

Phoenix Flyer

NEWSLETTER OF BRIGHTON PHOENIX ATHLETIC AND TRIATHLON CLUB

OCTOBER 2013



Young Phoenix

Special

The thoughts of Chairman Collicutt



This time round in the newsletter we are celebrating our juniors. However, it just wouldn't be right not to mention a trio of World Triathlon Champions (OK one of them won their title in the Duathlon!). Massive congratulations to Sean Scott, Sam Wade and Bob Novis.

I'd also like to mention Charlie Grice's silver over 1500m at the European U23 championships, his amazing 3:54 mile clocking (and he's still just 19), Josh Guilmant's storming victory in the Southern 5kms Championships and Dan Stepney taking the National Intercounties Mile Championship.

Our juniors have some great role models.

Over recent years our junior section has grown considerably. In this issue we highlight some magnificent achievements and look at how to progress through the age groups.

Here I'd like to pick out a group of athletes who have totally committed to the Phoenix training programme: Archie Davis, Sam Kitchen, Robbie Fitzgibbon, Billy White, Jake Algar and Spencer Thomas. They are not the only ones who have committed to our programme but they are a group who are prepared to go to County, Area and National Championships. They have all shown great dedication and have been rewarded with an English Schools bronze medal, two silvers in the Southern Champs, one gold and two National Championships bronze medals and one National Champion. We've also backed up these medals with other athletes reaching the top eight places in the English Schools and National finals.

Take a look at The Power of Ten to see how highly our young athletes feature in National rankings.!

The front cover shows Alanah Olivia Harding, Alice Wright and Douglas Zveushe in action at the Phoenix Open in May.

Photos by Lance Bellers

Coaching success



Phoenix coaches have been earning honours this year.

Jon Bigg (right) and former Phoenix athlete Jeremy Freeman were both chosen as the endurance coaches for the England team at the Loughborough International back in May. Jon went on to be selected as endurance coach for the GB team at the European U23 championships in Finland, where he also coached our Charlie Grice to a fabulous silver medal. Meanwhile Phoenix's Olympic medalist Mark Rowland who now resides in Oregon USA, where he is head coach at the Oregon Elite Track Club, coached Nick Symmonds to a brilliant silver over 800m at the World Championships in Moscow.



So near but so Farah

Ian Leitch had targeted the London Marathon for a sub-2:20 and set off with the leaders, including a casual-looking Mo Farah. In the event he had a bad day at the office and finished in 2:41:49. At least he ran the whole thing. Mo was just 'rehearsing' and dropped out at the half-way point. Other Phoenix finishers included Josh Guilmant (2:41:52), Mike Whyte (2:51:20), Donald Maclellan (2:54:23), Tom Farsides (3:02:56) and Gary Wilson (4:46:32).

We're only here for the medals

Phoenix entered four teams for this amazing event - the 100-mile six-person South Downs Way Relay from Eastbourne to Winchester. Did we win any medals? You bet! The Senior men won A team gold, In the B team competition we won gold again. The Vets took silver and the women came third in the women's section, their best performance ever.



We're only here for the beer

Throughout the summer Phoenix organises a few fun training sessions for seniors that are, well, a little different. The Blackcap Handicap and the Tank Track and Windmills events had their supporters but numbers tripled (or even tippled) when we hosted the Beer Mile at Preston Park Cycle Track. It's not an easy event. You need a fair amount of bottle!



OK it wasn't officially a Club event but let's just say there were a lot of familiar faces. There are clear international rules for this race and even a world record (5:04:09 if you must know).

Juniors - look away now. Everyone else - don't try this at home!

Essentially once the gun has gone, each runner must down 330ml of beer before setting off and then another at each quarter mile. This is far, far more difficult than it sounds and there were some distinctly queasy faces at the finish. Our own Finn McNally made light of it though, winning in an astonishing 5:43. He must have been getting in some practice at Uni - running we mean!



Above: There seem to be quite a few Phoenix faces in the line-up for the beer mile. The post-race photos show the same faces only greener.

... and talking of medals

We seem to have a grip on relay events* at the moment and never more so than the Sussex Road Relays at Easter.

This year the senior men's A team (Robbie Fitzgibbon, Dan Stepney, Will Durkin, Jon Pepper, Josh Guilment and Charlie Grice) won for the third year in succession. Although not able to match their course record of 2012, they led their arch rivals, B&H, by a mighty four minutes. Other gold medalists on the day were the U13 girls team (Naomi Fonteyn, Chloe Watson and Almi Nerurkar). The under 13 girls B team won bronze, as did the O40 and O60 men.



**In the Southern Road Relay Champs at Aldershot on 22 Sept, both the senior men (17th) and the U17 boys (7th) qualified for the National Road Relays in October.*

**At the Sussex XC relays on 28 Sept the O40 men took gold, and fastest laps were run by Almi Nerurkar (U13 girls), Archie Davis (U15 boys - record) and Bob Novis (O60 men). The U13 girls, U15 boys, U17 men, O50 men, and O60 men were silver medalists.*

We are the (world) champions

You wait for ages for a world champion and then three come along at once. John Tindell, multisport representative, reports on a summer of success for Phoenix athletes.



Sean Scott

The last few months have been very successful for our multisport athletes competing around the globe. The summer started with an outstanding victory for **Sean Scott**, who qualified for the World Duathlon Championships at the Dambuster Duathlon in 10th place. After qualifying, he put the hours in and took a gold medal when it mattered in Canada. Not content with just winning he also posted the fastest bike time out of all age groupers.

