



Loughton Lines

Welcome to *Loughton Lines*. This issue features news and reports from around the Club, and John Hart, Forest Legend, treats us to a follow-up. Thanks to Rob and Helen for sharing their expert knowledge with us in the form of their coaching and physio articles. 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.

November 2013

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Quids In for the All-Weather Surface

Please support your Club by continuing to pay £1 at each training session towards the all-weather surface. We've already raised more than £1200 so far from the Quids In appeal. Thanks for your support! Thanks also to those who attended the EGM in September, which concerned the fencing around the all-weather surface. Members voted not to leave this unlocked, and the Committee are now in discussion (again!) with the Council on the issue. They will report back in due course.



Congrats!

Huge congratulations to Mark Howard, who trains with David's group: he raced in the Open Sprint Race triathlon in Hyde Park in September - and won it! To give you an idea of the quality of the event, the elite race the following day featured the Brownlee brothers and world champ Javier Gomez. Mark says: 'I knew the bike element (22.5km) was going to be tough, as it was a tricky course and my bike-handling skills are horrible. With this in mind I sprinted the swim (750m). Then the bike was OK but very busy, so I was stopping at some of the turns just through weight of traffic. Seems I lost a few places through the bike leg too, but this is pretty normal for me in a triathlon. After that the run (5km) felt amazing, smooth and strong (maybe my new Loughton AC sprint training?) and I ran through the field with a 16:41 split.' We're pleased to have Mark training with LAC and hope that he continues to benefit from the sessions!

Race Details

David Hobbs emails round to everyone a few days before a race is happening, so that you know all the details. Please see him if you want to be included in this email list – or indeed if you want to be taken off it! His email is djhdraftarts@yahoo.com

Circuit Training

Numbers have been on the low side this term, so please do come and support this session if you can. Bring a friend – or two, or three... Sessions cost £3 a go, payable on the night. Meet upstairs at Roding Valley sports hall for a 7pm start.

Home Chingford League Fixture



Thanks to all runners, marshals and officials who made the home fixture on 12 October such a success. Even the weather was nice to us! Thanks to David, John, Tony, Jim, Ted, Gay, Doris, Shaun, Roy, Jean, Linda, John, Julie, Heather, Terry and anyone else who contributed. It was a real team effort! And we've never seen a more tempting cake stall at a cross-country fixture – well done Doris.

Dates for the Diary

Doris is still accepting tables for the Quiz Night on 30 November at 7pm. Come along and give your brain a work-out – and raise some money for the Club in the process. Tickets are £6, and you're invited to bring your own food and drinks. Contact Doris on 020 8508 3341.

Everyone is welcome at the Mince Pie Relay, which will take place on 21 December at 11am. This is a whole-Club relay event – teams of three will be drawn from a hat and will compete against each other for the coveted title. Each leg is a short course on the fields by the Clubhouse, so bring your sister/brother/Mum/Dad/Granny/Grandad and encourage them to join in – it's always a giggle. The cost is £1 a head, and proceeds will go to the all-weather track fund. Join us in the Clubhouse afterwards for a cuppa and a mince pie.

Good Month for... Siobhan Maycraft, Tony's daughter and Club member, on her wedding to the lovely Brent ... **Also Anna Clark**, who ran well in the Met League and is a step closer to qualifying for the Essex U17 team

Bad Month for... Helen Real, who changed jobs and never makes it to training or races now – roll on the end of the probationary period!

Linda Duncanson

Everyone at the Club wishes Linda well as she receives treatment for cancer – Linda has been a regular at the track both to run and to help Doris and Shaun. We miss her very much and hope that her treatment is successful and she starts to feel better soon.

U11s Update

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

The Sports Hall Athletics sessions are well under way at Roding Valley, and we are currently oversubscribed. We have 45 children on the register, and they're enjoying their athletics very much. One of the children, Harry Bruce, said: 'It's my favourite group of the week!' – what an endorsement.

In Linda Duncanson's absence Heather Newman is organising a mums and dads' rota, so that we have some help each week. We'd like to thank all who help with the running of these sessions.

