



Fairlands Valley Spartans Running Club

Affiliated to UK Athletics and the Association of Running Clubs

'Catch a Coach' ~ newsletter

Issue 3

March 2010

Catch a Coach newsletter

Welcome to the third 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 March schedule with our top 10 things to do as well as an update on the development activities that have been taken up by members of the coaching team. There is also an update on the feature we started last month where we focus on training goals for some of our members and the advice the team have provided them.

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

We would love to receive your feedback and ideas for features in future 'Catch a Coach' newsletters.

Finally, please remember that we are still running in dark evenings. It is important that all runners wear bright clothing, ideally with reflective strips and/or one of the LED bands available from the club. The kit guys have a great range of club kit available, including the fluoro tops. Just see Ian Larman, Jamie Drackford or Simon Harris at training or e-mail them at kit@fvspartans.org.uk

Cheers

Chris 'Coach' Leigh



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

We thought the disruption of the snow, ice and cold weather was over by the end of January but it still dogged us at times during February. Nevertheless we were able to stick to our training schedule with very few adjustments needed. For March we are looking forward to further improvements in the weather and the lighter evenings. March is going to be packed with running – let's see what is in store, with ten of the best!!!!

1. It's the month for Sport Relief!



On Saturday 20th March the club are holding their own mile events at Ridlins stadium, Woodcock Road. Just come along at 9.30am and join in. There is no need to pre-enter, just turn up and pay your entry fee and run a mile (£3 for adults, £2 for children or £8 for a family of 4 entry). All proceeds go to the Sport Relief charity. There is a prize for the best fancy dress 'miler' and a prize for the most creative way of completing the mile! Also, look out for the 'Who kept it up longest' hoola hoop sweepstake. A chance to win £30 for a £2 stake and also provide extra funds for the charity when you enter. Please see Chris Leigh to enter.

- On the following day (Sunday 21st March) Sport Stevenage are holding the official Sport Relief mile at Ridlins Stadium from 1pm. You can pre-enter for this through the official website www.sportrelief.com or go along and provide your support for the organisers (see the Forum for further details).
2. For those that are spring marathon or half marathon training there will be long runs scheduled each Sunday during March to support your goals. Also, look out for the follow up 'clinics' after training on Tuesday 2nd March for the half marathon and Tuesday 9th March for the marathon. A chance to chat about your training to date, what you need to be doing in the lead up to the race and on the day of the race.
 3. On Sunday 21st March Paul Holgate will be leading out the Club 20 event. Designed to support those training for a marathon (giving them the chance to run 20 miles in training) there are also shorter mileage options from 8 miles upwards so it is NOT just for the marathon junkies!!! Keep a look out for the details on the FVS events board within the Forum.
 4. Our main Tuesday training sessions will continue to support the four different training groups and will see a progression in the length of the timed efforts we will be using as we go through the month.
 5. The 25th March sees the third 5K handicap in 2010. This is another great opportunity to get in a timed 5K run with the added attraction of trying to beat the handicap you have been set by our resident club statistician, Paul Holgate.
 6. On 14th March there will be a number of Spartans zooming around the sweeping curves at Silverstone racing track for the half marathon. A number will be running their first half marathon and have been following advice from the coaching team as well as sticking with the Sunday training runs. We wish all Spartans taking part the best of luck – it should be a great day. Just remember not to go too fast down Hangar Straight as there is a tricky chicane to negotiate afterwards!!!
 7. For those that were either not able to enter the Silverstone half or were just F1'd out, there is the option of the Milton Keynes half on 7th March. It will be on a different course this year but one which is likely to be largely flat inside and outside of the town. For those that want a slightly hillier option(!) there is the Berkhamstead half on the same day.
 8. On the 28th March there is a fixtures clash between the 20 mile race options at Oakley and Finchley, ideal for those training for a Spring marathon, and the re-arranged county cross country fixture at Verulum Park, St Albans. The club have had a terrific year so far in the Cross Country and it would be great to get a good showing at the county event. Please look at the details on the Forum for entry and put your name forward to round off the cross country season in style.
 9. On the first Saturday of the month we have a pace judgement session at Ridlins. This gives members the chance to come along and run either a timed 1500 metres or 3000 metres to see how their training is progressing. The sessions on a Saturday give members the chance to come along and use the track in a relaxed environment and focus on their running technique and developing speed in their running.
 10. Do take some time out to plan the races you want to run later in the year and get your entries in!! Races are filling up even quicker than ever before.