Earlier in the year we also saw **Erica Martin** qualify for the ETU World Duathlon Sprint Championships. She had to train through the savage winter conditions, but it paid off for her as she brought home the bronze medal. She also made her debut into Middle Distance Triathlon and finished 13th female in a time of 4:59:59.9, getting into the much desired sub 5 hour mark by the skin of her teeth!



Bob Novis

While this was happening, others were busy qualifying for the World Triathlon Championships age groups in London. **Bob Novis**, who already has a strong presence in the Triathlon world, including gold in the 2007 ITU World Champs and the title of British Triathlon Age Group Athlete of the year in 2002, took gold at the BTF Sprint Championships, securing him a spot at the Worlds. He then went on to take gold in London, meaning that he has taken the World title over two age groups.

Along with Bob, Phoenix athletes **Iain Martin**, **Will Flewett**, **Tim Woodman**, and **Colin Simpson** all qualified for their respective age groups.

Furthermore, **Sam Wade** added to Phoenix's success by taking gold in the 20-24 age group at the ITU World Grand Final, showing that he is one to look out for in the future.



Sam Wade

Erica's year

Erica Martin set out at the start of 2013 with two main targets, to qualify for the European Sprint Duathlon Championships and to compete in her first middle distance triathlon. These events were very different and so was the preparation for each.

I managed to qualify for the European Championships at Althorp in Northamptonshire in February. The Europeans took place in Holland in a small town called Horst in the south east of the country and consisted of a 5km run, followed by a 20km bike, before finishing with a 2.5km run.

Like many European events of this kind, it took over the entire town for the weekend, which created a fantastic atmosphere, particularly with the start and finish being right in the centre of the town.

Being a sprint race, the pace from the start of the run was extremely quick. This continued on the bike and despite the course being very technical in places it was completely flat, so I was able to maintain a decent pace. The final run was only 2.5km so passed by very quickly. I didn't know what position I had finished until I checked the results and was very pleased, not to mention surprised, to finish third in my age group and take home a bronze medal!

Competing for Great Britain was a fantastic experience and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone that gets the opportunity to do so. Cycling in Holland was brilliant, with smooth surfaces, cycle lanes everywhere and even cars giving way to cyclists which was a new experience!

After returning from Holland I began training for the half ironman. This involved increasing the length of my rides and runs and actually doing some swim training, something I had avoided for quite a long time.

The race seemed to come round really quickly and before I knew it I was lining up on the start line to complete the 1.9km swim, 52mile bike and 13mile run at the Cotswold Water Park in Gloucestershire.

The race went well and despite finding it tough, I was pleased to sneak under 5 hours - and I mean sneak - finishing in 4:59:59.9!

From this season I have learnt the importance of targeting specific races and that with hard training and sensible preparation you can achieve good results in a variety of events.



Erica and Liz Halliday were both in action at the Cotswolds Water Park Half Ironman.

Ben Lux out

Ben Tickner and Paule Kremer have been a real presence in the club over the last few years, not only on the racing front but on the social scene as well. For the time being they have relocated to Luxembourg. We asked Ben to give an update.

Paule is training to be an English teacher and I have recently got a contract teaching English to adults. Luxembourg has nice pastries, sausages in rolls, Cremant (white wine like champagne) and lots of rich bankers roaring around the city in fast cars.

The country is very small but a nice place to live and although we both miss Brighton, it's nice to know it's a short hop home.

There is a lot of interest in triathlon here, and Paule was 46th woman in the inaugural 70.3 half ironman on 8 September in a time of 5 31:24 (1 hour and 4 mins off her previous best!), which put her sixth in her age group.



I did a triathlon but finished dead last by some margin in the swim and decided I don't like them and training for running is enough for me!

This weekend (29 Sept) I am preparing to run the Route du Vin Half Marathon* against 16 Kenyans who have run under 62 minutes, and long term I am looking at racing the 2014 Brighton Marathon.

I'm hoping to run the national road relays for Phoenix too on the

12th October and after that the European Cross Trials.

Regarding the club, I think that there have been some great successes with the multi sport athletes but also the younger ones, eg the new 800 metre champion [Spencer Thomas]. What I do think is missing is someone in a coaching capacity who can cater for the longer distance athletes. Josh Guilman, Jon Pepper and I are a valuable resource for training and how to train correctly as we all race pretty well and I think we could help out with this.

We are missing you all and the pre- and post-race banter!

** The race was duly won by Kenyan Limo Jackson in 1:01:31. Ben was ninth in 1:07:10*

Jon's record

April 12th saw Brighton Phoenix member Jon Pepper run the 4th Brighton Marathon in a blistering 2:20:28 - a new club record.



Jon was the first British runner to finish, coming eighth overall. His time broke Matt Patterson's time of 2:23:53 set way back in the early 1980s. Both Matt and Steve Overt had been following the outcome of Jon's run and they sent their congratulations afterwards.

There was a great Phoenix turnout and some superlative performances, with Bruce Warren (M50) finishing 20th in a time of 2:52:15 and Liz Durman, making her marathon debut, coming 32nd in the women's race (3:26:28).

Boston remembered

On 15 April, a week before the London Marathon, a horrific bomb attack took place at the Boston Marathon. Three bystanders were killed and 264 were injured. Tom Farsides gives a personal account of how this affected his motivation at London.



Runners bow their heads in silence prior to the start of the 2013 London Marathon.

I was focussed on getting a sub-3 hour at London this year but my motivation completely changed the Monday before the race.

