

PAWPRINTS

The Newsletter of

Altrincham & District Athletic Club Ltd

(Altrincham & District AC since 1961)

March 2026

Club website www.altrincham-athletics.co.uk

Richard Evans breaks 20 year old club record!

Richard Evans was first MV60 in 30:23 in the Alsager 5 mile road race on Sunday 1st February, breaking the club record for that category by almost a minute. The record had stood to Derek Walton since 2005.



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Chairman	Mansel Pope
Secretary	Helen Simpson
Membership Secretary	Fiona Cosgrove
Treasurer	Carole Harrison
Road Running	Richard Johnson
Cross Country	Graham Harrison
Fell Running	Tim Raffle
Track & Field	Alison Vesey
Junior Coaching	Vacant
Health & Safety Officer	Damian Utton
Welfare Officer (Juniors)	Andy Pickford
Welfare Officer (Seniors)	Duncan Dickinson
Social Secretary	Gordon Nicoll
Any safeguarding concerns:	safeguarding@altrincham-athletics.co.uk .

April Pawprints

Please send material for next month's Pawprints to Colin Davies: colinxxdavies@gmail.com
by Friday 27th March. Articles, reports, results, news, and photos gratefully accepted.

Personal best for Michael Whitham in Seville Marathon

Michael Whitham ran a personal best 2:33:59 in the Seville Marathon on 15th February. Also taking part were Paul Abraham who finished in 3:15:18 and his twin brother Peter who ran 3:28:08.



Alsager 5 - Sunday 1st February

One of the few remaining 5 mile races still in existence attracted over 1100 runners but with only 3 from Altrincham. However, two of the three broke club records. Richard Evans finished in 30:23, almost a minute faster than the MV60 club record set by Derek Walton more than 20 years ago and Colin Davies broke his own MV75 club record, lowering his previous time of 49:24 by 1½ minutes.

Richard was first MV60, Colin was second MV75 and Tim Greenald was third MV50.

Full results: <https://results.sporthive.com/events/7421910393242517504>

Chip Times

Tim Greenald	29:26
Richard Evans	30:23
Colin Davies	47:52

Photos by Bryan Dale

www.racephotos.org.uk



Tim Greenald



Colin Davies

Hale 10K - Sunday 15th February

More than 1600 runners took part in the fifth running of this local race with our club providing 30 of the finishers and winning the team prize! It was a cold and windy morning but most of the runners finished before the rain came along. Richard Johnson set a new MV60 club record and there were personal bests for Tom Brown and Sam Garrett. The race was won by an unattached runner, Reece Brown in 31:38 and the first lady was Sarah Dufour-Jackson of Vale Royal AC in 33:27.

Chip Times

Mike Berks	33:36
Tom Brown	34:11
Jens Van Den Brande	34:16
Ben Walmsley	34:19
Phil Raffo	34:22
Sam Garrett	34:43
Andy Pickford	34:46
Ryan Teare	35:22
James Pattison	35:45
Richard Johnson	35:56
Nick Bugler	36:40
Jack Burbidge	37:27
Matthew Perkins	37:54
Craig Foster	38:21
Ian Blann	38:25

Matthew Allen	38:47
Emma Simpson	39:03
Steve Renny	41:22
Nick Somers	42:47
Peter Waterson	42:48
Peter Leech	42:59
Andy Spencer	43:35
Sam Higgs	44:05
John Noblett	44:11
Kate Stuart	44:44
Duncan Dickinson	45:28
Bev Jackson	49:19
Steph Hughes	49:42
Richard Hill	49:05
Frazer Cowgill	53:23

Full Results: www.tdlevantservices.co.uk/en/results-embed.php?event=4183#1_A05D15



Hale 3K - Sunday 15th February

Alongside the Hale 10K there was a 3K race with plenty of success for athletes representing Altrincham. Alice Boothroyd and Sophie Joseph were first and second U14 girls and Bethan Williams was third U12 girl. Mabel Pickford and Alice Lee were first and second U10 girls, Oscar Reynolds was 3rd U12 boy with Charlie Reynolds 9th and Sam Boothroyd 11th.



