



# 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 30

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### **Catch a Coach newsletter**

Happy New Year to you all!! Welcome to another edition of Catch a Coach, the monthly newsletter from the coaching team at Fairlands Valley Spartans.

As we move into a new year this is a great time to reflect on the year passed and what you have achieved. It is also a time to be looking ahead to what you would like to get from the coming 12 months. Objectives and targets help you focus and also help to motivate you, giving you a better chance of success. Whatever your personal aims may be for 2013 (and I hope that running is a part of them!) please don't forget why you run!

The coaching team are currently working on the club's training programme for the months of February to April inclusive. This is going to be a time when much of the club's training programme on the road is going to be focussed on the forthcoming midweek league series. We would all like to see you take part and enjoy it. In addition, we will have our usual packed training programme on the track to help support both the indoor and outdoor track season. The club had a great year in 2012 – 2013 has the promise of being even better.

All of the details of the club's training programme can be found by going to the training programme drop down option on the Club Calendar tab on the club website (<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/calendar-all/old-style-calendar/>). In addition, the club calendar has a wealth of details on races, so you can start to plan your running and racing programme early.

On the social scene we have our Presentation Evening on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January at the Barns, Knebworth. This is the time for us all to recognise the great achievements in 2012 and celebrate those outstanding performances. Please don't forget to book your ticket (just go to the website and do it online).

I would like to say a huge thank you to all members of the coaching team who have done a superb job in 2012, delivering a varied and challenging training programme for the club.

Best wishes for 2013.....and see you at training!

Cheers

*Coach Leigh*

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## **What's coming up – 10 of the best for January**

Here are our 10 of the best for January:

1. On the 25<sup>th</sup> January we are having our annual presentation evening at the Barns, Knebworth. This is your chance to celebrate all of the marvellous achievements within the club and to crown the Spartan of the Year. All of the details can be found at: [http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec\\_event/presentation-evening-2013/?instance\\_id=5716](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec_event/presentation-evening-2013/?instance_id=5716)



2. On 13<sup>th</sup> January we have the next cross country league fixture at Royston. This is a chance to take part in supporting the club in continuing to improve its position within the cross county league standings and to have some fun at the same time! You can find the details on the Forum within the cross country board.
3. On the 20<sup>th</sup> January St Albans Striders are hosting the County 10 mile race – the Fred Hughes 10. You can see the details at: [http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec\\_event/fred-hughes-10-mile-race/?instance\\_id=-](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec_event/fred-hughes-10-mile-race/?instance_id=-). Please don't forget to tick the County box if you are eligible when you enter!
4. On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> January we have the first running of the club handicap 5K race. The details can be found here: [http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec\\_event/out-and-back-2020-tempo-run-2/?instance\\_id=7670](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec_event/out-and-back-2020-tempo-run-2/?instance_id=7670) Please let Paul Holgate know whether or not you are running so that he can refine the starting list. Paul would also welcome a few people to come forward that don't intend to run to help at the start/finish.

5. Our Tuesday training sessions start back with a real bang on 8<sup>th</sup> January when we have a LT/tempo/LT sandwich. This is a combination of short efforts run above your lactate threshold, followed by tempo paced running with a final set of short intervals pushing above the lactate threshold again. A great way to bring in the new year and start to build to quicker running.
6. January will see another varied Saturday morning track programme. Starting with an 800m session on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> January, we will be holding a variety of 400m based sessions with a challenging pyramid session sandwiched in between. Something for everyone. On 12<sup>th</sup> January we will also be offering the chance to complete the Cooper Test (see below for details). If you haven't been to the track to train before why not make this is a new year resolution. The track based sessions bring a good structure to your training and really focus on developing your running technique and, with it, your speed.
7. During the month of January we will have a full programme of longer training runs on a Sunday, catering for all running abilities. Distances will cover a complete range from 6 to 16 miles as we progress through the month. This helps to support runners with objectives across a range of distances. Just take care to consider your own training programme and how the club sessions can be used to support that.
8. On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January the club will be holding the handicap 5 mile and 10 mile races for members of the club. Target times and start times for runners will be published soon. Details can be found at : [http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec\\_event/club-10-mile-and-5-mile-handicap-races/?instance\\_id=6450](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/ai1ec_event/club-10-mile-and-5-mile-handicap-races/?instance_id=6450)
9. On 17<sup>th</sup> January we will be holding the 20:20 out and back session. This gives us a chance to develop our tempo pacing over a longer distance/time. Details on this can be found at : <http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/2012/04/15/tempo-training/>
10. Last but not least this is a hectic time of year for race planning. Clubs are finalising their race programmes and details of many races are already available. Please start planning your programme sooner rather than later so that you are not disappointed – many of the popular races in the period to April are already full!