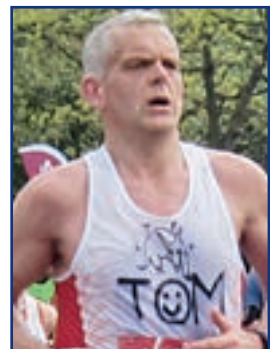
Since 2009 I have been in daily internet contact with a group of runners who ran the Boston Marathon that year. I have met many of them and several are now 'proper' friends. About 50 of them were running in the Boston Marathon this year. As the events unfolded on Patriot's Day, we were all resolving to run the event next year. To guarantee a place, I needed to run sub-3:10 at London. That became my A-goal.

I stopped myself getting too emotional during the 30-seconds silence to honour the Boston Marathon and from then on my primary focus was to run as well as I could.

At Mile 10, a band was playing Sweet Caroline, the 'theme song' of the Boston Red Sox (baseball team) and therefore of Boston itself. I raised my hands above my head and clapped them and then got back on with the job in hand.

Cramp in the latter stages meant no sub-3 but I was grimly satisfied to have achieved my A-goal,

Spotting my Boston vest, I was interviewed by a couple of American journalists. Their accounts can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/br3ajpg> or <http://tinyurl.com/d3xks2d>



Paul's Poll

Paul Collicutt has been nominated as coach of the year in a Local Council initiative. The decision will be made on 23 October but meanwhile this is his commendation:

Paul is a level 3 UK Athletics Coach and has been coaching in the city for over 20 years. As well as being Chairman [of Phoenix], he coaches at least 4-5 sessions a week to athletes of all abilities and ages (mainly aged 9-20). Paul is a remarkable coach who inspires young people to improve their performance, and currently coaches five young athletes who compete at a national standard. Paul has been the lynch pin of the club for more than two decades, and takes great pride in developing talent in young athletes.

Good luck Paul - we think the recognition is richly deserved!

THE SUPER SIX

Junior mentor, Joel Kidger, gives the lowdown on the Phoenix U17 lads.

For those who don't know me, I used to run 800s and 1500s at a fairly high level. I ran 1.47 for 800m and represented GB and England as a Senior. My role now is to act as a kind of 'mentor' for the U17/U15 middle-distance guys - something I really enjoy as they are a great bunch of lads.

Inspiration from the U20s

When I first started training with Phoenix, there was a strong group of U17s coming through - the likes of Charlie Grice, Finn McNally and Max Pickard, as well as promising U20s like Dan Stepney and Matt Barrie. These guys formed the foundations of the group as it is today and gave the U15s and U13s that were emerging through the youth ranks (Billy, Archie, Sam and Robbie at the time) something to look up to and strive towards. I think Charlie's progress in the last couple of years has really helped inspire some of the lads and helped us raise the bar in terms of expectations within the group and belief in what can be achieved with hard work and determination. Previously we may have been happy to have

some of our guys reach the English Schools, but now we want to be collecting medals and national titles as well as gaining international vests at Junior levels.

A range of strengths

In the last year or two the 'new' U17 group has come into its own, and has formed what is now probably one of the strongest young training groups in the country. We have six core guys in the group, with new people joining all the time. Each has their own strength and bring something unique to the group, which is one of the main reasons I think they work so well together. Billy is really strong all round; Spence and Sam 'Speed' Kitchen always add a bit of spice to the speed sessions; Robbie and Jake have great endurance on the mid to long reps; and Arch, who is only 14 (15 in October), is rapidly coming through to keep all the older guys on their toes!

A six-day training programme

The expert coaching set-up really helps facilitate the athletes' development, and there is a great mix of experience to guide the athletes through. Jon Bigg, who has a wealth of experience, is head coach and sets the main training programmes along with Paul Collicutt, but there's also great support from the likes of Dave Howe on track nights and Dan Stepney who helps guide the strength and

Archie Davis

Age 14

Nickname 'Arch'

Started athletics October 2010

Previous clubs Arena 80

Preferred distance 800m

Favourite session 10 x 150m with walkback

Least favourite session 6 x 800's off 2 minutes

Ambitions for 2014 Break the 4 minute mark for 1500m, make the English Schools final a year under age and possibly medal

Target times 2014 3:59 (1500), 1:55 (800)

Influential people My family for their support. Jon Bigg, as he knows his stuff and is always willing to help. Joel Kidger, as we have a great relationship on and off the track, and he always loves to see the athlete succeed. Plus everyone in the group, as they are older and have good experience.

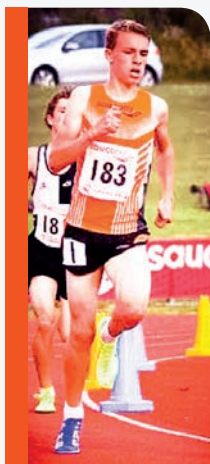
Top tip for youngsters It's important not to do too much too early, everyone develops and progresses at their own pace.

Favourite possession My phone

Favourite pastime Spending quality time with friends.

Achievements 2010 - Sussex Schools Cross Country Champion, Sussex 1200m Champion. 2011 - Sussex Schools Cross Country Champion, Sussex 1200m Champion. 2012 - Sussex Cross Country Champion, Sussex Cross Country League Champion. 2013 - Sussex Schools Cross Country Champion, Sussex Cross Country Champion, Sussex 800m Champion, Sussex 1500m Champion, 4th English Schools 800m, Southern England 800m Champion, 3rd National 1500m, Sussex All time U15 800m Record.

