



Loughton Lines

Welcome to *Loughton Lines*. This issue we focus on the forest – John Hart, surely LAC’s Forest King, explains the stories behind the names of various forest landmarks (official and not so official!), and physio Helen Real tells forest runners how to avoid injury. We also have our regular news, interview and nutrition features. As ever, there’s more news, results and race reports on the Club website, 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.

March 2013

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Amazing Anna!

Anna Clarke represented LAC in style when she powered home to take 800m bronze in the Eastern Indoor Athletics Championships and silver in the Essex Indoor Championships at Lee Valley on 10 February. Anna, 15, now sits fifth on the UK U17 list this season, a fabulous achievement. Her time of 2:17.96 was also a PB and a Club record. Her medals came just a week after she clinched the Chingford League U17 girls team title for LAC, as well as individual gold. Anna’s dedication to her training has been an example to the rest of the Club this winter. She deserves all the success she gets, and the Club should be very proud of her. Well done Anna – we can’t wait to see what summer brings!



Club Members Give Go-Ahead for All-Weather Surface

Club members voted unanimously at the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on 28 January to support the installation of an all-weather surface on a section of the tennis courts opposite the Clubhouse. The strip will provide an important training facility for the sprint group and the younger athletes alike – a point which was made by many members at the EGM.

Thanks to members of the Committee, the Club has already secured more than £15,000 in grants, leaving a shortfall of a further £15,000+. The EGM agreed that the Club should take advantage of an interest-free loan, which

will be met through subs from members, or other Club sources, for the next 10 years.

Fundraising will start soon, so please do support the Club as much as you can. And please consider taking on a more active role in the leadership of the fundraising activities – the Committee are looking for volunteers and would be grateful for your help. The Club is indebted to Committee members for getting the project this far, and particularly to David, who has endured endless meetings and conversations with the Council. It is now up to the rest of the members to do all they can to see the project through and set the Club up for success in the future.

Quiz Night

Thanks to everyone who supported the quiz on 1 December, both by coming along and by buying raffle tickets. It was a great success and raised over £400 for Club funds. As usual, the Hobbsees came out on top, showing that their dedication to watching *University Challenge* each week is worth it. Special thanks to Tony, for doing a grand job with the questions, and to Doris and Shaun, for organising the evening.

Annual General Meeting

Please note that the Annual General Meeting is on 25 March. Do make an effort to attend. It's an opportunity to hear about what the Committee have been doing over the past year and to have your say on Club matters – as well as voting for your Sports Personality of the Year. And if you haven't already paid your subs, please bring your money down to training and give it to Tony Maycraft.

Congrats to Jon and Yvette

Well done to Jon and Yvette Mays, who ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon in October in aid of St Clare Hospice, following the sad passing of Yvette's mum. Jon and Yvette raised a hefty £1,877 for the charity – a great effort.

Good Month for... Caroline

Touchstone, who gave birth to her second child, Florence, on 22 January. Congratulations to proud auntie, **Helen Real**, and grandma, **Linda Cox** ...

Bad Month for... John Hart, who took a tumble in a fell race on 9 February and wound up in Worcestershire Royal Hospital – we wish you a speedy recovery, John.



Sports Hall Athletics – The Future of LAC!

LL caught up with Doris and Shaun DSB for an update on the Sports Hall Athletics programme they run for the U11s during the winter season.

On average we have about 40 children on the register. We have run a course of indoor sessions at Roding Valley Sports Hall over the winter, and in the last session before we go out on the field (aka the duck pond!) we hope to take the children to Lee Valley Athletics Centre for a session, as we are keen to do some of the field events with them which we can't coach at Roding Valley.

We offer the children a variety of events and try to make it fun and challenging: we use a mixture of training with some games. Natalie Newman, age 9, says: 'I enjoy it because we do lots of running games. My favourite thing is long jump!'

