



# Loughton Lines

Welcome to *Loughton Lines*. This issue features articles by Rioch, whom you'll probably all know better as the barefoot runner, and Rob Hyatt, who shares his plyometrics knowledge with us. George takes back in time, and we report from around the Club on all the exciting goings on. As ever, there's more news, results and race reports on the Club website, [www.loughtonac.org.uk](http://www.loughtonac.org.uk). And let me know if there's anything you want to see covered in the next issue of *LL* – it's your Club, and your newsletter.

## Gold for Columba!

Columba Morling was the pride of LAC when he took Gold in the U13 boys 2000m walk in the Essex County Championships on bank holiday weekend. Columba showed good technique to win in a time of 17:23.73, maintaining LAC's great record in race walking at county level and beyond. Anna Clark ran a PB in the U17 girls 800m, narrowly missing out on Bronze. She made up for it at the Essex Schools Championships two weeks later when she took Silver. A big well done to Columba and Anna, and to Ella Cleary and Euan Lazell, who also represented the Club in the Counties. We're very proud of you!

## Quids In for the All-Weather Surface

More than 100 years after the Club first began, LAC finally has an all-weather surface! The eight-lane stretch takes up part of the old tennis courts, and looks (and feels) fantastic. Please support your Club by continuing to pay £1 at each training session. We've already raised almost £400 so far from the Quids In appeal, which will all go towards the cost of the all-weather surface. It's really important that we all club together to pay for our new facility, so that our athletes of the future have better equipment than we enjoyed as youngsters!

## Dates for the Diary

Everyone is welcome at the **Club Family BBQ**, which will take place on 14 July at the Clubhouse, from 12 noon. We will be serving sausages and

## July 2013

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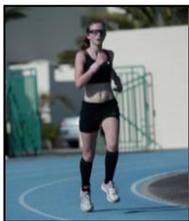
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burgers, but please bring your own drinks and salads, plus something to sit on. We will be organising races and games, so don't forget your trainers – that includes you, mums and dads! The cost is £1 a head, and proceeds will go to the all-weather track fund.

The **Eastern Vets AC (EVAC) home match** is on Wednesday 7 August at Lea Valley, starting at 7pm. Barb and Tony would appreciate as much help as possible. Please email Barb at [bjh1954@me.com](mailto:bjh1954@me.com) if you can help.

### **Anna Wins LAC Sportsperson of the Year**



Anna Clark was deservedly voted Sportsperson of the Year by members present at the Club AGM in March, on the back of her fantastic Indoor Silver at the Essex County Indoor Championships and Bronze in the Indoor Southern Counties Championships. Anna has since won Outdoor Silver to add to her medal collection. We're very proud to have her represent the Club!

### **Doris DSB Honoured at Jack Petchey Foundation Awards Evening**

Doris and Shaun DSB, Gavin Harper and their volunteers do sterling work with our young athletes. Doris's contribution to the Club as a young athletes coach was recognised on 8 May 2013 at special event organised by the Jack Petchey Foundation, an organisation which gives grants to programmes and projects that benefit young people aged 11–25. The Foundation exists to raise the aspirations of young people, to help them take advantage of opportunities and play a full part in society.



The Leader Award enables clubs like ours to honour the dedication and commitment of our coaches – all of whom go the extra mile to support our young people. Doris was honoured at a Jack Petchey Foundation celebration event and awarded a certificate and medallion.

The Club is continually grateful to Doris and to all our coaches and volunteers for everything they do for our members. Read our young athletes report on page 3 for more.

**Good Month for... Amie Harrison**, who has run a PB in every race she's done this season ...

**Bad Month for...** your editor, **Mary Knapman**, who had to run the 2k Steeplechase on her own at the Southern Athletics League match at Ashtons in front of a packed track!

## U11 Update – The Future of LAC!

LL caught up with Doris and Shaun DSB for an update on the programme they run for the U11s.

The children's section of LAC continues to go from strength to strength: we currently have approximately 50 budding athletes in the U11 age group and another eight in Gavin's group. Most of you will have seen the young athletes getting stuck in to the training and games sessions on a Tuesday.

