**Road/Trail runners report February 2022**
After a covid interrupted 2020, fortunately 2021-22 saw the resumption of regular training and a gradual return to competitive racing.
Given the success of the 10am training slots, we have continued with these sessions “post covid” and they continue to prove popular, especially in the wetter and darker days of winter. Attendances at training have reverted more or less to pre covid levels and it’s very pleasing to see so many faces back again at our sessions. Interest from new members has also started to rise as we welcome additional athletes to our group.

Sessions only happen with the support and cooperation of the coaches, so thanks must go to Tim Fowler, Don Powell, Andy Cullen, Andy Goddard, Ray Gartland, Jenny Froud, Terry Wegg and Michael Hickey.

On Tuesday evenings we have progressed with an 18 week schedule for those running marathons with London last October and Manchester in April being target races. Thursday sessions will continue to be one merged session so that everyone trains together at least once a week. The past year has also seen the return of the club’s handicap which has moved to a Sunday morning, in daylight, through the winter using the more popular Cliddesden route.

Sessions vary between road and trail, but all details are available on the club’s website (Road / XC Page). Many of our members started as their children attended the junior sessions, so if any newer parents fall into this category and are thinking about getting back into running, feel free to come along and join in!

We also welcomed back the annual Club Championships after the 2019-20 season was cancelled by covid. These consist of up to 16 races with the best 8 races counting towards an overall score. The main awards are complimented by the age graded equivalent which tries to equalise allowing for age (and gender). Congratulations then to our outright winners: Tony Parker in the men’s competition, and Tracy Jones in the ladies category. Mike Hill, Mark Slaney and Marc Soane slugged it out for a three way tie for second in the men’s event with Cat Coveney and Jane Bradbury successful in the women’s event.

In the age graded, Russell Burton regained his title with Mark Slaney and Don Powell joining him on the podium. In the Ladies it was the same 1-2-3 with Tracy Jones ahead of Cat Coveney and Jane Bradbury.

With an interrupted season of racing, we decided not to award Runner of the Year or Most Improved. These will return for 2021-22.

Over Cross Country BMH had another successful year in the Southern Cross Country League. With one race still to take place in March, the club have won all races to date (one tied) so look set to retain the trophy for another year.

Staying with Cross Country, many of the road/trail group compete in the Hampshire cross country league which take place on Saturday afternoons.
The Senior Men finished 3rd this winter behind AFD & Southampton with the Senior Ladies 2nd. In the veteran category, our men achieved second place but regretfully we didn’t have enough ladies compete to get an overall position in the veteran women’s competition.

At the county XC Championships in Botley, there was success for our athletes in the age categories. Alex Hamilton took first place in the V45 age group, with Mark Slaney successful in the MV60 group.

Under the guidance of race director, Tim Fowler, the club held a real, “covid safe” Hampshire Hoppit half and full marathon in June. As in previous years, over 100 of the club’s membership were on hand to run, support or marshal at the event. The 2022 event takes place on June 12th and entries are now open. If you wish to help in any way for this event, then Tim or myself would be delighted to hear from you.

Wishing all our athletes a successful and injury free 2022

Terry Wegg
22/02/22