

# Roadhogs Leicester A.C.



Autumn Newsletter 2007

Established 10/08/1984  
Affiliated MCAA, LRRL, DRL, RWA.



Peter: Season-long improvement.

Inside another packed edition:

Swanee's Running History (Page 3)  
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.....and a whole lot more!

## Prize Winners

Three Roadhogs will be picking up awards at the LRRL Presentation Evening in November. Mark finished as second VM40, Peter grabbed third place in the VM45 category and Rob was fourth in the new handicap competition. I've had my doubts about the handicap calculations - probably something to do with receiving only a minute more than Mark in some races - but there is no doubt that Rob is a worthy winner. When he joined us at the end of last year he gave the impression of being a solid performer but since he began Marathon training his form has been a revelation.

Peter has also had an outstanding season, culminating with a top 30 finish in the hardest race of the series. Five seconds quicker and he would have had a county age group title to put alongside his 100% award. Another top performer has been Ceri, finally translating potential into performance, setting PBs almost every time he raced.

The senior men secured the all-important 4th place to retain Division 2 status for 2008. The veteran men went one better, finishing a magnificent 4th in Division 1. The ladies team secured a creditable 14th place on the back of some strong winter league performances.

SM Ceri 31st, Simon 36th; MV40 Mark 2nd; MV45 Peter 3rd, Dave 20th, Dale 21st, Baz 22nd; MV50 Rob 6th, Keith 10th; MV60 Dave 2nd.

SF Rachel 20th; FV45 Alison 15th.

## Barry Beats 'em All

After more hiccups than a brewers' bash, "Super Vet" Barry Waterfield was crowned "Roadhogs Handicap Champion 2007". With the darkness drawing in, Barry was first to emerge from the gloom completing the scenic 10k course in exactly 60 minutes. Despite the rudimentary handicaps, everyone seemed to have a good time.



Barry receives his trophy from special guest "Eric Clapton".

## Big Brother Strikes Back!

In a surprise development, Craig was seen back on 2-wheels earlier this month. Before Mrs Atton has kittens I should point out that it was not a 50bhp Honda but a pushbike (insert your own joke about pie power here - I've given up until he's slow enough for me to beat again!) and what's more it was for charity.

Round 2 in the 2007 sibling rivalry series was played out over the 3 disciplines of the Wreake mini triathlon. After his severe beating at Glooston, Karl followed a twin track strategy as he plotted his revenge. First, get fit and second find something that you are better at, like swimming. As Craig only does breast stroke (again, make your own joke!) Karl managed to gain a decisive advantage in the pool.

Karl 29th, 1.14.34  
Craig 65th, 1.20.52



Karl: Painful defeat at Glooston

## Famous Five!

Congratulations to the intrepid Hoggs who made it through the entire LRRL season unscathed: Mark, Peter, Dave, Dave and Alison.

Marathon:  
Jerry Wilkes 3.47  
Rob Milstead 3.50  
John Stew 4.22

Half Marathon:  
Mark Chamberlain 1.18  
Peter Sloneczny 1.22  
Mat Topham 1.31  
Dale Jenkins 1.38



## Birthdays

### October

20<sup>th</sup> Mal Blyth is 71  
27<sup>th</sup> Dave Lodwick is 47

### November

5<sup>th</sup> Steve Blyth is 50  
9<sup>th</sup> Helen Gregory is 33  
17<sup>th</sup> Colin Smith is 71  
27<sup>th</sup> Ron Atton is 65

### December

3<sup>rd</sup> Sam Blows is 25  
12<sup>th</sup> Adam Taylor is 23  
15<sup>th</sup> Sid Smith is 55  
15<sup>th</sup> Helen Cooper is 39  
30<sup>th</sup> Chris Peach is 44  
31<sup>st</sup> Claire Di Palma is 37

