**HHH Presidents Report 2020**

The year got off to its usual start: Cross-Country Championships, Final X/C league matches, last rounds of the Sports-Hall League meetings, the early winter season road races and Half Marathons. All was suitably progressing towards a vibrant summer of racing as we met for our AGM on the 6th March last year. Well just a little echo of some new virus in China and Italy.

What little did we know. Grounded, confined to barracks...call it what you will…progressively between 16th and 23rd March we were locked down. Exercise – yes, but not much contact and certainly no more racing/team events. We learned about Zoom. After a month or so of this lonely diet, one of our newer members, Chris Faulkner, gave us a prod about considering some kind of “virtual handicap race”. And so after some thought we launched a virtual race series for members using (mostly) – predefined routes using GPS and Strava’s segment leader functionality. The ideas we had, grew and grew; with results cut from every angle – speed, age bands, Age grading…against target…You could only win the latter once.

As time progressed we introduced some team based competition – firstly a 6 leg version of the SDWR and then one based around our summer Blackcap handicap run. We repeated a version of the latter in December when we honoured Chris Smith by joining with over 170 runners from ourselves, BHR, Lewes and Phoenix. Our expertise had filtered North and in August we ran a challenge against Bridlington road runners: 5k, 1mile and a lot of book-cooking led to an honourable tied result. Our Juniors wanted in on the activity so we ran a couple of summer holiday events for them too.

It’s quite a busy programme when you look back at it

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| **VR #** | **Window** | **Activity** |
|  | 5 May | Quiznight |
| 1 | 8-10 May | 5k |
| 2 | 22-25 May | 10k |
| 3 | 5-7 June | 5k |
| 4 | 20/21 June | 6 Leg SDWR |
| 5 | 3-5 July | Blackcap 5m + Team event |
|  | 20-26 July | Junior 2k |
| 6 | 24-26 July | 5k & Bridlington RR Challenge |
| 7 | 7-9 Aug | 10k |
|  | 21-31 Aug | Junior AG Challenge |
| 8 | 23-29 Nov | 5k |
|  | 24 Nov | Quiznight 2 |
| 9 | 5-13 Dec | Blackcap 5m Chris Smith team Challenge (with BHR, Lewes, Phoenix) |
| 10 | 1-10 Jan | Lindfield 5m (incl EA RR) |
| 11 | 18-21 Feb | 10k |
| 12 | 25-28 Mar | 10m |
| 13 | 22-25 Apr | HM |

“Just racing” was only part of the story. We also wanted to keep a certain “club spirit” going at the same time and communication/Social Media was integral to that: Strava Kudos and Comments, Beetroot Chat on Whatsapp and regular and “interesting” reporting on the Website News. Rather than rather staid AW style reporting we tried to keep a current of humour running with a variety of “guest” journalists giving commentary. Many thanks to hacks young & old, sober or sotted, identified or mysterious who wrote with wit and diligence.

Also **Many Thanks** to the following members who contributed in various ways to the whole “non-conventional” programme in 2020 with Route planning, Route piloting, writing up instructions and safety reviews, managing entries and teams, processing results, making commentary: Marion, Martin, Andy Hind, Ben & Hannah Gibson, Ian Dumbrell, Chris Faulkner, Rob Watts, John Rix, Linda Tullett.

I haven’t mentioned our coaches, group leaders and their tremendous response to working with members in these “interesting” times, only because others have said more about that already. 2020 will go down as one of our more unusual years. However, with the spirit and creativity that exists inside the club it’s clear that it is in good hands.

Mark

(aka El Presidente, Harvey’s Mark, Lately A Runner)