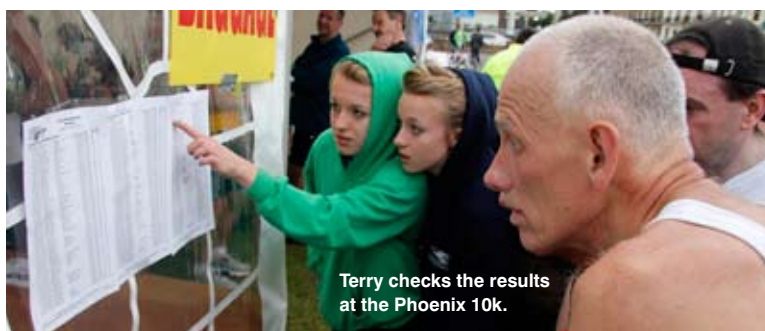
The Phabulous Phlying Phoenix Brothers. Matt Paterson with some of the athletes he coached.



Mark Rowland who is now head coach at the Oregon Elite Track Club



Bridget Smyth with her youngest son Seymour



Terry checks the results at the Phoenix 10k.

Terry's all gold

Terry Avey, in his first year as an over-60 vet, has set himself the task of garnering as many age-group firsts as he can. As we go to press his total stands at 24. Terry's ambition is to reach 30 by the date of the club's 30th anniversary party (October 29th). Don't forget to put that date in your diaries.



Phoenix take part in 'Take Part'

For two weeks in June and July the City Council ran their annual 'Take Part' Festival of Sport, which introduces the public to a wide range of physical activity from karate to jazz dance, soccer to orienteering. This culminated in a huge event in Preston Park where local clubs were invited to set up stall. Phoenix were there for the first time. Our stand – with our splendid display boards and proud banners – featured **John Marinko** and **Nigel Herron** showing off their flash competition bikes, which attracted a steady stream of admirers through the

afternoon. In addition we ran training sessions for juniors on a nearby marked-out course. There was a steady stream of queries and some good contacts were made. It was definitely worth doing and those of us who were involved are full of new ideas about how we can make even more impact next year.



'Of course, in reality, the bikes move.' Nigel and John explain the finer points of triathlon to a fascinated audience.



"Fancy a quick 8 x 400?"

Hitching for Miles

On Saturday 27th August, after 11 years of being a couple **James Miles** and **Liz Durman** finally tied the knot! The event took place at Lewes town hall and the happy couple had a fantastic day. The party really kicked off in the evening though as several Phoenix members joined the festivities and showed their endurance by dancing most of the night away to the excellent band. James and Lizzy are now travelling to India, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong in a three-month honeymoon. Both have said they will endeavour to keep running even whilst on honeymoon!



Runners get ready at Blackcap

Summer fun runs and socials

Liz Halliday and **Sue Hudson** organised a great series of events this summer, combining them with the end of the month social. In other words you had to earn your tipple. While the evenings were light, we thought we'd hold a monthly club running event that was fun orientated. Think of the annual Blackcap Handicap and these events were held in the same spirit.

26 May: "Meet me at Juggs at 8 o'clock". This event had a start point, a route a choice of two routes, one hilly and one not so hilly and a bit shorter) with 'check points', and a distance but no start time. The winner was the person to arrive at the Juggs in Kingston closest to 8pm. No watches could be used and you decided your own start time and your own pace.

30 June: "Blackcap Handicap". The start and finish was at Ditchling Beacon. Runners were set off at handicapped intervals from 7pm based on the handicapper's estimate – informed by the runner's recent best flat 10k (or 5k) time. The idea is for all runners to race to the finish line together. The course is from Ditchling Beacon to Blackcap and back (an undulating 5 miles along the ridge of the Downs). The social was held in the Bull in Ditchling.

28 July: "The Snake Downhill Mile". A time-trial format was used in running down The Snake over a measured mile. Runners were set off from 7pm with a warm-up group leaving the Swan at about 6:15. The social was at the Swan in Falmer.

25 August: "Jack & Jill Up & Down". This started at Clayton and was a straight up-and-down fell format run. Total distance was about 1.2 miles. Runners were set off at 18:45. The social was at the Jack & Jill in Clayton.



Finished. Now for that pint.
(The Snake)



We've earned this



Lizzy & Hildi



Liz



Jim



Dave



Matt



Tom



Whew - that's my stint over

Legging it

On the first Saturday of June each year, in the early morning, some 50 teams set out from Eastbourne and with each of six runners running three legs, with a bit of luck and decent navigation, Winchester is reached around 8pm with 100 miles covered. It is an extraordinary event and the favourite of many of us.

