

THE HARRIER

(JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER)



Our relaxed athletes at the Oh My Obelisk

Our athletes did well at today's tough **Oh My Obelisk** in Dawlish with Lindsay 2nd fv40 and Jenny 2nd fv50.

The first major road race of the year, the **First Chance 10K** was cancelled due to icy conditions. It has been very tricky underfoot of late. Hopefully everyone has avoided a mishap! Fortunately, the weather hasn't been quite as bad as in Cornwall but I suspect it was hard going at today's Cross-Country races at Westward Ho!

I hope you all had a good Christmas and now back in full training in this New Year.

In the Harrier are the club ranking for 2025. If I have missed any races which affect the rankings, then please let me know.

Dave Fox - Editor

From the Chairman: Hello everyone, I hope you have had an enjoyable start to 2026.

Looking back to December, we had the annual club Christmas party and awards evening. Thanks to Sharon and Ruth for organising everything. I hope everyone enjoyed the new venue. The following day was the Armada Christmas Relays where we had 11 teams representing the club including a couple of junior teams. Our senior men managed to retain their title and we picked up some other prizes which was a great end to the year.

We start the year with a couple of Cross Country races including the Westward league XC at Westward Ho! Which I'm sure will be as bracing as ever! Don't forget the next Westward League race is much closer to home - Central Park in Plymouth on Sunday 8th February. It would be great to have a big turnout from club members for this race.

Following the return of the Club Championship in 2025 it is back again in 2026 - full details elsewhere in The Harrier and club website. A big thanks to Lynne and Helen Chappell for their work with this.

We have a confirmed date for **Ivybridge 10k on Saturday 23rd May 2026**. As ever, we will be requesting some help from you to put on the event. More details to follow later in the year but if you could save the date, it would be appreciated.

We have also started making preliminary plans for the Ivybridge Relays and Fell Race, for which we will also need volunteers to help host these events - more details to follow.

Tuesday night club runs seem to be going well - a gentle reminder to please wear hi-viz and on returning from your run please try and stop on the pavement before negotiating your way through the entrance to the rugby club. It's still very dark there with a lot of cars exiting the car park.

I look forward to seeing you at club or a race soon.

Tom Davies - davies.tp@googlemail.com and 07909 595965

SECRETARY'S NOTES

Happy New Year

We hope everyone had a good Christmas and New Year. We are now firmly back to normal. 2026 is a significant year for Athletics with the change in age groups happening in April. The juniors age groups will now be even years (i.e. U10, U12, U14, U16 and U18) instead of the current odd ones. We will try and prepare all our juniors for this over the next few months.

The competitions have already restarted with the SW Cross Country Championships last Saturday and the Westward League this weekend in Westward Ho!

The weather has turned very cold and icy with a number of cancelled events including the popular First Chance 10K.

We hope that the promised milder weather will arrive. We have now confirmed the date of our 10K as Saturday 23rd May. Please save the date as we need everyone's help as always. We are keeping the entry fee the same as last year which is very good value indeed. Make sure you tell all your friends and colleagues.

We are also putting on the Relays again on Friday June 26th and the Ivybridge 3 Tops on Saturday 15th August.

The Club Championships will resume again and details will be in the Harrier and on the website

Please note that our 2026 club memberships is now due. Thanks to those who have already paid. Details and the link to the forms are on our website.

Training and Competition update

We have resumed Junior training after the Christmas break and numbers were very good. We have the next Sportshall fixture on 25th January and we hoping to increase our overall lead over Plymouth. We hope to recruit new members over the next few weeks.

Senior training also resumed with the Winter Handicap. It was a bit quiet but that was possibly due to the weather. The results of the Winter Handicap are now posted. We are resuming Friday training sessions and hope to increase numbers. We will review this in early March.

The routes for first three months of 2026 are now on the website.

Road (and off Road) Running

The Armada Relays held just before Christmas went well with the EVH senior team retaining their title. There was also success for some of our other teams. Ben

Holmes did extremely well setting the fastest leg. The 5K race held at Torbay Velopark on 21st December was also good with Luke Hayes having a particularly good run. Sally Erith also had a good run.