## Running History

Unless you are a football historian you may not be aware that Tottenham Hotspur in 1961 became the first football team to win the double of League and FA Cup at Wembley Stadium. It had been achieved in the 18 hundreds but Spurs were the first in the modern era. What has this to do with running you may well ask? Well that year I gained my first real experience of running. The school that I attended each year held a School Cross-Country race. There wasn't much country, mainly roads, before the lovers of Cross-Country say anything. I wanted to leave early that day so that I could go to the second replay of the semi-final of the FA Cup at St. Andrews against Sheffield United. Leicester had already drawn the first 2 matches at Leeds and Forest now the second replay on a Monday night at Birmingham was looming. So I determined to run the Cross-Country seriously and then catch the train (steam of course) to the footy. I finished the race in second place only about a hundred yards from the winner John Offord. John later went on to run for Britain as well as becoming a very successful coach at Beaumont Leys and Owls, and I have to come clean and say that the real reason that I was as close to John at the finish was because he took a wrong turn at one point, but he was so far in front of me that I couldn't shout and warn him. For the record we won the second replay 2 - 0 so it turned out to be a great day all round. On the strength of that second place finish I was selected for the Area Games running the 880 yards (800 metres to you). Never having run that distance before I decided on my tactics for the race. Tuck into the group just behind the leaders and when they blew-up attack just like Steve Ovet would have done and go on to a remarkable victory. The theory was great as I ran the first lap in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> spot. Problem was that I went over the finish line in the same spot and my track career came to a sudden end. I never had a fast finish and the lads in front never blew-up.

For the next 20 years other pastimes took over. Football, Cricket, Opposite Sex (not always in that order) held more appeal. Anyway nobody ever ran in the local streets apart from kids having knocked on some old

lady's front door, or pinched an apple from the local orchard, or grown-ups being chased by big burly constables. But unfortunately football days have to come to an end (Don't they Dale). After that the alternatives become Darts and Snooker played in pubs and clubs and suddenly the mid-driff becomes larger and you can no longer see your feet. Then you know you need to do something. This period however coincided with the running boom in the UK. The Americans apparently started the trend in the late 70's and the late Chris Brasher had staged the first London Marathon through the capital in 1981 with over 5,000 runners taking part. Although it was inspirational to those watching on TV there was no way I was going to become involved, not with my stomach anyway. But it no longer became unusual to see people trotting around the streets in small shorts and trainers.



Nearing the finish of the London Marathon: Dave does his Max Bygraves impression.

In 1982 I went on holiday to North Wales with my family and another family in a large cottage. A couple of days into the holiday and my friend Steve said he was going out for a run and did I want to join him. No way Jose. Was I sure as he was only going to run a couple of miles and would not run too fast. My wife, bless her, having checked the Insurance Policies told me to have a go as I might enjoy it. Why would I enjoy it? So to stop the banter off I trotted. Can't remember what I wore or

what my trainers were like but I managed to keep up with Steve (or he slowed down enough to encourage me) and we completed this course he had worked out in advance. It seemed like it took a couple of days but was only about half-an-hours run and when I saw the cottage again it looked the most beautiful thing I had seen in years. I collapsed into a big arm-chair, whilst my wife ran around bringing me drinks and towels, and I was still alive. Not only that but within 10 or 15 minutes from the end of the run I began to think that it wasn't such a bad thing after all. Maybe I could have another go later in the week. This I did and from that moment on I was hooked.



Ashby 2007



Desford 2007

Returning home and recounting my tale to friends at work it was not long before I started to run some lunchtimes with Kim down at Saffron Lane Stadium. I set myself some goals and I was always able to achieve these targets. First it was 10 laps of the track, then 15 and so on until I could comfortably do 10k and more if we had had more time. The first few times I ran from home I was very conscious of the neighbours reaction to my attempts on becoming an athlete but that soon disappeared and off I would trot to Braunstone Park for my evening runs. Sundays would always be long-run days, evening runs around the Park and lunch-time runs at Saffron Lane.

I remember my first race. It took place on a Wednesday evening in the late Summer of 1982 (I think). Having done my training this just appeared to be the next stage forward and I looked forward to the event with great anticipation. The race started from a school which was located near to the Space Centre. The race took us over Abbey Lane and up Beaumont Leys Lane. Can you imagine a road-race these days taking the runners over Abbey Lane and the police stopping all the traffic to allow the runners to cross. Heady days. We ran into Thurcaston before turning left towards Anstey and back up Gorse Hill and through Beaumont Leys estate and back over Abbey Lane to the school. It must have been about 10 miles and I remember the Gorse Hill climb particularly. What I should have done was to record all these races, times and dates but I never did. It is my big regret as the years have gone by that there wasn't this record to look back on in my old age.

