



LEITH HARRIER AND ATHLETIC CLUB

www.leithharriers.com

leithharriers@gmail.com



facebook.com/LeithHarrierAndAthleticClub  
#leithharrierandathleticclub

## LEITH HARBOUR FREE TURNS 2

On a chilly and dark June evening in 2019 the Leith harbour free 10km and 5km was born into fruition with a small bunch of hardy runners heading their way down the west harbour cycle/walkway toward St Leonards. Fast forward two years and the monthly event, covering two different courses and amassing more than 360 participants, continues to thrive.

As long as the winds remain calm, personal bests are always aplenty on the flat and fast courses. Initially numbers were much more favourable to the 10km distance, however, beginning to rival the ever-popular ParkRun, the Harbour Free's 5km option sports a large following where, among the many, avid park-runners take on the 5km option and finish in astonishment of their time being considerably faster than expectations. A healthy contingent of walkers are also able to take on the 5km option and whispers of a half marathon option in the future have been mooted...watch this space!

June's running of the Harbour Free will take place on 24 June at 6pm on Course 1. Do come join us in celebrating our second year of the free event.



## PONYDALES

20 Leith Lassess braved the freezing southerly winds and an ankle breaking course at the annual Ponydales challenge. Forgetting what a true cross-country felt like after an absence of the event in Covid ravaged 2020, it was fair to say the short, sharp run was a shock to the system for many.

Shout out to Sophie Hicks who ran a blistering 8mins flat in an epic final leg for SW1, making up huge ground and claiming silver for the team, only 3 seconds behind Ariki in first. Well done also to our MW1 team, also securing silver in their grade.



## JO COWIE MEMORIAL 5km

9 Leith girls took on the Jo Cowie Memorial 5km handicap run in what will likely be the Forbury venues swansong for running events.

The weather was perfect for a late Autumn race, yet the underfoot conditions made for tough going on the soft, sandy surface where hopes of PBs were dashed for many.



Congratulations to Lisa O'Donnell who took line honours, holding off everyone from start to finish. Lydia Pattillo came home with the fastest time for the girls, followed by Meriam van Os and Rosa Lutz.

# RECENT RESEARCH – Energy Gels

Energy gels; do they really work? When do I take it? Do I need water too? How long of a race would I need one? Sometimes the blessed little sugary squeeze can cause more confusion than it's worth.

Trawling through research you would conclude that evidence suggests the use of gels can enhance performance, particularly so the longer the race. Essentially, the use of energy gels may assist a runner at maximal effort in a race lasting about an hour or longer – the placebo effect may also have much to answer for! In a google search you also open up a minefield of personal preferences or opinions and, although it may add to the confusion, it does highlight the fact that it really does come down to what works for you in a trial and error approach.



As a rule of thumb; always test out new nutritional endeavours in training. Energy gels do not agree with many people's stomachs so it's best not to test it out for the first time on race day!

A great online article sums up the topic well for anyone interested in using gels in an upcoming event <https://runnersconnect.net/coach-corner/energy-gels-for-runners/>

## NOTABLE NUGGETS

- Hit a tough patch mid-run where everything starts to feel too much? Try smiling. It's well documented that smiling can make us feel more positive. Two-hundred yards with a big grin can sometimes be enough to make the pain pass.  
Works well during races – spectators tend to react when they see a runner 'enjoying' themselves. Their response can be inspiration!
- POP the Changers!! Well that's what they did back in Victorian times where it was thought that alcohol was a performance enhancer. The tradition dates all the way back to Ancient Greece and China. Incredibly, they would also take drugs such as heroin and cocaine to enhance their running performance, something that is unthinkable today.
- Breathing trick: if you get to that desperate-for-air stage where you feel like you're gasping, try one big deep breath in, followed by a big exhale. Then return to regular breathing. A big blow out like this can 'reset' your breathing rhythm and fight off the inefficient panting that you need to avoid.
- "It hurts up to a point and then it doesn't get any worse" – Ann Trason, Ultramarathoner



## HOODIES and FLEECES

Siobhan will soon be ordering some more of our Leith Hoodies and Fleecees. Get in touch if you would like to order one or have any questions regarding sizes etc.

[siobhanslt@gmail.com](mailto:siobhanslt@gmail.com)



# A Brief Timeline of All the Bullshit Female Runners Have Overcome

CULTURE FEATURES HUMOR By Andrea Keklak

**1896** The modern Olympics are founded. Women aren't allowed to compete. On the bright side, they are allowed to cheer! SCORE! (Though, come to think of it, yelling might be prohibitively difficult when you're rocking an S-bend corset and a tight lace collar.)

**1900** Women are featured in the Olympics! Sadly, no running allowed... but women can compete in sailing, golf, tennis, and – wait for it – croquet.

**1904** All the aforementioned female events are removed from the Olympics. Women can now only compete in archery. Don't ask.

