

# Welcome to.....



[www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk)

## WHO ARE WE?

Fairlands Valley Spartans is a Stevenage based running club founded in 1984 following the inaugural running of the Stevenage Marathon. With more than 350 members, we are one of the largest running clubs in the local area. We are primarily a **road running** club, but our itinerary also includes **track** and **offroad** activities. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive club, so all abilities are catered for – from committed marathon runners to people embarking on a program of fitness from the depths of their armchairs. Our Starter Group was launched in 2008 and has been a huge success in supporting individuals embarking on running for the first time (see the New to Running section below). In 2010 the club won the great accolade of the UK's Best Running Club from Runners World.

The club has a wide ranging training programme, so there is something for everyone! First and foremost we thrive on seeing our members enjoy their running. Whilst we encourage runners to participate in races, it is not compulsory! We do encourage members to race in the club colours and there are plenty of local and national events to choose from. It's great for an individual's progress, but also helps foster a great sense of team spirit within the club.

## NEW TO RUNNING?

Why not come along to one of our Starter Group Sessions? We meet at 7.30pm every Monday and at 7pm on Thursdays at Marriott's Sports Centre in Stevenage. Full details are on our website at [www.fvspartans.org.uk/startergroup](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk/startergroup)

Whichever session(s) you attend, no-one is ever left behind, whatever their ability. The emphasis is definitely on enjoyment and making friends whilst getting/keeping fit. We believe in 'try before you buy!' Try the club sessions. All we ask is for you to join the club after you have completed 4 trial training sessions.

## COACHING

We have a large coaching team who have a wide range of running and technical abilities so we can fully support our runners. Members of our coaching team will be present at all sessions and will be available to answer your questions. Our Head Coach (Andy Prior) and the members of the coaching team draw up a regular training programme, which is published in advance. This assists in planning your own training around that of the club and can be found on the club's website, [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk).

## TRAINING

- Our main training sessions are held at 7pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, meeting at Marriott's Sports Centre in Stevenage. On a Tuesday we train in 5 different ability groups which cover distances of between 5 and 8 miles and the session usually consists of interval training, where everybody re-groups to the back runners each time, ensuring nobody is left behind. Runners can determine which group to join based on their indicative 10K times and the level of fitness/training. The following table can be used as an indication.

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

- On a Thursday evening there is a choice of a continuous 5-6 mile run or a session with either a shorter speed based component or hills based training. The latter is ideal for those runners who have been training regularly for at least 12 weeks and are seeking to improve their running pace and developing their overall running technique.
- On a Saturday we hold a track session for all abilities at Ridlins Athletics track. We meet at 09:15am for a 09:30am start. Alternatively, there is a social, off-road run starting in Hitchin at 09.30am usually covering 6 to 7 miles (also available on Thursday mornings, starting 09.30am).
- Our Starter Group meet on a Monday at 7.30pm and a Thursday at 7pm, at Marriotts. See our 'New to Running' section for further details.
- On a Sunday there is usually a long run available covering distances of between 6 and 12 miles. These usually start at 9.00am. Everyone is looked after, no matter what their pace is. These are varied on a regular basis with different starting points to take in different routes around the local area. It is also a great way to see the surrounding countryside!
- During key times of the running year the club will introduce additional training elements to support their runners. For example, the club has a detailed training programme that supports runners during December to May whilst they are training for marathons such as those at London, Paris and Edinburgh.



## Marriott's Sports Centre

Marriotts and Lonsdale School

Brittain Way

Stevenage

Hertfordshire

SG2 8UT

\*Members have the option of affiliating to England Athletics. The affiliation fee is set by UK Athletics/England Athletics. Membership of England Athletics brings a wide variety of benefits for members ranging from reduced entry fees for road races (usually save £1.50-£2 per race), to discounts on products such as a £15 voucher for money off shoes at Sweatshop, another £5 Sweatshop voucher and a further 10% discount of subsequent purchases. It also enables you to opt to receive fortnightly bulletins on what is happening in the sport including essential information for athletes to know. On becoming an England Athletics member, you will receive a competition licence that shows your details and a registration number. The licence can take several weeks to be posted to you so if you need your registration number in the intervening period please contact the club's membership secretary, Bev Harlow by e-mail at [membership@fvspartans.org.uk](mailto:membership@fvspartans.org.uk). You need to quote the registration number on race entries if you are to receive the benefit of reduced race entries for affiliated members.



Registration number

Please e-mail us at [membership@fvspartans.org.uk](mailto:membership@fvspartans.org.uk) if you have any membership queries.

## CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

The championship runs from the 1st January to 31st December each year, and currently consists of a Short Course and a Long Course division. The top 3 male and female runners in each division are awarded trophies at the annual presentation dinner usually held in Jan/Feb of the following year. More details can be found on the website.

Our annual presentation event also awards many other members for their achievements, including our most improved Spartans and we ask members to vote each year for the person they think should receive the 'Spartan of the Year' trophy. This is your chance to thank somebody who in your opinion has made a significant contribution to the club.

## WEBSITE

Our website is a huge source of useful information on the club, and has links to many other organisations – local running clubs, retailers, nutritional advice sites etc. [www.fvspartans.org.uk](http://www.fvspartans.org.uk) The coaching team also have a wealth of material through the 'Catch a Coach' section of the website that complements the monthly newsletter they produce of the same name.

Please make sure you have registered to receive club news through the mailing distribution group. You can do this easily by going to the website and clicking on the members menu bar and then selecting 'news mailing list'. Just complete the information requested and we can then keep you in touch with all the latest club news!

## SOCIAL EVENTS

The club has a very active social side with social events throughout the year. These are great opportunities to catch up (without running kit on!), have a few drinks and get to know each other better.

## RUNNING SAFELY

The club has published a set of guidelines for all members to help ensure they run safely. This is called **Be Safe, Be Seen, Be A Spartan!** and can be found on the club's website. Please read the document and speak to a member of the coaching team or committee if you have any questions.

## ....AND FINALLY!

We pride ourselves on being a very friendly and inclusive club. Our committee and coaching team strive to ensure that we support all of our members so that they can enjoy their running and fulfil their running potential. If there is anything you are unsure of please speak to a member of the committee or coaching team. If they do not know the answer themselves then they will find someone who does!

Please enjoy your time with us. Remember we value all of our members whatever their ability so don't be daunted if you feel you are not at a good enough standard. We have all improved our fitness and our performance since we joined the Spartans! Improvement will come to you as well – it might come slowly, but it will come if you stick with it. And you'll have lots of fun along the way!