We hope the First Chance will be rearranged but the Oh my Obelisk run should be on this weekend. It is not too long now until the Spring Marathons and I am sure a lot of you are training hard.

Athletes of the Month (Dec)

The athletes of the month for December were Ben Holmes and Fran Pickstone.

Forthcoming Events

Jan 24th – Devon Schools Cross Country

- Endurance Life South Devon Races – Beesands

- Pagan Trails - Chagford

Jan 25th – North Devon 10 miles and 10K

- Devon Sportshall – Plymouth

Feb 1st – Newquay 10K

Feb 7th – SW Schools Cross Country Championships – Exeter

Feb 8th – Westward League – Plymouth

Feb 15th – Mini Marathon Trials and Relays – Westpoint

Feb 22nd - Devon Sportshall – Plymouth

Feb 28th - Westward League at Redruth - Hameldown Hammer

March 1st – Looe 10

- Taunton Half Marathon

March 8th – Granite Way 10 or 20

- Bideford Half

- Grizzly

- Regional Sportshall – Taunton

Finally –Please take special care when running in icy weather. It is very easy to slip and injure yourself. Also make sure you can be seen by cars when running at night.

**Keith - 07934373943
reedy41c@googlemail.com**

RACE NEWS

Erme Valley Harriers triumph again at the Armada Christmas Relays in Central Park

Posted on [December 24, 2025](#) by [Plymouth Sports Gazette](#)



ERME Valley Harriers won the Armada Christmas Relays title at Central Park for a third successive year.

After two years of triumphing with exactly the same quartet, this year **Ben Holmes** came in for university student Matthew Gilvear. He joined **Luke Hayes, Peter Allen** and **Charlie Milward** in the team.

They took victory in the 4×3.3km event on Sunday by nearly three minutes, coming home in a time of 46 minutes and seven seconds.

Second team were Plymouth Harriers Reindeer Rebels, who were made up of Matthew Cundell, Dave Morris, James Cartlidge and Gary Booth. They clocked 49.03 minutes.

Third place went to the City of Plymouth senior men's side of David Goodspeed, Simon Anderson, Ross Penney and Tom Blackford, who finished in 49.33 minutes. They were just seven seconds ahead of their under-18 boys' team, who came fourth overall and took the top junior prize. That young team was made up of Finley Eales, Sebastian Travers, Tristan Bigham and Finley Bennett.

Storm Mixers were the first mixed team, with speedy female runners Lauren Knox and Charlene Matthews joining up with David Kilgore and Jack Arundel to come home in a time of 52.07 minutes.

The first female team was City of Plymouth U18 girls. Their quartet of Elsie Goodspeed, Margot Goodspeed, Zoe Bigham and Daisy Elliott clocked 57.06 minutes.

Second female team and the first senior women's quartet were the Tamar Trotters side of Lydia Herbert, Ayesha Gillespie, Daria Khomych and Kat Seargent, who finished in 57.30 minutes.

Erme Valley had the third female team overall and the second senior women's one with **Jess Ashworth, Becky Lee, Charley Kendrick and Hannah Claydon**.

The Ivybridge-based club also picked up the F45, **F55** and M40 team prizes, while Tamar Trotters won the M50 award and Plymouth Harrier's Santa's Sacks took the M60 title.



Erme Valley's Holmes was the quickest runner on the day, clocking a quick 10.28 minutes for the 3.3k circuit, with his team-mate **Luke Hayes** second fastest with 11.16 minutes. City of Plymouth junior Finley Bennett was third fastest.

Storm's Knox was the quickest woman, clocking a fast 12.00 minutes, with her team-mate Matthews second fastest with 13.04 minutes and City of Plymouth youngster Elsie Goodspeed third quickest with 13.29 minutes.

ARMADA CHRISTMAS RELAYS - Central Park, Plymouth
Sunday - 14th December

This was a great day for the club as we had success in many categories. We also had a terrific turnout from the club.

We won the race for the third year in a row with **Luke Hayes, Peter Allen, Charlie Milward** and **Ben Holmes** making up the team. **Ben Holmes**, replaced **Matthew Gilvear** from last year's winning team.

