



Kirkstall Harriers Running Club



KA7

Another triumph!

Monk & friends celebrate again!



Saltaire
HAND CRAFTED ALES
SALE STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART OF YORKSHIRE

A big thank you for all contributions to this month's edition, but what's in store?

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Message from our Chairman,
Chris Glover



Kirkstall Abbey 7

We had the highest attendance ever for the KA7 trail run on Sunday 27th Sept. We also had more than ever running the Mad Monk Meander (82) and the Junior Race (28), so the pressure was on for Kirkstall Harriers to put on another good show and make the event a success. I can say that it most definitely was, thanks to our fantastic team of volunteers who worked hard to make the whole morning 'run' smoothly. Thank you all for your efforts.

We have made money for the club and we will be able to make a generous donation to Wheatfields Hospice as a result. We have had many very positive comments from runners who enjoyed the whole event and were very complementary about the organisation and the marshals.

Yorkshire Veterans Athletic Association

by Peter Hey

If you are new to the club or have not done one of these races before - please give them a try. You have to be 35 or over on the day of the race and attracts about 200-300 runners of all ages and abilities. They are an individual *and* a team competition, so even if you came last, which is very unlikely, your score still counts for the club. The distances are about six miles and are usually an interesting mix of all terrains. Even if you do not win a prize for the race, there are usually a few spot prizes to be awarded after the race - provided you have stayed behind - and this is one category where Kirkstall seem to do well. See yvaa.org for all the details.

The remaining race is on Sunday 8th November at Spenborough.

Autumn and dirty footwear in Kirkstall Leisure Centre

Just to remind you all again that when we encounter muddy routes on our autumn runs, please can you remove your trainers before entering the leisure centre when we get back.

Thanks again for your continued cooperation!

Race report: Great North Run

by Chris Scott

It was an early start to get from Leeds to the Newcastle in time to miss the road closures and get parked before the GNR, but the excitement had me awake most of the night anyway. I couldn't wait to pound the pavement in the city I grew up in, and race in one of the most famous and recognised half marathons in the world.

Overcast and quite cold, the conditions looked perfect for a good time later on as we set off up the A1, although fueling strategies went out the window when nerves got the better of me and my friend meaning we couldn't eat until a few minutes before the off.

It was nice to bump into Shami before heading to the start line (although how she spotted me in the crowd I will never know). It was only on the walk to the start line that the enormity of this event became clear. Over 50,000 runners (plus just as many spectators) among one fairly small stretch of road is an impressive sight. Huge speakers pumped out music to which runners were warming up to, as the temperature steadily rose. As the clouds burnt off, it was looking like a scorcher of a day!

My friend and I had numbers reflective of our original estimates of completion time (around 3 hours) so made our way slowly to the back of the throng of people. I thought we would be in the middle, but we were so far back we actually saw the sweeper bus set off! Another



depressing fact was that after the starting gun went off, it took around 30 minutes for our part of the queue to start moving. By the time we crossed the start line, Shami would be at approximately mile 10.

The start was just absolute chaos, but in a good way. Darting past the Teletubbies and the runners who had come to realise that 13.1 miles is a long way made up the first few miles. The hills of Yorkshire are good training though, as the overall course was quite undulating especially early on. The run got warmer and warmer, and at the halfway point a sign was displaying the temperature as 18 degrees. Not ideal, but there was shade to be had and plenty of water stations all along the route which were very welcome.

The race has a stretch, fairly near the end, from around miles

10 to 12 when it just becomes a relentless uphill. Nothing too steep, but just a constant, gradual grind uphill. On already tired legs, many runners seemed to walking at this point, despite the crowds being at their fullest along this stretch. The uphill slog then abruptly levels off before a steep downhill 200 meters turned many legs to jelly, leading to a gorgeous final mile along the coast and over the finish line.

The highlights of the race included the heart swelling moment of running over the Tyne Bridge (thankfully early on so you manage to appreciate it!), an amazing Red Arrows display, the fantastic crowds that lined the entire race route, seeing the sea at mile 12 and crossing the line just in time for a sub 2 and half hours result. Not a brilliant time, but much better than I had guessed for myself in March.

It might not be a good run for a PB and it might not be the most scenic of half marathons, but it deserves the right the call itself the GREAT North Run for so many reasons and I couldn't recommend it enough.

Highlight fancy dress costumes included Marge Simpson, a pantomime horse (2 people) and a huge Peperami! Maybe some inspiration for the purple posse next year?