PBs
400m - 54.02 (training)
800m - 1:58.80
1500m - 4:08.60



Billy White

Age 16

Nickname 'The Big Ogre'

Started athletics 4 years ago

Previous clubs None

Preferred distance 800m

Favourite session Love 10x150m or anything with 300m or 400m in it

Least favourite session 3x10m minutes reps

Ambitions for 2014 To get my first GB vest or England vest either cross country or track

Target times 2014 Sub 1.50 for 800m and 3:47 for 1500m

Influential people Everyone from the training group, training with good people makes you better.

Top tip for youngsters Train hard, you get out what you put in. Also its important to have patience and persist, if you train hard your time will come.

Favourite possession This is probably my phone can't live without it!

Favourite pastime I guess this is probably just chilling with mates, playing FIFA.

Achievements 2011 - English Schools 800m final. 2012 - English Schools 1500m final and Sussex Champion for 800m, 1500m and 3km. 2013 - English schools 800m final (4th), Southern Championships silver medal, Nationals 1500m 5th place, and UK School Games finals.

PBs
400m - 52.01 (training)
800m - 1:54.52
1500m - 3:54.02
3000m - 9:16.08



Jake Alger

Age 16

Nickname 'Snakey Jakey'.

Started athletics 2008

Previous clubs Seaford Striders and Eastbourne Rovers AC

Preferred distance 1500m & Cross Country

Favourite session 3 x 10 mins

Least favourite session 1000m 600m 400m 300m 200m 150m 5 mins recovery between each.

Ambitions for 2014 Qualify for English School Track & Cross Country U20 Men. Finish top 15 at National XC

Target times 2014 3000m 8:35, 1500m 3:54, 800m 1:55.

Influential people My coaches, plus Joel Kidger (very supportive and great athlete) also other team mates, like Charlie Grice, Dan, Billy, Spencer, Robbie, Max, Sam & Archie as they all train hard and are the best team in Sussex.

Top tip for youngsters Train hard, race hard, win easy.

Favourite possession Short shorts

Favourite pastime Billy White throwing an orange at Will Thompson's face at training camp.

Achievements 2013 - Sussex Cross Country League champion, Sussex Schools 1500m 2nd, Sussex Championships 3000m 1st, South East England 1500m 2nd, Southern Championships finalist 1500m 5th, UK National Championships 1500m Finalist 11th.

PBs
800 - 1:59
1500m - 4:05
3000m - 9:02



Joel leading the lads out



conditioning training twice a week at Jon's Gym. The weekly structure is pretty consistent although it changes through the yearly cycles. A typical week would normally entail a park session on Monday, run and weights on Tuesday, track on Wednesday, tempo and weights on Thursday,

rest on Friday, track/park on Saturday, and a long run on Sunday, when we all go out for 9 or 10 miles on the Downs, often followed by a bacon sandwich or fry up!

As well as regular weekly training we try to organise a couple of training camps through the year, where we go away for a few days and really hit some hard training sessions. The last couple of times we've been to the New Forest, which has been great - it's been perfect for doing lots of running off road and threshold sessions. The camps are a great chance for the lads to train hard, but they also just enjoy getting away as a group, and having some fun and great banter.

Fun as well as hard work

I think that this 'social' element is a real key to why we have been successful in creating a great training group. Although they all come to train hard and improve

(and when the sessions start they do train very hard), they also enjoy coming to training as it's where their mates - both on and off the track - are. There's a 'team' spirit that really helps when we go away to races as they all very much support one another and encourage each other on race day.

All the above elements have combined to help the guys really produce the goods on the track this year and we've had a number of star performances that help demonstrate the progress they have made. All of them have run big PBs across all their events. Four of them have reached the English Schools finals: Spencer came 5th in his first ever track season; Billy ran great to take 4th in the same race (both ran 1.54); Archie also came 4th in the 800m U15 final; then Robbie ran fantastically to take a Bronze in the U20 1500m a year under age! On top of this we've had Archie breaking the all-time Sussex record for U15 800m, as well as taking Southern track gold and 3rd place in the National 1500m Championships, plus Robbie taking a national Bronze on the same day. Sam and Jake also ran at the Nationals, and Jake ran a PB to make the 1500m final. To top the bill, in his last race of the season, Spencer Thomas took the gold medal to become National U17 Champion in his first real track season.

All this has been achieved through the hard work of the guys in training, the great set-up and atmosphere that has been created at Phoenix, the support (and facilities!) the coaches provide and, of course, the parents who cart this lot all over the country week after week).

2014 promises to be an even better year - *watch this space!*

Robbie Fitzgibbon

Age 17

Nickname 'Gibby the white Kenyan'

Started athletics 13 years old but started to take it seriously at 16

Previous clubs None

Preferred distance 1500m (or cross country)

Favourite session 5 x 1k reps in winter 400m 200m x6 in summer

Least favourite session 150s

Ambitions for 2014

Make the GB team for world junior championships in the USA, win inter counties cross country U20 also win English schools 1500m and cross country, continue to run pb's over each distance.

Target times 2014 1500m: 3:42 3000m: 8:08 5000m 14:00

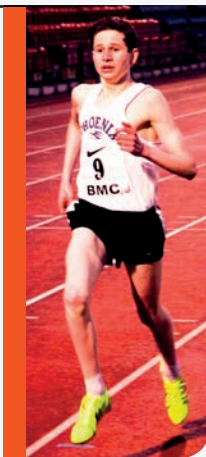
Influential people My training mate Charlie Grice as he is doing so well for himself and that gives me inspiration to emulate the things he has done. Also my good friend Joel Kidger as he gives me good advice and support to help me in my athletics. My coach Jon Bigg also plays a big part as he gives devotes a lot of his time to making me a better athlete and knows what it takes to get to the highest level of my sport.

