



WHITE HORSE HARRIERS

2013/14 Chairman's Report

24th October 2014

Gareth Smith

Cross Country 2013-2014 Season

The Cross-Country season has continued the standard pattern that we have had for some years with the season based around the Oxford Mail League and Championship races. We also affiliated to both the Wessex and Chiltern Cross-Country Leagues so as to provide some additional competition. In particular the Chiltern League takes place on Saturdays. The January Oxford League fixture, which was due to be combined with the County Championships had to be cancelled following the bad weather. The County Championships were then held in conjunction with the final Oxford Mail League fixture at Harwell in March.

Oxford Mail XC League

Team Results:

- U13 Boys: 9th
- U15/U17 Girls: 8th
- U15/U17 Boys: 5th
- Women: 6th in Division 2 (after promotion from Division 2 at the end of the previous season)
- Men: 8th in Division 1.



Individual Top-Twelve Results: A total of 16 Harriers had final placings in the league.

- U17 Women: Josie Harrison 1st
- U17 Men: Ben Claridge 5th
- U20 Women: Becky Hodgson 2nd; Jennie Lithgow 4th
- Senior Men: Paul Wileman 9th; Paul Jégou 11th
- V50 Men: Ian Lambourn 2nd

Thank you to the League Organisers for all their work.

Oxfordshire County Championships



Team Results: U/20 Men 1st

Individual Top-Five Results:

- U17 Women: Josie Harrison 1st
- U17 Men: Ben Claridge 4th
- U15 Boys: Okan Onay 3rd
- U20 Women: Becky Hodgson 2nd
- V2 (V50) Men: Ian Lambourn 1st
- V3 (V60) Men: Tim Hughes 1st

Ridgeway Relay

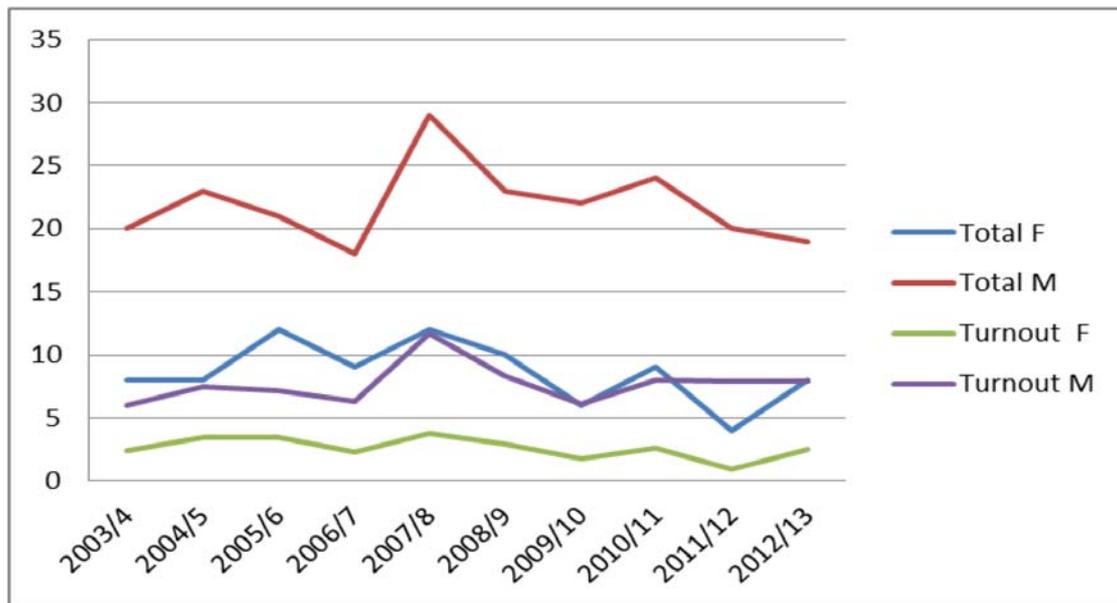
This June year we fielded **two teams in the Ridgeway Relay**. The senior team finished 6th in 10:28:39 with the vets team 40th in 13:27:39. This was a fantastic performance. The event was enjoyed by all and congratulations to Paul Jégou for organising two teams.