This year the three Phoenix teams didn't trouble the medals, but what a time we had. We had our fair share of injuries, falls and heatstroke problems but also a lot of laughs and good companionship throughout the day.

Athletically, too, there were some great performances, notably by **Tom Hopkins** (two all-time Phoenix leg records) and **David Powell** (one Phoenix vet leg record).

Thanks are due to **Liz Halliday** who organised the women's team and **Andy Bone** who organised the Vet's team and the A team for the men. Andy also drove the vet's support vehicle, **Ro Harrington** drove the women's van and **Petra Kopp** the A team van. Thanks to them and to **Bruce Warren** who helped out as well. Our friend **Hitoshi Koboyashi** was also on board gathering material for an article in the Japanese Runners World. Thanks, too, to supporters who cheered us on at Ditchling Beacon.

Brian proves you can still be happy on your final leg



Tom and Andy in good spirits

No time to enjoy the scenery



Relay

Tom is fairly sure he's going the right way



Lance to John



Tom to Nigel



Andrew to Malcolm



Time to just relax and watch

Some women will run 100 miles for a pint



Phoenix 10K

Wednesday 20 July 2011



The inaugural running of the Phoenix 10K was an undoubted success. Not only did the race sell out but initial feedback from competitors is very positive. With chip-timing and well-organised facilities such as toilet provision, baggage tent, massage, and PA (great work Tim), the overall impression was highly favourable and bodes well for the future.

Congratulations have to go to **Andy Bone** (pictured left) who steered the event with consummate organisational skill. The marshalling and bike-leading, too, were excellent

with **Liz Halliday**, **Eleanor Moore**, **Malcolm Kemp** and others assuming responsibility. Particularly heartening was the raucous reception committee of junior athletes, organised by **John Marinko**, at the 5K turnaround point.

It also turned out to be a high-quality race with a sprint to the finish.

Dean Lacey of Cambridge Harriers just edged out Phoenix's **Ian Leitch** by three seconds. **Josh Guilment** of Phoenix was just 30 seconds back in third place. Phoenix won the men's team prize (**Ian Leitch** 30:27, **Josh Guilment** 31:03, **Tom Hopkins** 33:02, **Daryl Hards** 34:10).

A special mention too for **Terry Avey** whose running this season has transformed. He was first in the over-60 category against a quality field in that age-group, with a superb sub-40 run. Amazingly, this was his eighteenth age-group first this season.

In the women's race **Emma Richards** of Hailsham Harriers was runaway winner in 37:35, a substantial PB for her. The next two places were fought out by two V45 athletes. **Elsbeth Turner** of Horsham Blue Stars was second in 38:17 and **Cathy Ulliot** of Brighton and Hove was third in 40:13.

Thirty-one Phoenix athletes competed.

Our charity partner The Clocktower Sanctuary has benefited by £600 thanks to the selling out of the race and the generosity of the Shoreham Port Authority who waived their fee for the road closure. There may be more to come from Friday-Ad advertising revenue.

A view from the halfway point

John Marinko reports

Before any serious work could begin, we (that is a large group of Phoenix U13 juniors, parents and marshals) all sat down for a hearty meal at Carats Café, the turn point and water station for the 10K. Once the famous Carats food was consumed, cones, tape and a few turn signs were deployed. Tables, water butts and cups were then positioned awaiting the hordes of thirsty runners. Most of the children with yellow bibs had brought whistles, vuvuzalas and drums to add some volume to the turn.

At 7.01pm a call from Andy Bone confirmed that the runners had started on time and were on their way. The leading group (including Ian Leitch, Josh Guilment, Tom Hopkins, Daryl Hards and James Miles) were soon in sight at 7.14 and the carnival noise began. The children manning the water station seemed to be in competition for who could give out the most cups of water, and during the peak period of the race, we nearly ran out of cups, but Carats came to the rescue. By 8 pm the last few runners/walkers had come through and our job was done.

Many thanks to all the junior athletes, parents and marshals who made the turn point enjoyable and successful (we just need to remember to bring a few more cups next year). The atmosphere was great and everybody seemed to be enjoying watching the race while doing a valuable job. Well done everybody.



Perfect conditions for the first-ever Phoenix 10k



Tim does his stuff



The top trio in the men's race



Emma picks up the prize in the women's race



Terry collects over-60s medal



Our 10k charity partners

Bigger and better in 2012

Next year the race takes place on **Wednesday 18 July** at a later time of 7:30pm. It's a great course for a pb and promises to develop into a major event. Already we are planning a larger entry (the 450 places available this year sold out ten days before the race) and bigger prize money.