**1928** For the first time ever, women are allowed to compete in Olympic running events! However – in a cruel twist of fate – after watching female 800m runners collapse at the finish line, the IOC bans the women's 800m on the grounds that the event is much, much too arduous for the delicate, dainty female physique.

**1961** The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) officially bans women from competing in all U.S. road races. "The fuq?" says 19-year-old runner Julia Chase. In a classic case of female runners not putting up with bureaucratic bullshit – indeed, the hallmark of the female running movement – Chase runs a 6.5 mile road race in Chicopee, Massachusetts. According to reports, she did cartwheels at the finish.

**1967** Kathrine Switzer enters the Boston Marathon under the gender-neutral name "K.V. Switzer." (Reminds me of how Joanne Kathleen Rowling was told by her publisher to go by "J.K." because "boys might not have wanted to read a book if they knew it was written by a woman." Do better, society.) About four miles in, the race director noticed Switzer was a woman and lunged at her – as captured in the now-iconic photo. Undaunted, Switzer finished the marathon, and after crossing the finish line, casually mentioned that she "felt so great...I felt like I could have run all the way back to Hopkinton."

**1977** In the most groundbreaking sewing project since Betsy Ross's flag, Lisa Lindahl, Polly Smith, and Hinda Schreiber stitch two jockstraps together to create the "jogbra," the forerunner of the modern-day sports bra.

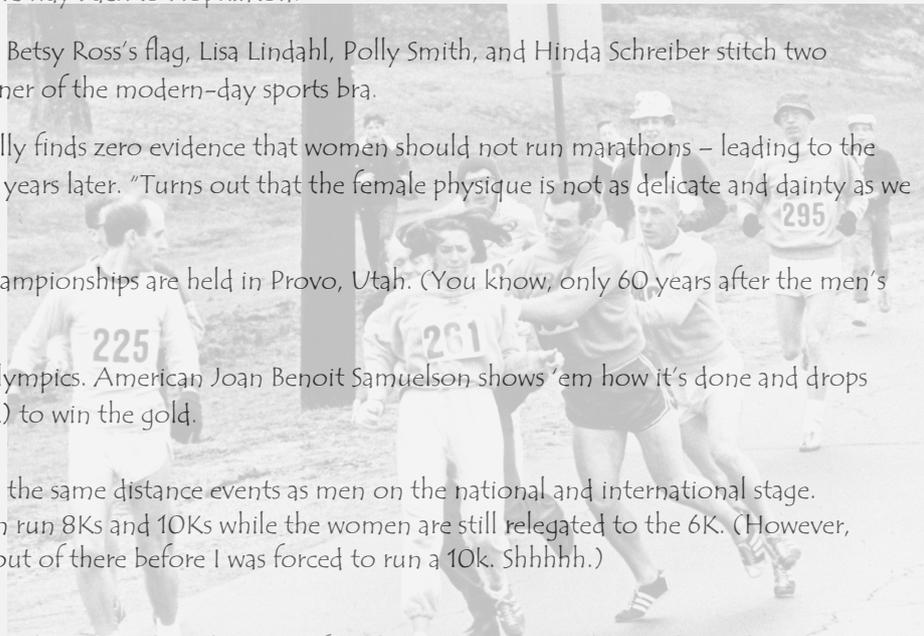
**1980** The American College of Sports Medicine officially finds zero evidence that women should not run marathons – leading to the introduction of the women's Olympic Marathon four years later. "Turns out that the female physique is not as delicate and dainty as we thought!"

**1982** The first-ever Women's NCAA Track & Field Championships are held in Provo, Utah. (You know, only 60 years after the men's started.)

**1984** The women's marathon is finally added to the Olympics. American Joan Benoit Samuelson shows 'em how it's done and drops everyone at the 4-mile mark (yes, the 4-MILE MARK) to win the gold.

**2018** Today, women are finally allowed to compete in the same distance events as men on the national and international stage. Well...except NCAA Cross Country, in which the men run 8Ks and 10Ks while the women are still relegated to the 6K. (However, being a 1500m runner myself, I'm secretly glad I got out of there before I was forced to run a 10k. Shhhhh.)

So, let's give a big hats off to all the pioneering women who broke the rules and defied the running patriarchy. Without them, we females would still be watching from the sidelines and chafing away in our Victorian corsets on long runs. From the bottom of my running-crazed, normal-bra-phobic, feminist heart, THANK YOU



## BOOKWORM CORNER

Some recommendations from those among us who like to get stuck into the pages:

- **Roar** by Stacey Sims
- **How She Did It** by Sara Slattery and Molly Huddle



**Mighty Moe: The True Story of a thirteen-year-old Women's Running Revolutionary**  
by Rachel Swaby and Kit Fox

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12 June: Mt Difficulty Ascent and related events
- 13 June: Barnes cross-country
- 24 June: Leith Harbour Free 10km/5km
- 26 June: Edmond Cup cross-country

Every Tuesday: Chris Sole's training group, approx. 5:20pm @ Caledonian and fields

Every Saturday: 5km Park Run 9am @ the Botanical Gardens