Alice Boothroyd

Manchester Area Cross Country League

Match Five - Saturday 7th February - Heaton Park

The final of this season's matches was at Heaton Park and 27 Altrincham runners took part with Oscar Reynolds once again finishing third in the U11 boys' race and thus clinching third place in the series.

The U11 boys' team were 5th with Rafe Lucas 17th and Sam Boothroyd 38th.

Erin Maule was 30th in the U13 girls' race and Mollie Offord was 21st in the U15 girls' race.

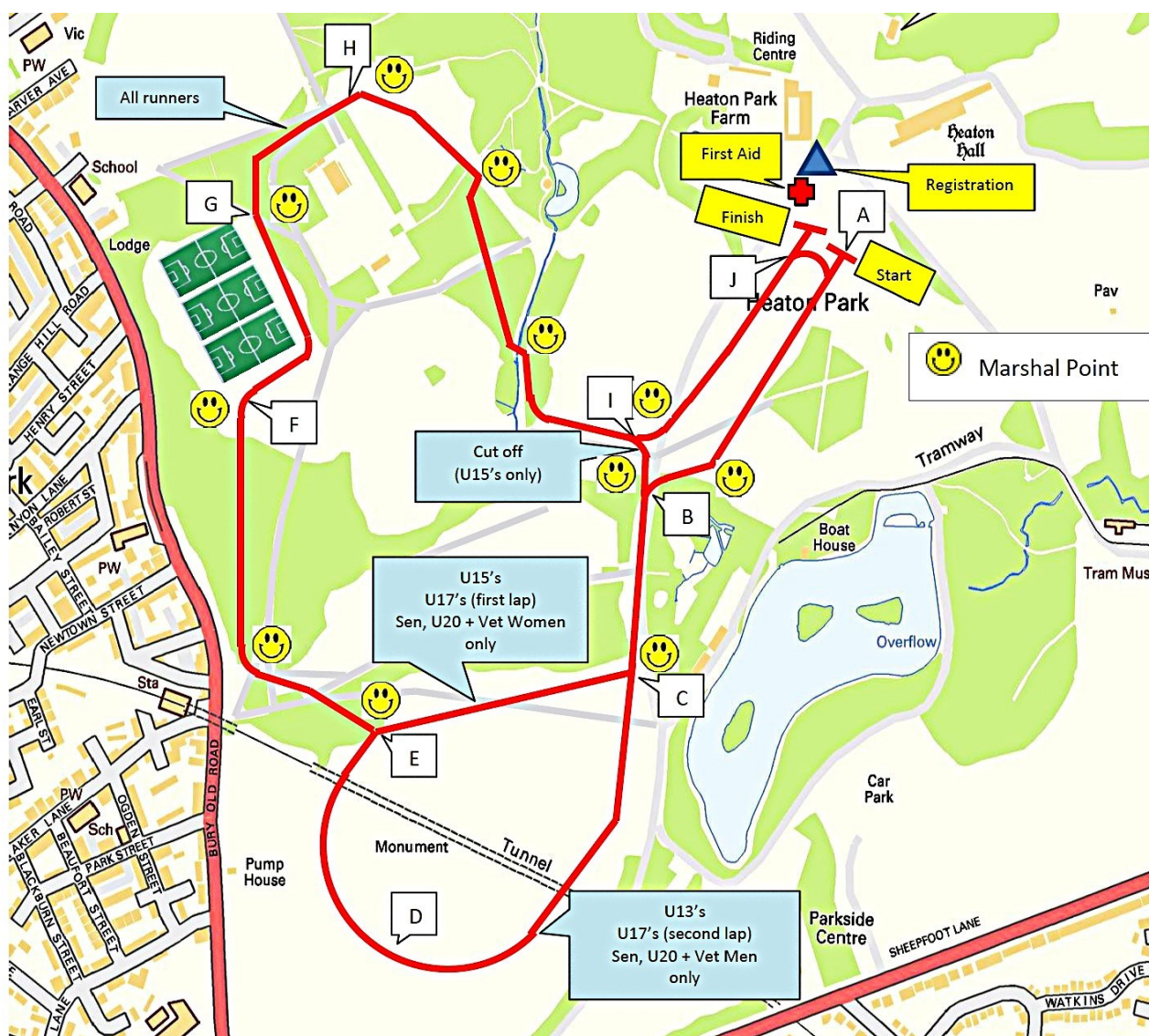
The U15 boys' team were 9th with Oscar Curran finishing in 24th place, Nico Sidebottom 37th, Max Tempest 39th and Callum Roberts 45th,

The U17 men's team were 6th with Thomas Turner 28th, Liam Rhodes 29th and Nate Logan-Virden 32nd.