Sussex Road Relays

Saturday 23 April 2011

The lateness of Easter meant brilliantly sunny and warm conditions, and a good turnout from the club was rewarded with a fair share of the honours.

The U13 boys, fielding two teams, kicked us off with a silver medal – **Archie Davis** taking individual bronze (third fastest leg).

Next was a splendid gold-team performance by the over 60 men (**Malcolm Kemp**, **Andrew Field** and **Terry Avey**) and then, highlight of the day, a spirited gold-medal performance by an inspired senior men's team. Sixth after two of the six legs, the next four laps took them one minute ahead of arch-rivals Brighton and Hove.

Josh Guilment won individual gold and **Tom Hopkins** bronze. **Charlie Grice** was actually second fastest runner of the day behind Josh, which made him U17 gold medalist. We scooped all the individual medals in that category – **Will Durkin** was second and **Jake Elliot** was third.



Charlie anchors the senior men to an emphatic win



U13 boys silver medallists



It's Avey to Field on the way to over 60s gold



Brian and Malcolm set off



Erica hands over to Sonal in the women's race



Liz takes it on



Finn flies

Brighton Marathon

Sunday, 10 April 2011

It was vet honours in the second Brighton Marathon, with three of the first four Phoenix places going to the 40-50 age group. Senior **Alex Bonzi** was the first home, though, in a splendid 2:54:51 for 25th place. Next, **Mike Townley** stormed to 32nd place in 2:56:20. Then **Jon Pike** ran an impressive 2:59:31 for 40th and **John Marinko** 72nd in 3:07:34.

There were 20 or so Phoenix runners.

There was also a terrific entry in the ten races that constituted the Mini-Mile. We were winners in no fewer than four of those races, with pride of place going to **Charlie Grice**, winner of the U18 boys for the second year running. **Sam Kitchen** won the U15 boys, **Luca Bigg** the U11 boys

It was especially encouraging to see 21 young athletes from the Phoenix starter group with some stunning results, especially in race 7 (2nd, 3rd and 6th).



John and Mike at the start



Darren



Bob



Jon



Andy



Stuart

London Marathon

Sunday, 17 April 2011

Dave Carter	2:41:11
Mike Whyte	2:59:07
Jim Whitelegg	3:36:16
Emma Satterly	4:06:06
Elana Moore	4:12:24
Terry Avey	4:14:49
John Lamb	4:20:55



Dave leads our runners

The 2011 track season turned out to be one of the best years in recent time for Team Phoenix, with a number of our athletes stepping up in class and putting in some fine performances.

The season got off to a cold and blustery start with a number of our junior athletes taking part in the **Millfield BMC classic**. A strong wind in the home straight made PBs a near impossibility but this did not deter Charlie Grice, who won with ease in the A 800m race, a clear indication of the good form to follow for the rest of the season. Also stepping up to the mark was Will Durkin winning the B 800m race. As the meet moved on, conditions only got tougher but this did not stop Finn McNally running a PB and Jake Elliott coming within a second of his PB in the 3000m.

As the **County Championships** came around, the early season form shown by Grice and Durkin in the 800m was continued with both taking their respective age group titles (U20, U17). Elliott ran his own race and kept out of trouble to take the U17 1500m title. Following in their footsteps, the younger age group runners were also making an impact with Billy White winning the 1500m. Only a week earlier he put down one of the fastest marks by an U15 in the country (2.04 for 800m). In the county 800m he was unlucky to come home 2nd, with training partner Sam Kitchen a strong 4th. This is only Sam's first season in athletics and he has shown that with a committed attitude you can make an impact straight away in this sport. Archie Davis took the U13 800m title by a massive 10-second margin and with lots more left in the tank.

In the Senior 5000m Ian Leitch – more used to running on the road than on the track – took control of the race from the outset, and with repeated surges tried to shake off the persistent Matt Dumigan. In the end, however, he had to settle for 2nd but the consolation of a PB 15.01. James Miles had a great run, taking a massive chunk off his PB with 16.16 in 6th. On the women's side Jody Mann just missed a top 3 placing in the U15 800m. Phoenix-trained Abigail Ashbee-Simmonds had two strong runs to take a gold and silver in the 1500m and 800m U20. It was also good to see Jody Mann and Maddy Houghton turn out in the U15 girls 800ms.