We are looking forward to going outside in the summer but obviously need assistance from some of our members. We run a rota system, so you needn't commit to helping every week. The more people we have on the rota, the more we can share the coaching responsibilities! Please do get in touch if you can help: the children are the future of the Club and it really is great to see how much they enjoy their athletics! We hope that the older (Year 6) children can move on to Gavin's group this summer, which will be more challenging for them.

We appreciate the help and support of Jean Hobbs, Linda Duncanson and Gavin. We are still waiting for Tony Babbs to return! We miss you, Tony!

Doris and Shaun DSB

Interview: Steve Luton (aka Steve The Cabby)

Thanks to Steve Luton, who agreed to be LL's latest interview victim...

Name: Steven Luton

Age: 41

Where were you brought up? Clayhall, Barkingside

Favourite events: 10k and half marathon

Personal bests: 45.36 and 1.38.56

Favourite course: The British 10k – it's straight through the middle of town

How long have you been a member of LAC? 2.5 years

What's the best thing about LAC? Friends and competition

And the worst? Alderton Hall Lane sprints!

What one piece of advice would you give a new LAC recruit? Give it a go: don't give up after a week because you're not the best!



Which sportsperson do you most admire and why? Mo Farah: that fast at that distance

What's your job? London cabby

What's the worst road you drive on? Hyde Park Corner: if you're going to crash, that's the place!

Who is the most interesting person you've had in your cab? Celebrities are generally a bit dull! This one sticks in my mind. A man told me the story of meeting his prospective father-in-law for the first time. He wanted to marry a Japanese girl, and the father consulted a notebook on meeting him. He said, 'Do you want to stay in Japan?' The man said no. He said 'Do you have any savings?' The man said no. The father spat something out in Japanese and the mother and sister started to cry. The man thought he'd blown it and got up to leave, but the mother and sister started hugging him! The father had said, 'At least he's honest!' The couple were still married 18 years later.

Who would you most like to have in your cab? Mo Farah or Ian Wright

Tell us about your charity work: There is not a lot to tell, but I will be doing the Magical Taxi Tour again this year, where a convoy of licensed London taxis take over 200 children, suffering from a range of chronic debilitating illnesses and life-limiting conditions, on a three-day trip of a lifetime to Disneyland Resort Paris. The convoy can be over three miles long when running and consists of 90+ taxis, City of London Police escorts, Gendarmerie Nationale, London Ambulance NHS Trust vehicles and AA breakdown trucks. It's a very humbling experience. See www.magicaltaxitour.com if you want to donate!

If you were stranded on a desert island, what two things would you take with you (and you can't say family!)? A very good smart phone and a solar power pack to charge it

What's your favourite song? *Bring me sunshine*

Tell us something your fellow LAC team members don't know about you. I am a Member of the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, and a Freeman of the City of London

Describe yourself in six words or fewer. A dad, competitive, talkative, silly and friendly

Loughton Lines

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

Results

All the results from the various League races this season are on the LAC website at www.loughtonac.org.uk. It's safe to say that this season has been one of the wettest in recent memory, as these photos testify!



Physio Update: Forest Running

To coincide with John Hart's forest feature on pages 8 and 9, LL asked physio Helen Real if there was anything runners could do to help prevent injury in the forest, particularly to ankles. Here's her advice.

Those who like to run in the forest will know that it is not without its hazards: jumping over logs, losing a leg in a pit of mud or running on uneven ground that causes you to turn your ankle. Turning an ankle can cause injuries ranging from a minor ligament sprain with minimal bruising and swelling to a more serious tear or even a fracture. Is there anything runners can do to prevent this from happening or recurring?

Prevention is always better than cure and yes, you can strengthen your ankles and train them so they are better equipped to adapt when you do come across uneven ground.

