



SENIOR NEWSLETTER – March/April 2020

Hi members, thought we would throw a quick newsletter together with some reports we have from the pre-lockdown races, Heather's from Inverness and Carolyn's from the D33. Also an update on the world of virtual racing, which is actually a lot of fun and really keeping everyone connected. We won't dwell too much on all of the cancellations you know about them, just think Heb 3 2021 is going to be some ceilidh! Happy virtual racing.

Virtual racing

Virtual races are nothing new but most of us probably hadn't taken part in one until recently, we are now getting really familiar with how they work. There are so many at the moment, 1 mile, 3k, 15 mins, relays, all sorts of new and interesting distances we wouldn't normally or be able to run.

So far we have had 3 virtual races, you can see the results here <https://srac.org.uk/results/>, and we plan to do a lot more. We are arranging them at short notice so keep an eye on the club social media pages and we will try and email members too. Last weekend we had a 5km or 3km challenge including age graded results. Young Jonny P coming out on top with 82.88%, fellow youngster Alastair Dunlop had an incredible comeback 5k and was third with 80.96%.

This weekend there is a Wacky Race 1 mile TT challenge. Pick the most downhill, fast, wind assisted mile close to your home and let rip!! Then send a link to your Strava, Garmin Connect or a photo of your watch to wackyrunners@gmail.com, along with your age.

Scottish Athletics have been also been running a few National races, they are free for SA members and a small fee if you are not, keep an eye here: [Scottish Athletics Virtual Events](#)

By the way if you're new to Strava there is a SRAC group <https://www.strava.com/clubs/105456> where you can find some fellow members to follow.

Heather's Inverness Half Marathon report – 8th March

I accidentally fell in love with running when I was pregnant with my second child River because it was the only thing that would stop my all-day-sickness. Hence doing my first half marathon at six and a half months pregnant.

After the support from local runners after Stornoway half and because someone said, "If you can run a half in that time pregnant, imagine what you could do when you aren't pregnant!" I became curious to find out and decided to join the club. It's has become a huge part of my self-care since.

Earlier this month I ran the Inverness half. It was only my second race and my first one off the island. I was going to keep it a secret actually, just to take the pressure off myself a bit, but when I got on the ferry half of the island were there and I forgot, you can't keep anything a secret here.

For some reason, I find it easier to run for other people. I run my races with a person in mind for each mile. Seen as the Inverness half fell on International Women's Day, for each mile of this race, I brought into my mind and heart who I was running for in that mile. (And I took note on my slow miles that I wouldn't run for that person again!)

Before the race began, I noticed a row of red and gathered with the group for a team photo. It was actually so nice to see a bunch of our islanders there at the start line and feel into the collective energy of running for the club. The encouragement is so genuine.

Before the race began I was warming up and clocked the woman who was going to win it. You could tell she was going to win it. She had clearly decided that in her mind. I could see she was totally in her zone. Her form even in her warm-up was impeccable. I remember feeling deeply inspired by her focus.

I also never expected my dad to show up in Inverness to watch me; he lives in Livingston and doesn't keep well but he turned up anyway (with vegan fuel that would last weeks). The sweetest part of the race for me was that when I started to run, I looked to my left to find my dad - not a runner - jogging along the side with me! I felt like I was 5 years old again, him encouraging me as I went (and me worrying that he'd end up in hospital!)

The weather was perfect for the race but I found the route itself less flat than people had made out. The crowds that gathered on the streets were wonderful though. People kept shouting my name which was really encouraging and it was the first time I had a club vest on which felt really important to me. I particularly enjoyed the people who were out with instruments and the same group of women at the start and then again near the finish who had become progressively merrier in their cheering!

The race was busy. I am not used to so many people racing and I found it quite strange to have to move past people. We are so lucky on the island that the numbers allow for spacious running. I



remember being on a hill during the race wondering why it was feeling so hard and I looked at my watch and I was running so slow for me, just cruising behind other people.

It was good to get the experience of a bigger race though and it was great to do it as part of the club. Many of you reading this will know that I didn't feel my form was good, but that means there's room for improvement and it was good enough for now. The last mile was tough. I felt like the track was looping round itself but I finished strong and I finished smiling.

I got told recently that every photo someone saw of me during that race, I am smiling, so it can't have been too bad!

At the end, my dad was there again, bless him. He was trying hard to shout over the 2,000+ people to make sure I heard him. My energy was still high and it was great to finish and be welcomed by some of the members of the club who again were so encouraging and genuinely proud.

My four and a half year old Noah was disappointed that I didn't win the race like he did on his nursery sports day.