The over 11s who have outgrown Sports Hall Athletics have now joined Gavin's group and are training regularly on the all-weather surface. Gavin has had as many as 18 under 17s at his sessions, which bodes well for the future of the Club.

The dates for the Sports Hall Athletics sessions are as follows (all dates given are inclusive):

5 November to 10 December 2013

7 January to 11 February 2014

25 February to 1 April 2014

Doris and Shaun DSB

Loughton Lines

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Race Reports

South of England Fell Racing Championships 14-15 September 'The Isle of Wight is Flat...'

There may be some LL readers who don't know that every year since 1999 the Club has been represented at the South of England Fell Racing Championships on the Isle of Wight. There may be some who doubt that the island can offer the sort of challenging running associated with fell racing. All I can suggest is that they have never been to Ventnor, or, if they have, they didn't look up.

If you look up from the seafront in the resort you will see the looming mass of St Boniface Down. It is really an 'up': 750 feet straight up from the shore, and it features in each of the three championship races included in the weekend. The first race you go straight up to the top and down again: that's Saturday morning for you. In the afternoon you do a 7-mile cross-country, working your way up to the right height to enjoy the drop from the top to the finish. Of course you don't actually enjoy it, because after the morning's run your high muscles are screaming when you descend.

By Sunday, they are beyond screaming as, after a hilly half-marathon, you hurl yourself once again off the hilltop.

The other masochistic highlight of the weekend's runs lurks a mile behind the hilltop, where you have to pull your body up a cliff-face using handrails made from scaffolding poles. Reaching the top of this you find you are only halfway up the climb.

So this part of the Isle of Wight is emphatically not flat. Neither is the social side of the weekend, which centres on the Spyglass pub, mercifully sited at the back of the beach. This was enlivened by a noisily contested 'Pass the Pigs' championships,* which was won by Lorna Gaffney.

Gay Shillaker and Lorna brought credit on themselves and Loughton AC by finishing second in their age groups in the championships. Congratulations to them both – and to Anne Heeks (who came third in her age category) and to the others who ran: George Georgiou, Dave Tyson, Helen Real and some old codger who ought to know better.

John Hart

*Two small plastic pigs are tossed on to a table top and scores accumulate according to how they fall. However, this description does nothing to indicate the skills involved and the excitement this game creates.



Anne Heeks avoids being accosted by an elderly spectator on the course!

EVAC Final: 8 September

The Vets teams both successfully reached the Eastern Vets' Final again this year. Mick and Barb told LL all about it.

Another EVAC season is over, and both our women and men's teams did well having again made it to the final on 8 September at the regular venue of Bedford International Stadium. Weather-wise, the contrast to last year couldn't have been greater! The monsoon downpours of Olympic year at Milton Keynes were thankfully not a feature this year, and all events on the programme were completed (although a few spots were felt later on).



There was a clear winner last year – the tea hut, which had a PB... The athletics team winners this year were: Fairlands Valley Spartans from Stevenage (Women) and Bedford (Men).



Loughton's teams were both hit by injuries and holiday commitments. This meant that the likes of Michaela and Pam were valiantly chasing their tails all day! LAC had two individual event winners, Emily in the W55 100m and Amanda in the W45 400m – well done to them. The overall winner this year was a fun day, made possible by the volunteer officials, two of whom are photographed on the triple jump sandpit. These are the 'Loughton Rakers', Amie and Anna, two of our younger athletes who were only too pleased to help. Other photos feature Michaela and the spectating group near the end.

Thank you everyone for your support – we look forward to 2014. As soon as dates are confirmed, we will let you know. The *likely* final date is 7 September, so please try to avoid being on holiday then...

Barb and Mick H

Loch Ness Marathon: 29 September

Rioch ran the Loch Ness Marathon in late September. LL asked him how it went.

Having had my preparation for running a sub-3 marathon hampered by a series of annoying injuries, my planned introduction to this article of 'After months of training...' has had to be slightly scaled back to 'After a few Tuesday night training sessions and that one slow six miler...' and hoping that said injuries wouldn't make an unwelcome reappearance on the big day!

