

### The Human need to explore

**When I was a Primary School teacher**, I knew that I had the power to crush dreams. Ask most 7- or 8-year-old boys, what their favourite sport is and they'll say football. They aspire to be Premier League players. And here's the crush – if you haven't been picked up by an academy by 7 or 8, it's unlikely that you'll make it as a professional player.

One of the things I learnt, both as an amateur sports person and as a teacher, is to set realistic goals – ones that you can achieve.

If you were to rank the greater achievement – watching a documentary about climbing Mount Everest or actually doing the climb, the answer is unquestionable. Thousands of people do the climb every year. Some do it even though they're blind or disabled, but regardless, it's a meaningful challenge. If all you can manage is Ben Nevis or even Beachy Head, it all comes down to your perception of a challenge and your ability.

In the late 1800's, an early pioneer of psychology, William Wundt proposed a concept of stimulus and response – in simple terms, how complicated, unknown or unexpected or intense the stimulus is versus how much we like it.

If something is too simple, obvious or easy, it'll be boring. If it's too hard, complex or unpredictable, it's also uninteresting. Try reading a book in Icelandic (unless you speak the language). Not only can you not understand the words, but many of the letters don't make sense to us. It's too much to bother with.

Whether in training or at an event, we're looking for the sweet spot – enough of a challenge to be achievable. And that'll be different for everyone. What for one person might be an obvious, easy, not particularly meaningful exploration, might be the experience of a lifetime for another.

So, at this time of year, when so many set themselves New Year's Resolutions, why not set yourself a new exploration – which needn't be sport related. It should represent a challenge, that you'll enjoy (achieving, if not the actual doing), one that you know, with effort, that you can achieve. Something that you can look back with pride. It may not take a year – in which case, you can

reassess your goal and seek to go better. And you're only challenging yourself and not comparing with anyone else. Happy New Year!

#### In this edition

- The Human Need to Explore
- Recent results
- Pinpoint your weak points
- Athletics Heroes
- Forthcoming Events

### Recent Results

**7<sup>th</sup> December:** ESAA National Cup Finals – Cross-Country, Rugby



Third fastest school in the country! 🏆 🏆

50<sup>th</sup> place overall

Very muddy



**7<sup>th</sup> December:** Victory 5, Portsmouth

The 79<sup>th</sup> running of the Victory 5 and the last time at the Lakeside complex in Cosham.

Whilst it wasn't cold, it was wet and a strong wind either hindered or assisted, depending upon which direction we ran.

95<sup>th</sup> Mike Webber (V55) 29:59

240<sup>th</sup> Darrell Waite (V40) 33:49

313<sup>th</sup> Craig Kennedy (V60) 35:54

518<sup>th</sup> Tom Evison (V60) 43:24 (course pb)

Next year, the race will move to a brand-new, faster, and more scenic route starting at the picturesque promenade, passing around the Mountbatten Centre, and finishing at Lakeside. The new course promises to build on the strong legacy, offering fresh excitement and stunning coastal views.

**NEWBURY ATHLETIC CLUB**

**NEWBURY 10K**

MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE  
MONDAY 25 MAY 2026

**RACE TIMES**

**0.9k @ 9.10am**  
FOR 5-10 YEARS, ENTRY FEE £5

**1.5k @ 9.20am**  
FOR UNDER 15s, ENTRY FEE £5

**10k @ 10.00am**  
ENTRY FEE  
£23 AFFILIATED  
£25 UNAFFILIATED

Register online 

All profits in support of 

**FINISHER'S MEDAL • T-SHIRT • PRIZES • CHIP-TIMED RESULTS**

LIMITED SPACES  
Secure your place!

Sponsored by







With thanks to






FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE RUN ROUTE:  
[newburyac.org.uk/road-running/newbury10k](http://newburyac.org.uk/road-running/newbury10k)

### Southern Athletic League Meetings 2026

Following the UKA Fixtures Meeting held recently the SAL have been allocated the following dates ...

1. Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May – TBC (Dorset host)
2. Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June - Aldershot
3. Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July - Andover
4. Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August - Aldershot

RESERVE DATE ... Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April

#### Division 3 West

Aldershot F&D (Relegated)

Team Kennet and Marlborough (Composite)

Team Dorset (Composite)

Andover

Havant

Chichester

**Andover Athletic Club**

**Charlton Track, West Portway,**

**Andover SP10 3LF**

[www.andoverathletics.co.uk](http://www.andoverathletics.co.uk)



# Newsletter

## January 2026

*"Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them - a desire, a dream, a vision."  
- Muhammad Ali*

### Safeguarding & Welfare

The club Welfare & Safeguard Officer is Katy Karas, can be contacted at [KatyKaras@yahoo.com](mailto:KatyKaras@yahoo.com)

### Instagram

Andover Athletic Club can now be found on Instagram



<https://www.instagram.com/andoverathleticsclub/#>

2026 Race Entries NOW OPEN



Entries for the **Goring 10k 2026**, taking place on **Sunday 8th March**, are **now open**. Now in its 26th year, the Goring 10k is widely regarded as one of the **most enjoyable 10k races in the UK** – set in the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside, with closed roads, chip timing, and a fantastic community atmosphere.

[Goring 10k Race | One of the Most Enjoyable 10k Races in the UK](#)

### Articles for submission.

The Andover Athletic Club newsletter is about the members and their exploits on track, field, road and cross-country.

Whether you compete in club, school, or Country colours, we'd love to hear how you get on. Articles are often less than 20 words long! Forward your story, ideally with a picture, to [aacchairman@yahoo.com](mailto:aacchairman@yahoo.com)

THRUXTON 10K SERIES 2026  
**THRUXTON 10K SERIES**  
THRUXTON MOTOR CIRCUIT  
19 MAY, 23 JUNE, 21 JULY 2026



**Andover Athletic Club**  
Charlton Track, West Portway,  
Andover SP10 3LF  
[www.andoverathletics.co.uk](http://www.andoverathletics.co.uk)



# Newsletter

## January 2026

### Hampshire Cross Country League

#### Dates for 2025-26

#### Timetable

- 11:30 Under 11 Girls, approx. 2.1k (x1 ABC)  
11:45 Under 11 Boys, approx. 2.1k (x1 ABC)  
12:00 Under 13 Girls, approx. 3km  
(x1 A,B, black, C)  
12:15 Under 13 Boys, approx. 3km  
(x1 A,B, black, C)  
12:30 Under 15 Girls, approx. 4km (x2 ABC)  
12:50 Under 15 Boys, approx. 4km (x2 ABC)  
13:05 Under 17 Women, approx. 4km  
(x2 ABC)  
13:35 Senior, U20 & Vet Women, approx. 6km  
(x3 ABC)  
14:10 Under 17 Men, approx. 6km (x3 ABC)  
14:30 Senior, U20 & Vet Men, approx. 10km  
(x4 ABC)

10th January 2026 –  
7th February 2026 – Reading



White Horse Half  
Marathon  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Entries are now open for the 2026 White Horse Half Marathon. Usual course - same PB potential, same friendly marshals!

The race is at 9:30 on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026, with race HQ at St John's Primary School, Wantage.

Entries are now open, [Register Here!](#)  
Find out more: [White Horse Half Marathon](#)

### Junior Cross-Country

The dates and venues of the 4 matches have now been confirmed

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Greenfield School  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026 Wellesley Woods  
For further details, please speak to an Under-11's coach.

### Age group changes

England Athletics are keen to collaborate with clubs ahead of the age group changes coming into effect on **1 April 2026**.

**The upcoming indoor track and field season and this cross-country season will operate under the current rules and age groups.** However, competition providers may request to pilot the new age groups as part of the licensing process.

The EA Age Group changes website has plenty of useful information for clubs such as:

[An age group calculator based on date of birth](#)

Details on new hurdle heights and field implements for each new age group.

[Age Group changes - England Athletics](#)

[Top tips for athletes and parents to prepare for age group changes - England Athletics](#)

**Andover Athletic Club**  
Charlton Track, West Portway,  
Andover SP10 3LF  
[www.andoverathletics.co.uk](http://www.andoverathletics.co.uk)

### Pinpoint your weak points.

Knee or hip pain? These common muscle weaknesses are often the culprit – here's how to fix them.