Alana Dunn was 12th in the senior women's race in which Pippa Entwistle was 96th, Fiona Cosgrove 152nd and Nadia Erdenesuren 182nd. The team finished 24th.

The senior men's team were 11th with Jens Van Den Brande 38th, Tom Moseley 78th and Andy Pickford 88th our first three finishers.

Full results: www.race-results.co.uk/results/2026/maccl25-5.pdf



Flower Scar Fell Race - Saturday 21st February

This early season fell race at Todmorden had 111 finishers.
Craig Foster was 35th in 1:28:17 and Shaun Jackson was 57th in 1:36:43.



Shirley Blinston

from Dave Entwistle

It was with great shock and sadness, at the end of January that I heard of the passing away of Shirley Blinston, wife of Alan Blinston. Shirley played an equal role to her husband in my integration into the ADAC family. She was a great source of club history information and had evidently played her part in the club's development and longevity.

I've mentioned many times; Shirley was my first contact to club and athletics organisation and administration. Having completed my first race, as a 9-year-old, it had been Shirley who I handed the raffle ticket showing my finish position at the club organised John Leigh Park Schools' Cross Country back in 1973. Whilst I can't remember my position, no doubt a mid-placing (nothing has changed since), I do remember the conversation:

SB: School?

DE: Navigation.

SB: Name?

DE: David Entwistle.

SB: (Looking up from her results sheet...) Are you Eric's son?

DE: Yes (in later years I'd have to hold back a sigh before answering this question).

As well as club activities, Shirley was an active member at Altrincham Methodist Church, my parent's church; a membership she would maintain until the last few years of her life. Adding the arrival of Alan and Shirley's two children, Rachel and Kerry, it becomes clear Shirley had a full life.

Another role Shirley took on was as Alan's coach. There are certainly others who can bring further information as to her skills and application to this role, but you only need to look at Alan's results at the peak of his career in order to understand she was bringing something to the party. From my own experience, Shirley was certainly tuned-in to the idea of "marginal gains", long before David Brailsford and the Sky Cycling Team extolled the values of such thinking some 30 years later.

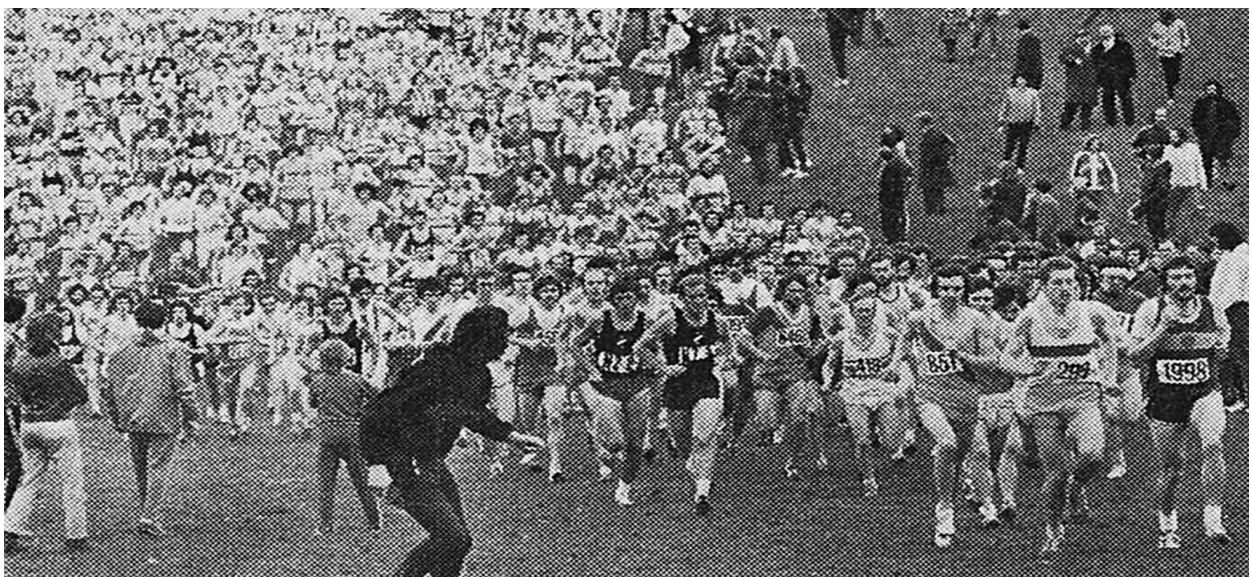
Proper fuelling, sufficient sleep and recovery and my personal favourite, not getting cold. After runs with Alan, she'd never miss the opportunity to tell me I should get warm clothes on to cover my cooling legs.

