

Stride & Tested

Denmead Striders

Costal Ultra 50k

Paul Welch

When I first took up running never did I think that I would run a marathon, let alone an ultra! I ran my first in 2015 and was surprised at how much I enjoyed training and running the longer distances. Having eventually got my London place and before I'd even written up a training plan I stupidly set myself another distance challenge, this time coming in the form of the Portsmouth Coastal Ultra 50k!

Race day came and I'd decided that 4hr 30mins was going to be a hard but achievable target. I usually try to break my long runs into sections so that I don't get overcome by the whole thing and my first "checkpoint" was going to be the top of the Eastern Road as I knew this is where Clare & Lisa were going to be (My support crew).

After running toward the lifeboat station we were directed onto the beach which I wasn't looking forward to as I know a few people that have lost shoes before! I managed to get through with both intact and on to dry land and was very happy to see my support crew at my first checkpoint.

My next one was the bridge onto Hayling as this has always been a popular location for supporting Striders. I carried on along the cycle path and was pleased to see Julia & Mick offering support. It then got a little lonely and although I could see a few runners ahead I wasn't making up or losing any ground on them however I then had my next pick-me-up in the form of Julian, Emma & Steve C.

I crossed the bridge & joined the Billy trail, looking back across the harbour to Portsmouth made it feel a long way. I got to the end of the trail feeling pretty comfortable, but as this was where the marathon turn point was I did start thinking to myself "why didn't you just do the marathon you idiot". I plodded on towards another beach. This time the pebbles were there for a lot longer, trying to run on loose stones after already running 14 miles is not the easiest thing I've ever done. I reached the turn point and was greeted by Kiernan from PJC another friendly face to keep me going. Running back I passed fellow Striders where we encouraged each other. Coming to the end of the beach was very welcome as well as seeing Gary Edmonds who was going to give me company for a couple of miles.

With my new running partner we headed

towards Station Theatre where I was greeted by a surprise visit from Clare & Lisa, this time wearing very festive Christmas hats. We re-joined the trail where the marathon runners were now coming thick & fast. So from running solo for about 15 miles I suddenly had a running buddy & loads of other runners to take my mind off of the fact that I still had to run a half marathon to finish. Gary kept the pace & spirits high along the full length of the trail, he left me just before the bridge and at this point I was about 20 miles in and really starting to feel it, luckily for me I had another boost when my crew popped up just as I re-joined the mainland. All I had to do now was retrace my earlier steps.

Julia & Mick were still there cheering on all the runners, this time joined by Pete Maisey, again another very welcome boost. As I got to the car park at the top of the Eastern Road I was a little disappointed not to see my support crew but put it down to Clare's inability to manoeuvre a car in a busy car park!

I crossed over the bridge and after a quick look at my watch I realised that I was about to go past marathon distance, now I was in no-man's land! I only had 5 ish miles to go, it shouldn't be that tricky, should it?

I carried on down the coastal path and saw my support crew again cheering and encouraging me to push on. (I think their actual words were Matts just up there, you can catch him) well that was never going to happen but I appreciated their confidence in me. That did me give a focus and a target to concentrate on in the closing stages though. Now I was in "let's get this finished" mode and was so happy to get back to Eastney knowing that I've just got half a parkrun to do and then I can stop. Gary Armstrong who ran the half earlier, was riding up and down the promenade between Matt and myself trying to squeeze the last bit of energy out of us. I'm not sure it had any effect on my pace but it was appreciated.

As I went past the pier and could see the finish line in the distance I spotted my travelling support crew, this time running trying to get to the finish before so they could cheer me across the line, they made it....just.

I finished the 50k in 3hours 55mins so to totally smash my prediction was unbelievable.

January 2018

Race dates – February & March 2018

February 2018

Chichester 10k	4 th
Ryde 10m	4 th
Bramely 10 & 20m	11 th
Polecat Valley XCountry	25 th

March 2018

New Forest Running Festival	17 th
Eastleigh 10k (HRRL)	18 th
Hundred Acres 10k	25 th
Combe Gibbet to Overton	25 th

I'm not sure I could have managed this without the support of everybody that was out on the course, I know they weren't there exclusively for me but when you see someone you know it always gives you that little boost which sometimes is enough just to get you through to the next "checkpoint". Thanks to everyone (and apologies I couldn't name you all) that gave me words of encouragement that day, it would have been a lot harder without you.

Striders Stats PB's by Clare

December PBs. Well done to:

Name	Race	Time
Chris Cornwell	Victory 5M	00:30:21
Daniella Offer	Victory 5M	00:36:32
Suzanne Richardson	Victory 5M	00:36:29
Dan Starkey	Victory 5M	00:32:13
Rob Wilson	Victory 5M	00:29:33
Rolland Hill	Portsmouth Coastal Marathon	03:19:48

Official New Members A warm welcome to:

Simon Burrough

Don't forget it's now time to pay your membership fee for 2018. Payment of £24.00 due. Speak to Julia for further details.



2017 Striders Photos (Clare's two Favourites)

Thank you to all of you that sent in photos. Would be great to continue into 2018. There were so many to choose from but these are my 2 favourite from 2017



Upcoming Events Lee Weeks

Curry Night – 9th February

Milton Tandoori. Table booked for 8pm.

This is a bring your own drinks as there is no bar license. New faces are welcome – come and get involved. Email or text Lee Weeks to book your space.

AGM & Awards Night – 16th March

New venue this year – The RNA Club in Waterlooville.

AGM will take place at 7pm with the awards evening after starting at 8pm.

Please note all members are welcome to the AGM as well as the awards evening.

Easter Walk – 31st March

The annual club 2018 walk will take place on Easter Saturday. This event is open to all members and friends (including furry ones) The walk entails a distance of around 10 miles with either a coffee stop of pub stop or both depending on route. Please make a date for your diaries.

Details of this event will follow.

Membership Payment

Please note that subscriptions can now be paid directly to the club sort code **40-45-26** account number **51233475** at £24.00 for 2018 year, please add your **full name** as reference

Getting to know you, getting to know one another....

This month's insight is our Cross Country Rep – Paul Welch

Q & A with Paul Welch

What made you join the Striders?

I was thinking about joining a running club for a couple of years but never got around to it. After seeing Denmead Striders in their masses at local races I just decided why not go along to my local club and "give it a go"

What inspired you to start running?

I used to play football (very poorly) but as I got older the recovery seemed to take longer each week, after stopping I needed something to keep me fit so started running on my own.

What's your favourite distance and why?

Any distance above half marathon. I feel I'm better suited to endurance races. The fast stuff hurts too much!

Cross country or road?

Definitely cross country, what could be fun than running through muddy woods?

Summer/winter training?

Mixed emotions on this, I love the lanes in the summer but feel I get more out of the winter sessions as I'm usually training for a spring marathon.

Favourite club session?

Hills, not sure if that's normal?

Any club inspirations and why?

Julia, anybody that can run that many marathons has to be inspiring.

Any pre run/race superstitions or prep?

I like to make sure I wear my vintage club vest for all HRRL races

Favourite medal?

Milton Keynes marathon as this is the race that guaranteed my London GFA entry

