



Easingwold Running Club – Advertiser article November 2020

A message from ERC's Chairman Mike Bishop...

"Like all of us, 2020 has presented Easingwold Running Club with a unique set of challenges this year. It is well documented that sport of any kind is beneficial for both physical and mental wellbeing and since March, we have sought to keep the running club busy and active as an antidote to the restrictions placed upon us by the pandemic.

As these restrictions were lifted in the Summer, we were able to return to our traditional club evenings every Thursday, albeit in smaller groups dotted around the villages and countryside of Hambleton. However, the reduction in daylight in September presented us with our biggest challenge to date as many of our usual locations became untenable from a safety point of view. Since September, we have been meeting in groups of five, with a maximum of ten people in each group. This is within the guidelines laid down for physical activity; we ensure we follow the two-metre distancing at all times, run with a trained coach and also try to keep away from members of the general public as much as possible. We do have at least three groups meeting in different locations in Easingwold, but then ensure that these groups do not come into contact with each other and they tend to run out into the country away from town. There are also groups that meet on an ad-hoc basis every Tuesday, and these groups follow the same procedures as above but follow the rule of six. All of this is in line with the restrictions that have been set by the government and our own governing body, England Athletics.

However, as a result of the new lockdown, we have had to suspend all activities, but once the restrictions are lifted, we hope to resume these activities as before. We wish to reassure people living in Easingwold that we are at all times following the guidelines that are laid down and are doing so in a way that is as Covid – 19 safe as possible.

In previous editions of The Advertiser, we have mentioned some of the events we have participated in and the late Summer and Autumn period has been particularly busy up to the beginning of this month. Such events include...."

Following on from Mike's message... Normally ERC's members would be taking part in a good number of autumnal events and gearing up towards the winter cross-country (x-c) series our club has entered for the last two years. The North Yorkshire and South Durham (NYSD) cross country league is a really popular race series using routes in Whitby, Richmond, Askern, Darlington and more.

Sadly, these have been cancelled along with so many others. But, as a club, we're hoping to organise our own 'Covid compliant' x-c, slightly away from Easingwold. The mud awaits!

The list does not make happy reading with the Temple Newsam 10, the Brass Monkey half in York, the Muddy Boots 10k in Ripon and the Snake Lane 10m in Pocklington all having to be cancelled for the 20-21 season.

It seems the new 'go to' word in this context is now "virtual". So, virtual races have been run by members, just not in the original location.

In early October, the following ERC runners took part in the virtual London Marathon, using local routes to complete the famous 26 and a bit miles.

Really well done to Colin Fletcher (3:28:51), Daisy Fletcher (3:39:21), Shaun Lawson (3:32:24), Liz Chambers (4:29:17) and Michael Wallis (6:58:04).

Also congratulations to Karen Rayner who completed her virtual York Marathon in 4:52:28.

I know a lot of training as usual went into these endeavours. Money was raised for charity so again, well done to our Marathon runners and also to all those who helped and supported along the way.

Not quite 'virtual' but organised in a slightly different format this year was our annual 'George Becton' (GB) 5k Handicap Race.

The first 'race' is to set up the handicap times for the second and main event.

In normal years, we've all gathered on Tanpit Lane and run out along the Thirsk road, looping right and back in via the Husthwaite road, back past the school, up towards the church and aiming for a sprint finish back down Tanpit.

The route was almost the same this time but with all runners continuing past the church to finish at the bottom of Millfield, allowing for a wider area to recover, stretch and have a word, whilst being able to keep distance etc.

ERC's top three in reverse order were: Olivia Pearce; Julian Ollive and our GB 2020 winner - Adam King. Well done to them and all of the runners who were able to take part in either or both of the races.

We also appreciated the support of our volunteers, time keeping, marshalling and supporting... Andy, Claire, Sally-Anne, Cath, Steph, Neil, Jenny and Sarah (and apologies if i've missed anyone).

One positive in the race calendar this year was the 'Northumberland Castles Half Marathon'. The organisers write: "This popular road race in the historic village of Bamburgh, with the Castle as the backdrop. This year's route is a 2 lap route between the Bamburgh/Seahouses villages - this is a slightly undulating race in the beautiful Northumberland countryside."

The race was originally scheduled to take place last October, however regrettably cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. And it has been blighted since by the Covid19 restrictions.

The organisers set the runners off in waves in order to comply with distancing and it finally took place on 1st November with one member of ERC taking part. Despite the tremendous winds, Richard 'Knotty' Knott achieved a very respectable finish time of 1:42:12 and hugely enjoyed the two lap route.

"Definitely one for the bucket list" Knotty said.

Well done to Rich for taking part in the above and hopefully a few more ERC members might like to add this one to their 2021 list (hopefully).

Having taken part in the last 10 Northumberland Coastal Runs (not this year, v sad face!), I know it'll be on my itinerary.

As Mike mentioned at the start of this article, the club, just as for other groups, organisations and indeed individuals, has had to adhere to our governing body's guidelines. England Athletics, in turn, takes it cue from the Government.

Readers may remember reports of ERC adopting and adapting new contests, from the 'virtual' events we're now seeing, the 'in-club' challenges we completed back between April and the summer, personal running, groups of 6, then 10, then 2!

Mike quite rightly made the comment that we are following the guidelines and certainly wish, as a club, to reassure local residents.

He also mentioned how sport and exercise in general is so important for both physical and mental wellbeing.

I'm sure everyone hopes we can get back to pre C19 normality, but during these 'virtual' times, the simple act of putting on a pair of running shoes, dusting off the bike, headtorch ready, may mean a lot more than we realise.

Life's path goes up and down. It may split offering choices, decisions to be made. Carry on or double back. Sometimes when the path goes downhill, momentum gathers pace and more effort would be needed to try to go back up.

Whether internal or external forces are aiding us downwards, we might just need a bit of help. Putting on those metaphorical or literal running shoes, with empathy from others, might not straighten the path (that would be boring!) but going up is a personal reassurance too.

Sometimes, things don't affect us until they affect us and we don't feel them until we feel them.

Jonathon Harris-Douglas, Publicity Secretary