We also won the male 40, female 45 and female 50 categories, with the Senior Women finishing 2nd in their category.

Some 49 teams made up of all ages completed the relays.

Erme Valley results:

1	Senior Men	Luke Hayes (11.16), Peter Allen (12.06), Charlie Milward (12.17) and Ben Holmes (10.28)	46.07
8	Sen Men 'B'	Ben Bristow (13.10), Russell Gibson (12.52) Dan Francis (13.58) and Josh Burke (12.45)	52.45
9	Scratch Men's Team	Adam Griffiths (13.06), Dave Engledew (14.37) Luke Hayes (12.26) and Peter Allen (13.03)	53.12
10	Male 40	Tom Davies (13.34), Tim Steere (13.13) Barry Neal (14.21) and Chris Prall (12.33)	53.41
15	Male 50 'A'	Dave Rayfield (13.58), Nigel Grottick (14.24) Stuart Witty (14.13) and Alan Gatling (14.40)	57.15
21	Sen Women	Jess Ashworth (14.17), Becky Lee (15.49) Charley Kendrick (16.19) and Hannah Claydon (13.47)	60.11
28	Female 45	Liz Bristow (17.11), Becky Prall (15.53), Helen Pearse (15.56) and Emma Lake (14.30)	63.30
33	Girls	Freya Norris (16.12), Bluebell McBride (15.50) Eryn Hoey (16.33) and Harriet Rogers (15.40)	64.15
34	Misfits	Richard Maunder (12.45), Maisie Squires (19.27) Erin Follet (17.23) and Tom Davies (14.42)	64.17
41	Male 50 'B'	Nick Bristow (16.58), Kevin Paull (17.59) Dave Lloyd (17.20) and Simon Swift (15.43)	68.00
45	Female 55	Lynne Whitfield (16.14), Linda Bracher-Swift (18.05) Andrea Mitchell (17.00) and Alison Engledew (16.55)	68.14



There were some pb performances from our runners taking part in the **City Runs Fast 5k** races held at the **Torbay Velopark on Sunday 21st December**.

There were two races held on the flat course and in the A race **Luke Hayes** had a great run to break 16 mins for the first time. **Luke** set a new pb of 15.55 finishing 17th in a high quality race. **Graham Reed** was 28th in 16.44 and **Allister Bristow** was 61st in 17.40.

in the B race **Sally Erith** also set a pb of 18.54 finishing 28th with **Alison Thorn** 40th in 19.16. **Nick Bristow** battled bravely after recent illness to finish 61st in 20.40.

Ben Bristow set the early pace in the B race but had to drop out with a hamstring issue and **Liz Bristow** also unfortunately failed to finish.



The Chapell's successfully completed the 100KM Triathlon in Qatar

Jessica Newman took part in the Final Countdown Trail 10KM on 31 December. She finished 154th in 1.10.56 in the race, which started on Sidmouth Seafront and heading up the South West Coast Path trails. The race then goes inland around Mutters Moor and nearby woodland trails, before the descent down to the finish.

There were 276 runners in the race, won in a time of 43.22.

SOUTH WEST CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

It has been very icy since Christmas with cancellation of Parkruns and the popular First Chance 10K in Exeter.

The SW Cross Country Championships did survive the weather and took place on Sunday 4th January. We had two U13 girls, who both ran for Devon in the Inter Counties event, which is part of the Championships. **Freya Norris** was 27th in 12.19 and **Harriet Rogers** 29th in 12.23. The course was over 2790m.

Tom Davies was our only senior and finished 107th in 31.18 over a distance of 7130m.



EVH Club Championship 2026

The Club Championship is ready to go for 2026 with a few updates. There are a variety of events each month so that everyone can find something that will hopefully appeal to them. Get the dates in your diaries!

New for this year are the South West Athletics League events. It would be great to get a good turnout at the track events. Tom will give more details on this closer to the time. Another new feature is being able to score points for volunteering at our events – the 10k, the Relays and the 3 Tops Fell Race.

As always, feedback and suggestions are welcome. Please speak to Lynne Whitfield, Helen Chapell, or any member of the committee.

