The Towpath Handicap

Aim

The Towpath Handicap is a series run on club nights during the summer, where runners start at different times with the aim of getting everyone to finish together.

The handicap system allows runners of differing abilities to compete together and rewards consistent improvement over the series.

How many races in the series?

There are 7 races in the series which are run at fortnightly intervals. The current course goes from the canoe club to Sunbury lock and back and is 5.5 miles. A map of the route, including mile markers, can be found [here](#).

What can I win?

The Towpath Handicap shield is awarded to the runner with the lowest handicap score in the series.

Prizes are also given for the best men's and ladies' scratch times over the series.

How does the handicap system work?

The first time that you run in the handicap series during a season you will be given a handicap time, which determines when you start. The faster you are, the later you will start.

As your first handicap is only an estimate of how well you are running, you don't score in the first race you complete.

Once you have completed a race, the time you set will determine the handicap for the next race. You will continue to use the same handicap until you set a quicker time.

Your handicap score is simply the position that you finish. The results from your best 3 handicaps are added together to give you a final series score and the lowest score is the winner. You must run in at least 4 races to score.

In the event of a tie, the winner will be decided from the best 4 handicap scores. If there is still a tie, the winner will be decided by comparing the best 5, or if necessary, 6, scores.

If there is still a tie the trophy will be shared.

How are the scratch scores calculated?

Runners are given scores based on the actual time taken to complete the course. The fastest runner will get 1 point, the second fastest will get 2 points and so on.

The winner is the person with the lowest combined score from their best 4 races.