

**Overton
Harriers**



**&
Athletic Club**

**Overton
Harriers**



**&
Athletic Club**

September 2012 Issue 421

Visit us on our Web Site at www.overtonharriers.org.uk
Email your reports to me at PiersPuntan@overtonharriers.org.uk
or Franny at richard.francis@uk.delarue.com
or Frannyohac@gmail.co.uk

You can view or print this and previous editions from our website

October 7 th	Basingstoke ½ Marathon Clarendon Marathon
13 th	HANTS XC LEAGUE: FARLEY MOUNT
14 th	SOLENT ½ MARATHON
21 st	Denmead 10k Minstead Stinger 15k
25 th	FOXDOWN HANDICAP
28 th	Great South Run Fleet 10k

Also remember the Park Run 5k's at the War Memorial Park, Basingstoke, Greenham Common, Newbury and Charlton Sports Ground, Andover at 9:00 Saturday

FRANNY'S BITS

It's been a busy month with the Overton 5 kicking off the new Road Race League, a great turnout of runners put us top of every division and things are still looking good after the second league fixture at the Victory 5. This bodes well for the rest of the season so please support the club by entering as many races as possible; we need 4 men or 3 women for a scoring team.

The Overton race was a great success as was the Summer Party held on the same evening, Many thanks to everyone who assisted in both the race & the party.....organisers, marshals, officials, caterers etc., etc. When we hold an event it's always a good one.

Thanks also the Emma & Martin for their articles this month, if anyone would like to contribute any items just send them to the E Mails addresses at the top of the page.

The Cross Country season will soon be upon us; Farley Mount is the first fixture (details on notice board) and it's an ideal baptism for the XC novice (not too muddy). Runners of all abilities take part in these races & if you are interested just sign a list on the board.

Those of you who have been unlucky in the London Marathon ballot and wish to be considered in the club draw for places can they please pass me the rejection slips as soon as possible. The club places have to be allocated earlier this year; we can't wait until the Christmas Party due to changes in the marathon timetable.

Lastly the Christmas Meal is again being organised by John Hoare this year, details are on the back page.

NEWBURY PARKRUN **(Including Club 5k Championship)**

A total of 16 Harriers took part in a Newbury Parkrun during August and therefore staked a claim for the medals on offer for the first Club Championship of the year.



James took the men’s title with a cracking time of 16m 35sec as he won the first race of the month. Silver went to Sean’s 17m 25sec in the final race with Lee taken bronze with 17m 53sec in the same race. Special mention goes to Robin who ran both the first & last races clocking times only a second apart.

The ladies title went to Cath who clocked 20m 17sec in race one, Kerri ran 22m 23sec in the same race to take silver and was only marginally slower in race 4. The race for bronze was decided by a very close finish in race 4 where Claire Boyle managed to break away from Lucy in the finishing straight to record 23m 17sec.

	4 th August	11 th August	18 th August	25 th August	Best Time
J. Knight	16:35 1 st				16:35
S. Holmes				17:25 2 nd	17:25
L. Tolhurst				17:53 5 th	17:53
R. Oakley	18:04 3 rd			18:05 6 th	18:04
N. Martin				18:22 7 th	18:22
R. Clifford			18:45 7 th		18:45
C. Wheeler	20:17 19 th				20:17
P. Puntan		20:27 17 th			20:27
R. Wakefield		20:57 21 st			20:57
S. Edwards	21:53 30 th				21:53
D. Titcomb			22:14 33 rd		22:14
K. Barton	22:23 34 th			22:39 40 th	22:23
R. Francis	24:18 62 nd	23:04 50 th			23:04
C. Boyle		23:17 54 th			23:17
L. Pearson		23:24 57 th			23:24
C. Parsons	25:35 77 th				25:35



OVERTON 5**1st September**

Due to a possible variety of reasons, the entry for our annual race was lower than normal although the 106 entries taken on the day certainly boosted the field; however there was certainly no shortage of local talent with 24 Harriers on show. The weather was quite warm and quite a few struggled in the heat but this didn't deter James who had a storming run to lead home the club interest in a fine 8th place. Sean has put in some very consistent Thursday sessions recently and his good form was confirmed by a strong run in 12th. First surprise of the day was Sam's great effort and, hopefully, we will see a lot more of him this winter. Lee chased him all of the way to the line and must have been quite pleased with his run that anchored the Men's A Team to the top of the Hants Road Race League.