Next step had to be a Half-Marathon and with Kim and the rest of the lads we decided to go for the first running of the Belvoir Half-Marathon in the spring of 1983. 13 miles seemed an awful long way to run but I was always confident that I could achieve the distance and the paperwork on the race suggested that the course was going to be fairly flat. There must have been about 6 of us

running, who all brought their wives and girl friends along to support us, and having found the lovely village of Hose we set off. The race in this first year went towards Harby at the start and finished by going by Langer Airport and not the other way round that runners today will be more aware of. I managed to overtake some of our team on the tortoise and hare basis and was still running at the finish in a time of around 1:43 much to the delight of my wife and family. I felt elated at the end.



Kibworth 2007: Gumley Hill has taken its toll.

The Leicestershire Road-Running League started and more and more runners were by now copying me and pounding the pavements (quite a trendsetter eh!). The choice now began to dawn that to take part in these races I would either have to join a Running Club or the group of runners could form their own club. Steve Clegg and Ian Rankine had already joined Huncote Harriers and that was one alternative for the rest of us. I had already talked Steve and Ian into running their first ever half-marathon this being a Saturday afternoon event staged at a school in Coalville to coincide with their fete. I remember standing on the start-line at this event talking to some of the other runners and the guys alongside us had their fags and lighters in their back pockets so they could have a smoke on the way round. Obviously very serious runners. Ian took off like an express train

whilst Steve was more conservative, but both finished a long way in front of me and this event really kick-started their career in running. As a result they too pledged their futures to a Club based at the Insurance Company, and resigned from Huncote, and in August 1984 the club was born and we became affiliated to Midland Counties AAA with Kim as Chairman and Ian as Club Captain.

We did all sorts of races in those early days. One I remember started in Newtown Linford from the Bradgate Pub and went towards Anstey along Link Road and towards Cropston Reservoir before turning off to Swithland. We then ran to the back of Bradgate Park up Wardley Hill and finished back at the pub. It was officially a 10 mile race but it was a pretty tough course and run in the heat of the day on a Sunday afternoon. We would travel a lot to run in races, one of our favourites being St Neots for their Half-Marathon, but Peterborough, Worksop, Atherstone etc. were all regular venues for events in those early years.



Hungarton 2006: A posse of Birstall runners try to mark Roadhogs star runner.

Of course when you are a runner and racing regularly the ultimate challenge will always be the Full Marathon and London the ultimate goal for your first attempt. I entered the race in 1983/1984 and 1985 without success but in 1985 I won the ballot within the club for the club place, which I greedily accepted and started training hard for the big day. My family travelled down to London with me, I think more to watch the celebrities running than yours truly but the training must have gone well as I managed to run the whole race and finished in a time of 3hrs 8mins 30secs.

This was of course in the days before chip and pin so it was maybe a couple of minutes quicker. I managed London on three other occasions with a best time of 3.02 and always enjoyed the race and the event although it was never a PB race or course. Other Marathons I undertook were at Wolverhampton, Stratford-on-Avon, Leicester and St Albans. I also ran the Abingdon Marathon twice and it was in the first of these races that I managed to break the 3 hour barrier for the one and only time. My car broke down on the way to the race and I only just managed to arrive as the runners were setting off at the start. By the time I had changed and was ready to run the runners had long gone, but fortunately the organisers allowed me to take part and I chased the slow group and eventually caught them and finished the race in 2hrs 56 mins which was worth another 3 minutes which I am sure I lost at the start. Still I had achieved a notable goal and one that remains my proudest moment in the sport.

Coming back to the local scene we continued to run in some, what appears now, to be some remarkable races. One Winter League race was staged at Winstanley School and involved running along a brand new road which was not open to traffic at the time. This was the road from Hinckley Road to Fosse Park through Thorpe Astley which is a very popular thoroughfare these days. Another was from Rowley Fields School which ran towards Fosse Park along the Narborough Road Service Road up Soar Valley Way on the pavement and then turning into the Great Central Way. Finally we were supposed to run up the Narborough Road and back to the School but there were no Marshalls about on the course and the runners were everywhere. Then there were the 5k races that were staged at Beaumont Leys from the Tesco car-parks on a Wednesday evening. They used to stage a Senior Men's and Women's races and also a veteran race for the over 40's. As I matured into an over-40 I decided to run this race but I was completely blown away by the high-class field assembled that evening and although I ran the race in around 19 minutes I was well down the field. On one of these nights we had a great thunderstorm during the course of the evening so we received a good soaking as well. We ran

10 mile races at Waltham-on-the Wolds, half-marathons at Melton Mowbray, 17 mile races from Kingsway Community Centre, half-marathons at Huncote and at Market Harborough. This race used to be staged on a Saturday morning and the early part of the race was run through the centre of the town with all the shoppers looking on. Can't imagine that these days.