### **Race results - a reminder**

Please remember to tell us all about your race results so that we can cover them within our weekly press release!!! **Send them in to results@fvspartans no later than 8pm Sunday evening for inclusion in the weekly press release.**

**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.**



## **Coach development**

In addition to Jan Fry, Trudie Molloy and Tracy Pez, I am pleased to say that Rachel Payne will be attending the Leadership in Running and Fitness course at Hatfield on 17<sup>th</sup> February.

## **What's new on the Site**

Here's a taster of the new features/articles that have hit our website over the last month. Why don't you have a catch up!

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/2012/12/>

## **Coaching resources**

With many members of the club turning their attention to half marathon and full marathon distances in the first 4-5 months of 2013, here is a reminder of a selection of the resources that are readily available through the club website. Why not take a look and use them to help with the planning of your own training.

### Half Marathon

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Half-Marathon-10-Dos-and-10-Donts.pdf>

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Training-for-your-first-half-marathon.pdf>

### Marathon

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/club/coaching/the-10-dos-and-donts-of-marathon-training/>

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/club/coaching/marathon-training-the-4-ps/>

<http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Training-for-your-first-half-marathon.pdf>

Coach Leigh

## **Top tips**



When running downhill, relax and keep your feet under your centre of gravity. Land on your midfoot and allow your foot turnover to increase. Because core muscles and hip flexors do the bulk of the work when running downhill build on your strength training and increase your stability with core exercises such as planks and hip bridges. A weak core and hip flexors mean that smaller muscles kick in such as the piriformis (part of your glutes). These aren't designed to carry the load and tend to become tight and pull on other muscle groups, leading to injuries.



'Tis the season to start as you mean to go on and log your training/racing. Keeping a running log or diary is an excellent training tool. Recording certain details of your runs can keep you on track, motivate you and even help head off injury. You can use a diary, calendar or an electronic version. Just jot down some key points.

The run – take a note of the distance you have run, the route and terrain and the time(s). It is also helpful to note the time and temperature as these are factors that can affect your performance.

About you – make a note of your weight, your mood and whether you have any aches or pains. I also include a note of how much sleep I had the night before.

Other information – what have you eaten, whether you running alone or in a group and your targets. You may also want to include here any ideas you have had during the run (it can often be a time of high creativity!!)



If you find yourself falling behind, whether on a training run or race, try to close the gap before it gets too large. Say to yourself that you are not going to fall behind by more than 3 strides because there is a psychological benefit in staying close. This is why packs of runners form at races, because it is mentally easier to share the workload of hitting the pace.



Everyone slows down eventually because aerobic capacity drops off as we get older. Once you have passed your personal best you may still have a lot of running years left!! If you want to keep running then trying to set new personal bests year after year is just going to get frustrating and demotivating. One way around this is to set age based time goals each year.

### **Quote of the month**

“Courage is fear holding on a minute longer”

George Patton, World War II general

### **What is.....the Cooper Test**

#### **Objective**

The Cooper Test (Cooper 1968)<sup>[1]</sup> is used to monitor the development of the athlete's aerobic endurance and to obtain an estimate of their VO<sub>2</sub>max. VO<sub>2</sub>max is the maximum amount of oxygen in millilitres an athlete can use in one minute per kilogram of body weight. Those who are fit have higher VO<sub>2</sub>max values and can exercise more intensely than those who are not as well conditioned. Numerous studies show that you can increase your VO<sub>2</sub>max by working out at an intensity that raises your [heart rate to between 65 and 85% of its maximum](#) for at least 20 minutes three to five times a week.

Whilst we have been using the 'bleep multistage fitness stage within the club to assess aerobic fitness and VO<sub>2</sub> max levels this can only be completed safely in dry conditions. The Cooper test does not necessarily have that restriction and simply requires access to a running track.

### **The Test**

This test requires the athlete to run as far as possible in 12 minutes.