Neil Martin proved that his Race the Train performance was not a one off as he took advantage of his marathon training to beat 30 minutes and lead home the B team. Robin was only just outside the 30 mark with Neil Glendon and Richard both having great runs to put the B team top of their division. Keith seemed to have recovered from all his Olympic watching and just made the top 50 while Cath must have been delighted with her run finishing in a superb 4th place overall and 1st in her age group. Hannah was second counter for the ladies ahead of Stuart who ran well considering his injury problems. Kerri put in a solid captain's performance to complete the ladies A team and yes.....they too top their division.

Second surprise of the day with that little blighter Tilbury having a cracking run in the heat, it's not often that he runs away from the young ladies of the club but perhaps his fine run was caused by surprise #3 which saw the completely unheralded appearance in a club vest of Paddy "Methuselah" Keenan. For those who have only been members for the past 10 years, Paddy is a bit of a legend amongst the older members of the club and it was great to see him in action again.

With 3 teams topping their divisions could the ladies B team make it a full house, there was little to separate the 3 scorers on the day with Lucy running a tactical victory over Claire Boyle to finish just outside 39 minutes. Claire was obviously not enjoying the heat in the closing stages but was only 10 seconds behind at the line. Kate is showing signs of a return to her pre stress fracture form and anchored the team for another table topping result.

Edmond transferred his track form to the road and narrowly missed a sub 40 clocking, Liz had her best race in sometime ahead of Monique while Steve was feeling under par and had a run that he would probably rather forget. Claire Parsons & Katie both seemed pleased with their runs and hopefully both of them will be racing more often in the coming months.

Harrier	Time	Position	Harrier	Time	Position
James Knight	27:38	8 th	Kerri Barton	36:58	155 th (12 th F)
Sean Holmes	28:21	12 th (1 st V40)	Eric Tilbury	37:21	164 th (2 nd V65)
Sam Westhead	29:10	21 st (3 rd V40)	Paddy Keenan	38:46	188 th (5 th V60)
Lee Tolhurst	29:21	23 rd	Lucy Pearson	39:03	190 th (14 th F)
Neil Martin	29:45	26 th (5 th V40)	Claire Boyle	39:13	193 rd (15 th F)
Robin Oakley	30:11	33 rd	Kate Groundsell	39:20	195 th (4 th V35)
Neil Glendon	30:37	42 nd (8 th V40)	Ed Simpson	40:20	217 th (1 st V75)
Richard Clifford	30:56	46 th	Liz Sandall-Ball	40:52	225 th (2 nd V60)
Keith Vallis	31:24	50 th (3 rd V45)	Monique Van Nueten	41:33	238 th (5 th V55)
Cath Wheeler	33:11	82 nd (1 st V50)	Steve Edwards	41:57	245 th (32 nd V40)
Hannah Oliver	34:05	99 th (5 th F)	Claire Parsons	43:02	259 th (21 st F)
Stuart Searle	35:09	118 th	Katy Rundle	43:43	264 th (10 th V45)

OVERTON 5 PHOTOS



TEST WAY RELAY

8th September

from Richard Francis

A warm, sunny day was probably not the best conditions for racing across the county but at least the recent mini heat wave had dried out most of the route with the noticeable exception of leg 7 where there was a very boggy section approaching Romsey.

Mixed “Elite” Team

The mixed team was hoping to improve on their second place last year and with the same runners on the opening 2 legs as last year they made a solid start. Lucy was competing in a Triathlon the following day but despite the heat she put everything into her run and was only a few seconds down on last year’s race. Kerri had a trouble free run compared to last year and was well inside her split and managed to move the team up several places before handing over to Stuart.