All of that was forgotten when I got to the start, however, proudly kitted out in my Loughton AC vest; a fantastic day for running, a beautiful setting and 4,000 runners soaking up the atmosphere, drinking tea, sellotaping energy gels to every square inch of body surface imaginable, queuing for the lavs and all focused on the 26.2 miles ahead. A local school band playing the bagpipes was there to send us on our way, and when the starter's horn sounded, we were off on our Highland adventure.



The course took us through the valleys for the first few miles, before eventually hugging the shoreline of the Loch for the vast majority of the race; a more picturesque run I couldn't possibly imagine. Unlike London, my only previous marathon experience, the course was essentially deserted, save for a few local residents regarding 4,000 strangers passing through their usually deserted country lanes on a Sunday morning rather curiously. This meant that even though there wasn't that famous swell of energy from the sidelines, there was more opportunity to share a few words with my fellow runners, with all of us agreeing that it would be hard to go back to the average inner-city road races after this!

As enjoyable as the scenery was for the first 10 to 15 miles, it became less of a focus as the race wore on, as we all slowly retreated inward for our own battles as the going began to get tougher. Having very little idea of how I would cope, my vague goal of 'under 4 hours' was looking comfortably achievable at the halfway point, which I crossed in 1:41. However, as anyone who has run a marathon will tell you, the real halfway doesn't come until mile 18, and as the 18-mile marker came into view, what I can only describe as the *real* Loch Ness Monster reared its ugly head: 'The Wall', in full view. The next 2 miles were a leg-sapping uphill slog that must have demoralised even the most well prepared of runners and really hurt any PB chasers who were unaware that this was on the horizon. A lesson for us all – *don't forget your hill training!* It felt like an eternity, but must have taken me 25 minutes to do those 2 miles, and had slowed me to something like 10-minute miles for the rest of the race.

I crossed the 22-mile point in exactly 3 hours, so barring a disaster, I was still going to come in under my original estimate, and I finally crossed the finish line in a time of 3:39:46, in absolute pieces! Despite being over half an hour slower than my London time, the lack of training meant that it hurt a lot more!

After a lot of rolling around on the floor and reluctant stretching, I made my way to the meal tent via the showers and was served some Baxter's soup (courtesy of the event's main sponsor) and a couple of scoops of a beef and potato stew. It was one of the most satisfying meals I've ever eaten!

Although the last 6.2 miles of the race may have been the most arduous miles I've ever run, the entire 'festival of running' as the organisers have named the day (which includes a 10k, 5k and kids 2k) was hugely enjoyable, in a truly special setting. If you're after a scenic marathon, where PB potential doesn't rank top of your priority list, I couldn't imagine a better event.

Results

All the results from the various League races this season are on the LAC website at www.loughtonac.org.uk. LL included a Club Records update earlier in the summer, and although some have been broken since, we will publish the full list before the next athletics season, so that you all have something to aim at! Instead, here are the results of the Newman Trophy (for the most points scored by a single athlete in the Southern Athletics League) for the summer season. As you can see, our officials are also so important to us! Thank you from all of us.

Men

Jim Harrison	11	15	24	21	28	99
Gavin Harper	10	15	8	8	18	59
Cliff Warren	8	12	-	8	23	51
Scott Hurley	-	12	18	15.5	-	45.5
John McCabe	5	6	6	8	11	36
Lee Wright	-	12	-	-	-	12
Paul Gilbert	-	-	12	-	-	12
Rioch O'Gorman	-	-	-	7	4	11
Paul Beard	-	-	-	9	-	9
Ben Joyce	-	4	-	-	-	4
John Ryan	-	-	-	-	4	4
Paul DSB	3	-	-	-	-	3
Relays	5	4	4	4	9	24
Total	42	80	72	80.5	97	371.5