Cross-Country Championships (Senior)

The 2013-14 senior championship comprised a total of 8 races of which each runner's best 6 results counted. These being: 4x (**note: owing to the January fixture cancellation - normally there are 5**) Oxford Mail League (including County Championships), 1x Chiltern League, 1x Wessex League, South of England and BB&O Championships.

Winners: Senior & Vet Men: Ian Iambourn
Senior Ladies: Jennifer Lithgow
Vet Ladies: Ros Burgess

The following graph shows the total number of Harriers (Male & Female) who have competed in each of the last ten cross-country seasons along with the average number of Harriers at each of the races in the club championship.



Cross-Country Champs (Junior)

The 2013-14 junior championship comprised a total of 10 races as follows. 4x Oxford Mail League (including County Championships), 1x Chiltern League, 3x Club Time Trials, South of England and BB&O Championships. Statuettes were presented to the individual age group winners, with the additional requirement that the winner had to have competed in at least three events. Medals were also presented to all who had taken part in three or more of the events.

Age Group	Winner	No. of participants (For 09/10; 10/11, 11/12, 12/13 in brackets)
U/9 Girls:		0 (2,3,1,2)
U/9 Boys:	Burt Staunton-Lamb	1 (0,2,1,1)
U/11 Girls:	Beatrice Spence	15 (14,12,4,4)
U/11 Boys:	Arthur McLintock	9 (9,1,2,4)
U/13 Girls:	Phoebe Leech	1 (13,5,4,12)
U/13 Boys:	Reuben Paget	6 (16,11,3,3)
U/15 Girls:	Georgia Paxton-Doggett	4 (5,9,2,5)
U/15 Boys:	Okan Onay	3 (9,9,5,8)
U/17 Women:	Josie Harrison	1 (4,2,3,2)
U/17 Men:	Ben Claridge	4 (3,4,2,2)

The trophies for the Best Young Harriers for the 2013/14 season were awarded to Josie Harrison and Ben Claridge.

Track & Field Athletics

White Horse Harriers has not fielded a senior team in Track & Field competitions for some years. The following are the main competitions undertaken:

- The Oxfordshire Athletics Network’s combined team in the National Youth Development League again provided good competition for our athletes in the Under-17 and Under-20 age group. I have written more about this team in my section dealing with the Oxfordshire Athletics Network.
- During 2014 we again entered a men’s team in the local Vets League. The league comprises 4 fixtures on which take place on Monday evenings. The competition has now become established within the club, with more Harriers competing, club records being broken, and the development of a great team spirit. My thanks to Richard Jégou for his work in managing this team.
- Open Meetings: Following their instigation in 2013 Oxford City AC again ran Open meetings every fortnight at

Horspath. As last year this provided useful additional local competition.

We did not participate in the Oxfordshire Junior T&F League (for ages up to Under-17) during 2014.

In addition to the above one or two WHH members compete in T&F athletics as second-claim athletes for other clubs. The remaining fixtures are made up primarily of the County Championships and other Open meetings.

This year also saw the 8th Annual Club Athletics Championships, held at King Alfred's School West Site on Thursday 17th July. The weather was good and a total of 21 athletes took part which was a significant drop from the 48 last year. As usual the events contested were a sprint (100/75m); middle distance (800/600/400m); jump (long jump) and throw (vortex, shot putt). Thank you in particular to Angela Briscoe for organising this event and to everyone who helped on the day.

I note that we continue to be very short of officials who are obviously crucial to the hosting of athletics competitions in the area. This does have an impact on our teams. The club currently only has two qualified officials (Bruce Charles & Richard Jégou).

Oxfordshire County Championships

Horspath: 24/25 May 2014



Under 17 Men: **100m** 2nd Zac Smith 11.93sec. **200m** 2nd Zac Smith 23.54sec.
Under 17 Men: **400m** 1st Ben Claridge 49.53sec; 3rd Okan Onay 57.62sec (56.68sec in heat).
Under 17 Men: **800m** 1st Ben Claridge 1min 57.11sec; 3rd Okan Onay 2min 13.87sec.
Under 17 Men: **1500m** 2nd Okan Onay 4min 33.98sec.
Under 17 Men: **Long Jump** 2nd Zac Smith 4.73m. **Discus** 4th Okan Onay 21.52m.
Under 20 Ladies: **400m** 1st Becky Hodgson 60.05sec.
Under 20 Ladies: **800m** 1st Becky Hodgson 2min 25.08sec.
Under 20 Ladies: **3000m** 2nd Josie Harrison 11min 38.51sec.
Senior Ladies: **3000m** 1st Hayley Chaundy 12min 21.87sec.
Senior Men: **400m** 4th Graham Wiggins 66.62sec (in heat).
Senior Men: **3000m** 2nd Jonny Cornish 2nd 9min 34.90sec.