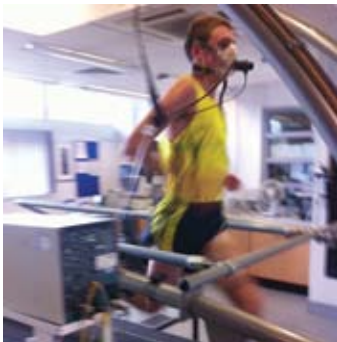
The **Phoenix Track Meet** teamed up with the British Milers Club for their first such event in a number of years. This commitment from the club to develop a high standard track meet along with the already very successful road 10k and Cross Country Championship race shows the club's hunger to grow and develop all the key aspects of athletics. The commitment was matched on the day by the athletes who took part. Grice this time took on former Olympic 1500m star Michael East, again coming out on top. He was also joined in the A race by

Durkin, who had his best race of the season a massive 1.55 to place him 11th U17 in the country. In the other races it was good to see Ray Mathews setting a new PB 2.15 as a V45. Judging by how Ray ran this season, it seems you get faster as you get older. Others also making the most of the meet were Ryan Elson lowering his PB to 2.12, with Max Pickard cracking 4 minutes for the first time and McNally running for a PB as well in the 1500m. It was good to see a mixture of young and old giving the 3000m a go as U17's Luke Reynolds and Megan Lillie battled seniors John Tindell and Jonathan Hancock, who were having their first experience of track racing.

The **Southern Championships** again suffered from the weather as is the way in an English summer. This, however, did not stop Phoenix athletes putting together the best string of results from any Sussex club. Again it was the 800m runners who took the plaudits, with Dan Stepney finally returning to form coming 3rd in 1.51 dead. Grice again won in the U20 event. Phoenix-trained James McCarthy won the U20 3K steeple with Max Pickard in 2nd. Pat Davenport made his first and last race of the season coming home in 6th although moving smoothly over the barriers, Pat has been plagued by injury and has not been able to get the training in to challenge for the win, which he has done on so many occasions in the past. In the 5000m Josh Guilment was taking part in his first serious track race of the season and his mind must have been elsewhere as he missed the move with 1k to go, coming home 5th and a little irritated with himself. Gus Kennedy U20 came 7th in the 400m, finding it hard to find his top form after peaking in the Australian track season where he ran 48.71 to put him in the top 20 in the country.

It was good to see three athletes at the **English National Championships** this year Grice again having the best result in the 1500m, coming home 2nd qualifying for the junior European Championships, Stepney just missed out on a medal, finishing in 5th in the senior 800m, while Guilment uncharacteristically had to pull out of the 5000m half-way through the race.

The **English Schools Championships** is usually one of the highlights on the calendar and this year was no different with a large field of Phoenix-trained athletes making the team. Team selection for this event is time-based and you have to be one of the best in the country to even get invited to race. This year we had Charlie Grice, Max Pickard, Will Durkin, Billy White, Sam Kitchen and Katy Bird. All committed themselves fantastically. Grice went into the final the overwhelming favourite, having taken his 1500m PB down to 3.42 and when he hit the front he just wound up the pace until he was out by himself. Pickard knocked a PB out in the heat but will be disappointed not to have made the final – maybe a final dip would have got him through. In his first English schools track championships Billy White made the Junior boys 800m final and came a very creditable 6th.



Charlie doing a VO2 max test at the UKA testing centre at Loughborough



Jake Elliott at Millfield BMC



Billy White on his way to the Sussex U15 1500m title



Ian Leitch on his way to silver in the Sussex 5kms champs at Crawley



Will Durkin and Ryan Elson in the U17 Sussex 800m champs...Will won...at Crawley



Archie Davis in the Sussex U13 minithon at Crawley



Ray in the Sussex senior 800m champs at Crawley



Jody Mann (right) and Maddy Houghton (left) in the Sussex U15 girls 800m

The **Sussex 3000m Championships** were held at Withdean Track for the first time in many years. Both Finn McNally and Robbie Fitzgibbon took full advantage of their home track as they out-kicked their respective opponents in taking the championships. Finn, in his first year as a senior, won in 8.50 dead – well off his best for the distance – while Robbie took the Under 17 title in a PB of 9.36.60.

As Grice went to Estonia for the **Europeans**, Stepney was taking part in the **UK Championships**. He managed to get to the semis, where he ran a pb of 1:50:78, but just missed out on a spot in the final and a TV appearance on the BBC. The Europeans did not go as planned for Grice, as he suffered from heat exhaustion in the searing temperatures. He did, however, manage to make the final, where he came 10th – not the result Charlie wanted but still a considerable achievement in his first year in the U20 age group.