Once you have sprained your ankle you will always have a weakness. Ligaments are non-contractile and so once stretched they do not return to their original length. The muscles that cross the ankle joint, however, can be strengthened and, importantly, trained to work at the right time to help you control your ankle on the uneven ground. When you sprain an ankle, it is also important to do the right exercise to place load through the damaged tendon, to ensure that the scar tissue is strengthened.

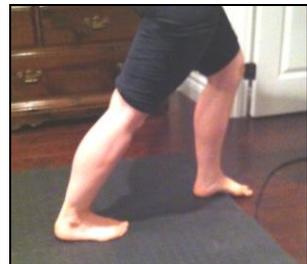
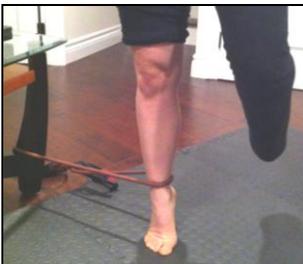
Key points of training should include:

- Correct timing of muscle activation
- Flexibility
- Strength
- Proprioception (balance)
- Controlled exercises on uneven ground

The exercises in the pictures aim to address the key points above.

1. Heel raise with the band pulling the ankle out (spraining position), resulting in the outside leg muscles activating at the right time. This exercise is done for endurance and so you are aiming to do 15–20 reps and 3 sets.

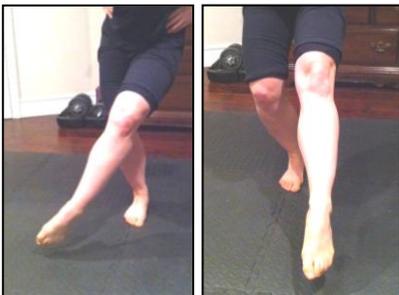
2. Flexibility involves keeping your ankle moving in all directions: up, down, in and out. The biggest risk of stiffening is in the calf and so carrying out the stretches as in the picture will help with this.



3. Strengthening – heel raises and turning the foot in and out against the band. Once again you are aiming for endurance and so 15 reps and 3 sets will target this.

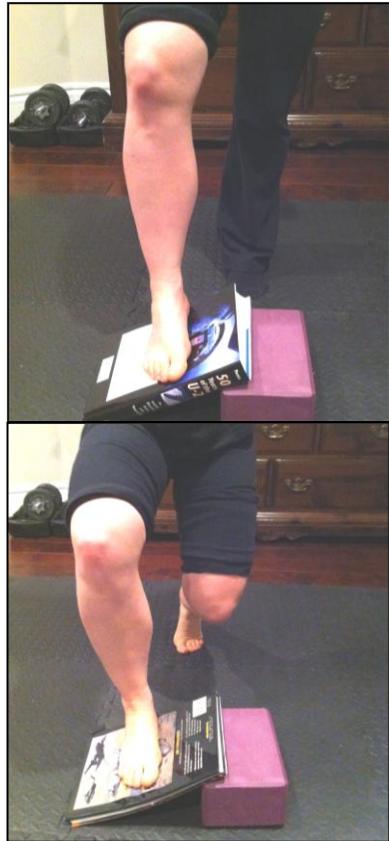


4. If you have a wobble board then you can use this. Alternatively you can use the star excursion test, which involves you drawing out (or imagining) an 8-point star and drawing your foot along the length of each point with your other foot 5 times. This helps to strengthen your dynamic balance.



5. Lastly, practise stepping/running/lunging/hopping onto uneven ground. You can make yourself an assault course to do this by using a 45-degree slant/wobble board/cushion and get yourself used to the 'controlled unexpected'.

Helen Real

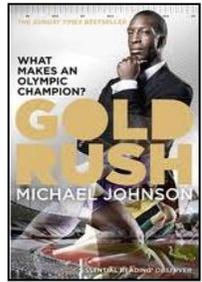


If you have any queries relating to her article, do speak to Helen or to one of the club coaches. Note that the information given above is of a general nature. If you want medical advice tailored to your individual circumstances, consult a medical professional.