PS Don't forget Mother's Day on 14th March!!

Training Clinic – case studies – an update

Pretty Rich!!

In this edition we are catching up again with Sam and Richard (Hazey) to see how their training has been progressing towards their goal of running the Brighton marathon on 18th April.



Firstly, they have been sticking to their training schedules! That might seem a relatively easy step but you have to consider that Sam was a self confessed gym junkie and marathon training was going to take her out of the gym on a number of those days and get her running on the road. She has done this without any kicking and screaming and also hasn't had to resort to taking up knitting!! Hazey was not sticking to a structure in his training so he was hoping the programme would give him that.

Both Sam and Hazey had entered the Bramley 20 mile race on 14th February. This comes up relatively early in the marathon training schedules so they were asked to try running the race at their goal marathon pace of 8 minute miles. True to current form they listened to the coaching advice and completed the race together in a time of 2 hours 38 mins and 24 seconds against the target time of 2 hours 40 minutes. A member of the coaching team tracked them around the course and finished a minute after them, ensuring they did stick to the plan!!! (actually the coach in question was running flat out!)

Sam took time out of the higher mileage runs to support the club and compete in the last cross country fixture at Cassiobury Park on 21st February,

running the race as a good tempo session. She finished as first female Spartan and 13th lady overall, showing that cross country running can be blended into marathon training.

It hasn't all been plain sailing for the pair up until now. Richard developed a groin strain in late January and Sam had to have a period of rest in the middle part of February due to ITB friction syndrome caused by the step up in mileage. They have followed advice and taken the rest period, increased their stretching and used sports massage as well.

They continue to stick to the training schedule and will see a progressive increase in their training run mileages during March as they build towards the race. Their ultimate test before the Brighton marathon will be when they run the Oakley 20 mile race on 28th March. They will both be racing and this will give them a good indication of how their training has progressed and what to expect at Brighton.

Sam and Hazey are running the Brighton marathon to raise funds for the Alzheimers Society. You can help by either sponsoring them or why not join them on their curry evening on the 28th March. Have a look at the details on the Forum and put your name on the list of attendees!!

Hayley Andrews

In the February edition we also introduced Hayley who joined the Starter Group as a complete beginner. She has set herself a goal to run, without stopping to walk, her first 10k at the BUPA 10k on 31st May 2010.



Hayley's main goal in February was to try to run consistently at least twice a week. This she has mainly achieved in February, although her netball has occasionally got in the way! Hayley's increase in speed has become evident during the month,

and with the regrouping to the back that she now does on a starter group session, the distance she is running has also increased. The impact of Hayley's increased consistency was most evident in the February Handicap 5k, where she was 2nd to cross the finishing line in a PB of 39:26. She improved on her previous handicap 5k times by over 2 minutes.

Hayleys' main goal in March is to start increasing the length of one of her runs, and to consider introducing a further weekend run, so that she is running 3 times per week for most weeks.

If you have a goal or target that you are working towards and would like to be featured in Catch a Coach then please speak to a member of the coaching team.

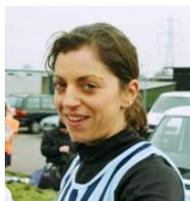
New members of the Coaching Team

It has been a busy time in the last 6 weeks or so with development within the coaching team. A further 5 members of the club completed the UK Athletics Level 1 coaching course that now allows them to act as an Assistant Coach. Our congratulations go to:

Paul Carter



Marie Colucci



Andy Jay



Jo Laing



Richard Sidlin



Richard Sidlin, Andy Jay, Paul Carter and Marie Colucci attended the course together at Loughborough.

Here's what Marie thought:

"The venue was really modern catering for all track and field events, both indoor and outdoor. The course was very much structured on pupil participation and practical learning rather than teacher orientated. It was very much focused on the principles of safe and fun coaching. I felt the course was primarily useful for coaching track based athletics with a large emphasis on jumps, throws and sprinting techniques but I did come away learning some useful skills such as:

Different Coaching Styles:

- Telling (Coach led)
- Showing (Coach and athlete centred)
- Involving (athlete centred)
- How to Coach – Planning, delivering (instruct/explain, provide demo, observe/analyse, feedback) and evaluating.

Each of the separate components of delivering the coaching are separated into a bug chart with four components of which we all had turns at using to assist in our demonstrations. Handy tips were to make sure you observe from a distance, check for safety issues, repeat yourself and check for understanding and invite questions.

I think the course provided a good grounding of the principles of coaching but the Level 2 course will focus on more technical training issues and focus on coaching for running, warming up, cooling down, training sessions etc.

