

Riverside Runners : Handicap

1. Introduction

The primary purpose of the Handicap Run is to provide you with a chance to measure your current form by comparing your time over the same course with that of previous months. It is also a competition in which members of all abilities can compete equally with each other regardless of sex, age or running performance. It is open to all fully paid up members of the club aged over 14 on the day of the event. Junior members must have completed a specific Handicap Race Parental Consent Form before being allowed to participate.

The Handicap Run is not a race in the conventional sense. You don't have to be super fit or super fast to take part. The aim is to provide you with a measure of your current form, whether you're fit or unfit, a whippet or a tortoise, a new runner or a seasoned athlete.

The Handicap Run normally takes place on the last Monday of each month (LMotM) from the playing field adjacent to the top gate at Longsands College, Longsands Road. Start times will be based upon a predicted finish time of 19.20hrs (with the earliest start time allowed being 18.25hrs). The finish will be at the same place as the start.

2. The Rules of the Handicap

The Handicap Series starts in January and the Handicap Run takes place on the LMotM of each month through to December. Handicap Times will be carried over from the previous month and will be adjusted throughout the season. If the Finishing Time is faster than the Handicap Time then the new Finishing Time will be the new Handicap Time. If the Finishing Time is slower than the Handicap Time, then the new Handicap Time will be increased by $\frac{1}{4}$ of the difference, subject to a maximum of 30 seconds per month. If the difference is greater than 10% of the Handicap Time then no adjustment will be made to the Handicap Time.

For members competing in the Handicap Run for the first time no Handicap Time will be set and only one point can be earned. The Finishing Time in the first run will become the Handicap Time for the next run. If the Finishing Time is judged not to be an accurate reflection of the member's current ability, then the Handicap Time will be set by the Organiser of the Handicap Run.

Points will be awarded each month based on Finishing Position. First place will receive 40pts, second place 35pts, third place 30pts, fourth place 25pts, fifth place 24pts, sixth place 23pts etc. Everyone who completes the course and posts a time will score a minimum of 1pt.

Additional points are available – every time a runner records a new fastest time on the course in the current year, they will receive 10 bonus points. As SB (Seasons Best) times for the Handicap are based solely upon that year, no SB bonus can be earned for that runners first time in any calendar year.

Anyone arriving late for their start, will still retain their allotted Handicap Time – they will just have to start late and run faster.

The series will be won by the person with the highest number of points from their best eight runs and all PB bonuses. In the event of two or more members being equal on points at the end of the series, their position will be decided by the relative values of the eighth best scoring Handicap Run. If still level, then by the seventh best scoring run etc.

3. Handicap Route

The route will be a standard 4.4 miles course, starting and finishing from adjacent to the top gates at Longsands College.

Start

Up playing field adjacent to Longsands Road to a marker then turn to leave playing field at the back of Heron Court.

Along tarmac footpath to Rowley Road and left down Priory Hill, to Derestricted Speed sign (a few metres from the roundabout) and then back up Priory Hill to top of Longsands Road

Down Longsands Road turning right down footpath straight after Longsands School to the end of the refurbished element then into Princess Drive and right to get to Kings Lane

Turn left into Kings Lane and then left again at the end up Cambridge Street

Follow the road around to the station and turn left down the footpath to Longsands Road

Turn right up Longsands Road to the top and then left to head down Priory Hill

Turn left in Rowley Road and then right, back along tarmac path

Left into Longsands playing field, up to marker then to finish.

There are not many rules but two are (and failure to observe will give a “DNF”) :

- 1. You must stay on the left hand pavement in direction of travel along Rowley Road at all times**
- 2. You must stay on right hand pavement in direction of travel on Longsands Road at all times**

4. Risk Assessment

The handicap poses no significant risks for the club or its members who take part. However it is recognised that there is a marginally different bias to the hazards than those normally encountered on a club run. These are :

Potential mass finish Playing field chosen for finish with no on-road element over the last 600 metres or so where some members may be overtaken by determination in the final stages at the expense of taking care.

Tripping hazard and restricted access to the playing field in the dark months It is not anticipated that there will be an egress problem leaving the field but there is the potential of an access problem with groups of runners trying to compete for position on the return to the field. This is not normally an issue in daylight but could be in the dark. It is proposed to provide some illumination at this point.