Top tip for youngsters Respect yourself to be respected by others.

Favourite possession Garmin Watch and XBOX, can't decide what I prefer.

Favourite pastime Video games, listening to music, chilling with buddies.

Achievements 2010 - 4:29 for 1500m, 11th at Lotto XC Cup, 170th McCain Challenge League Birmingham 2011 - 4:25 1500m 9:47 3000m. 2012 - 3:55 1500m, 8:50 3000m 7th at English Schools 1500m, Sussex Schools Champion, made English Schools 1st time, 4th Southern 1500m. 2013 - 3:49 1500m, 8:24 3000m, 1:54 800m. 3rd at English Schools 1500m bottom



of the age group (also only the 2nd time qualifying for English Schools) Ranked 3rd for a 17 year old over 1500m (16th U20) and 3rd over 3000m (6th U20). 2nd at the Westminster Mile (U17) in 4:16.

PBs

400 - 51 High!! (Rolling start in training though)

800 - 1:54

1500 - 3:49

3000m - 8:24

Sam Kitchen

Age 16

Nickname 'Kitch'

Started athletics 2011

Previous clubs

Phoenix all the way

Preferred distance

800m and 400m

Favourite session

8x150m with walk back recovery

Least favourite session

1 km reps

Ambitions for 2014

English schools final

Target times 2014 800m 1:53, 400m 48.5

Influential people Top coaches Jon Bigg and Paul Collicutt for their expert advice, Joel Kidger for his help, my mum, PE teacher from secondary school, family and friends.

Top tip for youngsters Run for yourself, run for enjoyment and not for someone else.

Favourite possession Sprint spikes

Favourite pastime

Going away on Phoenix training camps with the lads.

Achievements

2011 - English Schools

2012 - Sussex Schools 800m Champion 2013 - 2nd

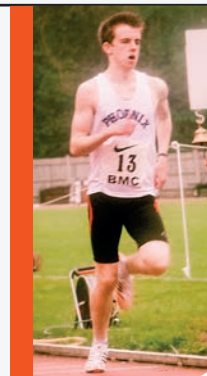
Sussex County & Sussex Schools 400m.

PBs

400m - 51.8

800m - 1:59.3

1500m - 4:18 (2012)



Spencer Thomas

Age 16

Nickname 'Spenny'

Started athletics 2012

Previous clubs Arena 80

Preferred distance 800m

Favourite session 10 x 150m with walk back

Least favourite session 1km reps in the winter

Ambitions for 2014 Hopefully go to the World Youth Olympics in Nanjing.

Target times 2014 1:50 for the 800m.

Influential people My team mates pushing each other to do better!

Top tip for youngsters Wait and your time will come.

Favourite possession My phone!

Favourite pastime Hanging out with mates and going out on a good bike ride on the Downs.

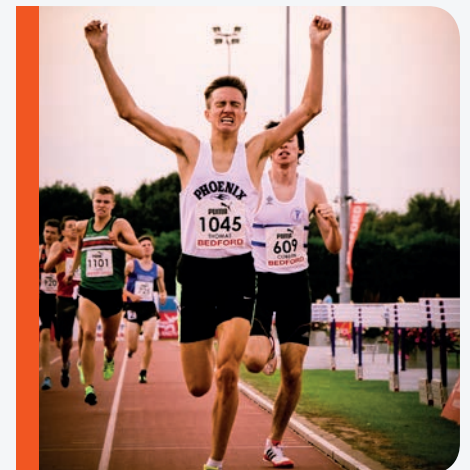
Achievements 2013 - National Champion for 800m, Sussex Champion for 800m and 1500m, 2nd at the Southern Championships for 800m, 5th at English Schools for the 800m.

PBs

400 - 51.7

800 - 1:54:65

1500 - 4:08:1



Charles the first

We asked **Charlie Grice** to tell us something about his progression through the club ranks from promising primary school athlete to International contender.

My first love as a youngster was always football. I had the speed, agility and strength, and I dreamt of making it as a footballer.

To increase my endurance, my Dad encouraged me to join a cross country club at my primary school, St. Bernadette's. After a short while I was asked to compete in the Brighton School's Cross Country Championships and, incredibly, with very little training I won the event. I really enjoyed the experience.

Early years at Phoenix

Immediately after the race I was approached by Chris Isherwood, a coach at Phoenix. He was very impressed with my running and invited me along to Phoenix to train. Max Pickard had joined a few weeks before me and we started our journey together through the ranks. In the early days it was all about enjoyment and not trying to do too much too soon. However, I always wanted to be the best and win everything – and to stay that way as long as possible. I set myself goals each season and was encouraged enormously by my parents, who would come with me to every race.

I have enjoyed the camaraderie at Phoenix, with the older athletes always encouraging the younger ones. The annual training camps with the coaches and older athletes were always great fun, as were the few trips to the Belgian Cross Country Cup competition in Brussels in December. Families would come too and enjoy the Christmas markets, another good way to socialise with different age groups in the club.

Coaching at Phoenix and beyond

I've had three coaches at Phoenix, who have all held me back as that has been in my best interest. I successfully combined football and athletics for a few years but as I started to make National finals, it was clear that if I really wanted to achieve my goals in athletics that the two didn't go together. I was getting quite a few injuries including a broken ankle and wrist. I represented my county at football and believed I could have pushed on further. But football is a team game and you are only as good as your team whereas in athletics the only person you have to rely on is yourself.

My coach Chris left Phoenix and I was coached for several years by Dave Howe. Dave was fantastic and really went out of his way

for me and for that I will always be grateful. My new challenge was always just around the corner! I won a bronze medal at the National Champs and silver at the Southern Champs.

