

Nene Valley Harriers

A CLUB WHICH STARTED AS A RUNNERS' OUTFIT NOW CATERS FOR EVERY TYPE OF ATHLETE

History

NENE VALLEY HARRIERS was formed in 1977 by a splinter group of just 14 athletes, who broke away from Peterborough Athletics Club and soon established themselves as a strong road running force before later branching successfully into track and field and cross-country competition.

Today, three of those original 14 members continue to play active roles in the club, with secretary Ray Church, sprints and hurdles coach and British Athletics League team manager Tim Needham and former long-term treasurer Mike Holt all fundamental to the Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire-based club.

The Harriers have four main training bases, the Peterborough Embankment track forming the central meeting point for the majority of the club's 350-plus membership. Boston, Spalding and Bourne provide alternative training locations for those athletes living further north.

Background

The club boasts some legendary athletes both past and present with Giovanni Rizzo, Paul Larkins and Teresa Dyer forming the old



One of the Nene Valley Harriers training groups after a tough evening workout

guard of national and international-standard members. Current stars include Hannah Molyneaux, who this year broke the UK under-15 shot put record and has topped her age-group rankings nationally for the last three years. She is coached by Geoff Capes, who also guides talented shot putter Robbie Shaw.

The club also has a strong group of veterans, including England internationals Ricky Huskisson, Dave Brown, Andrea Jenkins and Philippa Taylor, who along with former masters stars Mike Barnsdale and Stan Owen have contributed to the Harriers' significant medal tally at world level.

The club organise two 5km summer races at the city's Ferry Meadows, the NVH 10 miles in December, as well as the monthly Harrier League 5km series throughout the winter. Athletes compete in a number of track and cross-country leagues, providing competition opportunities for all ages and abilities, including the

UK Youth Development League, the British Athletics League for the senior men and the Southern Athletics League in the summer, as well as the local Frostbite League and the regional North Midlands League in the winter and also taking part in the southern and national road relays.

Club sessions

The club accommodates athletes from all disciplines, with most sessions taking place at the Embankment track on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

The several junior groups consist in total of more than 100 young athletes split into sections according to ability and distance, as well as a number of strong senior sprints and endurance groups with field event training also taking place several times a week.

The under-11s are headed up by Ann-Marie Przybyl and Judith Jacobs, with the main ethos for the younger athletes being training through fun and experiencing a wide range of athletics such as long jump, javelin and sprinting.

Denise Korkmaz's 45 junior sprinters train four to five days a week, with blocks, starts, acceleration and technique work the mainstay of their training, while the middle-distance athletes will complete threshold and race-specific work, depending on where they are in the season.

Russ Prosser heads up a growing

group of 16-18-year-olds on Thursdays at Peterborough. These focus on quality in the summer and endurance in the winter. He also caters for a larger age group at Crowland on Monday evenings, where grass endurance sessions are the mainstay in the summer, with long road runs in the winter months.

Tim Needham's twice-weekly sessions are aimed at his sprint, middle-distance, throws and jumps athletes, but he also trains hurdlers on weekends as well as running regular strength and conditioning classes and hill running sessions in the winter at Nene Park.

Ian Nolan's special needs club accommodates both junior and senior athletes at Peterborough, providing sprint training as well as long jump, shot and javelin training.

Dave Clay heads up a talented endurance group at Boston, including one of the club's best young athletes, Charlotte Taylor, who placed 11th at last year's English Cross Country championships and took English Schools bronze in 2011.

A large contingent of the club's young athletes also travel to Bourne Woods to train with Mike Prosser, whose developing group includes 17-year-old Alex Hampson, who currently heads the national 5km rankings.

Want your club to be featured? Contact: david.lowes@athleticsweekly.com with some history and details of a typical club session and we'll do the rest



Just some of the many keen and talented youngsters at a training night