One of the challenging parts of athletics is dealing with aches, pains, and injuries. There are several reasons the sport-related ailments crop up. But one of the most common culprits is muscle weakness. Weakness in one area forces another area to pick up the slack. This imbalance may not cause issues right away – depending on the extent of the weakness and how often you train or compete; it may not create problems for weeks, months or even years. But eventually, the area that's putting in overtime will reach its breaking point. And it'll raise the alarm to your body in the form of pain or injury. Here are five common muscle weaknesses that contribute to injuries, aches, and pains in athletes, along with the best exercises to help correct them.

**Glute weakness.** Glutes are one of the main muscle groups that power running strides; they also help control how your foot lands. When they lack strength, areas below these muscles – especially knees and ankles – can take on extra force, leading to issues including runner's knee, IT band syndrome, plantar fasciitis, and Achilles tendonitis. **Remedy exercise:** Incorporate glute bridges, in particular single-leg glute bridge, which mimics the running motion. Start with body weight alone.

**Hamstring weakness:** Hamstrings help bend the knee as you bring your leg forward. Weak hamstrings result in poor knee bend and other muscles have to compensate. This can lead to hip flexor tendonitis and shin splints.

**Remedy exercise:** Single-leg Romanian deadlift. Again, start without weights.

**Core weakness:** The core is fundamental to all forms of sport or physical activity, stabilising the spine and pelvis. A weak core leads to the diaphragm taking on more of the workload, and thus an impact on breathing. **Remedy exercises:** Perform the bird dog, sand lizard, and donkey kick. All can be performed easily on the floor. You can also include planks in various forms.

**Calf weakness:** The calves push us forward. Weak calves lead to shins and quads picking up the slack, which can lead to shin splints and runner's knee. The calves also function as cushions when we land. If they're weak, the energy gets transferred to the plantar fascia. **Remedy exercise:** Single-leg calf raises work the whole calf complex. Results are best achieved with regular (try daily) repetition.

**Upper back weakness:** Ideally you should have an upright posture. A weak upper back can lead to a forward lean. This can lead to restricted breathing, and triggers pain in the neck, shoulder, and upper back. A strong upper back will help with arm swing, keeping the arms back / forward, rather than across the body. **Remedy exercise:** try including a bent over row, increasing to include dumbbells. Keep the core tight, elbows tight to the body.

As with any exercise, consult your coach, physiotherapist, or doctor before starting any new routine of exercises.

### Athletics Heroes

#### John Le Masurier

John Le Masurier was quite unlike his mentor, the dynamic and extrovert Geoff Dyson. John Le Mas (as he was always affectionately known) had a mild, laid-back approach to coaching. In 1961 he and Denis Watts became joint AAA Principal National Coaches and both served until their retirement in 1978. John Le Mas was one of the most versatile of coaches, helping sprinters, middle distance and cross country runners, hurdlers, jumpers, throwers and all-rounders to fulfil their potential. His crowning glory was Mary Rand, who won the long jump with a world record 6.76m, silver in the pentathlon and bronze in the 4x100m at the 1964 Olympics of 1964. But he coached British record setters across a spectrum of events.

#### Denis Watts

Together with John Le Masurier, Denis Watts served as Principal National Coach, retiring in 1978 after 30 years of distinguished service with the AAA and BAAB. He was a British international at long jump and triple jump, and in 1946 became the first man ever to complete a AAA Championships double in those events. He was appointed by the AAA as one of Britain's first professional coaches in 1948. One of his great successes was Dorothy Hyman who won Olympic silver (100m) and bronze (200m) as well as European and Commonwealth titles. His ultimate triumph was with Ann Packer who he guided from being a 200m runner to world record breaking Olympic champion at 800m.



### Athletics Heroes

#### Mary Rand

Mary Rand excelled as a sprinter, hurdler, high jumper and pentathlete, triple jumped decades before it became a standard event for women, and even competed in a mile walk race! Her crowning glory, though, was the long jump and in Tokyo in 1964 she set a world record of 6.76m in becoming the first British female athlete to win an Olympic gold medal.

She first attracted attention while at Millfield School and when only 17, she set an English record in her first pentathlon. At the time of the 1960 Olympics, she was being regarded as a possible long jump winner and she led the qualifiers with a British record of 6.33m ... only to flop in the final, placing ninth. After fouling her first two jumps she registered only 6.01m. It was a shattering disappointment, redeemed only slightly by an unexpected 4th place in the 80m hurdles.