Women

Michaela Davis	14	14	15	18.5	16	77.5
Amie Harrison	6	14	13	16	15	64
Barbara Higgins	-	14	11	21	13	59
Joanne Ryan	10	9	10	10	15	54
Mary Knapman	-	15	12	19	-	46
Kate Merritt	-	14	12	-	15	41
Anna Clark	8	7	7	5	9	36
Jo Richardson	9	11	-	-	14	34
Hannah Davis	5	4	7	-	11	27
Jean Hobbs	6	-	4	7	7	24
Pam A-Snow	-	-	9	-	15	24
Michelle Hurley	-	8	7	8	-	23
Gabrielle Brooks	-	5	-	-	-	5
Relays	8	8	5	7	10	40
Total	66	123	112	111.5	140	552.5

Officials

8	8	8	8	8	40
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The Club rankings for the summer season are on the website. Thanks to George for compiling these. Please do go online and take a look.

As predicted, a new Club Record was indeed set on Tuesday 30 July when the Loughton oldies (George Richardson, John Cash, Ted Martin and Peter Cassidy) ran 4 x 100m relay on the LAC track. This was an inaugural Over 70 Club Record! Well done.

Fixtures

We hope to see as many of you as possible at some (or all!) of the fixtures listed. If you've never competed for the Club before, please speak to one of the coaches, who can offer encouraging words (and probably a lift to the venue!). It isn't as scary as you think! You may even enjoy it - it's a great opportunity to put your training into practice. And if you don't enjoy the race itself, you'll definitely enjoy your post-race bath at home afterwards.

Nov

Tue 5	Chingford League Road (all)	Redbridge Cycle Circuit	19:00
Sat 9	Vets Inter-Club (Veterans, M & W)	Loughton	14:30
Sat 16	Essex Cross Country League (all)	Basildon	12:00
Sat 30	Essex Cross Country Champs (Vets M & W)	Claybury	11:00

Dec

Sat 7	Essex Cross Country League (all)	Hylands Park, Chelmsford	12:00
Sat 14	Ware Cup (S/V, U/20, M & W)	Loughton	
Sat 21	Mince Pie Relay (all)	Loughton	11:00
Sat 28	Chingford League (all)	Alexandra Palace	13:30

Jan

Sat 4	Essex Cross Country Champs (S, U/15, U/13, M & W) (inc 7-mile men's Club X Country Champs)	Hilly Fields, Colchester	11:00
Sat 11	Essex Cross Country League	Southend	12:00
Sat 18	Chingford League (all)	Hackney Marshes	13:30
Sat 25	South of England X-Country Champs (all)	Parliament Hill	

Feb

Sat 1	Chingford League (all) (or 15th)	Victoria Park	13:30
Sun 2	London Walks champs (Promoted by Loughton AC)	Victoria Park	13:00
Sat 8	Essex Cross Country League (all)	Chingford	12:00
Sat 15	Chingford League (all) (or 1st)	Victoria Park	13:30
Sat 22	National Cross Country Champs (all)	Midlands	

Mar

Sat 1	Chingford League Cross Country Relays (all) + Presentations	Highams Park	13.30
Sat 15	Essex Road Relays (S/V/U20, M & W)	Chelmsford	14:30
Sat 22	Orion 15	Chingford	10:00
Tue 25	Physical Shield Road Relay	Loughton	20:00

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

Coaching Update: Improving Running Economy Using Strength Training

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.

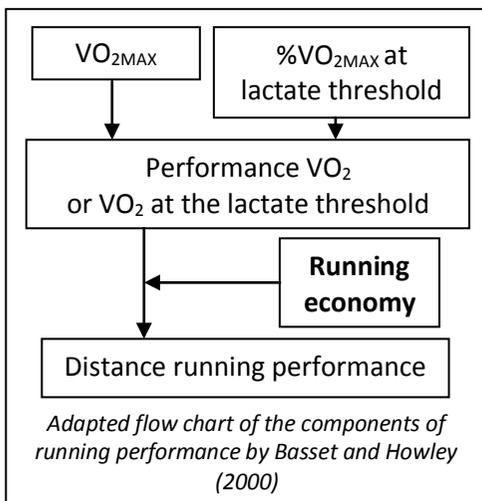
In the previous article we looked at plyometrics, a type of explosive strength training that research has shown to benefit running economy (RE). In this article we will look at defining RE and how traditional strength training can benefit RE and therefore running performance.

