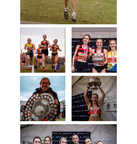
HERNE HILL HARRIERS HIGHLIGHTS

February 2026

Welcome to your monthly Highlights magazine – it's where our stories, journeys, results, team changes & if you have any photos and achievements you would like to share, we'd love to hear from you! Send them to newsletter@hhh.org.uk

National Cross Country Champions for 2026!!



Back row left to right: Jack Ellis, Jack Rowe, Ben Lewis, Ben Ashley, Ben Pickering, Ethan Ashby, Ethan Ashby, Ben Lewis, Jack Rowe, Jack Ellis

Front row: Ben Pickering, Ben Ashley, Ethan Ashby, Ethan Ashby

Herne Hill Harriers are the senior women's National Cross Country Champions for 2026!

Coming in for the title with our U13 girls who bringing home team gold. Congratulations to our senior women who have been a force to be reckoned with throughout our XC year, while our first ever U15 women's team finished in a fantastic 4th place.

Only 8 seconds after Kelly Smith, Georgina Lee secured seven on six crossed the finish line in 19th place, with Kelly Smith following in 20th place. Georgina's second season of the sport is proving to be a breakout year, with her 7th place finishes in the prestigious events as another sign of progress. Kelly has been a consistent presence for the senior women's team all year, and her 20th place finish underscores her value to the team's success.

The round 5 and round 7 scenario's sight at the finish either of a new day or a nightmare for the senior women's team, with the pack coming home in groups of seven or more in quick succession. Fortunately, the senior women's team came in a magnificent 19th place and Gareth Grover completed our national champion hat-trick, finishing in 19th place. Gareth's consistency has been a cornerstone of our success, and his ability to maintain his form over the demanding round 5 and round 7 courses underscores his dedication and skill. Gareth's performance was one of all-out effort, as he crossed the finish line in a state of exhaustion, but it was worth every ounce of effort for the team's success. Gareth's dedication and consistency have been a cornerstone of our success, and his performance in this race was no exception. Gareth's performance was a testament to his dedication and skill, and his 19th place finish was a fitting tribute to his consistent excellence throughout the season.

Congratulations on a hard-fought victory, and we look forward to seeing the Charlotte Jackson 10.7K and Kelly Smith's 21K Half Marathon start line! Congratulations to our senior women's team on their 4th place finish in the 8K, with Charlotte Jackson finishing in 4th place, and Kelly Smith finishing in 7th place.

Our Harlington Long Distance & Relay team, led by Jack Rowe, Ben Lewis, Ben Ashley, Ethan Ashby, and Ben Pickering, secured a fantastic 2nd place finish, with Jack Rowe's 2nd place finish being the team's highest individual finish. The team's performance was a testament to their dedication and skill, with each member contributing their unique strengths to the team's success. The relay team's performance was a testament to their dedication and skill, and their 2nd place finish was a fitting tribute to their consistent excellence throughout the season.

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National XC Team Medalists Q & A

Jack Rowe

For the first time in the Club's history, our Senior Women won medals in the National Cross Country Championships. Our U13 Girls team also made history by winning the National Cross Country Championships. Our Senior Men's team was led by Kelly Smith and Ainsley Lindholm-Reid. Sophie Tooley was 19th and Sarah Ellis was 20th. As a team the Senior Women finished 4th overall.

Lady Jones Tell us how you felt when you crossed the finish line?

Tired and very pleased that I had finished the course without a fall. Did you feel it was a good race?

Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace! The course was brilliant, quite dry and generally undulating with some interesting obstacles. Did you feel the support? Yes, I heard the voice you said (which I enjoyed) and the Kids and Dad kept it coming!

Did you have any special preparation? Nothing special, just training and racing. Did you have any injuries to overcome? Nothing that I can remember, thankfully. I was able to do. Once past Half way, I attempted to pass the girl in front of me and she fell in the last 100 yards. Did you feel you had a good race? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace and had a good race. Did you feel you had contributed? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace. I decided to make my move which was successful and I felt I had contributed to the team's success. Did you feel supported? Yes, I felt supported.

Did your performance surprise you/disappoint? No to a, neither. I was a little disappointed that I had fallen at the last but I had kept up the pace and I felt I had contributed to the team's success. Did you feel you had contributed? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace and had a good race.

What did it mean to win National Cross Country team gold? I felt it was important to win team gold as it was the first time the Senior Women had won it and I felt it was important to keep it in the Club. Did you feel it was important? Yes, I felt it was important to win team gold as it was the first time the Senior Women had won it and I felt it was important to keep it in the Club.

Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Kelly Smith Did

Did you feel you got a good race? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace.

Did you feel supported? Yes, I felt supported.

Did your performance surprise you/disappoint? No to a, neither. I was a little disappointed that I had fallen at the last but I had kept up the pace and I felt I had contributed to the team's success. Did you feel you had contributed? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace and had a good race.

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Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Ainsley Lindholm-Reid Did

Did you feel you got a good race? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace.

Did you feel supported? Yes, I felt supported.

Did your performance surprise you/disappoint? No to a, neither. I was a little disappointed that I had fallen at the last but I had kept up the pace and I felt I had contributed to the team's success. Did you feel you had contributed? Yes, I felt I had kept up the pace and had a good race.

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Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Sophie Tooley Did

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Did you feel supported? Yes, I felt supported.

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Sarah Ellis Did

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Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Ben Ashley Did

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Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Ethan Ashby Did

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Do you have any other comments? Nothing at the moment.

Ben Pickering Did

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Ben Lewis Did

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Did you feel supported? Yes, I felt supported.

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From Doubt to 2:21: Sam Brasshaw's Breakthrough Winter

Sam Brasshaw has enjoyed a stunning winter with huge PBs over Half Marathon and Marathon distances, including a 2:21 Marathon at Brighton and a 1:09:27 at Cardiff. As Sam Brasshaw explains, it has been a hard but rewarding journey. Here are both about Sam's journey:

Tell us about your training and what made it so hard, which were the days you had to push through?

Very hard to say I rarely felt good to go. I enjoyed a wide range of sessions which helped me stay motivated. Tempo runs were the hardest, I felt I was always knackered. Lactate/threshold, 10 grams from 10 K course, 2 different tempos.

Tell us little you got embedded, what was the point you felt your dream was coming true, what was the moment you knew you had a great race?

I'd have to say the Brighton Marathon, I knew I was in good form but I was doubtful of being able to run the course I had in mind. I'd set a target mentally of 2:20 and I knew I was capable of that but I felt it would be very hard. I'd set a 2:21 as a target for Brighton