



Fairlands Valley Spartans Running Club

UK's Best Running Club 2010

Affiliated to UK Athletics and the Association of Running Clubs

'Catch a Coach' ~ newsletter

Issue 7

July 2010

Catch a Coach newsletter

Welcome to the seventh edition of 'CATCH A COACH', the publication from the coaching team for all members. This is designed to give the coaching team a chance to give you news on training events within the club, how the coaching team are taking forward their development and new features to look out for to help in your own training. It also supports the material that you will find within the 'Catch a Coach' feature from within the club's own website. Please let the team know what you think – your feedback is a big help.

In this edition we are looking at the key areas of the July schedule with our top 10 things to do. We are continuing to build on the training that we have scheduled in the build up to the MWL race series and our track training will also be supporting those that are involved in the EVAC league as well as the series of track racing that are being held at venues such as Watford and Sandy..

I hope you find the newsletter helpful. Remember if you have any questions about the material in it or on the 'Catch a Coach' section within the club's website just CATCH A COACH or send an e-mail to the team at catchacoach@fvspartans.org.uk

Cheers

Chris 'Coach' Leigh



What's coming up - 10 of the best for July

July sees a whole host of racing activity for the club! Let's get straight into the key areas for the month.

1. 4th July – the first of our training sessions at Rowney Warren (Chicksands). Held in this lovely setting in the woods this gives you a chance to take part in a mixture of tempo, interval and hill running all using these off road, woodland routes.
2. 7th July – the third of the EVAC league fixtures is being held at Chelmsford. I am sure our EVAC members will be out in force to build on the results from the first two fixtures. Are there any other 'vets' out there who would like to take part??? Go and have a word with Dave or Tessa Stephenson at training.
3. 11th July – all those Spartan ladies out there who would like to take part in the Race for Life, make sure you have your entries in!!!! Can we have a Spartan win the race for the second year in succession????!!!! For those of you who are not running please contact Steve Smithson if you are able to give up some time to help out on the day (full details are on the Forum).

4. 14th July – a great opportunity to take part in the MOB match to celebrate the finish of the MWL series campaign for 2010 and also share in the glory for our runners who have won medals in their categories.
5. 18th July – the Fairlands Valley Challenge. This is a big event in the club calendar and offers runners the chance of a 12 mile, 18 mile or 26.2 mile off road runs taking in the countryside around the town. All standards welcome. If you are not able to take part in the running then please try and spare some time to help the club put the run on and make it another huge success!
6. 20th July – a chance to run 3K but with team spirit as well!!! It's the Fairlands Valley relays!! Teams of 5 men or 3 ladies compete on a 3K circuit around the lakes. If you want to take part in this very popular event it would be a big help if you could add your names to the growing lists on the appropriate posting on the Forum. This will help our club captains work out team combinations ahead of the start.
7. 22nd July – do you still not know what Fartlek means? There is another opportunity to take part in a Fartlek run using the grass field within the Fairlands Valley and find out what it is all about. This enables you to focus on your running form and pace over random intervals of pace and recovery. Richard Bate is also offering an alternative session on the same evening with hills on Fairlands Way followed by a 3K tempo run. Full details are on the Forum in the FVS Events section.
8. 3rd July – there is another great opportunity to try either a 1500m or 3000m pace judgement session at Ridlins stadium. Training starts at 9.15am with a programme of warm ups, drills and mobilisations.
9. Get your race entries in for the 5K race series. The race dates are coming up and places will fill fast! The races are being held on the 5th August, 19th August and 2nd September, each starting at 7:45pm from our base at Marriotts School.

10. Although it is not until October, the Standalone 10K will fill up quickly. Paul Holgate is arranging a block club booking with North Herts Road Runners to secure our places (over 75 have already they want to run for the club) but he only has until the end of July to submit the confirmed list (with payments of £10 per entrant). Please let Paul know if you want to run and your name is not yet on the list – don't forget your entry fee either!

Remember: if you are feeling unwell in any way during or after your run please make sure that you speak to a member of your groups coaching team. They need to be aware of this so that they can monitor the situation during training.