What is Running Economy?

RE is defined as the volume of oxygen used at a set speed. Therefore, runners with a better RE use less oxygen than runners with a poor RE at the same running speed. The diagram indicates where RE fits into running performance.

Why Look at Running Economy?

Aerobic fitness is actually a poor predictor of performance. Endurance athletes tend to have similar VO_{2Max} levels, but performances vary greatly – indicating other contributing factors such as RE.



What is Strength?

Strength is the ability of muscle to exert a force against a load. Another way of looking at strength is the production or control of force.

Benefits of Strength Training and How it Improves RE for Distance Athletes

- Decreasing the relative force (%max) applied during the loading phases of ground contact – *This reduces the metabolic demand for the same force output.*
- Increase in the number (and size) of type IIa fibres, which have a high glycolytic and oxidative potential and are relatively fatigue resistant – *Greater availability of these fibres allows athletes the potential to operate at higher running speeds.*
- Increased motor unit recruitment and co-ordination – *Increased movement efficiency.*

Results of studies that have implemented strength programmes to improve RE are shown in Table 1. The range of ages and performance levels of subjects indicate that strength training warrants a place within a distance athlete's regime. Careful planning and progression are key; Table 2 shows a basic overview of a strength programme for a distance athlete.

Participants	Study length	Improvement in RE	Researcher
Well-trained male runners (mean age 23.7)	12 weeks	+4.79%	Sedano <i>et al</i> 2013
Female distance runners (mean age 30.3)	10 weeks	+4%	Johnson <i>et al</i> 1997
Female recreationally fit runners (mean age 20.4)	10 weeks	+1.5%	Kelly <i>et al</i> 2008
Well-trained runners (mean age 28.6–29.7)	8 weeks	+5%	Storen <i>et al</i> 2008
Veteran marathon runners (mean age 44.2yrs)	6 weeks	+6.17%	Piacentini <i>et al</i> 2013

Exercise	Progression 1	Progression 2	Progression 3	Progression 4		Progression 5	
Squat	Learn squat pattern	Squat to box	Squat below parallel	Front squat		Back squat	
Deadlift	Learn deadlift pattern	Stiff leg deadlift	Stiff leg deadlift dumbbell	Stiff leg deadlift		Deadlift from the floor	
Single leg	Cone touch	Box rear leg reach	Hop and hold	Forward/back lunge		Over-head back lunge	
Push	Bench press dumbbells	Over-head press dumbbells	Push press	Push jerk		Olympic lifting movements	
Pull	Single arm row with dumbbells	Bent over row with dumbbells	Bent over row with discs	Narrow grip chin-ups		Wide grip chin-ups	
Phase	Learn	Learn	Learn	Build	Strength	Strength	Power
Reps	15	12-15	12-15	10-12	6-8	4-8	3-5
Sets	3	2	2	2-3	3	3-4	4-5
% of bodyweight lifted	0%	20–50%	20–50%	50-70%	85+%	85+%	95+%
Rest	3–5 mins			4 mins			>3 mins

Programme adapted from Performance Hertfordshire periodised model for distance athletes

Happy to discuss and share the above journals with those who are interested.

Rob Hyatt

Physio Update: Born to Run ... Barefoot?

As a professional physio, Helen was very keen to put forward the other side of the barefoot argument (see Rioch's article in the previous issue of LL). Rioch has obviously found that barefoot suits his individual situation, but what does the general scientific research say? Helen reveals her thoughts on barefoot with her professional hat on.



With the fairly recent publication of *Born to Run* by Christopher McDougall there has been much publicity about barefoot running. There have been big claims about it being good for both the everyday runner and the more competitive runner. Some claim it can reduce the risk of injury and improve running economy, but what does the research say? Should we all throw away our footwear (even the Jimmy Choos?!) and go barefoot?

Essentially there isn't enough research to support or negate it.