Track & Field Highlight

Ben Claridge gained a place at the English Schools Athletics Championships in Birmingham in July where he won a silver medal in the 800m. His time of 1min 53.56sec set a new club record not only for the under-17, but also the under-20 and senior levels. This performance is arguably the best track performance ever by a White Horse Harrier. Ben then went on to represent England in the Home Counties International in Cardiff the following weekend where he ran the 800m and a leg of the 4*400m relay to help the England team to victory.

Track & Field Trophies (2013 Season)

Best Track Performance:	Ben Claridge
Best Field Performance:	Richard Jégou
Best Young Male Athlete:	Zack Smith
Best Young Female Athlete:	Becky Hodgson
Most Improved Young athlete:	Jasmine Barrett

The above list is for the 2013 season as the trophies for 2014 have not yet been presented.

Sportshall Athletics

Hayley Chaundy has entered and organised a team for the 2014/15 Oxfordshire Sportshall League. This is a very welcome move that should provide varied and fun competition for our young athletes (U/11, U/1 &, U/15) throughout the winter months. The first event took place on the 19th October and Hayley reports that all the WHH athletes did well and there was an excellent team spirit. New initiatives that increase the opportunity for competition are always very welcome.

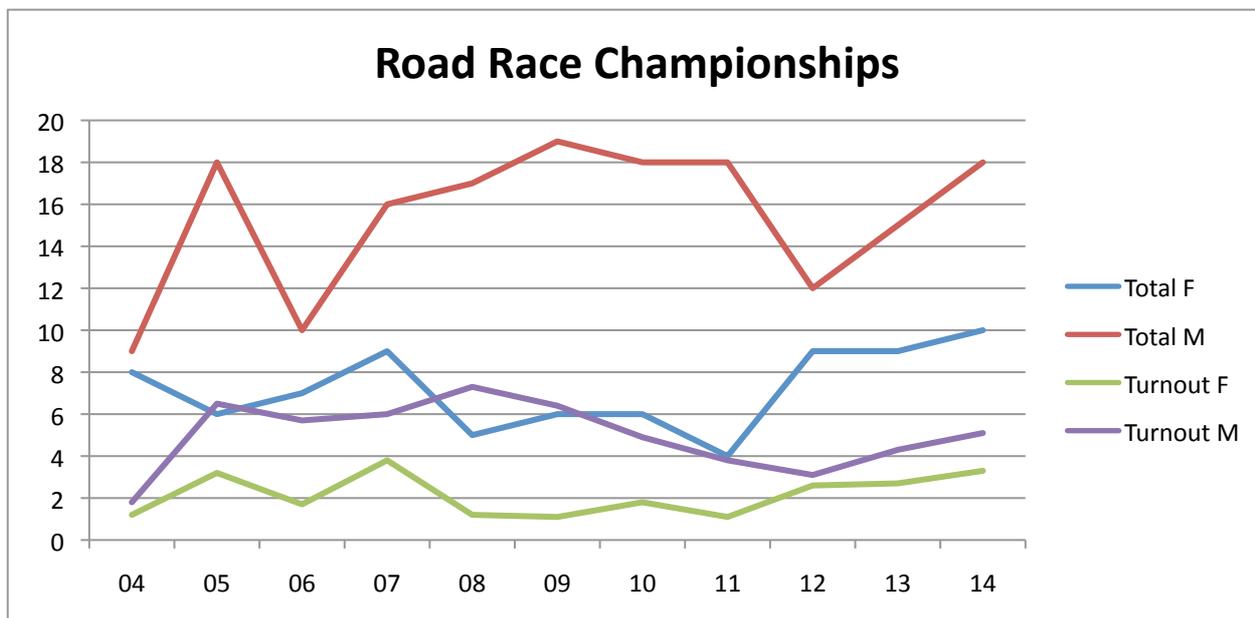
Club Records Update

The following records were broken during 2014:

Category	Event	Performance	Name	Venue	Date
U11 Girls	80m	12.53sec	Eda Onay	Wantage	17/07/2014
U11 Girls	75m	11.90sec	Eda Onay	Horspath	06/07/2014

The WHH Ladies Team won the ‘Minor Clubs’ shield in the 2013 Oxfordshire Grand Prix Road Race Series.