PBs for September

Distance		Name	Time
Half Marathon	PB	Helen Burgess	01:45:39
Half Marathon	PB	Alyson Glover	01:52:00
Half Marathon	First Race	Vicki Hipkiss	02:23:08
Half Marathon	PB	Shevonne McLarnon	02:01:11
Half Marathon	First Race	Julianne Odede	02:05:05
Half Marathon	PB	Hal Roberts	01:25:57
Half Marathon	PB	Shamiso Sisimayi	01:29:03
Half Marathon	First Race	Malcolm Taylor	02:40:09
Half Marathon	First Race	Hikari Yamaguchi	01:37:53
5k	PB	Shamiso Sisimayi	00:19:47

And not forgetting Adam Moger's super-impressive 00:20:22 parkrun buggy PB at Woodhouse Moor!

Fantastic running everyone!

Harriers night out (why not)

A selection of the purple people got dolled up and headed to town for a few social drinks on Fri 25 Sept, taking in the Lamb and Flag, Calls Landing and the Smokestack.

A good time was had by all but as ever, what happens on a night out, stays on a night out...

Christmas Meal

Our official Christmas do will take place on Thursday 10th December at the Horsforth Hotel, Featherbank Lane, LS18 4NA.

Three courses for £10.49 (or apparently you can get two courses for £8.49)

There are 50 places available (and they're going fast!) so please see Jill Buckley asap to reserve your place, or for more details.

Details of the Unofficial Christmas Do (no doubt sponsored by Alka-Seltzer again) to follow...

Race report:

Yorkshireman hat trick
by Anne Akers

It's Yorkshire through and through. Tough, hilly, no nonsense and, at just short of 15 miles, a good-value half marathon, well, we do like to get our money's worth, us Tykes. It's most definitely the toughest race I've ever done, an uphill start and an uphill finish, with hills in between, including the highest point in West Yorkshire, up above Oxenhope.

The Yorkshireman Half is officially a fell race, so kit has to be carried, including a whistle,

just in case you get lost, or plunge into a bog.

The going ranges from good to oh-my-God with mud, nettles, slippery stones, slabs, tree roots and a few cobbles. It's neither marshalled nor way-marked so a recce is essential.

The field is small, fewer than 300, even smaller for the full marathon, but it's a right Yorkshire challenge and those who complete it get a t-shirt and a huge plate of stew and cake,

which can be eaten together if necessary. In my case, it was absolutely necessary. Laura was more conventional.

It was our third Yorkshireman on the run, I achieved my goal of not being last (it was a close thing). Laura hoped to beat her brother back, he was doing the marathon, coming in second and leaving Laura in his wake.

There's nothing else for it, we'll just have to come back again next year. Who's joining us?



T-shirt, stew and cake
...not to be confused with Laura, Noel and Anne

Club Championship update

by Steve Webb

Two races took place this month, Rombalds Romp and the Vale of York Half two races with vastly different turnouts too!

Timothe Dazin, Paul Glover & Kieran O'Brien filled out the podium at Rombalds. For the second time this year we had the an all-female trio in the top three positions at the Vale of York with Alice Murray-Gourlay (CC debut), Helen Burgess and Alyson Glover respectively. A hotly contested third place overall saw Kieran O'Brien keep the step warm for only a week before James Nundy stepped up, somewhat surprisingly I must admit! [And me too - Ed] Paul Newton & Patrick Nesden have been planted in first and second so long there is a distinct possibility they've grown roots! I'm not even sure if it is mathematically possible for anyone to chop them down (note to self: check), but if it is it will make for a fantastic end to the season. I will update the bonus points after the Yorkshire Marathon.

We have no October CC races due to Pudsey Post Hill being cancelled (huzzah!), however this does lend itself to a prime opportunity to top up you parkrun count if you are still in the hunt for 25 bonus points.

November sets us up for a Club Championship climax (clearly struggling for alliteration here) with three consecutive Sunday races:

- 1st November – Guy Fawkes 10
- 8th November – Harewood 10
- 15th November – Abbey Dash

Entries for Guy Fawkes and the Harewood 10 are likely to sell out, so it's worth pre-entering to avoid disappointment.

I'll be pulling together a list of potential races for discussion at the next committee meeting – please get your suggestions in. In case you haven't already noticed, I'm not a local Yorkshire lad, so my knowledge of alternative races nearby is pretty limited! Unless anyone has any objections or suggestions for improvement, it has been agreed that the format and points structure of the CC will remain the same next year, but by all means please get in touch if you have any ideas. I'll happily bore you to death with dry chat....



Most of our Vale of Yorkers, but are the T-shirts red, pink, or coral?

Member Profile: Ben Coldwell



Age: 25

Occupation: Accountant

Originally from: Fairburn, near Castleford

Time as Kirkstall Harrier: Approx 2 years

When & why did you start running?