I'm now looking forward to getting my black shiny whistle and assisting the experienced coaches, hopefully learning a few tips from them and most importantly continuing to enjoy the well planned, safe, fun sessions!

Andy added:

"The track and field facilities at Loughborough were extremely impressive, including a warm up running track and indoor jumping and throwing facilities. We also had a chance to meet the legendary Geoff Capes!

Attaining level 1 not only provided an overview in coaching all aspects of track and field athletics but also provides the stepping stone to Level 2 and beyond. From there the coaching starts to specialise in focussed areas, which for our club means (primarily) focussing on coaching runners. With a continued growth in members coming into the club it's crucial that we grow our coaching community at the same pace."

Paul said:

"The course was quite intense, and I ached a lot the next day! The day focused less on athletic technique, and more on how to observe the athlete, and then give great feedback. I am looking forwards now to helping support the activities of the coaching team. Also, not only was it a great day, **we met Geoff Capes as well!**"

Jo attended the Level 1 course at Banbury and said that she was in a group of younger attendees who were part of an academy programme. One of the sessions during the day involved the group developing some approaches for training veteran athletes. The youngsters were struggling as they perceived veterans as infirmed wrinklies! Jo was really amused!!! We'll have the wheelchair and zimmer frame ready for her at the next 5K handicap!!!

As assistant coaches you will see them support the club coaches in leading the groups out on the training sessions during the week.

Whats your tipples?

Alongside the great range of club kit that is being made available at training, Ian Larman is also sourcing a wide range of energy drinks, energy gels, sports beans and other bars and supplements. The prices are very competitive, cheaper than the selection you will find in shops or on the internet.

For those that are marathon training, this is a great time to try these and find what works for you ahead of your race. Build then into your training runs.

Pop into the meeting room off of the entrance lobby at Marriott's sports centre before training and take a look at what is on offer.

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.

Marathon Tapering

With Spring marathons coming up, including the first Virgin London Marathon, here are a number of tips and advice provided by the Archangel (Tony "Ossie" Osborne) as you look to move into your period of taper:

The schedule at the end of this article is intended to be a general guide to tapering for the marathon. It is shown using dates in step with the London Marathon and can be easily adapted for other marathons. There is a separate article to help with recovery which will be included in next month's edition of 'Catch a Coach'. It is not intended to be prescriptive and should be read in conjunction with anything you have planned with your own coach. While written for the marathon the same general principles apply to shorter races.

We are all different, we run at different speeds and train different mileages each week. The mileages shown may appear to be too low for anyone running 50-60 miles per week for the past 6 months. These runners may want to add a few more miles and include slightly less rest days. However, try to resist the temptation to over train. The principles are the same whatever your mileage. You have worked very

hard and made big demands of your body and your mind. Now is the time to start being kind to your both mind and body and allowing them to prepare for the big day.

I have started the schedule from 4 weeks before your marathon date. This assumes you will be running until then on your own planned schedule. The Sunday before this schedule starts should be the last really LONG HARD RUN. This run should be at, or slightly slower than, your planned marathon pace.

Marathon less 4 weeks is the ideal time to start to ease back although you may see some schedules/advice refer to marathon less three weeks. As I said earlier, we are all different and are training at different levels so if you are in any doubt please consult me or one of the club's coaches.

I have called the first week Easing Back and then from the following week, Tapering . Views on how much you should taper vary, RunnersWorld recently suggested 10% 3 weeks before the race. However, I am suggesting slightly more i.e. nearer 20% at the same 3 weeks. As I said before the mileage depends on how far you normally run, so the following table gives some examples. Average weekly mileage shown is your average up to week ending 4 weeks before your race. Then taper as following table.

	Weeks before Marathon	AVERAGE WEEKLY MILEAGE		
		50-60	40-50	30-40
Easing Back	4	50	45	35
Tapering 3	3	45	35	30
Tapering 2	2	30	25	24
Tapering 1	1	20	15	15 Maximum

For those that are running the London Marathon, try to collect your number on one of the working days available leading up to the race weekend rather than going on the Saturday, even if it means taking a day's holiday. Think what you have sacrificed in the last 6 months, and if your partner protests remind them of what **they have sacrificed to support you**. It is worth giving up a day's holiday. Whether you go on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday do not spend too much time on your feet at the Exhibition and do NOT go shopping in London. Saturday is a day of **REST**, keep off your feet as much as is reasonably possible. However, remember the partner, children etc have a life as well. You do not need added psychological stress!

