

Ladies Captain speech 2017 – Sarah Hurcomb

Wow! What an amazing year for our lady Dashers and what a fantastic time I have had in my first year as ladies' captain. Upon reflection, it's hard to know where to start!

It has certainly helped with giving myself a kick to get out of bed on cold, wet and windy Sundays for XC to be greeted by lots of smiling faces and a full team of all abilities for every race, resulting in the mighty Dashers winning the series overall series and our very own Jill Collet winning pretty much every race!

We also entered the Berkshire league winning a medal in almost every category and putting Dashers on the map.

I'm incredibly proud of how inclusive our club is and really enjoy talking to new and potential members who are always worried whether they will be fast enough, or can run far enough or feel intimidated by the idea of a sports clubs – all of which I can relate to and probably held me back from joining for at least 2 years and even as members being out injured or away for a few weeks can still feel like this. It is so important that we continue to recognise the achievements of all our members whether they be breaking club records, course records or their own personal best – this is what our club is for.

I am inspired by the challenges I have seen our members undertake this year! Whether it be building up to our first 5k, 10k or half-marathon to completing an ultra-marathon, more than one marathon and even an ironman! It looks as though our mad Chairwoman's enthusiasm for ultras continues to rub off on you all...

We are clearly not a club whose members let barriers get in their way - literally with our hills session and flying all over the world - but why would we let being 6 months pregnant get in the way of running a marathon (Clara) or a broken rib stop us completing an ultra (Steph)...!

Our ladies raced 1698 times and club records were broken 25 times during the season over all 7 standard distances, but by only 3 ladies...

Jill Collett recorded 5 new records over 4 distances in the FS category and 3 new records over 2 distances in the FV35 category.

In the FV45 category Alison Jessop and Julie Humphries were swapping records

back and forth on an almost weekly basis. Alison broke records 6 times over 5 distances, whilst Julie Humphries set 11 new records over 4 distances.

Over the season the ladies recorded a total of 147 new PBs, led by Alison Jessopp, Liz Macartney and Emma Twomey who all set PBs at 6 of the 7 standard distances that are recorded, with Jill Collett, Louise Flisher and Laura Williams recording 5.

I'm delighted to see that our self-named 'slower Dashers' have this year been running marathons in Paris, ultras in Jersey and a special shout out to Ann Chandler who ran every one of the 5K summer series, achieved a half-marathon PB and continues to go from strength to strength.

I would love to share the individual achievements of each and every one of our 124 female members but simply do not have the time so I'll leave it to say I'm sure that as a club we will smash the forthcoming races in the cross country and spring race season.

Being on the committee this year has also given me a sight of all the hard work and effort that goes in behind the scenes, things you literally would never even consider. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nina and the rest of the committee for being so dedicated to the club and so supportive of one another when life sometimes gets in the way. Every decision made this year has had the best interests of our members and to continue to make this club the best club it can be.

Finally, I'm delighted to say that I'll be staying on as Ladies Captain and even more delighted to be sharing this with Zena. Not only a great friend of mine, but of the club and many of its members. Between us we plan to be here to support, encourage, eat cake and drink prosecco with you all!

Have a great 2018 everyone.