Stuart had run this leg for the A team last year but was returning from a long term injury this year, despite being a few minutes slower, he picked up another 2 places and the team were well ahead of the last years split. Liz took on the leg through Harewood Forest and her local knowledge meant no navigational problem as she made up another place and handed over to Monique with the team placed fourth out of the ladies / mixed teams.

Monique’s run was one of the highlights last year and despite being passed by a couple of male runners she did not let her concentration lapse and a strong finish saw her home a minute quicker than last year.

Things were looking good now and could only get better as the team was boosted by Jamie replacing the injured Martin and he quickly picked off a couple of runners & taking us up to third before handing over to Bliss who was also a late replacement for me. We had run the leg on the previous Monday and my main concern was that Mike couldn’t see the small course markers when running fast. Luckily he had no problems and after splashing his way through some muddy woodland he handed over in second place.



Piers had the glory leg which was also the longest, sadly Winchester had too big a gap for him to make up but everyone was delighted with our fine second place, and we kept the men’s team at bay.

Leg	Distance	Runner	Time	Cumulative Time	Position
1	7.1k	Lucy Pearson	38:40	38:40	8
2	8.5k	Kerri Barton	44:32	1:23:12	6
3	10.0k	Stuart Searle	43:21	2:06:33	4
4	7.8k	Liz Sandall Ball	42:07	2:48:40	3
5	7.5k	Monique Van Nueten	41:10	3:29:50	4
6	9.1k	Jamie Jones	36:53	4:06:43	3
7	9.1k	Mike Bliss	38:37	4:45:20	2
8	11.6k	Piers Puntan	51:51	5:37:11	2

Men’s Team

Southampton rolled out the big guns in an attempt to regain the trophy that we won last year and with everyone expecting Lee to be leading at the first changeover he let no one down by coming home well clear of the field. Robin seemed very nervous at the start, went off fast and increased the lead slightly by recording the 2nd fastest split on his leg. Sean was 2nd fastest on his leg as well and though Southampton closed by a couple of seconds they were still a minute and a half behind.



This all changed on the next leg and even though the Neil ran the third fastest leg; the Southampton guy ran an unbelievable leg that was over 2 minutes faster than anyone else to put them in the lead. Martin ran a storming leg for 3rd fastest split but Southampton were, by now, well clear. Team spirit was still high as Richard tackled the fast leg to Mottisfont with its enjoyable uphill finish.

The in-form Neil Martin again produced a fine run taking around 90 seconds out of the Southampton lead but the gap was too big for James to close especially as the Southampton anchor was only a second slower.

Second place on the day was a great result and the post-race celebration at the White Lion in Wherwell was very good.

Many thanks again to Paige who drove the bus and who coped with all the squabbling with great restraint and to John for taking on the club timekeeping stint on leg 3.

Leg	Distance	Runner	Time	Cumulative Time	Position
1	7.1k	Lee Tolhurst	27:33	27:33	1
2	8.5k	Robin Oakley	36:03	1:03:46	1
3	10.0k	Sean Holmes	36:42	1:43:28	1
4	7.8k	Neil Glendon	30:40	2:14:08	2
5	7.5k	Martin Groundsell	31:01	2:45:09	2
6	9.1k	Richard Clifford	35:55	3:21:04	2
7	9.1k	Neil Martin	37:12	3:58:16	2
8	11.6k	James Knight	42:43	4:40:59	2

HENLEY HALF IRONMAN

16th September

from Martin Groundsell

Quote of the Month

"Cone heads can't climb and they can't run"

On the way back from a frantic registration and bike racking on the Saturday, Stuart and I started to wonder what we had let ourselves in for.

We were thinking why hadn't we stuck to Olympic distance triathlons? We wondered if people doing the full Ironman thought, why didn't I stick to half Ironman events? Little did we know that strangely we were going to enjoy the pain the next day.