Book Review: Michael Johnson – *Gold Rush* (HarperSport, paperback, £8.99)

Having won the book in the competition back in October, Ray Crick kindly agreed to write a review for LL.

The question was easy: who won Team GB's first athletics gold medal at the London Olympics? Who could forget that majestic moment when Jessica Ennis swept into the lead in the 800m to win in such style? The prize I won was an autographed copy of *Gold Rush*, signed 'To Loughton, M. Johnson', a book that, were I half a century younger and blessed with a different body, would tell me how to become an Olympic champion. Certainly you could have no more qualified guide; Johnson has won four Olympic and eight World gold medals. He is self-evidently one of the very greatest athletes in history – if anyone has the right to arrogance, it's him. He is merely stating facts when he writes: 'I had not only dominated for six years at that point, I had established myself as the undisputed superstar of the sport', a theme he reiterates throughout. I found myself longing for a touch of that very English self-deprecating modesty. You respect Johnson (how could you not?) but without perhaps warming to him.



Gold Rush sets out to analyse the psychological and personal qualities that combine to make an Olympic champion, and interviews with other greats such as Usain Bolt, Daley Thompson, Steve Hoy and Ian Thorpe give breadth and variety to the approach. The chapter on mental strength is especially fascinating. It could, however, all be summed up, as Sebastian Coe does succinctly, as 'willpower and focus'. To Coe it's not complicated; you just 'run fast, turn left'.

The book makes interesting reading for any sports person, but I couldn't help feeling dissatisfied for what it was not. It was published opportunely to coincide with the 2012 Games, so of course cannot relive those golden memories or tell that story. Once a frustrated film shoot director had come back to Johnson 'saying that I was extremely difficult to work with and that they had gotten nothing that really told much of a story'. And that is the nub: *Gold Rush* doesn't tell much of a story. For that maybe I should go to *Slaying The Dragon*, the autobiography Johnson wrote in the wake of his Atlanta triumph in 1996.

The author's literary style matches his (supremely distinctive) running style in being effective but without much elegance. One has to forgive Americanisms like 'gotten', and even the countless split infinitives, but am I alone in hating the ugly new verb 'to medal', and the awful modern day mis-speech quoted in some interviews, such as 'She was like "No, you won"'. A truly great man, but maybe not such a great book.

Michael Johnson has a message for athletics in this country, warning that 'athletes are insulated against loss and rewarded for mediocrity and "potential"', and this has 'stripped the country's current athletes of a lot of their hunger [to become champions]'. Did anyone tell Jessica Ennis, Mo Farah and Greg Rutherford?

Ray Crick

Across The Channel: Our Friend In The East

George Richardson reports on his trip to see Gurm Sahans, Club member and Decathlon Club Record holder, who moved to the Netherlands a couple of years ago.

Every two years, I visit my friends in Amsterdam. For this October's visit, I asked Gurm Sahans if we would be able to meet up in Arnhem, where he lives.

We arranged to meet at lunchtime at Arnhem Railway Station. Gurm lives in North Arnhem in a relatively new part of the city.

Those of you with some knowledge of World War II will know that there was some vicious fighting in October 1944 for the control of the bridge over the River Rhine. Had the British paratroopers succeeded, the bulk of the Allied forces could well have entered Germany shortly afterwards. That they failed is now history. But the result was that the centre of Arnhem was almost completely destroyed. Some years before, in a bookshop in the city, I saw photographs of the devastation which resulted. Most of the buildings have since been either restored or have modern replacements.

From the station, it was a tram ride away from centre to the Sahans' house. Due to a computer fault, the tram system was not recording the use of their equivalent to London's Oyster Card. Free rides all day! As part of the contract of employment, Gurm's wife Sarah's employers provided their current house to rent for a fixed period of time. When I first saw him, I knew there was something different: he has had his hair cut to what one might call normally long!