The Club Championship aims to:

- encourage EVH members to support and participate in races in the local area
- encourage EVH members to represent the Club in EVH teams
- support events hosted by local running clubs
- promote friendly competition amongst EVH members

How it works:

- points will be awarded for participation in any of the EVH CC events listed
- to qualify for points members must run under their own name and for EVH
- new Club members will be added into the Club Championship until 31st August 2026
- bonus points can be scored according to the table given below
- to get the parkrun bonus points you can run or volunteer at the nominated parkrun for that month **at any time** during that month
- points for parkrun will only be given for the first 2 Saturdays in December
- a league table will be published each month
- a trophy will be awarded to the overall winner at the end of the year
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions will be able to nominate charities to receive donations of £100, £50 and £25 respectively from the club

Bonus Points	Points
Marathon (1 only)	Age%
Ultra event (1 only)	50
Club age record (including for a non-CC event)	50
Winning an EVH team race for a CC event	20
parkrun (run or volunteer - max 10 points per month at the parkrun nominated for that month)	10

Month	Nominated parkrun
Jan	Torbay Velopark
Feb	Plymvalley
Mar	Haldon Forest
Apr	Sharpham Estate
May	Central Plymouth
Jun	Parke
Jul	Torbay Velopark
Aug	Plymvalley
Sept	Haldon Forest
Oct	Sharpham Estate
Nov	Central Plymouth
Dec	Parke (1st 2 Saturdays only)

2026 CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Date	Race	Points Available
04-Jan	First Chance 10k - Exeter	Age% * 0.5
06-Jan	Winter Handicap 03	10
11-Jan	Oh My Obelisk	30
11-Jan	Westward League XC - North Devon	30
01-Feb	Newquay 10k	Age% * 0.5
03-Feb	Winter Handicap 04	10
08-Feb	Westward League XC - Central Park	30
07/08-Feb	Exeter Half	Age% * 0.75
28-Feb	Westward League XC - Redruth	30
01-Mar	Looe 10 miler	30
03-Mar	Winter Handicap 05	10
08-Mar	Bideford Half Marathon	Age% * 0.75
24-Mar	1 mile races - Plymouth	10
28-Mar	Exeter Trail Half Marathon	Age% * 0.75
28-Mar	Exeter Trail 10k	Age% * 0.5
03-Apr	Fast Friday 10k - Exeter	Age% * 0.5
07-Apr	Summer Handicap 01	10
08-Apr	Armada 5k	10
19-Apr	The Beastly Half (Bodmin)	Age% * 0.75
03-May	SW Athletics League - Exeter	30
05-May	Summer Handicap 02	10
10-May	County Championship (track)	30
14-May	Armada 5k	10
16-May	Meldon Madness Fell Race	30
17-May	Plymouth 10k	Age% * 0.5
17-May	Plymouth Half Marathon	Age% * 0.75
23-May	Volunteering at Ivybridge 10k	20
30-May	Burrator 10k	Age% * 0.5
31-05-2026 tbc	Muskie Madness 10k	Age% * 0.5
02-Jun	Summer Handicap 03	10
07-Jun	SW Athletics League - Exeter	30
10-Jun	Armada 5k	10
20-Jun	Burrator Horseshoe Classic Fell Race	30
23-Jun	Volunteering at Ivybridge Relays	20
26-Jun	Exeter River 10k	Age% * 0.5