The best part? I felt great after the race. After my last race (the year before) I was in agony and even a bit ill after pushing my body so hard. This time, I was out running again after a day of recovery. That was a huge signal to me that I could have pushed much harder and also that my progress through training consistently and with effort, has really been paying off.

It was so great to see other people there too, some smashing their PB's, others just enjoying themselves and I am forever inspired by those who couldn't care less about the time and just running for the sake of running! I love that about the club, there is such a variety of reasons why people run and each are as welcomed and supported as the other.

The banter-bus home was a joy too! I missed out on the banter in the back because I was having such a great heart-to-heart with the driver, who was a real gem. The ferry home was spent learning new card games (and learning we have some really competitive card players), sharing cakes and coffees with other club members and getting some tips from the speedy ones.

It was such a joy to be part of it and I really felt so honoured to be running for this club. The blessing of being from this island is the sense of community that comes with it. I am so grateful right now that I am a runner and that despite the constrictions, we still have this expansive and beautiful natural surrounding that we can make the most of. So keep well and keep running!

SRAC results (all those with SRAC against their name in the results, apologies if any club members are missed from this!):

Murdo	MACKENZIE	01:19:45
Howard	MACIVER	01:23:03
Jonathon	PRITCHARD	01:24:21
John	MACASKILL	01:28:36
Heather	BAILLIE	01:36:15
Brian	LEWIS	01:42:53
Sarah	MACLEOD	01:47:22
Anna	FLETT	01:59:41
Wendy	LEWIS	02:00:44
Amy	CUNNINGHAM	02:04:05
Margaret	MACLEOD	02:09:39
Corinne	MACLEAN	02:11:04

Carolyn's D33 report – 14th March

SRAC ultra-plodder, Carolyn completed the D33 ultramarathon in Aberdeen, as part of her ongoing prep for the Skye Trail Race, in 6 hours 20. This year's event was under new management and a surprise extra half mile was added so that finishers came round the top field (rather than just shooting down the hill) = definitely "Type II fun"! This time equated to 36/55 females and 16/26 in the cailleach age category. Lorna Thomson of Ness Runners also completed admirably in 6.38, despite having a head-cold, a dodgy knee and knowing that her target race The Highland Fling, had already been cancelled due to Covid19 concerns.

Wacky Race 2019/20 Champions Crowned!

As with everything else in the running world Wacky Race 6, the final race in the series, was cancelled. But the good news is we were able to crown some worthy champions based on the results after race 5!

Huge kudos and virtual round of applause to Sandra Kennedy who is the 2019/20 Champion! Pictured below receiving her trophy and the Hallowed Wacky Race shield from Scott Engineer Ear (who maintained the recommended safe distance, ps. photo taken prior to lockdown) Second place goes to Richard Galloway and third place to Marina Sinclair! They all received one of Murdo A's class handmade wacky trophies.

Massive well done to you all, reward for fantastic running and consistent improvement throughout the series! Kudos to coach Louise too. Sandra's win also makes it three in a row for the ladies joining Adrienne and Laura in the Wacky Hall of Fame.

Also special mention for Sandra, Richard, Ian Ferris, Valerie Hamilton, Scott Engine Ear and Gordon Kennedy for completing all 5 races. And thanks to every single one of you, 75 in total, that Wacky Raced this year.

[Click here for the final standings](#)



Results round-up

- Sandra Kennedy had a brilliant results in the Benbecula 10k on 14th March running 56.46.

Other news

- Pentland races, as in the email sent all entrants, the races have been postponed indefinitely. Refund is available to anyone who would like it now but we hope to try and hold the race before the end of the year, if rules allow. Would be a great comeback race!
- Stornoway Half Marathon, an update should be out soon re deferral/refund.

Virtual Races coming up

08-11 May	Virtual Wacky Mile TT	Send your mile time and age to: wackyrunners@gmail.com
08-11 May	Scottish Athletics Mile TT	https://scottishathletics.sportserve.net/pages/event/athleticsbookingdetails.aspx?id=10835
01-06 June	Virtual Leanne Fund 5k & 10k	www.entrycentral.com/TLFvirtual5K10K

And finally....

We received a message from friends of the Club Robert and Caroline from Alchester Running Club who were up running the Half and Heb 3 last year:

Meet "STORNOWAY" our new addition to the menagerie

Named after your running club !!!

A fine Indian Runner Duck

Hope we can all get back to some near normality in the not too distant future

Stay safe

Robert Kerr Caroline Kerr



Happy virtual running!

SRAC Senior Sub Committee

(If you have any news to add or know of any island virtual races please email newsletter@srac.org.uk)