Then four year ago Dave told me he felt that he had taken me as far as he could and that the time was right to progress to a higher level. At this point Jon Bigg had been overseeing me for a little while, and he now became my coach. I respect Dave a lot for not wanting to hold onto me for too long.

I should also mention Paul Collicutt, who has always worked tirelessly for the club and athletes. Without Paul the club simply wouldn't function and we all have a lot to thank him for. Paul has always helped out with my training. He has been the link in the chain, always ready to time sessions, help and advise – and tell great stories about Steve and co!

Jon has continued to be my coach since I started at St Mary's – a university I chose purely for my running. It was definitely the right decision as I enjoy the location, varied training, and the facilities we have on the doorstep. There has never been a day when there is no one to train with because even when friends aren't running, they will come out on the bike.

The ups - and the downs

The road to success doesn't come easy. There are always disappointments along the way. For example, in my first English Schools I came 6th and didn't make the final. I then came 6th in the final the following year and I remember asking Jon why I could not kick off the pace at the bell with the other athletes. The following year, with the guidance of Jon, I ended up winning the 1500m and breaking the Championship record!

2010 was the year I burst onto the international scene and had a breakthrough year dominating my age group domestically:

- 1st- Southern Championships
- 1st- English Schools Championships and breaking the Championship Best Performance
- 1st- Aviva Schools International
- 2nd- European Youth Olympics (in Moscow)
- 3rd- World Youth Olympics (in Singapore – the trip of a lifetime, which led to me getting onto the UK Athletics World Class Performance Programme)

This year has been a good one for me, topping the rankings for the u23 age group over 800m/1500m/mile. I managed to medal at the Europeans, winning the silver medal; this was a great achievement for me as the last two Championships hadn't gone well. Jon was a team manager this year at the Europeans, so it was especially nice to get it right on the day.

I have also started to be competitive at senior level, helping GB win the bronze at the European Team Champs in Gateshead, which was the first international Championships on home soil since the Olympics. One of my favourite races of the year was the Westminster Mile back in May, which kicked my season off; this was my first senior title, one which Ovett also won back in his day.

Very soon Jon and I will sit down and plan my targets for the coming year. I am a strong believer that anything is possible; never give up on your dreams. I am living proof, I haven't got there yet, but I am on my way – so watch this space.

Overall I would say that athletes who are members of Phoenix are very fortunate that they belong to such a great club with a great history and many experienced coaches. Listen to them – they know their stuff, and they have their athletes' best interests at heart!

Charlie

“The road to success doesn't come easy.”

Charlie with coach Jon Bigg after receiving his team bronze medal at the European Junior XC Championships in Budapest last December



Girls (and boys) just wanna have fun...

Brighton Phoenix is bursting with young talent. Can you spot yourself among these pics?



Photos by Lance Bellers, Roy Hayward and Judith Matthews

Brighton Phoenix Races

ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, GO...

Preston Park, Brighton • Sunday 10 November 2013

Races for children and young athletes and The Friday-Ad Mile for seniors.

The races run around a small lap of the inner park around the Chalet Café.

The surface is park paths with the last part of the race on grass.

Prizes: Medals awarded to ALL U9 and U11 finishers. Prizes for first three in other races.

Team medals (affiliated teams only x 3 runners). Cash prizes for mile race.



The Races (around a 800m+ lap)

Start	Race	Distance
12.15	U11 Girls	1600m
12.30	U11 Boys	1600m
12.45	Senior men and women	Friday-Ad Mile
13.00	U13 Girls	1600m
13.15	U13 Boys	1600m
13.30	U9 Girls	800m
13.45	U9 Boys	800m
14.00	U15/U17 Girls	2400m
14.15	U15/U17 Boys	4000m

Full info at www.brightonphoenix.org.uk



Richard Nerurkar

Almi in full flight

Running in the family

Almi Nerurkar is a rising star of Phoenix. Here she tells us about her running. Her dad, Richard, was an Olympic Marathon runner.

How old were you when you started running? I did my first race when I was two, but I only started training when we moved back from Ethiopia three years ago.

What's your favourite training session? It's hard to choose, but my favourite session is probably long hills at Withdean Park.

What's your least favourite? When the session is cancelled.

What's your favourite race? I enjoy 1500m on the track and less muddy cross countries.

Out of all your races last season, which win means the most? A 1500m in the English Schools Cup South East Region. I won in a new PB (4:51), beating a girl who beat me two days earlier.

Who is your favourite athlete? [Ethiopian and current World and Olympic 10,000 metres Champion] Tirunesh Dibaba

What other sports do you play? I play quite a few sports in school like netball, hockey, football and rounders. I also go swimming out of school.

What's the best thing about being a member of Brighton Phoenix? All the coaches I've had have been so friendly and I love the atmosphere on club nights!

Who is your favourite training partner? I enjoy training with Chloe and Naomi. Chloe is always cheery and makes the hard work in training much more bearable! Naomi is a good friend outside training as well.



Run, jump... and ducks

The U11s limber up at Hove Park

Under 13/15 team manager Roy Hayward reports on the recent progress of Phoenix athletes in this age group.

It has been rewarding to manage the track and field teams this year. There have been some good performances in both the under 13 and 15 teams. Everyone who competed did well.