Dan Stepney finished the season with another pb of 1:50:42 at **Watford**. 2011 has been his most consistent season so far, with three pbs and a Southern Senior Medal, boding well for the year ahead. Dan also came away with a win over 800m in a race in Belgium, keeping his cool after being messed around with start times.

With most of the main championships out of the way, attention turned to lowering personal bests. In what turned out to be one of the biggest 3000m fields you can run in a single track race (37 runners), all athletes came home with a PB – Guilment 8.25 McCarthy 8.32, Pickard 8.42.

In the season-ending **BMC Grand Prix Championships**, three of our in-form athletes travelled to Birmingham. The race got off to a great start with Pickard running a tactically astute race to win his 800m heat in a PB. Next up was Grice, who sat at the back of the pack in his 800m until the final 100m coming home strong with a PB of 1.48.83 (following on from a 1:49:97 800m win in Belgium the previous week). Guilment ran an even paced race for a PB of 14.37 in the 5000m.

Club records

This year we saw Charlie Grice break Johan Boakes club U20 1500m record with his amazing 3:42:86. His 1:48:83 800m is however just a bit slower than Johan's U20 club record of 1:48:67 and still a bit to go on Steve Ovett's Senior record of 1:44:81. We also saw Gus Kennedy set the Club U20 and Senior 400m record with his 48:71 clocking in Brisbane back in March. And we had a visit this year from the club 3km chase record holder Mark Rowland. His 8:07:96 is still the UK record and is over 23 secs faster than the best UK runner this year.



Archie Davis winning the 800m in the Sussex U13 minithon



Southern 800m medallists: Charlie U20 champ and Dan bronze in the seniors at Ashford



Gold and silver in the Southern U20 3km chase at Ashford: James McCarthy (B&H) and Max



Finn McNally on his way to bronze in the Sussex senior 1500m champs at Crawley

Cover story

As the track season draws to a close and the dark nights threaten to return, four of Team Phoenix middle distance athletes decided to travel up for a final run out over the 3000m distance at Watford. The athletes in question have all been in great form this year; with Charlie having near domination of the domestic middle distance scene, he would be taking on the longer distance for the first time in two years. Josh, finally putting in a 14:30 clocking in the BMC 5000m, would be stepping down and trying to lower his time in the third successive 3k race in a row before calling it a day. At the same time, both Finn and Max had unfinished business, having not hit the times they are capable of over this distance.

The race went off at a fair pace with all four in early contention. It was not long before Charlie took the lead and slowly increased the pace with a real push for home in the final two laps, finishing with a winning time of 8.21 (PB) and with far more there for next season. Josh came home in a respectable 8.30, some five seconds adrift of his PB, while Max had his best run of the season in 8.34, smashing his PB, and Finn returned to form, also hitting a PB of 8.38.

U13 boys rock on

The successes of the Phoenix AC U13 Boys during the cross-country season certainly generated more enthusiasm for the track & field season. Numbers at the Sussex Track & Field League pretty much doubled from the previous season, along with our points total for individual event scores.

Unfortunately, we couldn't improve on our overall league position, largely due to a similarly enthusiastic resurgence by Hastings AC. But overall it has been a very successful season, with two boys representing Sussex in the Southern Inter-Counties match in July, and current number one county ranking in four events. Six medals were won at the County Championships, the last being gold for the 4 x 100m relay team, their fourth straight win of the season and still unbeaten going into the league final in September. All bodes well for the cross-country season and, fingers crossed, it may well be a very successful one. Watch this space!

STOP PRESS: Archie Davis won the gold medal and Harry Swindells the bronze at the U13 Sussex Combined Events Championships at Sutton Arena on September 10. Archie now has double gold medals at combined events as he won the Sussex Schools back in June.



Jake Silver, Archie Davis, Matt Berridge and Theo Alger celebrate their gold winning time in the 4 x 100m relay at the County Championships.



Harry Swindells jumps his way to a bronze medal.



Sam Betts takes silver in the U11 Quadkids at the County Champs.

Phoenix in action

Through the summer Phoenix triathletes have been present at all the local races as well as further afield. Malcolm Hughes reports.



Multisport Champs

In the club's Multisport Champs, the races were the Frosty Aquathlon 6 March, Goodwood Du 10 April, Mid-Sussex Sprint Tri 12 June, Worthing Standard Tri 10 July and Ringmer Sprint Tri 21 August. The final results were decided early in the season. In the women's competition *Erica Martin* gained maximum points in the first two events, which was enough to see her top the table all summer. For the men *Malcolm Hughes* only missed out on two points in the first three races, making him very hard to catch, so he topped the men's table after the last race.