So at 5am we set off to ensure we could get to the event and check our bikes one last time before transition closed at 7am. As we drove to Henley the car became quieter and quieter as the nerves ramped up. As it just started to get light the first wave started at 06.30 and the nerves went up another gear. My wave was at 07.50 and it seemed to take for ever to come around.

Finally it was time to get into the Thames to warm up for the swim. The water temperature was 16 degrees which thankfully we are used to from weekly lake swims in Reading, but with the race nerves it still took my breath away.

The countdown started and I got ready for what I expected to be a five hour session in the hurt locker. The hooter went; I got a good start and managed to break clear of the madness. However due to the size of the field and quality of competitors I was soon in a pod of swimmers kicking and punching each other at around the 300 meter mark.



Luckily due to the lack of rain the current was mild and I managed to fight my way to the 950 meter turn point. Then with the current it was full gas time and I swam away from the pod I was in. After taking the racing line into the rowing channel on the way back and being shouted at by a safety canoe I managed to make up a few places and hit the exit pontoon.

As I exited I heard a voice shouting my name but due to being in my own world I didn't know what was going on, I soon realised it was Kate at the start of her endurance supporting session for me and Stuart. Transition was slower than usual as your kit is in a numbered bag rather than by your bike but I was soon on my bike and first target was a cone head on a time trial bike.

I managed to dispatch him but another came past me, I managed to talk myself out of giving chase and stuck to my pace. I then tried to have the first feed on the bike of a flapjack but that fell on the floor and was left behind.

We knew the 52 mile bike course was hilly so I had devised a detailed pace and plan, this then went out of the window on the first hill as I found the three cone heads that had overtaken me in the first 5 miles could not climb and so I dispatched with them in the 3 mile climb. The next thing I know I am saying to myself "Ride it like you stole it", from that moment it was about 45 miles of full on attack. Drafting was banned but due to a lack of marshals and a really busy bike course it was impossible not to so I made full use of it to pass people. On the first switch back I was hurtling down a hill to see Stuart taking people on the climb up, it was to be a good day for both of us.

After a lot of crazy riding and miles of downhill drafting at speeds up to 38 mph I hit the end of the first lap and Kate shouting me on got me through the lull I was hitting. Plus the encouragement to catch more cone heads made me do one last kick up the last climb. As I hit the top of the last climb I saw that I had 16 minutes to do the last 4 miles to hit my target time of 2hr 40 min. However it was downhill race time, I was in a small pack and the combined drafting of us meant that we flew and covered the 4 miles in 8 minutes and jumped off the bike in 2Hr 32min.

The run was where I went into the unknown, did my legs have a half marathon in them, was I going to end up walking? As I started I felt strong and thought, get through the first lap and then suck it up. The gels came thick and fast and I was flying, I was passing the cone heads who had rode away from me. One bloke who had tried to ride me off the road got a patronising slap on the back as I passed him. When I came to start the second lap, Kate shouted that Stuart was just ahead of me; at that point everything started to hurt. My answer was to take two gels at once and get high on caffeine. It worked for a while but then it was a case of gritting my teeth. At the turn point I saw Stuart and he looked strong so I knew he would not let me catch him - some encouragement to each other as we passed and then it was three miles to the end. I am not sure what happened in that three miles as all I did was try to block out the pain in my legs and blistered feet.

The finish came into sight and I tried to sprint down the red carpet but I don't expect that I changed pace at all. Kate was super excited, I asked her what my time was and she said "Too fast" and showed

me her watch, it was then I realised I needed food and water as I could not focus as all on her watch. I then walked into the recovery area to sit down, eat and drink. I noticed that the tent only had a few men in it and they all looked a lot more "Pro" than me the fastest fat man in Whitchurch. I waited until Stuart was in to check times and placing, due to my inability to make any sense and that I thought it was safest to be near Kate as she could assess how bad a state I was in.