As I said earlier, they live in a relatively new part of the city. Their house is quite spacious with a small garden. But to offset this, there is a wonderful park not far away, with a hill! Apparently it is so rare to have such high ground that visitors from other parts of the Netherlands go just to see the views available from the 'summit'. This includes Nijmegen, so in the aftermath of the failed British parachute assault it must have been frustrating to look down on the Allied forces.

Their two sons seem to have settled reasonably well, and I noticed that one of the boys living close by is a friend. Thomas' (Gurm and Sarah's elder son's) school is not far away, so the local environment is ideal for them.

Gurm has resumed training, and has even competed in a couple of decathlons in 2012, with scores not too far below what he achieved here. What helps is that there is an all-weather track within a short distance from the house. What a change from our poor facilities for his activities.

He is still interested in LAC's activities, and now that he will be sent an email copy of *LL* we may hear more from him in the future. If anyone wishes to contact him, his address is: Norbertijnen Straat 27, Arnhem 6823PT, Nederland (email: gurmukhsahans@gmail.com).

George Richardson

Forthcoming Events

April

Sun 14	Loughton Fun Run (Course set by Loughton AC)	Loughton
Sat 20	Southern Athletics League	Dartford
Sun 21	London Marathon	Greenwich

May

Wed 1	Eastern Vets League	<i>tbc</i>
Mon 6	Essex Champs Day 1 (Young Athletes)	Thurrock
Sat 18	Southern Athletics League	Woodford
Tue 21	Club Champs Day 1: 10000m (S/V M&W)	Loughton
Sat 25 & Sun 26	Essex Champs Days 2 & 3	Chelmsford

June

Tue 4	Open Graded Meeting	Woodford
Wed 5	Eastern Vets League	<i>tbc</i>
Sat 8	Essex Schools Championships	Chelmsford
Tue 11	Club Champs, Day 2: Endurance (S/V, M&W)	Loughton
Sat 15	Southern Athletics League (HOME)	Lee Valley
Sat 22	Club Champs, Day 3: 100,800,PV,SP,LJ,DT (all)	Walthamstow
Tue 25	Club Champs, Day 4: Walks (All)	Loughton
Sat 29	Club Champs, Day 5: 200,400,HJ,HT,TJ,JT (all)	Walthamstow

July

Tue 2	Open Graded Meeting	Woodford
Wed 3	Eastern Vets League	<i>tbc</i>
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)	Loughton
	Open Graded Meeting	Woodford

August

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

September

Sun 8	Eastern Vets League Final	Bedford
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As ever, remember to wear your Club vest in all races. All priced at £10.
Contact Barbara Higgins on 020 8508 3230.

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Nutrition Notes: Eating & Lifestyle Tips for Healthy Cholesterol Levels

Lara has been a professional dietitian for seven years and works across West Essex from her base at St Margaret's Hospital in Epping. She works with both adults and children who require specialist dietary advice on a range of medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity, malnutrition, irritable bowel syndrome and raised cholesterol. She enjoys combining two of her favourite things in life... sport and food!



The start of a new season always promotes some thought to making healthy changes. With that in mind this article is focusing on healthy eating for healthy cholesterol levels.

Did You Know Not All Cholesterol Is Bad?

When you have a blood test to check your cholesterol levels, several values are given. You get a total cholesterol level result which is all the different types of cholesterol combined. If you have to fast overnight for your blood test then a full cholesterol profile is checked – this includes total cholesterol, the 'good' HDL (high density lipoprotein) cholesterol and the 'bad' LDL (low density lipoprotein) cholesterol.

LDL cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease and stroke by increasing fatty deposits on the inside of blood vessels. These fatty deposits build up gradually over time and cause narrowing to the blood vessels. Eventually the blood vessels can become completely blocked and stop adequate levels of blood getting to the brain (causing a stroke) or heart (causing a heart attack).