Excitingly, we had three of our young athletes compete in the Essex County Champs this year: Ella Cleary, Euan Lazell and Columba Morling. As you'll have seen from page 1, we have a county champion in our midst, as Columba won the U13 boys 2km race walk.

The trio enjoyed competing in these championships and we rightly have some very proud parents. We'll certainly miss Columba and brother Ronan when their family moves to Jersey in a month's time.

Megan and Elliot Davies were just two of a good team of our youngsters who competed in the Mayor's Fun Run in April. They enjoyed their run.

Thanks to those who have volunteered to help with the rota. We would particularly like to thank Linda Duncanson, who helps out every week. If anyone else would like to go on the rota, please speak to me. You don't have to commit to helping every week, and it's a great opportunity to see how well our young athletes are doing.

**Doris and Shaun DSB**

## The Barefoot Runner

*When Rioch told me he was 'transitioning' I was slightly concerned; however, further questioning revealed that he was making 'the change' from running in trainers to running barefoot. He agreed to tell LL about his experience.*

Hi, I'm Rioch, or as some of you may know me better, 'that strange bloke who runs without shoes'.

My barefooting adventure began around four years ago when, after years of suffering with knee and hip pain through running, a friend of mine swung me a free pair of the latest 'minimalist' running shoes from his new client at work, and thought I might like to give them a go. I was vaguely aware of the minimalist movement and was encouraged, after a little research, that many people who had switched from their heavily cushioned shoes had shaken off historical joint problems and were back running, not only competitively, but faster and more regularly than they had previously managed.

So were they the answer to my prayers? Well, no. My first experience of them was overwhelmingly positive: lightweight, comfortable. It was exhilarating to throw off the (comparative) concrete blocks I had been used to wearing, and go back to the feeling of wearing PE plimsolls! So confident was I that I ignored the warnings about doing too much too soon, went 5 miles the following day and so sore were my calves that I struggled to descend stairs for a week.



They went to the back of the cupboard, as did my dreams of an injury-free life as a runner.

Of course, it was never going to be footwear alone that would get me back running the streets, so with some physiotherapy, a lot of strength and conditioning coaching, and more training than I care to recall, I ran the 2012 London Marathon in 3:08 (and 2 seconds... but who's counting?) and was delighted to be doing what I love again.

Post-marathon blues turned into several months of going through the motions of the odd run here and there until I read Christopher McDougall's *Born To Run*, which, for those of you who haven't read it (and *why* not?), is effectively a story of how an ordinary guy overcomes his injuries by running with a mix of minimalist footwear and going barefoot.

I've not looked back since. From walking around the house, to post-Christmas dinner barefoot strolls through the forest, to dressing up as a banana and running barefoot through Hyde Park, to running the LAC 10k, to picking up my daughter from nursery (a few odd looks that day!) I try to go barefoot as much as I can. As for the benefits, my feet and lower limbs feel stronger, while shorter strides and landing on my forefoot mean I don't feel as 'jarred' as I used to feel after a hard session on the roads or on the track.

Like all things, there is no miracle cure for any longstanding injuries, just as simply taking your shoes off won't make you the world's best runner, and just as footwear alone is never enough to compensate for poor technique. However, taking my shoes off has forced me to become far more aware than I previously was of how I move, and I believe I'm becoming a 'better' runner as a result. Not only that, but there's something base, enlightening and just plain fun about taking off your shoes and running the way nature intended!



I've just begun to step up my training for the Loch Ness marathon in September, and plan to incorporate barefoot running into my schedule as much as possible, as well as digging out those minimalist shoes... And maybe giving those big ol' Asics another go. Form over footwear!

Far be it from me to talk you out of your shoes, but if anyone would like to join me, it would be great to have some company at the next track session.