Other snippets of club history coming from Shirley. She spoke of the importance of the club gold vest. "It's very easy to see as runners are coming off Rivington Pike!" Her choice of Rivington Pike as an example always makes me smile as both Alan and our other Olympian, Jeff Norman were frequent winners of this race in the late sixties and seventies. Shirley also explained the evolution of the club vest. Apparently, the original vest was gold with black trim but as this was too similar to the vest of Stockport Harriers, the decision was made to move to gold and red.

As you can understand, being born in 1962, my anecdotes of ADAC club life in the 60s and 70s are all second or third hand. I've never thought otherwise, I have had the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of giants of the sport.

If we go back to my race debut in 1973, as testament to Alan's ability and Shirley's coaching, I have attached a photo below and the results of the 1973 National Cross Country at Parliament Hill on the next page.

First thing is to understand the size and quality of the field. The National was considered "the" race to win in this era with the best 9 runners of every club clamoring to make their team. Second thing is just to look at the results. I know I am a broken record when discussing Alan's ability. These results are a perfect example. 11th place wasn't that great by Alan's standards and for those with an interest, the 10 before him are household names. My eyes move lower down and I doubt there is nobody who doesn't know the names of the runners in 12th and 25th places.



Shirley Blinston

English National Cross Country Championships 1973 - Parliament Hill			
1	Dave Bedford	Shaftesbury Harriers	43:55
2	Roger Clark	Bristol Athletic Club	44:07
3	Tony Simmons	Luton United Harriers	44:26
4	Steve Kenyon	Bolton United Harriers and AC	44:29
5	Bernie Ford	Aldershot, Farnham & District AC	44:31
6	Bill Robinson	Gateshead Harriers	44:35
7	Ricky Wilde	Manchester & District Harriers	44:44
8	Grenville J Tuck	Cambridge & Coleridge AC	44:51
9	Mike Beevor	Hercules-Wimbledon AC	44:48
10	Mike Baxter	Leeds City AC	44:53
11	Alan Blinston	Altrincham & District AC	44:56
12	Brendan Foster	Gateshead Harriers	45:00
25	Ron Hill	Bolton United Harriers & AC	45:33

Alan's is the name in the results but I can but imagine the role of Shirley, not that she would have given it much thought. It's easy to remember the abilities of the athletes but I would just like to consider all the people supporting, Shirley being the perfect example. If you add her importance in helping with the club's survival and development in the early years, hopefully this article makes more sense.

By the time I joined the club in 1983, Shirley had handed the baton on to others to keep the club evolving and here we are in 2026. My kindest thoughts go out to Alan, Rachel, Kerry and the whole family at this difficult time.