Other highlights

In June the **GB Age Group Standard Distance Champs** were held at Rutland Water's Dambuster Triathlon. *Malcolm Hughes* won bronze in the 50-54 category. Also in June were the **European Tri Champs** in Pontvedra, Spain. Four Phoenix triathletes were racing as part of the GB team: paratriathletes *Faye McClelland* and *Paul Thomas* as well as age groupers *Deb Evers* and *Malcolm Hughes*. Faye won the gold in her category and Malcolm bronze in his age group.

This year saw the first ever **Tri England Age Group Champs** at the end of July – the Big Cow MK tri in Emberton Park. *Lizzy Brama* and *Malcolm Hughes* both won their age group to become English Champions.

Lizzy Brama is having a good year, winning her age group at **Ironman France** in a time of 10:49:02, meaning she will be racing at the Ironman World Champs on her birthday. She also won at the **Chantilly Triathlon**, part of the Castle Tri Series, giving her a chance to win the series at Hever Castle.

In August *Faye McClelland* confirmed her place as one of the world's leading female paratriathletes by winning the **Dextro Energy London Triathlon** – Elite Paratriathlon in Hyde Park.

Coach Costa

Well done to *Ananda Mello Costa* who has completed her training to become a BTF Level 1 referee.

Aquathlon postponed

Even after all the hard work put in by Erica Martin, it has been decided that the Phoenix Aquathlon is to be postponed until next spring due to lack of entries, probably because of the very crowded events calendar. It is hoped that we will be able to include a junior race in the rearranged event. The date has yet to be confirmed.

Beijing: How was it for you Tim?

I flew in from Heathrow via Rome to Beijing for the 2011 World Triathlon Age Group Championships to compete in the 55–59 year age group sprint triathlon, which includes a 750m swim, a 20k bike ride and a 5k run. The journey took me 48hrs to complete and I ended up on the same flight as the Italian and the Belgian élite squads. I have never been to China before and decided to go under my own initiative, which meant using local trains and buses to get around.

I didn't know what to expect and was relieved to find that the road and train signs had English signings as well as the Chinese writing. My hotel was a delightful 1000-bed conference centre with all the charm you would expect from a communist-built prison block. The GB team hotel up the hill was completely different and had all the trappings of ancient Chinese architecture. It was also a spa. More of this later.

Acclimatising in Beijing smog

I had a week to acclimatise and adapt to the time shift of seven hours in front of Greenwich mean time. The atmosphere was grey and the sun was very pale because of the clouds. I later learnt that this was the smog that Beijing is famous for. We were due to race on the same course that the Beijing Olympics were held on in the Champing District, which was close to the tombs of eight emperors of the Ming dynasty (14th–17th centuries).

I spent the week training and getting orientated, meeting up with old friends – including team mates Debbie Evers and Fay McClelland – and going to the opening ceremony with its cultural dancing and pasta party. The food in China isn't as it would seem, and a visit to the main supermarket put me in some dilemma. All the descriptions were in Chinese and as I didn't want to risk an upset tummy, it was pot noodles all the way, with fruit.

Part of my training included a visit to the local sports centre to join in with others training there. What I failed to realise on the first day was that there were two pools: one for the age groupers to swim in and one for the élites. Guess which one I got in. (How fast these élites swim is beyond belief. They went past me like I wasn't swimming at all.) The next day I got in the right pool – and I did beat one other person then. Woohoooo – ego restored!

Swimming in the rain on race day

We finally got to race day. It had rained two days previously and this had cleared the smog away and at least allowed me to see Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City in glorious sunshine. On race day it decided to rain quite hard and this made conditions quite difficult to my delight. Us Brits train in this stuff so we prospered.

Once in the water, I was surrounded by Aussies and Russians. Off we went, and a kick and a punch later I had settled into a good rhythm right on the feet of one of the Aussies. I got to the first turn buoy and the guy in front stopped and then started again and I got a good kick in the face and a slap on the back of the head. It does get a little rough sometimes.

Tackling the hills

I came out of the swim in a respectable 10th place and through transition in the rain and onto the hilly bike course. I overtook a few people and was doing ok until this guy shot past me like I wasn't moving. He looked really good in a white tri suite and on an expensive looking aero dynamic bike. The really fast ones now all wear helmets which I call Smurf helmets. Their aerodynamics are said to save over a minute on your time.

As I crested the top of the hill we had been climbing, I put on the power and the bike skills to go down the mountain road with blind corners at my usual daft speeds. To my surprise and glee, I shot past the same guy who had passed me and was now gingerly going round the corner at half my speed. I did laugh and it motivated me even more to go faster and push my limits.