I have met a lot of people over the years. It would be unfair to mention any of these because if I start talking about personalities there are bound to be people that I have left out and I wouldn't like to do that. A lot of runners have passed through the club over the years and many of them remain friends to this day. It is no secret that one of my ambitions for the club has been to increase the membership especially in the Ladies section. It is questionable whether we currently have the infrastructure to achieve this at the moment, but whatever the problems we do have the people that can make this possible. We just need to keep chipping away and building bit by bit and our goals will come. We have made great strides with our Newsletters and Club Web-Site with the great work put in by Dave Lodwick and that has provided the foundation to help us move forward.

Hope you have enjoyed my ramblings. I am sure that I have missed bits out that I will wish at a later date that I had included.

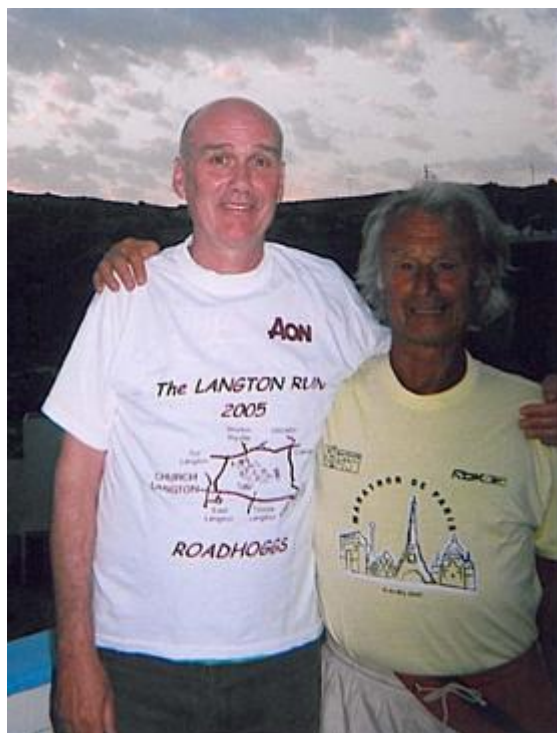
Everyone keep running.

*Dave swan*



## Nous Courrons

On holiday this year I noticed that the man in the room next to us was wearing the Paris marathon t-shirt. On starting a conversation with him it turned out that he was, perhaps not too surprisingly, French. Overcoming any language problems with my 'O' level French and his somewhat better English I tried to explain to him that two of 'mes amies', Keith and Simon, had run that race this year. He then took me into his room and produced, on coat hangers, the t-shirts for the last three Paris marathons. His name is Joe Gackowski and he completed the race this year in just under five hours, which considering he is seventy five, is not bad at all.



Over the course of the next five days we got to know each other better, discussing both wars, politics and, of course, running, although due to an injury he picked up at Paris we never ran together. He told me that his best marathon was as a thirty year old when he did 2.45 and that when he was fifty five did 3.40 and 3.50 at Paris and New York respectively.

When he was fifty-nine he did a one hundred kilometre race in 11.05 and then did 11.27 in the same event when he was sixty five! But the achievement he was most proud of was a two hundred and forty kilometre race across the Sahara desert in which took six days and he came in eighty-seventh out of three hundred. This was in nineteen ninety-seven. Puts things in perspective, doesn't it?

So if you are ever in the Avignon area of France and see an older chap running in a 'Langton run' t-shirt then the chances are that it is Joe.

*Steve Martin.*

### LRRL Final Positions

#### SENIOR MEN Division 2

	TOTAL
Ivanhoe	220
Desford	173
West End	164
Roadhoggs	162
Shepshed	141
Whetstone	117
Coritaniens	114
L TRI	98
South Derbs	90
Charnwood	74
Harborough	66

#### VETERANS Division 1

	TOTAL
Huncote	214
Wreake	178
Barrow	175
Roadhoggs	139
Stilton	132
West End	129
Hinckley	122
Desford	115
Nuneaton	100
Beaumont	95

#### WOMEN'S LEAGUE

	TOTAL
Barrow	541
Birstall	492
OWLS	481
Wreake	467
Huncote	444
Beaumont	442
Stilton	441
Barrow B	440
Ivanhoe	424.5
Hinckley	421
Hermitage	408.5
Desford	405
West End	374.5
Roadhoggs	369