The table below shows the numbers of runners who have competed in the Club Road Race Championships. Both the total number of different men and women participating is shown as well as the average per race over the season. The mean number of runners is taken for the number of races that have taken place each year before the AGM (i.e. before the generation of this report). For 2014 nine races are included. Note: The final event, the Eynsham 10K, is scheduled to take place in November.



London Marathon

The club was awarded two places for the 2014 London Marathon, the same number as in 2013. Following our usual practice the two places were initially offered to the winners of the club’s road running championship. Suzie Sheehy, as ladies winner, was offered and accepted a place, The men’s winner, Paul Jégou already had a place (carried over from the previous year) so the men’s place was offered to the Veteran men’s championship winner, Ian Lambourn who accepted.

Places for the 2015 race will be awarded using the same method. I.e. First offered to the winners of the club road running championships and then any remaining places allocated by a draw.

Virgin London Marathon Results. Sunday, 13th April 2014.

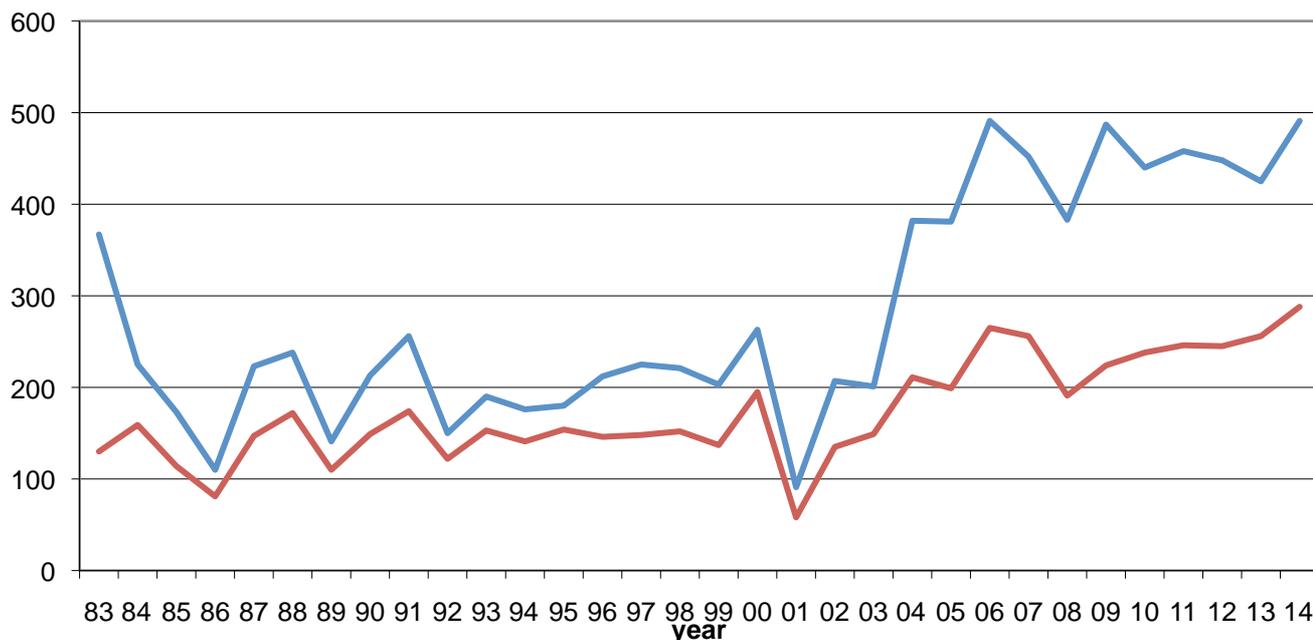
Paul Jégou: 2hrs 57min 20sec; Ian Lambourn M50: 3hrs 9min 11sec; Dan Peace: 3hrs 12min 4sec;
 Susie Sheehy: 3hrs 45min 47sec; Sharon Bedford LV50: 4hrs 23min 16sec.