**Rioch O'Gorman**

*There is plenty of anecdotal material and academic research out there; some positive, some inconclusive, and some negative, and if you're interested, Rioch would advise doing a bit of hunting around and drawing your own conclusions, perhaps after a chat with him, Helen and the coaches. Rioch will try to share with you as best he can his own experience and inspire a few of you to give it a go!*

*In the next issue of LL, Helen will set out the pros and cons of barefoot from a physio's perspective, based on the current research.*

## Results: Records Update

All the results from the various League races this season are on the LAC website at [www.loughtonac.org.uk](http://www.loughtonac.org.uk), but there are already a number of Club Records to report this season, to add to those achieved last season. Well done to the following:

Pam Ackland-Snow	VW55	Shot	6.70	EVL, 1 May 13
Terry Casey	VM70	Shot	6.05	Vets AC meet, 15 Aug 12
Anna Clark	U/17 W	800m	2:17.96(i)	Essex Champs, 9 April 13
		800m	2:19.75	Essex Champs, 26 May 13
		1500m	5:00.06	Essex Champs, 6 May 13
Anne Heeks	VW50	800m	3:02.3	EVL, 9 May 12
		1500m	6:21.7	EVL, 25 Apr 12
Barbara Higgins	VW55	TJ	6.25	EVL, 11 July 12
Jean Hobbs	WV60	1500m	7:04.5	EVL, 1 May 13
Charmaine Johnson	VW45	80mH	13.8	EVL, 13 Jun 12
		400mH	83.0	EVL final, 23 Sep 12
		LJ	4.38	EVL, 13 Jun 12
		HJ	1.40	EVL, 13 Jun 12
		Shot	9.91	EVL, 1 May 13
Jo Richardson	SW	400mH	70.2	SAL, 1 Sep 12
		100mH	17.58	SAL, 18 May 13
Chris Salvary	VW55	LJ	3.25	EVL, 25 Apr 12
Sarah Santon	VW35	100H	18.9	EVL, 25 Apr 12
Cliff Warren	VM50	200m	27.0	EVL, 11 Jul 12
		400m	60.6	EVL, 1 May 13
		400mH	74.6	EVL final, 23 Sep 12
		LJ	5.06	EVL, 13 Jun 12
		TJ	10.51	EVL, 9 May 12
	Indoor	200m	27.08(i)	SoE/EVAC Vets Champs, 24 Feb 13
		400m	59.72(i)	BMAF Champs, 9 Mar 13
Senior Women		4 x 100m	53.5	SAL, 1 Sep 12
		4 x 400m	4:16.4	SAL, 1 Sep 12
Veteran 45 Women		4 x 100m	63.2	EVL, 13 Jun 12
		4 x 400m	5:45.2	EVL, 9 May 12

A predicted new Club Record will be set on Tuesday 30 July when the Loughton oldies (George Richardson, John Cash, Ted Martin and Peter Cassidy) will run a 4 x 100m relay on the LAC track. This will be an inaugural Over 70 Club Record... Your editor will refrain from any rude remarks! It would be great to have as many members as possible present to witness this once-in-a-lifetime event! We will update you in the next issue of *LL*.

## Key Dates in Club History: 25 November 1992

*In a new feature in LL, George Richardson, Club historian and record keeper, picks a key date in our history and explains its importance.*

Pre-1992 there had been several attempts to form a women's section of LAC.



A glance at the photograph shows three suitably clad females standing outside The Loughton Club, our initial training and

social headquarters. Their appearance and clothing all suggest it was taken about 1920.

We do not know how long they remained in LAC, nor is there recorded any mention of competition for them. Bearing in mind the time when it was taken, there would not have been much.

The next definite evidence of women members was in 1977, when a team of three was entered in the Thurrock Road Relay. We do not know

their individual performances, but the team finished 10th of 18. A respectable start.

But after that not much happened, until on 25 November 1992 an Extraordinary General Meeting was held to discuss resurrecting the women's section. This time, a more structured approach was organised. Among the founder members were Jean Hobbs and Jo Whiffin; both were connected with the Club either through their husbands or their children. Both are still Club members.

Those new members initially had their competitive outings in the Chingford League and of course in the Club Championships.

The next step was entry into the Southern Women's League in summer 1995. That was the foundation of the success of the women's section. Since then, there have been numerous county and other achievements.