She married Olympic sculler Sidney Rand in 1961 and only four months after the birth of their daughter she took the long jump bronze medal at the 1962 European Championships. In 1963 she helped set a world record in the 4x110 yards' relay and posted British records in the 80m hurdles, long jump and pentathlon. At the Games she collected a complete set of medals, for after the long jump triumph she placed second in the pentathlon – finishing ahead of Soviet winner Irina Press in three of the five events but losing too many points in the shot – and helped Britain place third in the sprint relay.

*Courtesy of the [athleticsmuseum.org.uk](http://athleticsmuseum.org.uk)*

### Forthcoming Events

**A list of future Track & Field, Road Race, Cross-Country and Open Events.** You are encouraged to wear your club vest wherever you compete and let us know your results, ideally with a photograph.

#### 2026

**3<sup>rd</sup> January:** Hampshire County Cross-Country Championships, Botley

**10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> January:** SEAA Indoor U13/U15/U17 Track & Field Championships [Info](#), Lee Valley

**11<sup>th</sup> January:** Stubbington 10k

**17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> January:** London Indoor Games U20/Senior [Info](#), Lee Valley

**18<sup>th</sup> January:** Romsey 5

**24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> January:** London Indoor Games Age Groups [Info](#), Lee Valley

**31<sup>st</sup> Jan. – 1<sup>st</sup> Feb.:** SEAA Indoor U20/Senior Track & Field Championships [Info](#), Lee Valley

**1<sup>st</sup> February:** Ryde 10 (HRRL6)

**1<sup>st</sup> February:** Windsor, Slough, Eton & Hounslow Winter Indoor Open Graded Series [Info](#)

**7<sup>th</sup> February:** Hampshire Cross Country League, Reading

**14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> February:** England Athletics South Winter Long Throws Championships [Info](#), Lee Valley

**15<sup>th</sup> February:** Junior Cross-Country, Greenfield School

**15<sup>th</sup> February:** Bramley 10/20

**22<sup>nd</sup> February:** Winchester 10k

**28<sup>th</sup> February:** Basingstoke Winter Throws Series

**8<sup>th</sup> March:** Solent Half (HRRL7)

**14<sup>th</sup> March:** Basingstoke Throws Winter Series

**15<sup>th</sup> March:** Junior Cross-Country, Wellesley Wood

### Forthcoming Events

**22<sup>nd</sup> March:** Eastleigh 10k

**29<sup>th</sup> March:** Combe Gibbet to Overton 16 mile

**29<sup>th</sup> March:** Fleet Half Marathon

**12<sup>th</sup> April:** Salisbury 10 (HRRL8)

**10<sup>th</sup> May –** Alton 10 (HRRL9)

**16<sup>th</sup> May:** SAL Match 1 Dorset

**17<sup>th</sup> May –** Netley 10k (HRRL10)

**19<sup>th</sup> May:** Thruxton 10k Series, Race 1

**25<sup>th</sup> May:** Newbury 10k

**6<sup>th</sup> June:** Endure Reading

**21<sup>st</sup> June:** Alresford 10k (HRRL11)

**21<sup>st</sup> June:** SAL Match 2, Aldershot

**23<sup>rd</sup> June:** Thruxton 10k Series, Race 2

**5<sup>th</sup> July:** Lordshill 10k (HRRL12)

**19<sup>th</sup> July:** SAL Match 3, Andover

**21<sup>st</sup> July:** Thruxton 10k Series, Race 3

**8<sup>th</sup> August:** SAL Match 4, Aldershot

**30<sup>th</sup> August:** Totton 10k (HRRL1) (tbc)

**6<sup>th</sup> September:** Overton 5 mile (HRRL2) (tbc)

**25<sup>th</sup> October:** New Forest 10 mile (HRRL3) (tbc)

**15<sup>th</sup> November:** Gosport Half (HRRL4) (tbc)

**6<sup>th</sup> December:** Victory 5 (HRRL5) (tbc)

#### International / Elite Events

**2<sup>nd</sup> November:** New York Marathon

**7<sup>th</sup> December:** Valencia Marathon

[www.fetcheveryone.com](http://www.fetcheveryone.com)    [runabc.co.uk](http://runabc.co.uk)  
[www.thepowerof10.info/fixtures](http://www.thepowerof10.info/fixtures)