Towards the end of the ride my chain came off and I lost about a minute untangling it and putting it back on. But I still managed the seventh quickest time.

Running to the sound of cheers

Setting out on the run, I knew one of the Aussies I had left in my wake on the bike course was a better runner than me and I hoped I had enough lead to stay in front of him. The run course was up and down the finishing strait and past lots of people cheering on the Brits. I ran as hard as I could but unfortunately it wasn't enough to hold off the Aussie, who passed me with 200m to go. But I did finish 10th in the world and I was also first Brit home, which means I have pre-qualified for the Worlds in Auckland New Zealand next year – woohoooo!

See you all out there. **Tim Woodman**

STOP PRESS

Faye retains world title

Faye McClelland retained her T4 paratri category world title in Beijing on Friday 9 September in a time of 1:16:21 for the sprint distance. Congratulations Faye. On the Saturday in the age-group sprints, *Tim Woodman* finished in 10th position in the M55-59 category and *Debbie Evers* 11th in the F50-54 category.



Faye faces the press after retaining her title

Graniteman success

At the Graniteman Middle Distance event in Guernsey on Sunday, 11 September *Anita Jones* was 2nd female and first female vet.

Ironmen

Chris Mills and *Robert Rollings* have competed in an ironman event for the first time and both acquitted themselves impressively. At Ironman Wales on Sunday, 11 September Chris finished in 11:00:49 and Rob in 12:18:02.

Paul's progress

Paul Thomas took part in four international para triathlons this year and won two bronze medals. But the highlight of his season was in July when he took part in his first half-ironman (70.3 miles) in Antwerp. It took him 8 hours and 21 minutes to complete the 1900m swim, 90km cycle and 21km run. He is using this as a stepping stone to take part in a full ironman in the next couple of years.



So good, they ran it twice

A couple of years ago we ran a report by Malcolm Kemp and Phil Hampshire on the New York Marathon. They had travelled to that in some style on the the Queen Mary. This time they decided to go back with their partners and Phoenix's Carol and Steve Webb to try their luck with the Half Marathon. Lost luggage, lost sleep and a dodgy taxi but they made it to the start line...just! Here is Malcolm's report.

On arriving at Kennedy Airport, New York, we spent about an hour queuing to go through immigration, only to find out upon reaching baggage collection that Phil Hampshire's bag had gone missing with all his racing kit in it. After reporting the loss, we proceeded to where the taxis were and were approached by an old Mexican guy who told us the fare would be \$100. This sounded a good deal for the six of us, so we followed him – to the car park, where it became clear he wasn't a bona fide taxi driver. But on seeing his smart car we decided to go along with it, and the drive into New York went smoothly. We finally arrived at our hotel at around 5.30pm (9.30pm UK time). At this point Steve realised he had left one of his bags in the car – incident no. 2. What or who was going to go missing next?

The New York Half Marathon race rules state that all competitors must pick up their race bibs (numbers) in person from the expo, but we were never going to arrive until after it had closed. Months before, this had prompted many emails to the event contact from New York Road Runners, to sort out how we could obtain our numbers. It was finally decided that on arriving in New York I was to phone her mobile, and there would be a voicemail instructing us where to go to collect them.

Last-minute preparations

On making the call we discovered that we had to go to the New York Road Runners headquarters about 50 blocks up town, so we all headed off in two yellow cabs (proper taxis this time). Collection of the numbers and special security armbands went without a hitch, but Phil was still without any kit. Luckily, shops stay open late in New York. We discovered a Foot Locker nearby where he bought a pair of trainers, and then an H&M where he bought a hoodie and some training bottoms.

At this stage we had not eaten, so we headed back to the hotel and then across the street to a restaurant for dinner. By the time we got to bed it was 3.30am UK time – and the race would start at 7.30am New York time.

Getting to the start

Just before we were about to leave our hotel, Phil's lost bag turned up, so he rushed off to change. With very little sleep, bleary-eyed and not feeling in the least like running, we left the hotel at 6.00am armed with takeaway coffees and pre-race snacks. It was just a couple of blocks around the corner to Grand Central Station to catch the subway train uptown.