## Gettin' muddy with Kim

### Running through the countryside

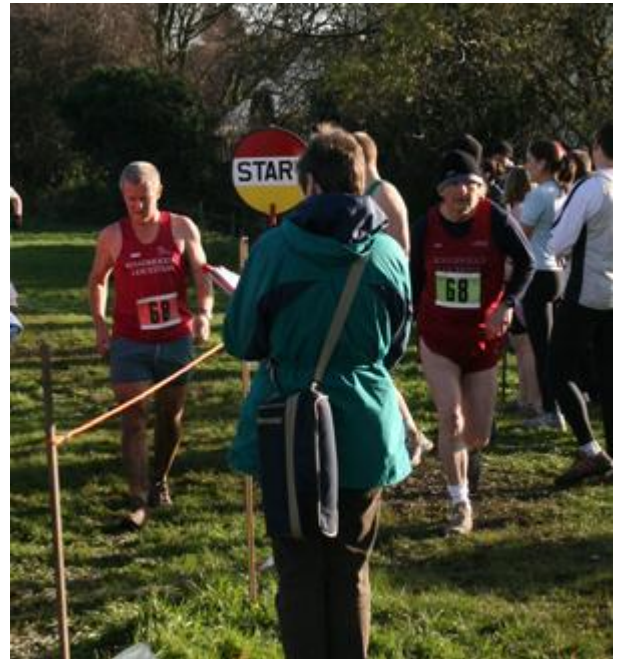
Runners seem to like cross-country running or they don't, there's not much in between. The kind of runner who enjoys cross-country probably does the long Sunday run off road, while the runner who races on the roads tends to stick to them in training as well. Personally I have grown to like cross-country more than road running, after too many years of pounding the tarmac and with aching ankles and knees, these days cross-country is the only racing I do. Why? Well firstly its more low-key than the roads so you don't feel the same pressure. The distances are non-standard and estimated rather than measured, plus there are no mile markers so you run as you feel without getting hung up about your mile splits or 10k times. But best of all the courses are much more scenic and challenging; you are off the roads and on the trails and footpaths. On the downside that usually means mud and water, but for me that adds to the challenge and enjoyment; its so friendly slogging with the other runners through the mud, or clambering up a hill, or wading across a cold brook.



Rex Stapleford: Cross Country fan.

Cross country running is slower than road running but needs more effort. Elite road and track runners use cross country for strength and stamina training in the winter, and it also gives your joints a chance to recover from the roads. Most championship races are held around parkland courses but, outside of the elite events, the courses are 'real' which means that they will be around hills, trails, fields and footpaths, with mud wherever they can put it in your way.

Some Roadhoggs have always been cross-country runners and did their favourite events as individuals because the club was really only organised to do road running and race walking. Slowly the cross-country runners increased in number until we were admitted to the 'Derby Runner' league for Leicestershire & Derbyshire clubs a few years ago. These are real courses, anything from 4.5 to 6 miles, sometimes 2 laps and usually out in the sticks somewhere. There is another local league, the 'North Mids' but this is for the bigger clubs and tends to be around parks.



Swithland Relays 2006: Kim has finished his leg and "Rocket" Rex is on his way!

The only advice I would give you is to wear shoes with some grip. Spikes are best but you can get away with trail shoes or any with lugged or studded soles. And be prepared to get dirty! If you want to try out cross-country, come and have a go at the 'Derby Runner' races. Roadhoggs are one of the smallest clubs in this league so we hardly ever get a full team out and usually finish low down, but we keep plugging away and you would be very welcome to join us!

Here are the league events this season, all Sunday mornings at 11.00:

- 18 November - Hinckley - course to be announced
- 2 December - Desford - Bagworth Heath
- 20 January - Shepshed - Grace Dieu
- 17 February - Shelton - Foremark Reservoir
- 2 March - Hatton - Sinai Ridge
- 30 March - Roadhoggs (B final) - course to be announced (Beaumont Leys?)



As these are league races, the club pays your race fees providing you are a paid up member, all you have to do is turn up and run. There are also junior races for the kids.



Jon Heap: Will race over any terrain.

Outside of the league there are some open events we regularly have a go at, and I'll be sending out emails to remind everyone of events coming up. The season is usually from October to March so there is plenty of opportunity for you. You'll feel fitter and stonger, give cross-country a go this winter!