In the under 13s **Louisa Saunders** shaved over a second off her 75m and 150m times. **Lola Evans** has jumped over 4 metres this summer, as has **William Saunders**. **Almi Nerurkar** again has run brilliantly, coming close to the league record at 1000m. **Izzie Whitelegg** and **Naomi Fontyn** have both run brilliantly. **Maia Hardman** has done fantastically well, throwing both shot and discus as well as running. The relay teams also did well with our main team coming 5th in The County Championships

The under 15s competed in the League for the first time. Everyone who took part did well despite the weather at the first meet in June being dreadful with driving wind and rain. We felt like we were ducks!

Chloe Watson ran the 1500 in all meets. **Marina Reid Martin** jumped well in the two meets and final and was unbeaten. **Ateya Marshal** jumped 1.35m – a fantastic achievement considering she only took the event up a few months ago. She also ran well at 800m. **Cameron Hardman** ran, jumped and threw brilliantly. **Tara May, Ella Grabsky, Anna Lewes, and Leah Singh** all did well.



Roy and team Phoenix at Sportshall

Thanks to Steve Hardman who helped me with the team, judging etc. all season. Thanks also to Rod Saunders for his help. Many thanks to everyone who took part and to the parents, who got them there! It has been a pleasure working with these young athletes.

Marina jumps for joy

Marina Reid Martin is a star long jumper for Phoenix. She rates the coaches as the best thing about the club for the motivation and support. Here she tells us about her event.

"I discovered I could long jump in Year 7 in PE. Now the hardest thing about my event is getting the run-up, perfect.

"I play other sports too including netball, football and tag rugby and my favourite training sessions are the long jump and sprint sessions and I don't like the long distance group sessions. Last season the win that meant the most to me was at the Schools Track and Field Championships K2 in Crawley where I jumped 4.95 metres.

"I also compete in the 200m and relay for Phoenix and my favourite Long Jumper in the world is [American Olympic gold medalist, and five-time world champion] Brittney Reese.

"When I grow up I'd like to be an athlete or a model or FBI agent."



Marina takes off

U11 training group

Alex Brothwell (age 10) gives his view of the U11 training group.



I've missed running and training since the closure of Withdean so it was good to restart in September at Hove Park.

I'd not seen my Phoenix friends for a while so the first session back was lots of fun. I have a lot of friends through Phoenix and especially like training with Lukas (Nerurkar), Arun (Burgess), Douglas (Zveushe) and George (Cooper).

We've done lots of different sessions and activities at Hove Park including hill training, sprints, drills and my favourite – relays. I always try and be in a group with my friends. The last relay we ran in, our team dropped the baton so I think when we get back to Withdean, our coach Bruce needs to go through more relay changeovers with us.

I can't wait to go back to Withdean and try the new track. Some of the girls I train with are hoping it's a blue track or even bright pink. I don't care as long as it's bouncier and makes us run faster. When we get back to Withdean, we are all going to be split into different groups. I'm looking forward to this as it will push everyone to their best abilities. I hope we get to mix up sprints and endurance as I like doing both.

I know the winter is coming so I'm going to grin and bear it when it's cold and wet as I know winter training helps the most. And me and my friends have entered next year's Brighton Half-Marathon and Marathon mini miles.

I've been with the club for over a year now. I hope the new youth members joining Phoenix when we return to Withdean enjoy training and running for the club as much as I do.

Bruce Warren describes his role as U11 coach.

How long have you been coaching at Phoenix? It is all a blur, I think it was early 2011.

How did you get involved? Wrong place, wrong time – I remember all the help my coach gave me as a young athlete, so I wanted to give something back to the sport.

What do you enjoy most about your group? The enthusiasm that most of the children have, even if it is cold and wet.

And the least? There are so many children and I only see most of them for 45 minutes a week and I confess to being useless with names, so I can't remember any names.

What is the most important thing you've learned being a coach at Phoenix? There are a lot of young people in Brighton who are prepared to work extraordinarily hard to achieve their potential.

Tell us about a typical training night. What do you do with your group? The session always starts with a warm up, we then divide into groups to do drills. These are important as they will be doing them for rest of their athletic careers, and we try and make them fun. We then go into the main session, which is mainly running but can be jumping. We haven't done a lot of throwing in the past but we are planning to change that. If there is time at the end we finish with a relay.

Why is Phoenix such a good club for youth runners? I think all clubs have experienced a boom in young members since the Olympics. Phoenix has a good reputation due to the national success several of its members are experiencing. It is a friendly club



with a small group of very dedicated volunteer coaches and parent helpers.

When did you start running? I started running when I went to secondary school.

In those days we did proper cross country every week, not just a couple of laps around the football field! A coach from my local club, Hastings AC, then joined the school and saw me running and invited me along, I think I was 15.

What is your best distance and time? Now as a 'super vet' (old man category) I enjoy all distances. I still have a bit of speed left in the old legs and have even done a few track races this year as well as everything up to the marathon. I hear some young runners moaning that they are not old enough to run 10k's and half marathons. My message is the faster you can run the shorter distances, the faster you will be able to run a distance race. Look how fast Mo Farah needs to run the last lap of a 10k! At present my highest national ranking for my age is the half marathon, which I did in 78:08 this year.

What training sessions do you like doing yourself? A long run over the Downs with a few friends as the sun is rising on a clear sunny day. I also enjoy trying to keep up with the youngsters in interval sessions.

And hate? A long run on the Downs when it's dark, cold and wet.

Who is your favourite athlete and why? I was named after Bruce Tulloh so have to mention him. However, it has to be Steve Ovett – he was local and my hero when I was a youth, better than that Coe chap!

What other sports do you play/enjoy watching? I enjoy watching most sports. I have had an Arsenal season ticket for years but I don't have time to go regularly anymore.