- The test will commence following a thorough and appropriate warm up.
- The assistant gives the command “GO”, starts the stopwatch and the athlete commences the test
- The assistant keeps the athlete informed of the remaining time/elapsed time at the end of each lap (400m)
- The assistant blows the whistle when the 12 minutes has elapsed and records the distance the athlete has covered to the nearest 10 metres

### **Normative data for the Cooper Test**

#### **Male Athletes**

Age	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
13-14	>2700m	2400-2700m	2200-2399m	2100-2199m	<2100m
15-16	>2800m	2500-2800m	2300-2499m	2200-2299m	<2200m
17-19	>3000m	2700-3000m	2500-2699m	2300-2499m	<2300m
20-29	>2800m	2400-2800m	2200-2399m	1600-2199m	<1600m
30-39	>2700m	2300-2700m	1900-2299m	1500-1999m	<1500m
40-49	>2500m	2100-2500m	1700-2099m	1400-1699m	<1400m
>50	>2400m	2000-2400m	1600-1999m	1300-1599m	<1300m

#### **Female Athletes**

Age	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
13-14	>2000m	1900-2000m	1600-1899m	1500-1599m	<1500m
15-16	>2100m	2000-2100m	1700-1999m	1600-1699m	<1600m
17-20	>2300m	2100-2300m	1800-2099m	1700-1799m	<1700m
20-29	>2700m	2200-2700m	1800-2199m	1500-1799m	<1500m
30-39	>2500m	2000-2500m	1700-1999m	1400-1699m	<1400m
40-49	>2300m	1900-2300m	1500-1899m	1200-1499m	<1200m
>50	>2200m	1700-2200m	1400-1699m	1100-1399m	<1100m

### **VO2max**

An estimate of your VO2max can be calculated as follows:

- $(\text{Distance covered in metres} - 504.9) \div 44.73$

### **Analysis**

Analysis of the test result is by comparing it with the athlete's previous results for this test. It is expected that, with appropriate training between each test, the analysis would indicate an improvement in the athlete's VO2max. We will maintain a full history of the results of each test so that athletes can easily compare their results.

## Referenced Material

1. COOPER, K.H. (1968) A means of assessing maximal oxygen intake. *JAMA*. 203, p. 135-138

If you would like to complete the test just come to Ridlins, Woodcock Road on 12<sup>th</sup> January at 9:15am and join in the warm up and drill exercises before taking part.

## Tuesday training groups

On a Tuesday we tend to train in 5 different ability groups, with coaches leading and supporting each of those groups. The groupings are based around each runner's 10K indicative time and runners are then given an indicative group to train in. That group is shown on the monthly training plan that Paul Holgate sends to all paid up members and is also shown on the club's website at : <http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/members/training/>

Here is a reminder of the groupings:

Group number	10K indicative race/run time	Typical total repetitions/efforts
Group 1 – red	57 minutes +	20-24 minutes
Group 2 – yellow	52 to 56 minutes	22-26 minutes
Group 3 – blue	46 to 51 minutes	25-30 minutes
Group 4 – green	42 – 45 minutes	28-32 minutes
Group 5 - black	Under 41 minutes	30-35 minutes

There will be times when training in your indicative group shown above is not necessarily appropriate. For example, recovery after a race at the weekend, part of a rehabilitation programme following injury or in readiness for a race coming up. However, with those exceptions noted, to get the most from your training it is always best to train in the indicative group shown. Sometimes that is going to be a little tough going, particularly when you have just moved up a group. But there will be big benefits in the longer term.

Make your new year's resolution now and join the group that you are shown to train in whenever possible and help to ensure that (1) the training groups are better balanced with the range of running abilities and (2) you kick start your training in 2013.

## Feedback



Members of the coaching team really value feedback from members of the club. Feedback enables us to adjust training sessions and also create brand new ones!

Whilst we think we are taking the correct steps in the design and delivery of the sessions, without your feedback we don't entirely know! The way in which you give feedback doesn't have to be particularly formal. Just a quick word with the coach after the session has finished is enough. If you would prefer to put it in writing after further thought then go ahead and drop the team a line at [catchacoach@fvspartans.org.uk](mailto:catchacoach@fvspartans.org.uk)

We listen to all comments and it is a real help when we look at the forthcoming training schedules and sessions.

Thank you