

TAC Masters Update Tuesday 18th April

TAC Easter Open

In less than ideal conditions with a strong head wind on one corner in particular Maria Heslop showed terrific determination to run a TAC W40,45,50 and 55 record for the 5000m, 18.47.23 for 95% age grading score.

It was great to see plenty of masters athletes in action ahead of the first Vets league meeting on the 5th May at Sutcliffe Park. I will update re non scoring opportunities in the 400m and 3000m. There will be no non scoring in the field events due to strict licence rules regarding the finish time.



Rotterdam Marathon 16th April

Jacek Traczynski was well on target for his sub 3 hour marathon until he suffered an injury 4 weeks out from the marathon date. Despite this set back he was still on 2.50's pace until about 35 km when things got tough, but he battled on to ensure he achieved a PB of 3.05.39.

Peter Sutton was able to maintain a very stable pace almost to the end and was rewarded with 3.14.41 on his debut at this distance. This was in the upper half of the range he had targeted.

Folkstone 10 miler Good friday

Conditions were good for this sea front out and back race, where I understand the course has changed slightly to take out a small loop at the far end that keeps it perfectly flat.

Helen Gaunt took advantage of the opportunity to run a new W40 TAC record. This puts her second in the country for 2023 rankings and 5th fastest female of all ages this year.

Anthony Crush 1.04.55 stepped up in distance .

<https://www.folkestone10mile.co.uk/results/2023-results/>

Battersea 5k VAC Tuesday 4th April

Mark PK decided the moment had come to test the Nike super shoes, having set a PB at Battersea over the same course in June 2021 of 18.46 he was keen to see how much the shoes help. Two years older with super shoes lowered the PB to 18.18. He then trimmed this to 18.16 at Bromley parkrun a few days later to confirm the shoes were a great present from the training group and a worthwhile investment.

Vets AC put on monthly races 5k or 5M in Battersea through the summer and welcome other vets. SCVAC members get an additional £2 reduction making £10 one of the best value races around!!

<http://www.vetsac.org.uk/Fixtures.html>

Ashford Half

Mark Grange and Richard Sargent took part in this challenging countryside course. Mark was 40th in 1.47.27 with Richard close behind in 1.48.24.

Newport Marathon

Recent member Mike Doe (M60) took part in the Newport marathon 3.51.24, which he reports as a PB and debut as per power of 10.

National 12 stage Road Relays Sutton Coldfield Sat 15th April

There were a few over 35's in the TAC teams.

Maria Heslop ran 4th leg (2nd Long leg) 33.03 which was a massive 94.60% on age grading Putting this in perspective, Phoebe Barker who led the team off in a club record time of 30.11 for 86.53% and Lillie Partridge who was second fastest on the first leg and I believe is about 30 who scored 90%.

Ben Cole ran a strong 3rd leg 26.19 that brought the TAC A team up from 5th to 2nd place. This was the 5th fastest on the leg. (Ben front row far right)

Nathan Chapman ran 29.45 for the 4th long leg in the B team. The second half was a test of mental strength with no one visible in front or behind.

Mark PK experience at the Road relays.

In my late 50's I have never put my name down for the National 12 stage relays. All the teams have to qualify via their regional championships, hence the standard is high. This is first time that Tonbridge had qualified 2 teams.

I was thinking of going to support particularly as Polly (daughter) was going to run in the women's team. Mark Hookway called to ask if I was going as he needed a 12th runner for the B team and was running out of options. Never one to turn down a race I was happy to say Yes on the proviso that I was only in the team if there was no one else!! As it was someone else dropped out and Anthony Crush also stepped in as he could watch Huxley as well!!

The rest of the team were genuinely appreciative and encouraging that Anthony and I were taking part, with absolutely no feeling that they felt the team would be uncompetitive as a



result. The aim was to finish in the top half and see how we did against other B teams. Also having a B team present provides a great source of reserves if there is a hitch with an A team runner on the day. Anthony and I were simply aiming to lose as few places as possible.

As it turned out there were 57 complete teams which finished, with 5 incomplete teams, so the target was 31st Team.

While the excitement at the front of the field saw the TAC A team hit the front during leg 4, the B team started in 36th, but by the end of leg 6 were in 30th. We were a stable 33rd for 9th and 10th legs. However, the relay format was then changed as a mass start was utilised for the long 11th stage (Anthony Crush) and the Short 12th stage for me. Unfortunately the focus of racing people on the road was no longer the case as we had no idea who our direct opponents were. However, this "race format" did mean we had others to race with, otherwise I would have been 5 minutes behind the racer in front of me and a minute and a half in front of the next runner.

The long leg mass start started at 3.50pm just prior to the winning team Central crossed the line. Anthony Crush had an epic battle on the road with a well known vet runner (5 years his junior) from our arch rivals Aldershot Farnham and District B team. Anthony showed that his finishing kick is alive and well to get the upper hand at the end.

I had the pleasure of watching the finish and cheering home the A team while waiting in the pen for the mass start. This is the beauty of this sport, as I realised that Nick Goolab, a recent GB athlete was also waiting (he did actually get out just before the mass start) I have great respect for him as when I first went to the 6 stage southern relays at Aldershot in about 2014 Nick Goolab ran away from the field on the first leg and my lack of understanding assumed he had gone too fast as he appeared to be sprinting!! He just went further away on the second lap !!!

As I was distracted watching the finishing athletes I ended up near the back of the mass start, felt that I was going well as I weaved through on the first descent. Lost a place on the long hill, got him back shortly after and then there were no changes after that, just running as fast as possible!! Great support from various clubs up the finishing straight. 19.35 to be 9 seconds faster than in the masters road relays last year on the same course. The A team were 5th and the B team narrowly missed the top half in 34th place. Anthony held 33rd and I lost 1 place, although I think I we were both aided by the fact there was one team with 10 and one with 11. Most importantly Aldershot Farnham and District B were back in 53rd place!!! We were 4th B team out of 6.

If faster TAC athletes had run, we would have comfortably been seven and half minutes faster, putting the team into 27th place and top half. But relays are all about the sum of the parts and are a real test of club depth, getting two teams qualified and complete on the day is a great achievement.

The best thing about this event is racing "with" the top athletes in the country. Anthony Crush was able to compare his time with Alex Yee (Triathlon Olympic Gold medallist) Andy

Buchart and Mark Scott both recent Olympic track athletes. I am not sure there are many sports where you can have this experience. As someone who came to athletics later in life I would strongly encourage those who are younger to take opportunities to race in events like this. (below Anthony, Mark Pk, Maria Heslop and Nathan Chapman)



Beckenham Relays

Wednesday 17th May 7.30pm

Teams of 3 , 2.6 miles each.

Please fill out the google sheet form now if you want to be included as we will have to enter teams very soon to avoid missing out.

<https://forms.gle/3Vc7keZpGfeqVuV36>

London Marathon

Good luck to those racing this Sunday.