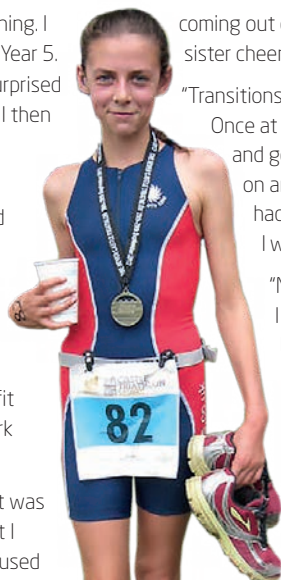
Junior triathlete

Charlotte Matthews, first 13-15 girl home in the world's largest children's triathlon at Hever Castle, tells us about her sport.

"I got into the triathlon through running. I competed in a cross country race in Year 5. I won that race and my mum was surprised as she didn't know I was that good. I then won the race again in Year 6 and so joined Phoenix.

"I'd always swam and my coach told me to join Dolphins Swimming Club. I've always cycled as my family love bikes – we like to cycle down to Carats Cafe, have a cooked breakfast and cycle back. Now I cycle to the track and pool to keep fit and my dad takes me to Preston Park cycle track.

"My first triathlon was at Ringmer, it was a Hedgehog Tri event and after that I was hooked even though I got confused



coming out of the pool as the first girl. I saw my sister cheering me on and ran the wrong way.

"Transitions between the events can be tricky. Once at Hever Castle I got out of the water and got my shoes, number belt and helmet on and realised I still had my wetsuit on! I had to take everything off and start again. I was so stressed.

"My mum has a checklist for all the items I need for triathlon like spray, elastic bands, talcum powder and vaseline. There are 53 items on my checklist so you have to be dedicated!

"Training is hard and takes up most of my free time. Every Monday I do hill training at Withdean with Phoenix; Tuesdays are swimming at Prince Regent with Dolphins; Wednesdays

I'm at athletics and Thursdays are swimming again. Friday is my rest day and I need to see my friends, and Saturdays I go to the cycle track at Preston Park.

"I think more kids are interested in triathlon after Britain's success at London 2012 – the Brownlee brothers won a gold (Alistair) and bronze (Jonathan) and in the women's Helen Jenkins came fifth.

"I want to go all the way and be in the Olympic triathlon one day. I've had that dream since I started the sport. I also want to be a sports journalist too.

"I'd like to encourage a lot more younger athletes to have a go at the triathlon. You should get involved in after-school clubs, and athletics clubs like Phoenix are good to join. The Hedgehog Triathlon events are a good starting point for kids too as they slowly introduce you to the sport."

More info at: www.hedgehogtri.co.uk



A leg end in his own lifetime

We finally plucked up the courage to ask John Lamb what the Greek script tattooed on his left leg meant. He replied: "It says Nikomen (we have won). According to legend, these were the final words of Pheidippides, the Spartan warrior who ran from Marathon to Athens to tell the king of victory over the Persian Army in 490BC. The battle had raged for days and he had fought non-stop. He died moments after uttering those words." So now we know!

Star turns



Did you catch it? ITV's "Celebrity Mr and Mrs" on 22 May featured our own Mr Jon Bigg and Mrs Sally Gunnell. They were up against two other couples in the quiz show that tries to find out just how much they know about each other. Although they didn't win, as far as this viewer was concerned, they came over really well, certainly compared to the frankly bonkers Joey Essex and Sam Faiers from TOWIE and the thespy Jenny McAlpine from Corrie with her boyfriend Chris Farr. Well done guys, you played a blinder.

The double

Gary Wilson decided he would run the Brighton Marathon and, a week later, the London Marathon. He has written an exhilarating account of doing the double which is well worth a read. You can find it at: brightonphoenix.org.uk/documents/london.doc

Next up

Oct 19	Sussex XC League 1	Goodwood
Oct 13	Haywards Heath Open XC Races	Hickstead
Nov 2	ECCA XC Relays	Mansfield
Nov 10	Phoenix Road Races	Preston Park
Nov 17	Brighton 10k	SGP
Nov 23	Sussex XC League 2	Plumpton
Dec 1	Crowborough 10k	SGP
Dec 7	Sussex XC League 3	Lancing
Dec 8	Mince Pie 10M Run	
Dec 14	SEAA XC Masters & Inter Counties	Biggleswade
Dec 22	Minithon U9, U11, U13	Lea Valley
Jan 4 or 5	Sussex XC Champs <i>(Date depends on FA cup draw)</i>	Stanmer Park
Jan 11	U13/U15 Open	Lea Valley
Jan 15	Sussex Schools XC Champs	Waterhall, Brighton
Jan 18	Sussex Masters/Intermediate XC Champs	Lancing
Jan 25	SEAA XC Main Champs	Parliament Hill Fields
Feb 16	Brighton Half Marathon	
Feb 16	Brighton Half Youth Races	
Feb 22	ECCA National XC Champs	Nottingham
Mar 1	Sussex XC League 4	Bexhill
Mar 20	Sussex Schools Year 7/8 XC Champs	Horsham
April 19	Sussex Road Relays	Horsham

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**BRIGHTON
Phoenix**

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Asthma notice

If you are asthmatic and use an inhaler you may need to register it for competition. Club Secretary, Paul Ross 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.

Phoenix Flyer is for and about you. It relies on contributions from coaches, managers, athletes, friends and families. Why not send us your contribution for the next edition? The deadline is 28 February 2014. Send contributions to: brightonphoenixmedia@gmail.com putting NEWSLETTER before the subject title.

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