HAVE A GREAT TIME ON THE DAY

Date	Week#	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun	Total
Normal weekly mileage 50-60 miles per week									
29-Mar	4	Steady 7	Intervals 8	Steady 7	Club 8	REST	Steady 7	Long Run 13	50
05-Apr	3	Steady 6	Intervals 8	Steady 6	Club 6	REST	Steady 7	Long Run 12	45
12-Apr	2	Easy 5	Intervals 7	REST	Steady 5	REST	Steady 5	Long Run 8	30
19-Apr	1	Easy 5	Easy 5	Easy 5	Easy 5	REST	REST	MTHN 26	46
Normal weekly mileage 40-50 miles per week									
29-Mar	4	Steady 6	Intervals 7	Steady 6	Club 6	REST	Steady 8	Long Run 12	45
05-Apr	3	Steady 6	Intervals 7	REST	Club 6	REST	Steady 6	Long Run 10	35
12-Apr	2	Steady 5	Intervals 6	REST	Steady 5	REST	Easy 3	Long Run 6	25
19-Apr	1	Easy 5	Easy 5	REST	Easy 5	REST	REST	MTHN 26	41
Normal weekly mileage 30-40 miles per week									
29-Mar	4	Steady 5	Intervals 6	REST	Club 6	REST	Steady 6	Long Run 12	35
05-Apr	3	Steady 5	Intervals 6	REST	Club 5	REST	Steady 5	Long Run 9	30
12-Apr	2	REST	Intervals 6	REST	Steady 5	REST	Steady 6	Long Run 7	24
19-Apr	1	Easy 5	Easy 5	REST	Easy 5	REST	REST	MTHN 26	41

Rest means different things to different people. Sometimes it may mean not doing any exercise apart from walking the dog. To others it may mean swimming, Pilates, Yoga etc. On the above schedule it may also mean different things on different days. To me it means RECOVER & RELAX, both physically and equally importantly mentally. Whatever you do make sure it fits the 3Rs, rest, recover and relax. Personally I would have treated myself to a Sports Massage every 2 weeks with all the heavy training. If you have done this then obviously continue. If you have not tried a Sports Massage then I would recommend one in week 3 and week 1 but no later than Thursday Evening/Friday morning.
When you arrive at your race you should be fully Recovered, Rested and Relaxed. NOW ENJOY THE DAY!!!

Tuesday training – pacing

Tuesday is the club's principal training session. It is interval training built within a run of between 5 and 7-8 miles depending upon the group that you run with. Intervals consist of timed efforts followed by timed recovery runs at a slower pace. The sessions help to build speed endurance and are designed to cater for all abilities of runner that are able to complete 5 or more miles of continuous running.

The groups that run on Tuesday are split by considering a band of 10K times. As a reminder, these are:

Group 1 – the red group

(indicative 10K time = 57 minutes or more)

Group 2 – the yellow group

(indicative 10K time = 50 to 56 minutes)

Group 3 – the blue group

(indicative 10K time = 45 to 50 minutes)

Group 4 – the green group

(indicative 10K time = below 45 minutes)

Have you considered the pace at which you should be running the efforts within these sessions?

Paul Holgate provides a helpful indicator within the monthly training plans that are e-mailed to each member. If you do not yet receive a target from Paul, simply e-mail him at paul.holgate@bt.com or have a chat with him when you are training next and he will gladly provide you one suitable to your individual running pace.

If you look at your plan on the Tuesday sessions, Paul will have provided an indicative distance that he would expect you to cover based on the data base he has. For those that use GPS devices (a growing number!) you can take your split times from the session and look at the metres that you have covered within each effort and compare those against the data in the plan. Equally, you can take your 10K target time (this may be a recent race time or a future target) and convert that into minutes per mile and track that against your GPS split times/distances. As important as measuring the numbers, it is also important to get use to the feel of a particular pace so that you become accustomed to knowing how a 7min, 8min, 8:30min mile etc feels like. You can then

replicate it when you need it (e.g. in a race situation). Practice in training will mean that you will have greater confidence in replicating when it really matters.

Obviously there may be some of the Tuesday sessions where you will not be training at full pace/effort (e.g. the week of a race) and you will need to adjust your objectives from the session. The key point here is that you should still be thinking about the pace you are running at and how well you are doing against that target/objective.

If you need any help working out the pace you should be running at on a Tuesday session, or indeed any of the other sessions, please just have a chat with your group coach.