**George Richardson**

### Loughton Lines

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Please send any LL articles or feedback to Mary and any photos to Tony.

## Coaching Update: Improving Running Economy Using Plyometric Exercises

*Rob is studying for an MSc degree in Strength and Conditioning at Middlesex University. He is a qualified Personal Trainer and UK Athletics Level 2 Coach. Rob currently delivers strength and conditioning sessions to distance athletes at Woodford Green AC & Essex Ladies. He is also employed as a multi-sport coach by Epping Forest District Council.*



### What Is Plyometrics?

Plyometrics involves the stretch shortening cycle (SSC). Many human movements, including running, skipping, bounding and jumping, involve the SSC. SSC is the combination of three phases.

- Eccentric Phase: Lengthening of the tendons and muscles. Potential energy is stored and stretch receptors are stimulated.
- Amortisation/Transition Phase: Transition phase between eccentric and concentric phases. This should be as short as possible for the action to be effective.
- Concentric Phase: Concentric contraction (shortening of the tendons and muscles). Elastic energy is released from the tendon.

### Why Is It Important for Running?

Plyometrics has the ability to:

- increase the stiffness of the muscle-tendon system, which allows the body to store and utilise elastic energy in the tendon more effectively, with minimal metabolic cost
- increase force production during the push-off phase in running
- reduce ground contact time
- reduce horizontal braking forces in foot landing.

The key to understanding plyometrics is to view the leg during running as acting as a 'spring'. The stiffer the spring, the more it allows energy to be released back and vertical displacement during ground contact to be lessened. Before the foot strikes the ground a co-contraction of the leg muscles should occur, increasing the stiffness of the muscle-tendon system in the lower leg. An example is where the foot is in a dorsi flexed position before it contacts the ground.

## A Beginner's Plyometric Programme for Distance Runners

- 1–2 plyometric sessions a week
- 1–4 plyometric exercises per session
- 1–3 sets per exercise
- 6–8 reps per exercise
- Duration of session: 5–15 mins; could be built into training after a dynamic warm-up
- Rest of 2–3 mins between sets

The aim of the programme is quality and explosive movements to maximise training effect. Athletes should be engaging in strength work at least 1–2 months prior to a beginner's plyometric programme. Performing a large number of reps and sets of plyometric exercises has minimal benefit to performance, so remember: quality over quantity. Athletes should not have sustained a musculoskeletal injury; neither should athletes perform plyometrics if they are fatigued or at the end of a training session.

### Example Beginner's Plyometric Programme

Exercise	Foot Contacts (Sets x Number of Contacts per Set)			
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Ankle hops	2 x 8	3 x 8	3 x 8	3 x 8
Hop and stick	3 x 6	3 x 6	3 x 8	3 x 8
Power skip	2 x 6	3 x 6	3 x 8	2 x 8
Total foot contacts	46	60	72	64

Short videos of the above exercises with coaching points are available on my YouTube page (Rob Hyatt – Picture of London Olympic Stadium) or on the link below: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCDRZDT0Db2kQF77JtmVuAyA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDRZDT0Db2kQF77JtmVuAyA)

### References

If you want to read any of these articles I have e-copies available.

*The efficacy and design of strength training programmes for distance running events* – Raphael Brandon (2006) UKSCA Journal

*Plyometrics and distance running* – Dan Cleather (2007) UKSCA Journal

*Explosive strength training improves 5km running time by improving running economy and muscle power* – Paavolainen et al (1999)

*The effects of resistance training on running economy – a review* – Debby Sargent (2008) UKSCA Journal

*Factors affecting running economy in trained distance runners* – Saunders et al (2004)

*The effect of plyometric training on distance running performance* – Spurr et al (2003)

*Improvement in running economy after 6 weeks of plyometric training* – Turner et al (2003)

**Rob Hyatt**

## Physio Update: Address Your Achilles Tendon Pain Before It Becomes Your Achilles Heel!

*Plyometrics can be a good way to address Achilles problems, as well as an important strengthening method for long-distance athletes (as Rob has already discussed). Professional physio and Club member Helen explains, with assistance from colleague Chris Jukes.*

Some of you will sadly be very familiar with Achilles tendon pain. It is a common and potentially very limiting problem which can leave runners feeling frustrated and confused about the best way to keep up training and racing.