Date	Race	Points Available
05-Jul	SW Athletics League - Exeter	30
05-Jul	Cosdon Fell Race	30
07-Jul	Summer Handicap 04	10
08-Jul	Armada 5k	10
16-07-2026 tbc	Tavistock Relays	15
25-07-2026 tbc	Cornwood 10k	Age% * 0.5
31-07-2026 tbc	Torbay Relays	15
02-Aug	Totnes 10k	Age% * 0.5
04-Aug	Summer Handicap 05	10
09-Aug	Devon Open (Track)	30
12-Aug	Armada 5k	10
15-Aug	Volunteering at Ivybridge 3 Tops Fell Race	20
19-Aug	Great Links Tor Flyer Fell Race	30
31-Aug	Lustleigh 10k	Age% * 0.5
01-Sep	Summer Handicap 06	10
05-Sep	Haytor Heller Fell Race	30
06-Sep	SW Athletics League - Exeter	30
09-Sep	Armada 5k	10
12-09-2026 tbc	Flete 10k	Age% * 0.5
13-Sep	Storm the Fort 10k	Age% * 0.5
20-Sep	Torbay Half Marathon	Age% * 0.75
20-Sep	Torbay Half 10k	Age% * 0.5
04-Oct	Templar 10	30
06-Oct	Summer Handicap 07	10
18-Oct	Acronyms Tamar 10k	Age% * 0.5
25-Oct	Tavy 7	30
tbc	Westward League XC	30
03-Nov	Winter Handicap 01	10
08-Nov	Drogo 10	30
21-Nov	Dark Dart Dash 10k	Age% * 0.5
21-Nov	Dark Dart Dash 5k	10
tbc	Westward League XC	30
01-Dec	Winter Handicap 02	10
13-Dec	Armada Christmas Relays	30
tbc	Westward League XC - Exeter	15

TRAINING ROUTES

January

13th - Headtorch Penquit Loop and Speed session
(short intervals) @ Woolcombe Road
20th - Ivybridge Loop or Km reps @ Gorse Way
27th - Headtorch run out to Bittaford and back
Plus Speed session @ Julian Road

February

3rd - Winter Handicap
10th - Headtorch Harford Loop or Speed session
(short intervals) @ Woolcombe Road
17th - Ivybridge Loop or Mile reps
@ Woolcombe Road (flag pole)
24th - Headtorch Penquit Loop or Hill reps @ Viaduct

March

3rd - Winter Handicap
10th - Headtorch run out to Bittaford and back
or Speed session (short intervals) @ Woolcombe Road
17th - Ivybridge Loop or Speed session @ Cross Park
24th - Harford Loop or Speed session @ Julian Road
31st - Summer Handicap Acclimatisation or Mile reps
@ Woolcombe Road (flag pole)

PROVISIONAL DATES AND ROUTES! – Speed sessions to be added

April

7th – Summer Handicap #1
14th – Speed session at Filham Lake
21st – Spirit of the Moor or Ermington Loop
28th – Hill Reps at Palace Lane

May

5th – Summer Handicap #2
12th – Penquit Loop
19th – Spirit of the Moor or Speed session at Julian Road
26th – Out and Back towards South Brent

June

2nd – Summer Handicap #3
9th – Hill Reps at Palace Lane
16th – Spirit of the Moor
23rd – Speed session at Filham Lake
30th – Harford Loop

**2025 CLUB 10K RANKINGS
(2024 RANKINGS IN BRACKETS)**

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Event</u>
1 (2)	33.27	Luke Hayes	Torbay
2 (4)	34.48	Simon Fitze	Cardiff
3 (1)	35.15	Graham Reed	Langley Burrell
4 (3)	35.27	Ronnie Haynes	Yelverton
5 (6)	35.56	Alison McEwing	Langley Burrell
6 (5)	36.47	Peter Allen	Exeter
7	37.36	Andrew Reed	Croxton (Norfolk)
8 (7)	37.37	Allister Bristow	Bristol
9 (8)	38.23	Charlie Milward	Ivybridge
10	38.28	Nick Bristow	Exeter

Luke Hayes produced one of the performances of the year at Torbay, where he was 3rd behind race winner Tom Merson.

Simon Fitz had a great year and achieved a vet record. Alison McEwing was also in terrific form as her time was a club ladies and vet record. The 10K standard remained high.

The top six remained the same but in a different order!

**2025 CLUB HALF MARATHON RANKINGS
(2024 RANKINGS IN BRACKETS)**

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Event</u>
1 (1)	1.15.25	Graham Reed	Bideford
2 (2)	1.16.21	Ronnie Haynes	Plymouth
3 (10)	1.16.23	Simon Fitze	Cardiff
4 (8)	1.20.04	Alison McEwing	Cardiff
5 (4)	1.22.01	Peter Allen	Bideford
6	1.22.16	Faith Taylor – Tippett	Bideford
7 (5)	1.24.45	Allister Bristow	Southampton
8	1.28.45	Holly Jones	Edinburgh
9	1.28.46	Nick Bristow	Plymouth
10	1.31.05	George Benton	Plymouth

Congratulations to Graham Reed for again topping the rankings. His time was almost a minute quicker than his run at Newport in the previous year.