*Kim Richardson*

## LRRL Race Reports

### Hungarton

It was an excellent night for running and this was reflected in the times. I managed to trim half a minute off last year's time and was rewarded with a finish 36 places lower! The Roadhoggs team had a fresh look about it. We were pleased to welcome Chris Peach and John Stew, both making their league debuts. It was also great to see Mat back after injury and Craig itching to make someone (me) pay for all the pie jokes. All this resulted in some great battles out on the course as we vied for bragging rights.

Six runners managed to scoop the jackpot by beating the target time so it was an expensive night for host club Wreake. Mark kicked things off with 15th and Peter put in a magnificent performance to grab 38th in a very fast field. Mat showed that he is returning to form with 72nd. Next up was Craig beating 7s for an excellent 122nd. He was followed in fairly short order by the fast improving Rob (135th), Adrian (137th), Dave L (148th) and Dale (153rd). The burgundy

train continued with Baz (155th), Simon (172nd), Jon (174th) and Chris (178th and a confidence building performance). The final trio of men were Dave S (209th), Keith (225th) and John (235th, following an excellent PB at Prestwold with another improved performance).

Ladies captain, Rachel (68th), led from the front - despite having spent the day driving back from Cornwall (how's that for dedication). Reem (93rd) got the better of Claire (95th) on the final climb and Alison made sure of the points in 113th. Over all, only Claire managed to do a 'Hungarton PB', but it's never an easy course whatever the conditions.

### Huncote

A pleasant evening, if a little humid. As usual, the race attracted a good quality field including 21 Hoggs. The organisers had responded to the popularity of the event by raising the entry limit to 600, which made the start even more like Oxford Street during the January sales. It also caused some problems at the finish with queues extending over the finish line at times. Just to add to the festivities, we had a 400m stretch of road works at the end of the first mile. Up front it was the Tim and Tara show as the Mr Hartley and Ms Kryzwicki underlined their dominance of the local scene. On this occasion though, the over all victory was anything but routine, with Gordon Lee taking the fight all the way to the line. Mark (11th) was slightly slower than in previous years but his time (27.53) was in line with his consistent form during the winter league. Performance of the day was Peter smashing the 30-minute barrier with a 29.28 clocking for 39th place. This was despite suffering a migraine the day before and feeling under par. Mat (66th) showed that he is fully recovered from injury by recording his fastest performance of the season (30.28). Craig was looking for a sub-6.30 performance and duly delivered with 32.24. Hot on his heels was Ceri (116th) slicing yet another chunk off his PB (32.37). Next up was Rob (133rd, 33.00), with Dale (180th) and Jon (197th) completing the eight. Dave L, Baz and Adam all dipped under the 7-minute/mile mark to make 11 runners in all. Chris continued his rapid improvement whilst Dave S all but matched his performance from a year before. Behind these two was Jerry Wilkes, making his debut for the club. Jerry is an experienced runner but unused to this sort of racing, so there'll be plenty more to come once

he finds his pace. Keith (307th) is struggling with his ankle but got round to make it 10 out of 10 in the League this year. It was great to see Steve (359th) making his first start since Kibworth, back in March. Rachel (360th) did her usual captain's job, leading from the front, with Cathy (389th) not far behind. Martin turned out for his annual Huncote outing with 43.11 for 441st. Alison and Barry rounded off proceedings with 476th and 483rd respectively. 517 finishers.

## OWLs John Fraser 10

In a repeat of the previous year, Countesthorpe gave us a stiff breeze and warm sunshine. The first half of the race was unpleasantly hot but fortunately it clouded over later. With the men's league position all but secured the priority for the "ever presents" was to survive the final 10 miles of the season. Sadly for Keith, even walking was painful so he had to throw in the towel. That was a poor reward for a man whose dedication persuaded him to run an 8-mile race the day after struggling through one of the country's hardest Marathons.



Ceri: Another excellent performance.

For the 11th straight race, the Road Running Captain led from the front (11th). Mark wasn't able to get near his PB performance from the previous year but it was still good enough to consolidate the 2nd MV40 slot in the Summer League. Next up was Peter, slicing 2.25 off his

2006 clocking and breaking into the top 30 for the first time. Mat (84th) took his customary 3rd spot, although in initial reports I had him 5th on account of his position in the photographs. I couldn't understand why he looked so relaxed on his way to the line when a finish behind both Ceri (101st) and Rob (115th) suggested a lost wheel somewhere! It wasn't until I saw the official results that everything became clear and Tom's cryptic remark about a "deliberate mistake" made sense. It seems that our snapper had managed to muffle his first opportunity, so after finishing Mat kindly ran past him again during a gap in the field. Of course, by this time the next two Hoggs had already made it home.