Dave Entwistle

from Jeff Norman

I was most upset to learn that Shirley's funeral was to be on 27th February. I really wanted to be there, but after cancelling our holiday plans 4 times, we finally confirmed that we would be going on 21st February, our first holiday for a year. I am one of the few that will remember Shirley Baldwin before she became Mrs Blinston. I agree with Dave that Shirley played an integral part in the club's history, not only in her role as the supportive wife of Alan, but in helping to shape the direction of the club in its early days. Shirley joined the club in September 1964 as a long jumper. She was soon voted onto the committee and took over from Rick Bond as newsletter editor. She raised money for the club, which was in a dire financial state at the time by hosting coffee mornings. She also became ladies' cross country captain, assisted in the organisation of our schools' cross country races at John Leigh Park, and was race secretary for our first big promotion - the Linotype 5 which the club promoted for 28 years until traffic and lack of police support stopped it.

Dave alluded to Shirley's involvement in the club vest, and it was Shirley who suggested the jaguar for the club badge as she insisted it, and not the cheetah, was the fastest sprinter in the animal kingdom from a standing start. She enlisted the help of her brother to produce the original artwork based on an actual photograph. As Dave said, Shirley "was bringing something to the table" as Alan's coach. That's something of an understatement as from finishing 84th from 98 runners in our first Manchester XC League and still just an average club runner when he married Shirley in April 1966, within 2 years she transformed him into an Olympic 5000m runner.

As with Dave, I send my sympathies to Alan, Rachel, Kerry and other family members

Jeff Norman

Senior Endurance Training at Timperley Track

Start Time 7.15pm (warmed up, ready to go)

Mansel's group (Tuesdays)

March

- Tue 3rd Track: Joint session with Phil's group:
2 x 3 min, 90s recovery, 2 min jog, 4 x 90s, 60s recovery, 2 min jog,
10 min tempo, 2 min jog, 4 x 90s, 60s recovery.
- Tue 10th Track: Joint session with Phil's group:
12 x 3 min, 90s recovery.
- Tue 17th Track: 4 x 60s, 60s recovery, 8 x 90s, 75s recovery, 4 x 60s, 60s recovery.
- Tue 24th Track: 5 sets of 90s, 60s recovery, 60s, 30s recovery, 30s - 3 min jog rec between sets.
- Tue 31st Track: 12 x 90s, 75s recovery.

Phil's group (Tuesdays)

March

- Tue 3rd Track: Joint session with Mansel's group:
2 x 3 min, 90s recovery, 2 min jog, 4 x 90s, 60s recovery, 2 min jog,
10 min tempo, 2 min jog, 4 x 90s, 60s recovery.
- Tue 10th Track: Joint session with Mansel's group:
12 x 3 min, 90s recovery.
- Tue 17th Road & Track: 1½ mile road tempo, 3 x 90s with 75s rest, 1½ mile road tempo,
3 x 90s with 75s rest, 1½ mile road tempo.
- Tue 24th Track: 20 x 80s with 50s recovery.
- Tue 31st Road & Track: 1½ mile road tempo, 4 x 90s with 75s rest, 1½ mile road tempo,
4 x 90s with 75s rest, 1½ mile road tempo.

Phil's group (Thursdays)

March Venues vary - see dates for location.

- Thu 5th Conditioning Session at Timperley Track: 7:15pm start.
- Thu 12th Stamford Park: meet at park car park on Stamford Park Road 7:15pm.
1 km reps 1 min recovery (number dependent on target race distance).
- Thu 19th Conditioning Session at Timperley Track: 7:15pm start.
- Thu 26th Stamford Park: meet at park car park on Stamford Park Road 7:15pm.
1 km reps 1 min recovery (number dependent on target race distance).

Please note that all sessions start at 7:15pm, warmed up and ready to go. If you wish to do drills on a Tuesday these start at 7:00pm and are highly recommended for all athletes irrespective of target distance.

On road sessions, though routes are chosen with safety in mind, athletes are advised to wear bright clothing, be mindful of any traffic, and always give way to vehicles.

The grass sessions include running up and over the bank and it is advisable that you invest in a pair of trail shoes for these sessions. Please pay your track fees in the office: £4 members, £5 non-members.

Conditioning Sessions (please make Phil aware of any injury or weakness issues).

Drills - Plyometrics – starting light and gradually building through the year.

Circuits – Core - Resistance running.

If you are unsure or need help concerning any ongoing joint or other issues that may affect your ability to do these exercises please speak to Phil, alternatives or specific adaptations can always be made.