Simon Fitze made rapid progress in the rankings as his 10th place in 2024 was at the hilly Saltash Half!

Good to see three ladies making the top ten.

**2025 CLUB MARATHON RANKINGS
(2024 RANKINGS IN BRACKETS)**

<u>Position</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Event</u>
1 (1)	2.39.26	Simon Fitze	Valencia
2	2.45.32	Ronnie Haynes	Manchester
3 (2)	2.46.21	Alison McEwing	Valencia
4	3.00.19	Chris Prall	London
5 (7)	3.18.38	Sally Erith	London
6	3.18.48	Nick Bristow	Newport
7	3.32.51	Dave Engledew	Newport
8	3.40.39	Barry Neal	Newport
9	3.43.43	Scott Smith	Loch Ness
10	3.46.21	Helen Chapell	Warsaw

Congratulations to Simon Fitze for maintaining his top ranking in one of the most remarkable runs of the year. Simon's time was 5 minutes quicker than he ran in Berlin to top the 2024 rankings and broke the long-standing vet record of Alan Ryder, which was set in Taunton in 2009.

Alison McEwing also had a fantastic year. Her time was a club ladies and vet record.

Dave Engledew and Helen Chapell also set vet records with their runs, whilst Ronnie Haynes had a great run in Manchester on his marathon debut. Sally Erith and Barry Neal also did well with personal best times.

CLUB KIT

From Ken Summers:

Hi all – would anyone be interested in helping me sell the kit.

It would be useful if I can't be at the club that members could still have a contact to buy or order.

Please speak to me at club or email: summersken906@gmail.com

Results just in for the **Oh My Obelisk**

9 miles	19	Lindsay Lane	1.36.19 (2 nd fv40)
	20	Lynne Whitfield	1.36.19
Half	50	Jenny Hayes	1.56.28 (2 nd fv50)
	78	Barry Neal	2.03.35
	147	Alison Engledew	2.23.00

JANUARY WINTER HANDICAP SERIES

Position	Runner	Clock Time	Handicap	Time	Points
1	Barry Neal	33:39	10:30	23:09	50
2	Andrea Mitchell	34:38	06:30	28:08	49
3	Nigel Grottick	34:43	11:00	23:43	48
4	Dave Rayfield	34:54	12:00	22:54	47
5	Adam Griffiths	34:58	12:30	22:28	46
6	Neil Squires	35:02	12:00	23:02	45
7	Tom Davies	35:12	12:30	22:42	44
8	Lynne Whitfield	35:15	07:00	28:15	43
9	Becky Prall	35:18	09:00	26:18	42
10	Lindsay Lane	35:27	06:30	28:57	41
11	John Griffiths	35:34	09:00	26:34	40
12	Jenny Hayes	35:38	10:30	25:08	39
13	Stuart Witty	35:52	12:30	23:22	38
14	Ben Bristow	35:53	15:00	20:53	37
15	Peter Allen	35:55	15:30	20:25	36
16	Andrew Mitchell	36:03	09:30	26:33	35
17	Russell Gibson	36:05	13:30	22:35	34
18	Alison Engledew	36:31	07:00	29:31	33
19	Luke Hayes	37:22	16:30	20:52	32
20	Nick Bristow	39:32	12:30	27:02	31

Points to date (leading positions)

Runner	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total (Best 4 out of 5)
Ben Bristow	50	45	37			132
Nigel Grottick	45	37	48			130
Lindsay Lane	40	48	41			129
Alison Engledew	42	47	33			122
Russell Gibson	49	39	34			122
Stuart Witty	47	36	38			121
Andrea Mitchell	27	44	49			120
Peter Allen	31	50	36			117
Barry Neal	35	32	50			117
Andrew Mitchell	28	43	35			106
Luke Hayes	33	40	32			105
John Griffiths	30	33	40			103
Tom Davies		49	44			93
Josh Burke	46	46				92
Neil Squires	44		45			89
Adam Griffiths	43		46			89