Rob: Continued improvement.

Next up, in an excellent time of 1.12.33, was Chris Peach (141st)(still without a club vest after his third race - that's two races more than some 'proud' owners have ever done!). After Chris, Dave L (192nd) and a slightly frazzled Dale (205th) completed the eight. Baz (237th) forgot his knotted handkerchief and suffered in the heat, struggling in a couple of minutes adrift. Dave S (260th) completed something like his 7th 100% season out of 8 John Stew (290th) a little way behind.





Rachel emulated Mark by leading from the front (50th lady) with Reem (68th) finishing a little further back. Mike Price kept his daughter Tracey company (it was good of her to slow down to Mike's pace!). Alison (94th) completed her third full season but I'm not sure she'll remember the race fondly for any other reason. Tail gunner was Barry (416th) who had brought along a friend for her first ever race. What a race to choose - if the "contours of Countesthorpe" don't put her off, nothing will!

*Dave Lodwick*



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## The Round Leicester Relay by the Captain of the non-elite mixed Roadhoggs Team

It felt like the first day of sunshine in 2007.

I started off from Mowacre Hill at a time not that long after sunrise (or so it felt on what would otherwise be a lazy Sunday). Steve and Tom, the latter easy to spot with his Superman T-shirt, provided support along the way with much needed water. I kept a good pace and was pleased to hand over to Steve at Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake. Steve sprinted off with support along the way from Tom and was pleased with his run. Barry was waiting patiently at Ashby Foville but the sun was really hotting up and a lot of runners were already struggling. Barry was supported by Mike Price and enjoyed the scenery so much he decided to add an extra bit towards the end of his leg☺. Angela took off at the restart point from the 4<sup>th</sup> leg at Somerby and ran as usual an excellent time and finished her leg looking comfortable.



I thought the Loddington to Slawston leg was the toughest part of the relay. Sarah Nicholson ran steadily up those relentless hills supported by her friend Claire running alongside all the way. Adrian provided water and supplies on his bike. Just before Sarah arrived in Slawston, the organisers allowed those waiting there to restart as at least 3 teams (including our team) were running late at that point. Steve



Clegg took off supported by Adrian on his bike again but Steve ran so well Adrian had difficulty keeping up. Another unplanned restart point at Foxton meant that Zoe took off before Steve arrived. Zoe ran like the day wouldn't end, even running through a local cricket match.

The 8<sup>th</sup> leg saw Claire takeoff from Bruntingthorpe at the restart time as planned although all the restart times were slightly delayed. The hills never seemed to end between Bruntingthorpe and Frolesworth and that was the hottest time of the day. Despite this Claire ran steadily overtaking one or two other ladies along the way. At this point Steve, Zoe and Claire were all out on the road. Alison took over from Claire, running from Frolesworth to Burbage and was pretty much self-

sufficient with back up from Baz who reported back that she appeared strong and was running at an excellent steady pace. It was too hot to walk let alone run by then.

Kim was next up, running the leg to Market Bosworth and again put in a solid steady run. Rachel made a spectacular effort in the heat running the 11<sup>th</sup> leg to Markfield supported by her friends and family. Adrian (now driving after his bike suffered two punctures) and I caught up with Jerry him briefly at the edge of Bradgate Park. He was running to Beacon Hill and at this point he did not even look out of breath despite his rapid pace. The final and 13<sup>th</sup> leg was also a restart point from Beacon Hill. Karl took off at a



speed supported by his family who doubled up as support for Craig, running the same leg for the elite Roadhogs team. Karl ran a good time and arrived back at Mowacre Hill looking strong and greeted by Baz, Mark, Keith and several others who were unable to applaud his efforts because their hands were busy balancing their pints and bags of crisps.

The sun was still shining at this point and everyone reported having enjoyed the day. The team came 33<sup>rd</sup> (and therefore not last) which I think is a very respectable position for our first year as the second Roadhogs team. Next year with the lessons learned we will undoubtedly

move up in the rankings.

*Reem Al-Jayyousi*