Correct diagnosis of your Achilles problem is key to successful treatment. A recent scientific paper categorises tendon pain mainly into 'reactive' and 'degenerative' stages. The treatment differs depending on the stage.

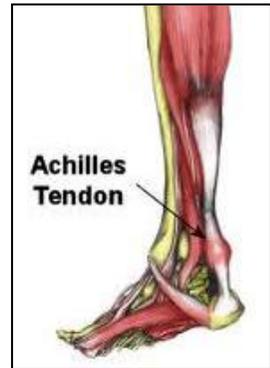
Tendons lie at the end of muscles, attaching them to bone. The Achilles tendon is the thickest in the body as it has to deal with a large load: your entire body weight! It is very elastic and can act as a spring when stretched, which makes walking and running more efficient.

Unlike muscle, which is made up of contracting fibres, tendons do not contract and are made of collagen fibres. If you suddenly increase the amount of an activity that loads the tendon without conditioning it beforehand (for example an intense sprint training session when you are used to slow, long runs), cells in the tendon can react and cause the tendon to thicken and absorb water. This is called a reactive tendon and can be very painful, and it may stay in this state unless rested sufficiently. This can take up to six weeks if you rest it correctly, avoiding all activities that cause pain. To reduce the risk of developing a reactive tendon it is important to build up to new activities gradually. This may involve strengthening exercises and plyometrics.

If a tendon becomes chronically overloaded – usually over a period of several months – the reactive phase will progress into a more degenerative phase. This is where the tendon collagen breaks down. It is generally less painful than the reactive phase, and is normally more painful at the start of a run if you haven't warmed up. Although it may then ease off over the course of the run, it is likely to be more painful the next day. The degeneration is thought to result from the tendon failing to heal itself after multiple stresses, and treatment aims to stimulate the repair process. This is achieved primarily through specific strengthening exercises, in combination with rest from the aggravating activity.

Strengthening typically involves performing a heel raise:

- In the reactive tendon, heel raises should be performed once the pain has settled. You may start with two feet on the floor, progressing to one foot, then with your heel off a step and lastly with added weight so that your tendon gets used to higher loads.



- In a degenerative tendon the aim is to stimulate repair cells, and some pain during the exercise is acceptable. Again, heel raises should be performed by progressively adding load until you can no longer perform another heel raise correctly. You should aim for 3 sets of 15 reps – if you can do more then you need to add weight by wearing a heavy backpack.

Plyometrics are a very important part of rehabilitation and should be started at a low intensity once pain has settled in either condition (reactive or degenerative). Exercises such as jumping on the spot with two feet can be progressed to a more intense level (see the programme suggested by Rob).

**Helen Real and Chris Jukes**

## **Your Holiday Read Sorted!**

*Congratulations to Terry Casey, who has just had his first book published! So snap up a copy and pop it in your suitcase for your summer holiday... Here Terry gives us a sneak preview.*

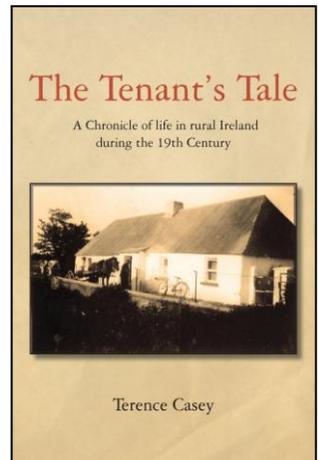
I have been associated with LAC for more than 25 years and have competed for the vets' team in the Eastern Veterans' League for the past 12 years, but my main claim to fame is undoubtedly being the marshal who is always at the furthest point from the start at every LAC cross-country race. At least the runners know that on reaching me they will always be sure of getting an encouraging cheer!

