

Pensby Runners AGM held on 29th January 2016 (8:30 pm) at Heswall Squash Club

Apologies: Jim Barrow, Dawn Sutton, Gwyn Thomas, Polly Williams, Elizabeth Gartshore, Emily Astley, Pat Peers, Ian Arnison.

Attendees:36

1. Charity presentations

Cheques are ready to send to Apex and Diabetic Alert Dogs, our charities for 2015. The committee have decided to donate £750 to each charity, the bulk of which comes from the Seaside runs, thanks to Jim and Phil.

There were two suggestions for charities for this year: Claire House and Wirral Alzheimer's Charity.

Beccy Davies from Claire House spoke movingly about the local children's hospice for Cheshire, Wirral and the Isle of Man, which offers respite care, counselling and therapeutic services, for siblings and family members of terminally ill children. Beccy made the point that the aim of Claire House is to provide a positive environment for seriously ill children, and to ensure that the time they have is memorable for them and their families.

Jim Fedigan spoke about the Wirral Alzheimer's Society, as a charity who provide support for people affected by dementia on the Wirral. Jim noted that this was an incredibly relevant charity for Pensby to support, since many club members have friends or family who suffer or have suffered from the disease. By supporting the Wirral branch of the charity, we also ensure that our donations will directly benefit the local area.

It was proposed that the club supports both charities this year, and this was ratified by the membership.

Roy also mentioned that Claire House are supporting TuffNutz this year, which is likely to result in increased donations to the charity.

2. Minutes of last AGM

Proposed as a true record of the meeting by Ian Chalmers.

Seconded by Steve Girling.

3. Matters arising from last year's AGM:

None

4. Chairman's report – Roy Fisher

Roy thanked the committee for their hard work in 2015. The membership has increased from 127 – 161 this year, and new members must be attracted by the variety of running styles and social activities offered by the club. 2015 saw the usual busy running calendar, with monthly 5 and 7 mile handicaps, the multi-terrain series, and the ever popular Chairman's challenge. Pensby ladies came 1st + 5th in the multi-terrain, while the men came 9th. TuffNutz was, as ever, a great success, reliant on the support of volunteers from the

club, to ensure the event goes smoothly. Requests for volunteers to help make TuffNutz 2016 as successful as last year will follow in due course! Tuesday training sessions have regularly had 60+ runners in attendance, thanks to the efforts of Nigel, Gordon, and the other coaches for making the training sessions a success. Colin Lamprey has established a regular Thursday night session, which has been well supported due to Colin's enthusiasm. And of course, we have our regular Friday sessions, pitched at a more social pace, together with the regular Sunday run, which is now augmented by Rob Beech's early morning ultra team!

2015 has seen a busy social calendar, with Steve Tilby's pub-crawl and curry night, and Dave Quirk's post-Christmas party at the Jug and Bottle being well supported as usual. In 2016 we have the Pensby Runner's 30th anniversary party at Leasowe Castle to look forward to, details to follow.

The 'Pensby Runners on Bikes' (PROBs) group have met every Thursday for a day of cycling, and the 'Pensby Runners on Foot' (PROFs) group have met regularly for walks in the local area. Gordon Scholefield has been awarded the Jack Lewis award, for biggest contribution to the club in 2015, as voted for by the membership. Polly Williams and Ralph Pawling were 'lucky' enough to receive London Marathon places in the Pensby ballot.

We have become such a successful club this year that even Wirral AC have been asking for advice! Could we soon be known as number 1 running club on the Wirral??

5. Cross country report – Gordon Scholefield

During the 2014/15 Season, Pensby Runners competed in the North West Sunday Cross-Country League as well as the Merseyside County Championships and the North of England regional Championships. In the current season we have already competed in the Merseyside Championships and will be running in the North of England Championships in Blackburn, tomorrow! Next month we will be running in the prestigious English National Championships, which this year are held in Donnington Park, Leicestershire. The name of Pensby is certainly spreading far and wide!

In our own cross-country league, made up of eight races, 30 men and 9 ladies competed and the overall winners were the husband and wife team, Sarah and Dom Roberts. Only Sarah, Dom and yours truly managed to run in every single race. The current leaders are Dom, who is well on the way to defending his title and Lucy Partridge is looking quite secure in first place.

In the Sunday League the men were 8th overall and the ladies 2nd. In the current season the men are lying in 8th position and the ladies are 7th. The men have consistently been able to field a complete team and sometimes two and even three teams. The ladies, however, have struggled to finish a complete team on more than one occasion. A big thank you to a number of new members who have stepped forward and ensured the club has been able to maintain the record of always fielding a complete team. It has been a little frustrating that the ladies have not been able to capitalise on their excellent start to the season but I appreciate that many have other commitments on a Sunday morning.