I was always a sporty kid growing up, and played in most sports teams right through high school. But that stopped as I got older, I started working in kitchens and bars and then went to uni. I'd say that I only really got into running about 3.5 years ago at the beginning of 2012. I got my first proper job after uni as a financial analyst and knew that 8 hours a day sat at a desk was going to do me no good if I kept eating and drinking the way that I was. So I started running, every evening as soon as I got home from work. Back then I could only manage a mile and would have to stop to have a breather, then I used to turn around and head home.

How did you end up joining Kirkstall?

In 2013 I realised that I hadn't really achieved anything in my life in the past year so I entered my first race, Leeds half, and then maybe a little

impulsively of me, I entered my first marathon in York without even doing the half first. The half went well, sneaked in just under 1 hour 30, but I soon realised that the marathon was going to be a different beast and knew I was going to need to do some extra training. I was working with Paul Miller at Direct Line at the time and talked to him about the half and that I didn't know how I was going to manage with the marathon. He said that I should come down and give Kirkstall a try. I did, and have never looked back.

What is your motivation for running?

So I can eat and drink whatever I want! I have always really enjoyed cooking and eating amazing food, but I also want to live a fit and healthy lifestyle and I find that running really helps to set that balance. And chasing a few PB's obviously.

Greatest running achievements:

My greatest running achievement is the fact that I've built up from only being able to run a mile 3.5 years ago to being a good for age marathon runner. Another running related achievement that I'm really proud of was winning the club championship last year.

Best running related memories:

My best running memories are pretty much all my firsts; completing my first race, completing my first marathon and going sub 3 hours for the first time. These are all incredible memories for me and evoke quite strong emotional feelings knowing that I did those things with my family and friends cheering me on. Oh and Paris, how can I forget Paris; Sam Broome, did I ever tell you about that time I ran Paris marathon?

Worst running related memory:

Although the completion of my first marathon brings back great memories it also brings back one of the worst. I decided to grab a

Lucozade sports drink at one of the water stops which was a huge mistake, and I knew it after the first mouthful. After 20 miles my run started to go downhill; I got cramp in my legs and I was throwing up and retching by the side of the road every few hundred metres and couldn't take any more water on board without it coming straight back up. Safe to say I didn't really enjoy the last few miles of my first marathon. I learned my lesson though and went back a year later and smashed it.

Any words of wisdom?

PB's are a great motivational tool, especially when you are starting out and improving rapidly but I think you need other things that motivate you once your times start to plateau, something that I nearly forgot earlier this year when I started struggling with a few injuries. Think back to why you started running in the first place and appreciate how far you have come.

Also, don't listen to a single word I say; especially when it concerns injuries and/or ibuprofen.

Tell us an interesting fact?

I was the face of Johnsons baby wipes when I was younger, true story.

I was also dropped down the stairs at less than 1 year old and spent 3 weeks with my legs strapped up in traction. I still give my mum grief for this by saying that I should actually be 6 foot tall and a quicker runner...



The last time Ben's legs were white...

Race report:

Leeds Triathlon, 13th Sept 2015

by Collette Spencer

I've wanted to do this for a few years but a little apprehensive as not sure if I was fit enough. When Sheila sent me an email to say she had entered it and asked me to join her, I thought why not, if I don't do it now I never will. So I took the plunge and hit the enter button.

I was quite excited in the weeks leading up to the event, but also nervous as I've never done an open water triathlon before. So I bought myself a wetsuit and tried to fit in as many open water swims as possible in the few weeks I had left before the event. Thanks to Lucy for organising a few open water swims to various places, which I quite enjoyed; however, realised how different it is to swimming in a nicely heated swimming pool.

Didn't have the best sleep the night before the triathlon, as can be expected. I woke up to my alarm at 5.15am, thinking OMG what have I done. I was one of the first ones that arrived at Roundhay Park and took my bike to the stall that offered a free bike safety check. They told me everything was in working order and wished me good luck.

The next thing to do was to take my bike and put it on the rack ready for transition. Was getting a little nervous by this point as everyone looked so fit with some very posh bikes and seemed to know what they were doing. There was a safety briefing that we all listened to then we were

set to go.

Sheila eventually turned up and I think I panicked her, when I said that I didn't think she was allowed into the transition area after 7.40am, as it was 8am by this point.

On went the wetsuit and off we went down to the lake. Was thinking I just want to get the swim over with as I was more nervous about this than any of it.

The horn went and we were off. Panicked slightly as everyone seemed to shoot off into the distance leaving me behind. I thought there's no going back here so just had to make the most of it. I was going into my second lap when another wave was just about to start. I thought, oh no I'm going to get so trampled on here. They all came flying past me, but surprisingly only managed to get whacked with a hand once. Phew! I thought that was a lucky escape.