If you are feeling unwell before the training session then you are advised not to run.

Development of the coaching team

Jim Brown will be taking part in the first of the new look UKA coaching courses when he attends the Assistant Coach course at Harlow on 10/11 July.

On the 20th June, Steve Smithson, Paul Carter, Tony Osborne, Tricia Hopper, Sarah O'Bryan, Andy Jay, Lisa Potter and Graham Blackburn passed a one day emergency first aid course that was held at Marriotts Sports Centre. A big thank you to Jamie Drackford for organising and delivering this. Chris Leigh, Katrina Doyle and Jamie Drackford have already received emergency first aid training.

Emergency contact details

Our membership forms will be updated for 2011 to include emergency contact details. In the meantime, we would like to update our records to ensure that we have up to date emergency contact details for our members. Please contact the club at membership@fvspartans.org.uk and provide us with an emergency contact telephone number (not your own mobile number), address and contact name.

Racing tactics

Some race tactics can be prepared well in advance but often you will need to respond to situations as they unfold, such as a competitor making an unexpected surge. You can practice stressful tactical moves in training workouts and mentally rehearse tactical possibilities so that you are more prepared for various situations that can arise in races. Here are a series of additional tactical points to consider in your racing and preparations:

- one option is to pace to run your best time and be confident this will be good enough to beat your main competitors. This won't exactly pit you in racing duels but can be the most effective way to compete for many of us;

- take the lead from the start, whether leading the entire race or just the set of competitors you are pitting yourself against. You can push for the first part of a race, say the first mile, before easing into a pace you can handle to protect the lead you have established. This tactic can undermine your competitors confidence and boost your own. This tactic is not without risk because it demands that you can break away and maintain that lead without faltering during the remainder of the race. You can adapt this tactic by forging ahead early on in a race but without pushing 'all out' and aim to wear down your competitors over a longer period of the race.

- you can run with your competitors and look to push on ahead of them at a key part of the race. This could be at a particularly challenging point, for example on a hill, where the sight of you passing them and holding a lead can be a psychological killer blow. You need to practice putting in these surges as part of your training. The best opportunities for this are either in interval sessions or on fartlek runs. Start the session using a fast but controlled pace and somewhere in the middle of the session put in a faster interval. You can then finish the session pushing through with the remaining reps, feeling tired, to mimic the finishing conditions of a race.

- responding to a surge – if your competitor puts in a surge during a race then you will need to be ready to respond. Try mentally tossing out a line to them and gradually pull them back into contact. Resist the temptation to go all out by responding

immediately and don't panic or give up. Try and remain calm and consider how you will respond by gradually increasing your pace and drawing them back in.

- remember to adjust your tactics for different race distances. The tactics you use in a 5K race will not necessarily service you well in a half marathon. In a 5K race you need to be in contact with your competitors from the start whereas a half marathon distance gives you longer to respond to gaps that emerge between yourself and your competitors.

- don't let others psych you out! Focus on yourself and what you need to do rather than letting others get into your head! Remember, you run the race with your legs and not your mouth!

- try running as part of a pack in the race. You can use other runners in this way to hold or push your pace, use them as a wind break or help you up hills.

- use runners as tow ropes – drop in behind someone who passes you and stay with the pace as long as possible. If you have to let go, take a break and then try to hook up with another runner.

- set passing goals - set yourself small goals of passing runners as the race progresses. See how many runners you can catch over the second half of a race, for example. You can play games with yourself by keeping a mental score - +1 for each runner you pass and -1 for each runner that overtakes you. By setting yourself scoring targets in final sections of races you can also help this to hold your concentration on the race and get the best out of your performance

- don't get bogged down with the 'pecking order syndrome'. If you analyse your competition and work out that you should be placed behind certain runners than that is what is likely to happen. Challenge the pecking order – dare yourself to move up to a new level!

Experience of racing will give you a greater understanding of what works for you in different situations. Practice different situations in training so that you are better prepared but don't forget – don't leave your race in the training session! (i.e. don't over cook your training so that you are spent for that big race coming up).