



Cyprus 4 Day Challenge

Report from Bob Lawrence:

Way back in February 2015 I suggested that should members of The Harriers be up for a challenge, there was an event in Cyprus that I had been involved in from its outset, when working for Mike Gratton's Company; 2:09 Events. I hoped that we might get enough interest to enter a team. It was a little staggering that, including two ex-Harriers from Stockholm, fourteen of us made the trip and it turned out, not only to be a very good trip but also a very successful Event in terms of performances.

Unfortunately, due to illness and injury in the month leading up to the Races, I was unable to be part of the running teams but at least I could be one of our two supporters for three of the four Races. The other support being Jane Taylor (Mark's wife). I was determined to take part in some way and managed to jog and walk the first day race of 6 kilometres. This race took the form of a time trial with each of the two hundred runners starting off at ten second intervals to complete the run on the coast by the Sea Caves complete with the obligatory sunken ship acting as a guard. With Nick Barrable taking 2nd place in the race and Simon Howden leading the M45 category the competitive edge seemed to come to the fore as we realised that we could do quite well across all of the disciplines.

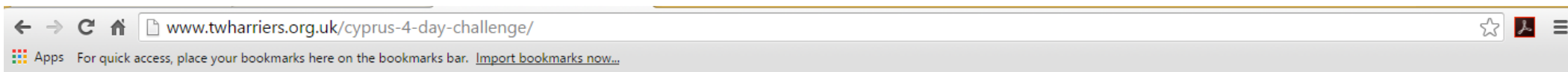
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Day 2 really did sort everybody out. A Multi-terrain 11 kilometre Race incorporating **600 metres of climb** proved to be as hard as we had been told it was but the long evenings of running the hills around Tunbridge Wells put our teams in very good positions. Nick retained his position of 2nd overall and 1st M40 and Simon took a few more seconds out of his challengers. Mark Taylor had improved to 2nd M60, while Sarah-Jane Barrable moved up to be in contention with the leading three ladies and Nicola Morris moved up to 4th place in the F40 class. It was not all good news for us though and Steve Bright was taken ill before the half way point was reached, but after taking medical advice he was able to walk the remainder of the route to retain his place on the start line for day three.

Day 3 was a Multi-terrain Half Marathon which finished near to the previous day's start, so at least all the finishers could use the blue sea as an aid to recovery when this difficult run had been completed.

Chris Potter improved his position to be 3rd M45 while the consistent Neil Clark & Tom Woolley both improved their positions. It was the furthest that Alexis Antonia had run since her pre-London injury and it was good to see her running steadily towards her goal. The ever consistent Lucille Joannes was certainly enjoying Day 3 more than she had Day 2 and moved up her position within her category. It was also a great pleasure and relief to see Steve Bright finish with the broadest grin on his face while announcing his comeback.

Day 4. The Paphos City 10K race was just that. It was just like The Tour de France being a lap of honour for the top two with Ben Livelsy (aiming to claim a Marathon Spot for GBR in Rio) finishing in style with our own Nick Barrable enjoying his moment of pleasure when finishing 2nd. Simon Howden lead home all the M45 runners with Chris Potter finishing in 3rd M45 while running a Personal Best for 10K. Sarah-Jane Barrable had squeezed into 3rd place overall and leading Senior Lady while Alexis Antonia also completed her race with a 10K Personal Best.



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The final act of this wonderful four days of racing was the Gala Dinner when all competitors joined together for a night of celebration. As well as trophies for Nick, Sarah-Jane and Simon, Neil Clark was also among the trophies with his share of the Team 3rd place trophy, which Nick and S-J allowed him to keep. (They hadn't got room in their luggage for it). We could never have captured how beautiful the scenery of the Akamas, where we were privileged to run, had been but along with the faultless organisation of the event, the photography of the event had been brilliantly caught on camera by Kevin McGarry and I would urge everybody to have a look at the event's website to see his amazing images – with Tunbridge Wells Harriers very much in evidence.

On a personal note: I did get a bit of competition in when Lucille and I took on the tennis might of Nicola Morris and Neil Clark. Although Lucille and I did give them a few years we managed to get a few rallies going before being narrowly beaten 6 -1, 6-1. It really wasn't that one sided. I hope to be fit enough to take on the Challenge next year. Anyone for tennis??

Results for our entries can be [downloaded here](#).

P.S. I realise that I've omitted from my Narrative any mention of Carol Tsang whose enthusiasm kept us all entertained.



Tunbridge Wells Harriers Running Club - <http://www.twharriers.org.uk/cyprus-4-day-challenge/>





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