Sometimes I wonder if it is sensible to push myself as hard as I did in the race, but when you see that you have come 23rd out of 621 people, finished with a 1Hr 28 half marathon and completed the course 24 minutes quicker than planned that you think yep it was.

Finally the big respect has to go to Stuart who completed the course in spite of his injury and doing sweet FA running training before the event. To make you laugh here is a picture of the state of me at the end.



From Stuart Searle

It was my ambition for 2012 to complete a half iron distance triathlon. I was planning to have done this earlier in the year, however, what I didn't plan for, was sciatica, which threw all my plans out the window. Fingers crossed, I'm now over the worst of my injury and should be having some treatment, so I can be back up to race speed in the near future. I entered Henley Half in June, still unsure whether I would finish, or even make it to the start, the entry fee alone sent a wave of pain through my body, as triathlon is not a cheap sport.

My training for Henley had gone well. I was swimming 3 times a week, cycling 2 or 3 times a week and running in between. I even threw in, what we call a "day of pain" all 3 events in one training day. My only concern was the running, having done just one 13 mile run since May, I wasn't sure how long, or if I could manage the half marathon to finish the race. However, one Sunday morning, I did an out and back recce of my Test Way Relay leg, which I made up to 13 miles, it took me almost 2 hours, but I ran (more like jogged) the whole way.

With the race on Sunday the 16th, Martin and I needed to go over to Henley on Saturday the 15th, to collect our race numbers, attend race briefing and rack our bikes. Easy enough, we left in plenty of time and aided by sat nav, should have been easy.... Slight problem, a 2 mile line of traffic, trying to get into Henley. We sat there, crawling for what seemed like hours. As we inched slowly towards town, we saw a man who looked like he'd just come from registration. We asked him what the holdup was and how far we had to go. He said it was only a mile, but registration closed at 3:00pm, it was by that time 3:10pm. Martin and I looked at each other, checked the race documents, had one of those "oh \$%*#" moments and decided there was no alternative, than to park on the side of the road and cycle down to registration. Fortunately, registration was still open and we got our numbers without any problems, racked our bikes and decided that we would use a different route on Sunday morning.

I had the usual nerve filled sleepless night, just lying there looking at the clock. I think my stomach had more butterflies in it, than my porridge and banana breakfast. But we made it to the start without any problems and were ready to go. Martin was in the first wave to start the half, he would go at 7:50, I was in the third wave and would start at 8:00. I didn't mind Martin starting before me; he's a much faster swimmer, so we wouldn't have been racing each other anyway. But, in some way it made it easier for me, not worrying about any competition between us; I could just concentrate on my own race.

At just after 7:55 on a cool and overcast morning, I entered the River Thames. At 8:00 the air horn sounded and I was off up the river. The usual mass of bodies surging forward, arms and legs all over the place, being punched and kicked. The only way I can best describe an open water swim in a triathlon, is like a rugby maul in water, all sporting conduct is out the window as you enter a free for all, survival of the fittest swim over 1.9km. My swim was slower than I expected, partly due to the mass of people at the start, and it wasn't until the return stretch that I managed to get into a rhythm and gain some time.

Out of the river and into Transition 1. Removing your wetsuit and putting on bike gear, has to be multi-tasking at its finest, as your arms and legs are all moving simultaneously in order to get you on your bike as quick as possible, it's not graceful, but it is efficient.



I sucked down an energy gel and was soon out on the 52 mile ride. The course was on closed roads, so we didn't have to worry about any cars. However, I have seen better surfaced roads, so the lumps, bumps and potholes were not appreciated. It did have a few climbs in it, but certainly nothing too challenging. I looked at my watch and decided I needed to be back into transition no later than noon, if I was to finish in under my 6 hour prediction, giving me 2 hours to run 13 miles.

I pushed quite hard on the ride, managing to overtake the expensive time trail bikes on the climbs. I was constantly looking at my watch calculating and recalculating my timing, telling myself to push on, go a little harder, not to let the MPH drop below 20. At around 11:40, I had finished the bike course and was in T2 and 20 minutes ahead of my schedule. We were rather spoiled at Henley, as the race marshals take your bike and rack it for you, which saves you a few valuable seconds.