It is interesting to note that the overall number of runners competing in the Sunday League from all the clubs, has more than doubled in the last five years, with, for example, 127 finishers in our Arrowe Park Race in 2010 compared to 328 in 2016. I would like to say a big thank you to all the members who either ran or helped on the day to make our home fixture this season such a success.

What has been the highlight of the season to date? Could it be the ladies finishing first in the team event at Clarke Gardens, or Kev Charleston finishing in the first 20 at Stadt Moers Park, or Simon Rogers rising from his sickbed to finish 3rd over 50 at Town Park, Runcorn, or Ralph securing a first 30 position at Arrowe Park? No, for me the highlight has been the smile on the face of Beccy Davies as she finished the notoriously difficult Beacon Park race grinning from ear to ear. With such enthusiasm the future of the club is secure.

If you have not yet experienced the joy of running as part of Team Pensby then why not join us for the last race of the season on Sunday 21st February, at Forest Park, Birchwood? With recent weather conditions I would, however, recommend that you are a reasonably competent swimmer!

Finally, I would like to thank all members who have run in any of the cross-country races over the last few years, particularly many of the relatively new members. All your support has been much appreciated. It has been rewarding to see the numbers taking part steadily climb. As you are aware this will be my final cross-country report as I feel it is now time for someone else to step forward and continue to strengthen the position of cross-country running within the club. As they say in the world of entertainment: **Thank you and goodnight!**

6. Fell Running report - Nigel Crompton

2015 was another good year for fell running (although not for the team captain himself). As a section of the club we are still going from strength to strength. In total 39 Pensby runners took part in a fell race during the year (3 more than 2014).

The winter league finished in March with the Y Moelwyn race with 26 Pensby runners having taken part in the winter series – a little down on the previous year. Rob Grantham took the mens winter league title with Anne Rosbottom taking the ladies title.

The Summer league kicked off with the Llangynhafal loop which, virtue of the fact, perhaps, that this was the first Supercup event had 22 Pensbyites hitting the fells to tackle the famous gully. I think Gordon Scholefield said that this was now his favourite race. That's what I heard.

The rest of the league included many local midweek races around Moel Famau as well as the Snowdon International race and culminating in the Lakeland toughie that is Grisedale Horseshoe where only Tom Rutherford and Andy Sumner took part although the same weekend on the same mountain had a number of other Pensby Runners either swimming or cycling or running.

The Summer league was won by husband and wife team Tom and Debbie Rutherford with Tom taking part in every league race.

The winter league is again underway with The new route of the Clwydian hills attracting some new members and Penmaenmawr seeing 16 of us trudging the bogs and the final race of 2105 was the downhill only Jubilee Plunge race from the top of Moel Famau down to the Golden Lion in Llangynhafal.

7. Road Race League report – Mark Roberts

In 2015, 16 ladies and 29 men took part in the road race league, which allows members to get some miles in on a more sensible running surface! The most popular race was the Birkenhead 5 mile, which was also the only race where Simon was able beat Ralph (although Simon admits that Ralph was recovering from Excalibur!)

The Ladies league was won by Tracy Pennington, who did the full 9 races to get 10 bonus points, and has had a fantastic running year. The ladies title was hotly contested between Sarah, Lucy and Tracy, until the last race of the year, where Tracy took the title. Next year could be even more competitive, with our recent influx of new members.

The Men's league won by Ralph, who nearly didn't get any points in one race because he forgot his vest! It was a tight contest between Ralph and Simon, who finished only 5 points behind Ralph. 3rd place went to Andy Gow, who started off well before injury struck. Dom Roberts had a really great year, setting PBs at every distance and coming 4th in the competition. Gordon came in 5th place, despite all of his holidays!

We had a number of requests for new races for 2016. The first race is a 10 mile at Bispham on Sunday 13th March starting at 11.00 am. I know it is not local, however it is very difficult to find 2 good 10 mile races. This is a new race to the league and is described as "2 laps and flat". Newer members are reminded that we usually organise car shares for the races via the FaceBook page.

Thank you to everyone who competed and made it all such a pleasure congratulation to Tracy and Ralph and roll on 2016.