Joining other athletes heading in the same direction, we finally reached a bright but bitterly cold Central Park where the race begins. With very little time to spare, we put our bags on the event trucks and headed for our respective start pens, or 'corals' as the Americans call them. You have to be in your start pens 15-20 minutes before the race starts as they close the pens. This means a long wait while announcements are

made introducing the elite athletes, including Mo Farah, who was running his first ever half marathon. It was freezing cold standing around, the only savour being the black bin liners retrieved from Phil's bag. Finally, after a rendering of the American national anthem, we were ready to start. Just before we all began to shuffle forward as the tapes dividing the various start pens were removed, I realised I was only about 50m from the start line.

The start horn blasted and I was off, running at a good pace. The sun was coming up but it was still very cold, enough for me to be wearing a Helly Henson long-sleeve top and gloves. I remembered this part of the course: it is used for the last few miles of the marathon, which I ran in 2008. It is undulating with switch-back hills that can break up your rhythm, but I managed to maintain my pace.

After one full lap of Central Park we continued on the same route through the start line and on for about 1.5 miles to just past the 8-mile marker, exiting the park and into Manhattan.

From Broadway to 12th Avenue

We ran down Broadway, with the tall buildings that make up New York's skyline towering above us on both sides of the road, and on to the bright neon advertising signs of Times Square. This is the hub of the city and is usually full of traffic and tourists but was now closed for the race and 15,000 runners. After about another mile we turned right and straight into a head wind. At this point I heard someone call my name and looked round to see Phil, who had slowed considerably from his sub-7 minute pace down to about 7.45 pace due to his long-term calf injury.

We continued towards 12th Avenue and then right again before doing a U turn and heading south for the final 3 miles to Battery Park. This section is run on half of the West Side Highway, which runs beside the Hudson River. With the knowledge that I hadn't far to go, I raised my pace for the last couple of miles to the finish, crossing the line at Battery Park in 1.34.43 – a personal best.



Malcolm, Steve, Phil, Jeanette and Carol strike a pose at Grand Union Station

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EVENTS

Oct 1	Goodwood XC Relays inc Sussex Champs Goodwood Racecourse	
Oct 2	Friston Forest 10k	
Oct 2	Lewes Downland 10 Miles	Sussex Grand Prix
Oct 9	Haywards Heath Open XC	WSFRL
Oct 9	The Jog Shop 20	
Oct 16	Steepdown Challenge, Lancing	WSFRL
Oct 16	Cuckmere House Challenge 10k	Seaford
Oct 22	Brooks Sussex XC League (1)	Goodwood Racecourse
Oct 22	Beachy Head Marathon	
Oct 29	BHF White Night Half Marathon	Brighton
Oct 30	Barns Green Half Marathon	Sussex Grand Prix
Nov 6	Crowborough 10k	Sussex Grand Prix

NOV 13 PHOENIX JUNIOR RACES AND SENIOR MILE

Nov 20	Brighton 10k	SGP/Sussex Champs
Nov 26	Brooks Sussex XC League (2)	Plumpton
Dec 3	Women's Christmas Cracker Chase	Worthing
Dec 4	Duck Pond Waddle 9 miles	Worthing
Dec 10	SEAA Inter Counties + Masters XC	Lloyd Park, Croydon
Dec 11	Mince Pie Run	Peacehaven
Dec 17	Christmas Pudding Dash	Ashburnham House
Jan 7	Sussex XC Champs	Stanmer Park, Brighton
Jan 8	<i>Alternative date for Sussex Champs if Brighton at home in FA cup</i>	
Jan 14	Brooks Sussex XC League (3)	Little Common, Bexhill
Jan 21	Sussex Schools XC Champs	Lancing Manor
Jan 28	South of England XC Champs	Stanmer Park, Brighton
Feb 5	Chichester 10k	Sussex Grand Prix
Feb 18	Brooks Sussex XC League (4)	Lancing Manor
Feb 19	Brighton Half Marathon	Sussex Grand Prix
Feb 25	English XC Champs	Taunton, Somerset
Mar 4	Eastbourne Half Marathon	Sussex Grand Prix
Mar 8	Sussex Schools yrs 7 & 8 XC Champs	Horsham
Mar 25	Hastings Half Marathon	Sussex Grand Prix
April 7	Sussex Road Relay Champs	Horsham

PRESTON PARK



'I'd take the bus if I were you.' Brian gives Andrew some friendly advice before the start of the South Downs Way Relay.

Asthma notice

If you are asthmatic and use an inhaler you may need to register it for competition. Club Secretary, Paul Thomas has the form you need. It is up to you to take individual responsibility to do this. On no account should you stop taking your inhaler without first consulting your Doctor.

Parents

Please can you collect your children from inside the stadium on a track night and not outside in the car park.

The views expressed in the newsletter belong to the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club.

ONE DIGITAL CREDIT

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