I quickly changed from my bike gear, into my running shoes and was off on the 13.1 mile course, which followed the Thames. My energy levels were running low, so I took the opportunity to grab a gel and drink from one of the many feed stations on the course. I thought that due to injury and lack of run training, my time would be quite slow. However, as I reached the turnaround area on lap 1 (of 2 out and back laps) I realized that my time wasn't looking too bad. I finished the first lap in around 45 minutes. I looked at my watch, and realized, that if I kept the same pace, I could not only beat my 6 hour prediction, but could go sub 5:30.

As I started the second lap, a wave of fatigue came over me, but I was determined to beat 5:30. It was quite easy to break the run into sections, I simply told myself to complete one section (about a mile or so) then focus on the next section. I took advantage of the free gels and pushed on, ignoring the pain in my back, the stiffness and twinges in my legs, the end was in sight.

With one last push, I was over the line in 5:13:11, exhausted, feeling rather unwell (due to a cold), but very happy.

Harrier	Swim	T1	Cycle	T2	Run	Total Time	Position
Martin Groundsell	31:13	2:47	2:32:34	2:09	1:28:03	4:36:48	23 rd (6 th V30)
Stuart Searle	42:00	4:49	2:51:11	3:06	1:32:02	5:13:11	187 th

SOUTHERN ATHLETIC LEAGUE 2012

The 2012 season came to a close on 1st September. Due to the re-scheduling of the league as a result of the Olympics the final fixture clashed with our Overton 5 and, apart from Piers clambering over the steeplechase, we were unable to properly support the Andover team.

Unfortunately we suffered a narrow defeat and our fourth place on the day meant that we ended 5th in the league. We then entered a “paper” match against all the 2nd place teams in the four 2nd Divisions which condemned us to relegation. So next year we will be competing at a slightly lower level in Div 2 South. But the way new teams are joining the league we will be provided with plenty of tough opposition.

Final Result

1. Nene Valley Harriers	204	2. Enfield & Haringey	187
3. Worthing & District	172	4. Andover & Overton	165

Final League Table

1. Southampton	1199	20	9. Herts Phoenix	872.5	12
2. Chelmsford	1052	18	10. Enfield & Haringey	870.5	12
3. Walton	1002.5	17	11. Worthing & District	831	11
4. Harrow	922.5	14.5	12. Andover & Overton	861	10
5. Marshall Milton Keynes	902	14	13. City of Norwich	827.5	10
6. Nene Valley Harriers	889	14	14. Luton	758.5	9
7. Stevenage & N Herts	880	13	15. Ashford	819	8
8. Havering Mayesbrook	911.5	12.5	16. Peterborough	673	5

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

COMBE GIBBET 2013

The 39th Annual Combe Gibbet to Overton race will be held on Sunday 7th April.

HAMPSHIRE XC LEAGUE FIXTURES 2012/2013

13 th October	Farley Mount
10 th November	Goodwood
1 st December	Popham Airfield
12 th January	Bournemouth
9 th February	Salisbury

SOUTHERN ATHLETIC LEAGUE 2013

April 20th (May 4th as an alternate for host clubs involved in London Marathon admin)
May 18th
June 15th
July 13th
August 10th

Venues and opponents to follow later

VICTORY 5

15th September

from Piers Puntan

The second Road race League fixture of the year was down on the Solent. The Victory 5 Race has been going for many years with numerous famous Britain's having won it before going on to further glories. This year there were some Kenyans on the front so whilst the history of Victory 5 being a breeding ground for future champions the nationalities has changed.



There was a good turnout of Harriers on what was a pleasant but windy day and we scored highly in the HRRL again.