8. Seaside Runs – Jim Fedigan

The Seaside runs are Pensby owned and organised on a voluntary basis. Last year saw good weather, and the 'Friends of Leasowe Light House' have kindly allowed us to set up registration inside the lighthouse, which helps greatly on days when the weather is not so kind. As such, this year we are donating £250 to the lighthouse, which is a charitable organisation. We are hoping to make the races more commercial and advertise more widely, to make them an even greater success for the club. The Seaside website has been revamped by Chris Nolan, and so a vote of thanks must go to Chris for all his work on the Seaside runs and Pensby websites. We have 574 people subscribed to the Seaside runs FaceBook site, which has a great community feel. This year we have purchased 'Grand Prix' medals, which people win if they run six out of eight races; 38 people achieved this last year. Since the Grand Prix medals proved so popular, this year, we will be purchasing engraved glass cubes, at a cost of £3.50 each to use as Grand Prix medals. A vote of thanks to all the people who have volunteered to help Jim and Phil to put the races on, without whom the races wouldn't take place. This year we will be looking for 1 or 2 co-directors to help organise Seaside races, to ensure we have cover in the case of illness and for succession planning. If anyone could commit to cover a couple of races a season, please get in touch with Jim. The Seaside races have been successful, but so have Pensby – last season Sarah was first lady in all 8 races, no-one in the club has ever run faster! Jim presented Sarah with an engraved salver, engraved with all of her times.

9. Treasurer's report – Andy and John (with Jim Fedigan to report on Seaside Run's finances)

Andy proposed a vote of thanks to John and Lesley Keyworth for helping him settle into the role, and for doing such a rigorous job of the accounts up to now. Andy compared this year's figures to last years and noted that the drop in income is due to a 6 month payment holiday in fees. To ensure the accounts are on track, Andy will prepare a second set of accounts at

the end of June. Some members have continued to pay direct debits in September and will have to be refunded.

Rising membership numbers have meant that we have seen increased profits due to kit sales, and increased payment to England Athletics for affiliation fees and this also means that we are able to donate more money to our chosen charities. Tuffnutz is slightly down last year, due to diminished donations from Andy's work.

Seaside run report: 770 runners took part last year, with an average of 100 runners per race. Sarah Roberts kindly left her prize money in the charity fund. The bulk expenditure for the Seaside runs is on water and St Johns. £250 is being donated to Leasowe Lighthouse.

Appointment of honorary auditor: Ian Shorrocks volunteered, and was voted in.

Questions arising from the accounts: Ian Chalmers thanks Andy Morley for producing such clear accounts.

Full accounts attached.

10. Membership report – Jo Cook on behalf of Chris Nolan and Andy Sumner.

Pensby Runners Membership Management

Early in 2015 we decided to move to an online payment system to make it easier for members to pay their fees, and so it's easier to manage the administration of an ever-expanding club (numbers have increased from 127 in January 2015 to 158 in January 2016). The benefits of an online payment system are as follows:

- One definitive membership list.
- Keep EA profiles up-to-date.
- Streamlines the application process for new members
- Allows current members to keep their contact details up-to-date
- Means we can offer on-line card payments alongside DD
- Keep members informed with automated welcome emails, payment receipts, membership acknowledgement etc

We used a Facebook poll to understand how people would prefer to pay their fees and this showed an overwhelming majority would like to pay by bank transfer or credit/debit card/paypal online (38/45). Cash and standing order had one vote each and Direct Debit received only 5 out of 45 votes. No one voted for cheque. Being an online poll there may be some selection bias here.

Chris Nolan trialled several membership management systems and Web Collect was found to have the most functionality; it also offered direct debit and payment by credit/debit card with reasonable fees (an annual fee of £150). A vote of thanks must go to Chris, who has worked tirelessly to manage the technical side of setting up the on-line system.

In order to accept card payments we have registered the club with PayPal. PayPal fees are 3.4% + £0.20 per transaction. Similarly, in order to accept direct debit payments we have registered the club with Go Cardless. GoCardless fees are 1%, up to maximum of £2.00 per transaction.

Since we were re-thinking how we managed memberships, the committee decided that it made sense to move the date of our annual subscriptions so that we received payments from members directly before the renewal date for England Athletics Affiliation (1st April), rather than in September. Heswall Squash club also agreed to us changing the date we pay our subscription to them (previously September, now due in March). This means that all of our major financial transactions now fall within March-April each year, making accounts management much easier. We paid 6-month's worth (rather than 12 months) of membership fees to the squash club in September, but decided not to ask members to pay for this 6-months subscription, opting instead to give current members a 6-month payment holiday, allowing all members to benefit from the large excess of funds we have in the bank account.