The first point I want to address is that, contrary to popular belief, not all barefoot runners land on their forefoot; likewise not all trainer runners land on their rearfoot. Research has shown that a proportion of barefoot runners actually land on their rearfoot. After following a 6-week training programme, *some* people can learn to run with a forefoot strike – but not everyone. Forefoot versus rearfoot strike is far more important than the type of footwear.

Why is a forefoot strike so important? The foot strike will change the biomechanics of the lower limb, some of it for the good and some of it for the worse. Available research has shown that forefoot runners have a lower reported incidence of injuries compared with rearfoot strikers. Is this due to the way their foot strikes the floor? Is this because a higher proportion of faster runners tend to be forefoot strikers and so are in better condition and have fewer injuries anyway? Is it because the impact on the musculoskeletal system while running is different? The research is inconclusive. Runners with a forefoot strike have less force going through *some* joints and less power absorption requirements. This *can* lead to a decrease in injuries such as stress fractures of the lower leg (widely called shin splints) and *may* reduce injuries at the knee (no research has been done on the hip, so the impact at the hip is unknown). However, forefoot running *can* increase forces at other joints such as the foot, resulting in stress fractures (commonly in the metatarsals) and overuse of the calf and Achilles complex.

Some barefoot running fans say that since the 1970s, running shoes have really developed, with cushioning becoming more technological; and that despite this, the rate of injuries has not changed. That may be true; however, there are other factors in play here. For example, running is not just a sport for the elite and fast (as it was in the 70s): it has become a hobby to keep fit, and so there has been a huge increase in the number of runners. These runners include those of different ages, fitness levels, body shapes and sizes – all of which may lead to an increase in injuries.



Photo from runblogger.com

Medicine, 9 October 2013, gives a good overview of the evidence. Contact me or Mary if you'd like a copy via email.

There is *some* support for the idea that forefoot running improves performance, although the research out there is limited. Running with a forefoot strike has been shown to increase the efficiency of the running gait. The foot is in contact with the floor for less time, and so the individual takes a shorter stride and increased step frequency. Having said that, how many runners can sustain a forefoot strike over a long distance? One piece of research looking at marathon runners showed that from 10k to 32k there was a 5.2% increase in rearfoot striking; sadly it didn't look at what happened towards the end of the marathon.

In conclusion, if you run with no problems I strongly suggest that you do not try to change the way you run. If you have ongoing injuries and have addressed all other areas that may be contributing to your injury but to no avail, this maybe something for you to consider. However, I recommend that you only do this with the support and guidance of a physiotherapist. If you would like to improve your running economy and speed, then once again do not try to make this change on your own: seek the assistance of a running coach or physiotherapist.

Lastly, if you want to adapt a forefoot strike, do you need to throw away your running shoes? The available research would suggest not.

Tam *et al*, 'Barefoot running: an evaluation of current hypothesis, future research and clinical applications', *British Journal of Sports*

Helen Real

If you have any queries relating to Rob or Helen's articles, do speak to them. Don't change your training routine without speaking to one of the coaches first. 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.

Photos Page



Lorna Gaffney descends St Boniface Down at the Isle of Wight



Jean Hobbs at the EVAC Final at Bedford



Competitors in the "Marble and Spoon Race" (with hurdles!) at the Club Barbeque in July



Loughton Runners Anne Heeks, George Georgiou and Gay Shillaker start the Sunday morning race at the Isle of Wight



Tony Babbs - Men's EVAC Team Manager at Bedford

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 *loughtonac@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.

Subscriptions for 2014

The committee has decided that Subscriptions for 2014 are as follows

Seniors	£42	<i>Less £10 for those do NOT wish to be registered with England Athletics *</i>	
Age 16-18	£25	Second Claim	£16
Under 16	£20	Social Member	£5

Subscriptions become due on 1 January.

Details of how to pay are on the News page of the website

** As the rules stand at the moment, individuals should be affiliated to England Athletics if they participate in any of the leagues. Individuals must be affiliated to compete in County, Area and National Championships (plus other high level competitions). Many road races and non-league races now apply a non-affiliated surcharge (£2) to their entries.*