White Horse Half Marathon

The 2014 White Horse Half Marathon was again a successful and profitable event. The race organisation was very similar to the previous year in that a traffic management company was again employed to control the traffic at the start and to assist with the finish. The race was also chip timed, although this time using a different type of chip (one bonded to the back of the race number) from a different company. Again, my particular thanks to the organising team: Dene Stringfellow (Race Secretary), Bob Harrison, Kevin Harris, Lucia Singer and Clare Hazell. Our thanks go to Fit2Run for sponsoring the race. Thanks also go to everyone who helped who helped on the day and to Grove Scouts for again manning two of the drinks stations. The WHH committee will be making, on your behalf, a donation of 25% of the profits of the race, a sum of £950 to the Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust. There were 491 finishers of whom 288 were affiliated club runners.

Following the 2014 race Dene Stringfellow has stood down as Race Director. Thank you to him for the enormous amount of work he has put into organizing the event. An appeal was made to both the WHH membership and wider for assistance in organizing the 2015 race. Very pleasingly the appeal met with a great response and a good number of people have come forward. In particular, Lee Barrett and John Bales who have stepped forward to help drive forward the preparations for the 2015 race. There had been some concern as there were plans to close the railway bridge between Grove and Denchworth at around the time planned for the 2015 event. However, clarification has been obtained from Network Rail and the 2015 race will now take place on Sunday 29th March.

White Horse Half Marathon - Total and Affiliated Finishers



Training & Coaching

We continue to be extremely reliant on a small number of coaches – a situation that has been the case for a long time. As for some years Angela Briscoe and Tom King hold level 2 (“Athletics Coach”) coaching qualifications and oversee the endurance training for all young athletes, with Angela taking the younger age groups and Tom the older. Richard Jégou has a level 2 qualification and provides throws coaching in the summer. During the past year Hayley Chaundy and Rachel Bennett have taken the “Coaching Assistant” (equivalent to the old Level 1) course and have also been taking some of the Thursday evening sessions. This has given a welcome boost to the existing coaching arrangement as well as providing much needed cover in times of absence. Unfortunately Bruce Charles has been unable to help with the sprint coaching over the past season.

The well-established rota of helpers continues to provide support for the Thursday evening training sessions, some members of which have a Level 1 or an Athletics Leader qualification. Those on the rota were Alison McClintock, Castel Fairlie, Sheila Bailey, Elizabeth Graham, Andrew Alder, Dominic Lamb & myself. My thanks go to Sheila for also organizing the rota.

Last year Tom King took two athletes, Okan Onay and Ben Claridge, on a British Milers Club training weekend.

As I stated last year, in addition to more coaches, we need assistance organizing junior teams, both before and during matches. Hayley has provided assistance to Angela and Tom over the past year in this area and I would also like to thank them all for their support.

The training venues remain unchanged. For the last six summers the use of King Alfred's Academy West site has provided local facilities for running, throwing and long jump on Thursday evenings. We remain grateful to KAs for the continuing use of this facility. Our winter training venues – the field in front of Wantage Leisure Centre and Wantage Park remain far from ideal. In addition, a group still trains at Tilsley Park on Tuesday evenings. The long Sunday run from the Court Hill Centre has become well established and has been in place for over a year now. Thank you to Simon Leech for continuing to promote this run. I would also like to flag up the ‘run to the pub’ that has taken place. The “intermediate” group still meets three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Furthermore the monthly ‘structured training’ sessions for seniors on Thursday evenings have continued right through the year. Interest has been such that Paul Jégou has increased the frequency to fortnightly, with one session per month taking place at Tilsley Park track.

We continue to restrict numbers of Under-10 athletes as we are unable to provide appropriate training for them due to an insufficient number of coaches. This is not helped by the difficulties of the winter venue.

Social Events & Handicap Runs

The autumn/winter social saw a change of venue and activity after bowling evenings of the past two years. This time the venue was Challow Cricket Club where we were given a very warm welcome. The evening was organized by Castel and Clare and there were some fun quizzes and fish and chips from the van. The whole evening was a great

success – and we were able to make the presentation of the summer trophies (Track & Field and Road Running).