The new system is now live, and annual membership renewal is due by midnight on Monday 29th February. You can find the link to the payment system on the web page, please use it and let us know if you have any problems.

Jim asked why we think we've had so many new members – is it the new website? Gordon has had some feedback from new members, and it seems that it's a combination of our visibility at races, ease of the new website and word of mouth. Jim suggested a poll (on FaceBook) to investigate this.

11. Election of officials for 2016 – Vice Chairperson, Vice Captain and Secretary are vacant positions.

Chair: Roy Fisher was confirmed as Chair.

Vice Chair: Gordon Scholefield, proposed by Jo Cook, seconded by Andy Morley. Carried.

Treasurer: Andy Morley. Carried.

Assistant Treasurer: John Keyworth. Carried

Club Captain: Nigel Crompton. Carried.

Vice Captain: Simon Rogers, proposed by Rob Beech, seconded by Gary Thornton-Allen. Carried.

Membership Secretary: Andy Sumner. Carried.

Secretary – Rob Beech (22 votes), proposed by Jo Cook, seconded by Gary Thornton-Allen. Carried.

Assistant Secretary: Dave Green (13 votes), proposed by Andy Sumner, seconded by Nigel Crompton. Carried.

Note: In 2015 the Assistant Secretary position was filled by Andy Sumner, who took on membership responsibilities on the resignation of Steve Tilby. As such, the position of Membership Secretary was vacant. To capitalise on the enthusiasm of Rob Beech and Dave Green to get involved in the committee, it was proposed that Andy Sumner took on the role of Membership Secretary, allowing Rob and Dave to fill the positions of Secretary and Assistant Secretary, respectively. This proposal was agreed by those present.

12. Achiever of the Year

Sarah Roberts received the Achiever of the Year award for 2015. Sarah represented Cheshire in the Inter-County Cross Country last year, she also won all 4 Deestridders off road grand prix races. She has achieved a reserve place to represent Cheshire County, this year, despite sustaining a fairly gruesome injury during a cross country in 2015. Sarah took 1st place in all

8 road races in the league and won all the Seaside runs this year. Overall, a great year for Sarah and a very worthy winner.

13. Discussion item (Ian Chalmers):

Ian noted that he joined Pensby Runners 17 years ago, and that the quality of the Tuesday runs has much improved in recent years. On Tuesdays, we now have Nigel's training session, Gordon's faster continuous session and that the remainder of runners, who are often older, injured, less competitive etc. tend to run the same routes, which are getting a little stale. Ian posed a question to the members: would the members like to have the option of an additional training session on a Tuesday evening, of a lesser intensity to the two sessions currently on offer, and if so, what sort of session would the members prefer?

Ceri and Jo agree with Ian and would like a lower intensity, non-stop run.

Gordon suggests that he leads the session one week, whilst Rob Beech does the next. Mark Roberts would also be happy to run an intermediate group.

Nigel would like run leaders to have LIRF training from an insurance and credibility / best practice standpoint.

Jayne Price suggested that the Secretary investigate the legality/insurance implications of having runs led by non-LIRF trained members. In the interim, Rob and Gordon will take charge of the alternative session.

14. Super Cup presentation

2015 saw the first year of the Pensby Supercup which endeavours to identify the Victor Omnium – the supreme champion – of Pensby Runners throughout the year. There are 12 races spread throughout the year which consist of Fell, Cross Country, Club, Road, Seaside and Multi-terrain. Competitors can take part in as many or as few Super cup races as they wish but they must undertake and finish at least one race in each category which means a minimum of 6 races.

As well as being able to name the supreme male and female runner across all disciplines within the club the Supercup also allows people to try out other disciplines. For ardent road runners to try some fell or cross country and vice versa. Certainly I haven't raced as many tarmac miles for many years as I have in 2015.

Vest wearing controversies aside, the Supercup has been well engaged with and 81 members took part in a Supercup race during 2015 (53 men and 28 ladies) although some did not know they were competing in a Supercup at the time.

While the men's Victor Omnium came down to the wire and could still have been in balance right up until the final race the ladies was assured from quite early on.

Supercup 2016 kicks off again tomorrow at the Northern Cross Country Championships in Blackburn and I'm sure Gordon Scholefield would find anybody who wants to run a place. But, the Victor Omnium Masculum 2015 goes to Simon Rogers and Victor Omnium Feminum goes to Sarah Roberts.

Roy Fisher suggested starting the AGM at 8pm next year, to allow people to get home at a decent time. All agreed.

The meeting was closed at 22:04.