Harrier	Time	Position
James Knight	27:00	15 th
Sean Holmes	27:26	17 th (1 st V40)
Lee Tolhurst	28:22	27 th
Neil Martin	29:05	39 th (4 th V40)
Neil Glendon	29:14	43 rd (5 th V40)
Robin Oakley	29:35	54 th
Richard Clifford	30:46	87 th
Piers Puntan	32:20	122 nd (18 th V40)
Dave Titcomb	34:53	202 nd (23 rd V50)
Kerri Barton	34:46	29 th Lady
Steve Edwards	37:05	268 th (35 th V40)
Lucy Pearson	38:31	63 Lady
Elizabeth Sandall Ball	39:27	73 th (3 rd V60)
Monique Van Nueten	40:29	84 th (5 th V55)
Claire Parsons	41:20	90 th Lady

SOUTHERN MEN'S ROAD RELAYS 23rd September

Excellent running at Aldershot where our men's Vets team put in a superb performance to finish 7th out of 55 teams with Sean being the 12th fastest individual.

Harrier	Time	Leg Position	Team Position
Sean Holmes	20:54	8 th	8 th
Neil Martin	21:58	7 th	5 th
Mike Bliss	22:34	11 th	6 th
Keith Vallis	23:13	17 th	7 th
Overall	1:28:39		7th

MY OLYMPIC AND PARALYMIC EXPERIENCE *from Emma Scoggins*

Back in 2011, UK athletics gave technical officials the opportunity to make themselves available to officiate at the athletics at London 2012. What a joy some months later to log on to Email and find that I had been one of the lucky officials to be selected. We had to take part in the test event at the beginning of May, then the selections were confirmed. I was going to the Olympics as a technical official in the call room.

The call room is the key place (the engine room) of any meeting. This is where all athletes have to enter before going out to the field of play. Here we checked the vests, shorts, spikes, kit bags of all

athletes. If the logo of any sponsor, other than the games official sponsors were shown, these needed to be taped over, Can't have other sponsors shown on TV!!!! Must say great fun for us women taping up all these hunky men!!!

The athletes varied in their time in the call room. Some were in their zone, others quite chatty, others like the Jamaicans and Brazilians just noisy. Each was preparing for their race in the way that suited them.

To be in the stadium for the men's 100m final you needed ear plugs. A real gem from the Olympics. An American athlete, who was running for Israel, could not find his spikes, a mad rush trying to find his coach. We could not find him, and the poor athlete was getting very worked up. He then turned to Oscar Pistorius "Have you got a spare pair of size 12 spikes. "Oscar replied "No, I have no spikes, but what's more I have no legs to put them on "He then burst into laughter. The athlete did get some spikes and was able to race.

After the Olympics I had two weeks at home, before back again for the Paralympics. This time I was staying in the village with all the athletes, we saw them all the time, about the village and in the dining hall. Again I was in the call room. To see these amazing athletes with their disability preparing for their races with broad smiles on their faces. We were now working in a more relaxed atmosphere .I was in the stadium for the men's 400m final and saw Oscar Pistorius win his gold medal.

He is an amazing athlete. The last time he was in the call room, he shook my hand and thanked me for what we had done. As Seb Coe said in his closing speech "We will never look at disability in the same way again" These athletes think that it is possible to achieve in their chosen sport,

A real privilege to be part of London 2012.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH *from John Hoare*

I have booked the Test Valley Golf Club again for our annual Christmas lunch. This will be on Sunday 16th December after the **CYCLISTS RACE** (starts 10.45am). Lunch will be 1.00pm for 1.30pm sitting. Cost will be same as last year £20 per adult and £10 for children under 12. There will be no charge for toddlers in high chairs. Menu is:

Starter

Homemade Vegetable soup
Melon with Winter Berries
Salmon Terrine

Main

Traditional Carvery
Roast Nut Cutlet

Puddings

Christmas Pudding
Chocolate Profiterole
Raspberry Pavlova
Fresh Fruit Salad in a brandy snap basket

Coffee and mince pies

When booking I will only need to know which starter you want and if you would prefer the vegetarian option as a main course.

No deposit required – pay on the day. **Early booking appreciated**