The good news is that our HDL cholesterol protects us from the action of LDL cholesterol and therefore protects us against heart disease and stroke.

What Are The Ideal Cholesterol Levels?

Total cholesterol - less than 5mmol/l (or less than 4mmol/l if you have diabetes or existing heart disease)

LDL (bad) cholesterol - less than 3mmol/l (or less than 2mmol/l if you have diabetes or heart disease)

HDL (good) cholesterol - greater than 0.9mmol/l in men and greater than 1.0mmol/l in women

If you are not sure what your levels are then don't be shy: ask someone at your GP practice.

How Can I Lower My LDL (Bad) Cholesterol?

1. Eat a healthy, balanced diet with at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
2. Increase your intake of soluble fibre – found in pulses, wholegrains, fruit and vegetables.

3. Reduce your intake of saturated fats, as these increase LDL (bad cholesterol) and reduce HDL (good cholesterol). Obtain majority of fat from polyunsaturated and monounsaturated sources (see the table below).

<p>Saturated Fat (the majority comes from animal sources) <i>Advice:</i> Limit these to special occasions</p>	<p>Polyunsaturated Fat <i>Advice:</i> Omega 3 fats make the blood less sticky and reduce risk of clotting. Try to eat oily fish twice per week. Omega 6 is a healthier source of fat than saturated fat</p>	<p>Monounsaturated Fat <i>Advice:</i> These will not increase cholesterol levels, and they do protect against heart disease</p>
Fatty meat	Omega 3: oily fish, eg mackerel, herring, sardines, salmon, tuna (fresh only), trout, pilchards	Olive oil
Butter	Omega 6: sunflower, soya bean, corn and safflower oils	Rapeseed oil
Cream		Spreads made from olive or rapeseeds oils
Cheese		
Lard		
Hydrogenated vegetable fat – found in processed foods such as cakes and biscuits		
Chocolate		
Coconut		
		

4. Keep to a healthy weight
5. Exercise regularly – 30 minutes' activity five times a week.

How Can I Increase My HDL (Good) Cholesterol?

1. Increase activity levels.
2. Eat a healthy, balanced diet.

Do Shellfish and Eggs Increase Cholesterol Levels?

It was thought that foods that naturally contained cholesterol (shellfish and eggs) increased cholesterol levels in the blood. However, we now know that these foods have very little effect on blood cholesterol.



It is the intake of saturated fat that has far more effect on increasing blood cholesterol levels. Even if your cholesterol level is raised, a portion of shellfish and 2–3 eggs per week will not affect your cholesterol levels.

Are Plant Stanols/Sterols Recommended?

Products such as Benecol and pro.activ and supermarkets' own plant stanol/sterol products have been shown to improve cholesterol levels. They are not essential, but if you have a high cholesterol level and want to try these products to lower your cholesterol, the key is to get enough of the active ingredient. You need to consume 2g plant stanol/sterol every day. If you consume less than this you will not get any benefit. The level of plant stanol/sterol will differ depending on which company has made the product, so check the individual labels. As a guide, 2g usually equates to 1 x bottle drink or 3 x servings of various products (milk, cheese, yogurt or margarine spread). Therefore if you have been consuming 1 serving of margarine spread (enough for 2 slices of bread) per day, then you are not getting enough of the active ingredient and you are not getting any benefit from the product.

Lara Regan (Registered Dietitian)

If you have any queries relating to her article, do speak to Lara. Note that the information given above is of a general nature. If you want medical advice tailored to your individual circumstances, consult a medical professional.

Dates For Your Diary

Your Club needs you!

Please make yourself available, either to represent the Club or to support or marshal, at the following events this summer:

Southern Athletics League

20 April, 18 May, 15 June, 20 July, 10 August

Eastern Vets League

1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 7 August - Vets Final on 8 September

Mayor's Fun Run

14 April - course set by LAC, and a great chance to promote the Club and help out Tony!

Please put these dates in your diary NOW!