The summer social followed the practice of recent years with a barbecue and presentation at the Court Hill Centre near the Ridgeway. This year the weather was kind to us, and a very pleasant evening was had by all. *The current statistics for this event are 3 dry and 3 wet!* Thank you again to Richard Jégou for running the barbecue.

Thank you to Jan McCabe for organizing our 2013 Christmas Dinner at Hanney Spice last December. It was a very enjoyable evening – and we look forward to someone (hopefully) coming forward to organize a 2014 dinner.

During the year the club traditionally organizes two handicap runs. The first is for those who can get out on New Years' Day morning and is a four-mile loop from The Lord Nelson pub in Wantage. The second is the Summer Cross-Country Handicap held at Sparsholt Firs for which the club's "Pieces Trophy" is awarded. The 2014 winners were:

Suzie Sheehy won the **New Year's Day Handicap**. Sheila Bailey won the **Cross-Country Handicap**.

JogWantage & Beginners Runs

The JogWantage beginners running course has now been run for the last six years. The 2014 course followed a similar pattern to those before with a one hour session on Wednesday evenings for ten weeks from May to July. This took place on King Alfred's field behind the Leisure Centre, with runs extending out as the athletes progressed.

25 people signed up for the 2014 course of whom 20 did enough sessions (at least six) to qualify for a T-shirt. There was a particularly good spirit amongst the participants this year – significantly helped by one of the participants setting up a JogWantage Facebook group that has been very active. Particular thanks to Graham Wiggins for taking a lead with the organizing, and also to Castel Fairlie; Simon Leech; Stuart Scott, Sheila Bailey, Ros Burgess (and myself) for helping. One problem that arose was with the T-shirts. The Run England T-shirts have always been supplied by, and funded by, Oxfordshire "Go Active". However, there was a funding problem and they were not able to supply T-shirts – something we only learnt having 'promised' these to participants. Graham Wiggins organized a set of T-shirts (which are of a very pleasing design). Graham has subsequently been reimbursed by Go Active. I would like to thank him for sorting this out.

Again this year we selected a Parkrun as the 'graduation' run for the course. We also focused on providing follow-on runs on a Thursday evening to run jointly with the club runs. A handful of the JogWantage runners still turn up regularly to these. The upshot is that a good number of the 2014 JW participants are still running regularly and have done at least one Parkrun making the 2014 course particularly successful. This is doubtless due to both the spirit of the group (and the leaders) – facilitated by the Facebook Group and the follow-on runs. We do feel there is a much bigger untapped opportunity for these courses. Our thanks also go to both King Alfred's Academy for the use of the field and to Wantage Town Football Club for use of their car park.

Stewart Scott again this year organized a similar course for some interested staff at the Diamond facility on the Harwell Campus. It was billed as 'Jog Diamond' and Graham Wiggins and myself helped lead it with Stewart. This ran for ten weeks with 11 runners signing up, of whom seven also completed enough sessions to earn a T-shirt.

Parkruns

Although the Parkruns are not organized by White Horse Harriers we recognize the value of these regular and free local runs. Following an invitation from the Abingdon Parkrun organizers, on 4th October this year WHH members took over the officiating and marshalling of the event for the day. It provided a valuable opportunity to publicize our club. Despite damp weather it was a very enjoyable event. It also fell on the tenth anniversary of the very first Parkrun.

Website & Communications

Social Media

The past year has seen the development of a White Horse Harriers Facebook Group that has become very active. This has contributed to the numbers of people attending events and to an excellent spirit within the participants. The group predominantly comprises senior members. It would be good to see it develop to cover a broader spectrum of the WHH membership. I continue to use the Club's Twitter feed for occasional information and reminders.

Website

We are aware of the limitations with the current website(s). Although there have been no significant changes as yet, work, led by Dene Stringfellow, is ongoing to completely replace and restructure the current arrangement of two loosely connected sites. Having said that there have been many updates to the web page contents.

The Harrier Newsletter

It is now a couple of years or more since a copy of 'The Harrier' newsletter was produced. I have continued sending a (roughly) monthly email to members so that relevant information is conveyed.