Since retiring 10 years ago I have been very busy writing a novel. Titled *The Tenant's Tale* it is very much a personal story about my great grandfather's life in rural Ireland. He was born in 1804 into an impoverished family and resolved to one day own his own farm. To this end he travelled to England in the 1820s with his only brother, Owen, where they both found work as navvies on the first ever railway that ran between Liverpool and Manchester. After many years of hard work they returned to Ireland in 1844 and my great grandfather became a tenant farmer. The novel describes in great detail the traumatic events that occurred in Ireland during the 19th century. Before his death, my great grandfather was fortunate to be able to achieve his lifelong ambition when he borrowed sufficient government funds to purchase his farm.

*The Tenant's Tale* is available at specialist bookshops in Loughton, Epping and Chingford, or online at: [www.amazon.co.uk/The-Tenants-Tale-Terence-Casey/dp/1909204188/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1370204841](http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Tenants-Tale-Terence-Casey/dp/1909204188/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1370204841)

**Terry Casey**

*Editor's note: For every copy sold at The Bookshop in Loughton (opposite the Post Office), Terry will generously donate £1 to the Quids In all-weather track appeal. Thank you, Terry!*



## Forthcoming Events

### July

Tue 9	Club Champs, Day 6: 5000m (S/V M&W)	Loughton
Sat 20	Southern Athletics League	Battersea Park
Tue 30	Club Champs, Day 7: 1500m (S/V M&W) Open Graded Meeting	Loughton Woodford

### August

Wed 7	Eastern Vets League	Lea Valley
Sat 10	Southern Athletics League <i>World Athletics Championships start</i>	Bury St Edmunds Moscow
Tue 27	Open Graded Meeting	Woodford

### September

Sun 8	Eastern Vets League Final	Bedford
Sat 28	Club 5 Mile Cross-Country Champs	Epping Forest

### October

Tue 1	Chingford League Road	Redbridge Circuit
Sat 12	Chingford League Cross-Country	Loughton
Sat 19	Essex Cross-Country League	Braintree
Tue 22	Club 5 Mile Road Championships	Loughton

### November

Tue 5	Chingford League Road	Redbridge Circuit
Sat 9	Vets Inter-Club Cross-Country	Loughton
Sat 16	Essex Cross-Country League	Hylands Park
Sat 30	Essex Vets Cross-Country Champs	Claybury

### December

Sat 7	Essex Cross-Country League	Basildon
Sat 14	Ware Cup	Loughton
Sat 21	Mince Pie Relay	Loughton
Sat 29	Chingford League	Alexandra Palace

### January

Sat 4	Essex Cross-Country Champs	Colchester
Sat 11	Essex Cross-Country League	Southend
Sat 18	Chingford League	Hackney Marshes
Sat 25	South of England Cross-Country Champs	Parliament Hill

As ever, remember to wear your Club vest in all races. All priced at £10.  
Contact Barbara Higgins on 020 8508 3230.

## Club Contacts

### Chairman:

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## Competition - Whose Legs?!

In an exciting new competition, *LL* will publish a photo of someone's body parts. Trust Cliff W to lower the tone of what has (until now) been a serious athletic club newsletter! And any pictures of photocopied bottoms will go straight into my trash folder - you have been warned!

In the meantime, whose are these delightful pins?!



Answers by email to [marykateknapman@hotmail.com](mailto:marykateknapman@hotmail.com) by 31 July for your chance to win a Club T-shirt.

### Club Email List

We have recently set up a Club email list for all current Club members over 14 years old. This has come about as a result of the rising cost of postage which makes it increasingly expensive to keep Club members informed about events, activities and Club business. A Club email list is a far cheaper alternative. Doris is setting up a similar list for all the younger athletes.

Many (or most) of you who are over 14 will have received an email from [loughonac@live.co.uk](mailto:loughonac@live.co.uk). If you did not receive such an email then it means one of two things: you're not up-to-date with paying subs or we don't have your email address. Either way if you could send an email to the above address then we can get you on the list.

For those who are not on email, a printed copy of all messages sent this way will be posted on the noticeboard in the Clubhouse.