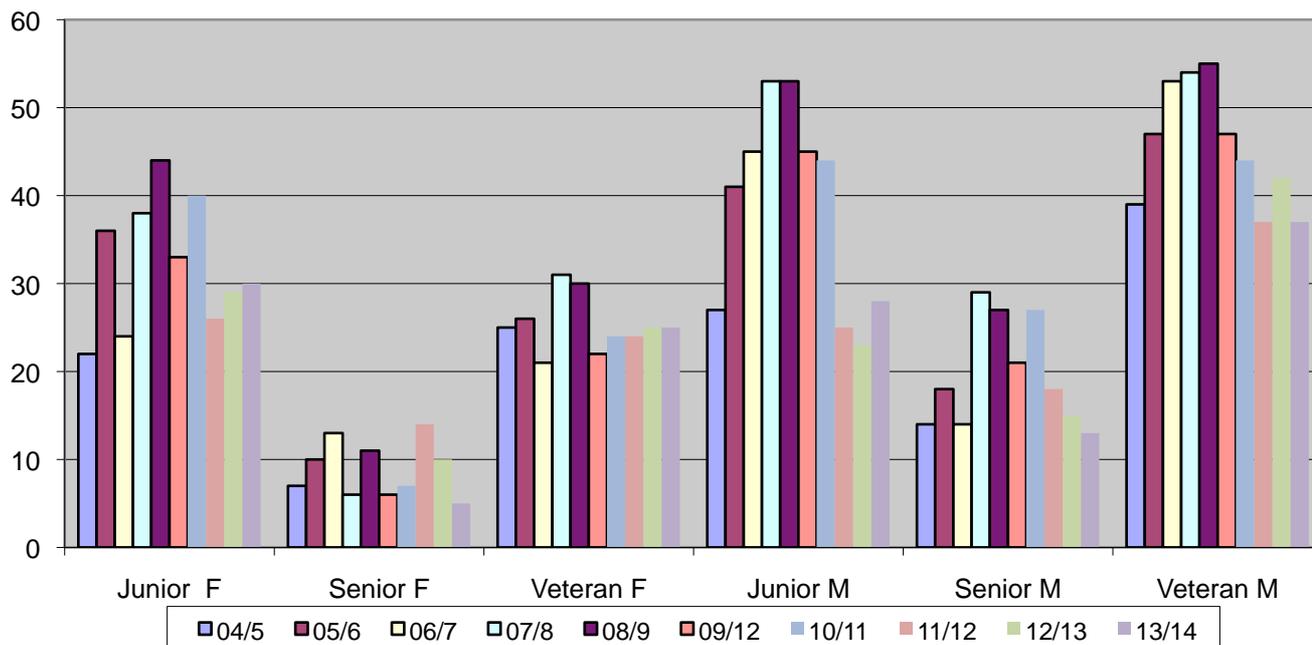
Publicizing Results

My thanks go to everyone who has provided material for the web, email and press articles and in particular to our Publicity Officer, Richard Jégou who has regularly submitted material to the press as well as providing the contents of the Results web page.

Membership Details

We currently have 138 members as of September (last year's total was 144). The chart below shows the numbers of members for each category over the last ten years.

Membership Trends



Oxfordshire AA & Athletics Network

We continue to be affiliated to, and support the work of the Oxfordshire Athletics Association. My thanks to Richard Jégou and Dene Stringfellow for representing the club and assisting with the work of the County Association.

We continue to participate in the Oxfordshire Athletics Network. This has now been in existence for over four years. During the past year the Network was enlarged as the original Network Clubs (Oxford City, Radley AC, Abingdon Amblers, Bicester and ourselves) have been joined by Banbury Harriers. The original Network funding from England Athletics has stopped although there is some money left from previous years for the Network to spend. As is the case for the other clubs in the Network, WHH makes a contribution of £1 per member (per year) to the Network.

The Network organizes a number of events in support of coaches and officials. From a White Horse Harriers viewpoint the most significant benefit continues to be higher level competition opportunities for young athletes as part of the combined Oxfordshire Athletics Network Team in the Youth Development Track & Field League. This provides competition for the Under-20 and Under-17 age groups that we would otherwise not have been able to offer. Having been team manager for the Oxfordshire Athletics Network Team since its inception, Jane Rennells is now stepping down from this role. I would like to thank her for work on behalf of the athletes in WHH and the other Network Clubs.

Committee & Plans

Committee Members for 2013-2014

I note that the 2013/14 committee remained unchanged from the previous year.

Chairman	Gareth Smith
Secretary	Dene Stringfellow
Treasurer	Sharon Bedford
Road Running Secretary	Paul Jégou
Cross Country Secretary	<i>vacant</i>
Press Officer	Richard Jégou
Membership Secretary	Clare Hazell
Welfare Officer	Castel Fairlie
Volunteer Coordinator	<i>vacant</i>
General Members	Bob Harrison, Lindsay Onay (co-opted)

ClubMark

Unfortunately I cannot report much progress towards achieving Clubmark Accreditation although it has remained a goal for the club. The amendment to our constitution at last year's AGM was a small step forward. However, a big, final push will be needed to complete the steps necessary to gain accreditation.

Open Members Meeting

An open members meeting was held on 12th May at which ongoing issues and ideas for the club's future development were discussed. The committee has reviewed the results of the meeting and made a start on tackling the points raised. Below are listed the topics that were discussed at the meeting along with a number of the key points raised. It is perhaps notable that this meeting largely reinforced the direction the club is taking and that a number of these actions are already under way.

- Increasing Opportunities for Senior Athletes – Training & Competition.
 - More structured training (but not to rely on one person only to lead)
- Increasing Opportunities for Junior Athletes – Training & Competition.
 - Support for Hayley's initiative to enter the Sportshall League
 - Need to get more parents involved
 - Seek better winter training facilities
- Promoting Running and Athletics in the Local Community
 - Regular adverts (e.g. in local press)
- Encouraging Greater Participation in the Management of the Club.
 - Offer roles in bite-sized chunks
 - More opportunities for social gatherings (e.g. low-key events – visit to the pub etc.)
- Effective Communications Between members
 - Sort out website.

Summary

The broad scope of the activities I have reported on each year are a testament to the club's vitality. The club continues to be very active with athletes competing at many levels across a wide range of events within the sport: Track & Field Athletics, Cross-Country, Multi-Terrain and Road Running. We should be proud of our achievements.

The main issues that limit us remain the same as in previous years:

- Too much has fallen on the shoulders of too few people. This is particularly true for the coaches.
- The Thursday evening training venues in Winter are very poor.

Nevertheless we continue to provide both training (especially local training based in Wantage) and competition for our members and there is something the club is involved in most weekends of the year. Last year the following issues were highlighted and I am pleased to say there has been some positive progress in these areas:

- "Poor turnouts (for men) in the road running championships." - *It is particularly pleasing to see greater numbers this last season.*
- "We still lack a 'beginners' run on a Thursday" - *This year we have made a big effort to provide follow-on runs after the JogWantage course and these have had some success.*

- “The Harrier as a newsletter has not been issued this year. Furthermore we have not been able to keep up with posting all results on the website. This issue is currently being tackled and I hope in the meantime the new Facebook page will help fill the gap. I have also instigated a monthly email which aims to both keep members informed and avoid too many ‘ad-hoc’ emails.” - *The Facebook Group has been very active. Furthermore there has been positive feedback regarding the monthly emails.*

There are areas for (possible) future change or improvement.

- The committee has discussed, but not yet acted on, trying to improve the facilities at King Alfred's Academy West Site. (Better long jump pit and throwing circle).
- At previous AGMs some members have expressed an interest in having our own (or a shared) Clubhouse. This has not been actively pursued.
- There is also the balance between Track & Field Athletics and Running. Maintaining a good level of activity in T&F athletics is made difficult by the club not being based at an athletics track – but remains an important aspiration for the club and its members.
- Another target, only partly achieved, has been to try and divide up some of the tasks of running the club into smaller chunks. In saying this I would like to recognize that there are a number of people already filling such roles and their efforts are very much appreciated.

I am standing down as Chairman at this AGM and would like to thank everyone who has contributed to White Horse Harriers in any way during my tenure. A particular thank you goes to Richard Jégou who is also standing down at this AGM after many years service on the club committee. I would also like to thank especially Bob Harrison and Dene Stringfellow who are also (very) long-standing committee members.

Gareth Smith
October 2014