I was so glad that was over when I came to the end of the swim. I was helped out of the lake by a very nice lady and off I went to pick my bike up.

My wetsuit came off fairly easy being my first time, picked up all my biking gear and off I went. I really enjoyed the bike ride but it was quite hilly on the way back. I was getting quite tired towards the end, thinking to myself 'must be mad' got a 10k to do yet! I probably came to the end of the ride a little too fast and had Sam screaming, "Dismount!" which I don't think quite registered, so she proceeded to shout 'Get off your bike!!'

I was absolutely exhausted by this point. Don't think my legs knew what had hit them. I managed a smile for James' camera and off I went on my run, 3 laps to go!

The run was a real slog, up Hill 60 and then the entire length of Soldiers Field. Whose idea was this?!

It was lovely to see Jill and Jason marshalling in the corner of the field to spur me on. The Girl Scouts who were marshalling on the top path of the park were brilliant, shouting "Come on, you can do it, you're amazing!" They definitely kept me going. It was also great to see my parents who came to support me and were cheering me on through the park, but was I glad to see that finish line!

I would like to thank my friends and family who came to cheer me on and all the purple peeps who marshalled on the day, it made such a difference to see your friendly faces.



Marzipan – king of running foods

by Anne Akers

I can't do gels. Sticky, sweet, gloopy messes that make a quick re-appearance once they've hit the stomach, somehow picking up carrots on the way. All the books and magazines say nutrition is needed at distances over 10km, and taken regularly, following the principle that by the time you're hungry, it's too late to eat. So little and often is the key, which is why gels are so squirtily convenient.

It took a bit of research, fuelled by a life-long love of marzipan, but I found that it definitely did fit the nutrition bill, with nuts providing slow-release energy. I wanted to add a little something extra, so made two

versions, one with raisins and chopped dried apricots, the other with crushed chocolate-coated coffee beans for that caffeine kick.

The recipe is easy, one block of shop-bought marzipan, a handful of raisins, a few chopped apricots, and the crushed chocolate coffee beans (I put them in a plastic bag and hit

them with a rolling pin, it felt good). Pull off a chunk of the marzipan, push the dried fruit in and roll into bite-sized balls, then do the same with the coffee beans. When finished, place in a bag with a little cornflour to stop them sticking. They keep for as long as you can keep your hands off them!



Bleep Test

We will be holding another bleep test session in the leisure centre in October. Look out for it on the training schedule.

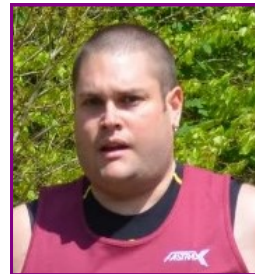
Our newest members, joining in September



Adam Nodwell



Joanne McGarey



Sean O'Halloran

along with

Matt Cox, Helen Kucharczyk, Catherine McIlroy and Anne Pinches

Welcome to the Purple Posse!

Race report: Vale of York half
by Rose George

I don't remember entering this race, but then, I don't remember entering many races. I do them in a flurry, like I'm on Racebest crack, and then months later, discover I'm running them. Apparently I entered Vale of York when I was still off with injury, so I must have been feeling optimistic, like I could actually run a marathon, as planned, in October. By September, I was feeling less optimistic. I was back running, but any formal marathon plan had long since gone out of the window. I'd done a few longish runs, but the longest had been 15 miles. So I had no choice: I'd have to turn a half-marathon into an eighteen mile training run.

We got to Sherburn airfield early. Martin and Mark were still setting out the start bollards. The airfield had looked on the map to be about a mile long. I'd looked on gb.mapometer, my usual source, for a nice five mile run, but the lanes around Sherburn-in-Elmet were mostly the country kind that don't have pavements. In the end it seemed easier to just run up and down an airfield for five miles. So I did. And it was nice, actually. I saw hares or rabbits scampering off at the far end of the tarmac road, and at the other far end were two polite RAF cadets marshalling the traffic, who looked at me quizzically until I said "marathon training" and then they looked at me pityingly instead. Martin shouted from his car, "You're in the lead!" and I shouted back "this is the only race I'll ever win!". The miles passed quickly, and I'd left myself half an hour between finishing them and the start of the race, for the usual toilet necessities, and for some coffee and bananas. It could have gone wrong, of course, and I could have stiffened up in that half hour, but actually I was fine. The sun was out, and it was a beautiful day. I told myself to put the first five miles out of my head (a tactic that didn't really work as my Garmin kept going rather than going back to zero) and off I set again.

I knew the first mile on the airfield road intimately, having run it several times already, up and down and up and down. I started near the back to avoid congestion and because it was chip-timed. I didn't have a pace in mind, but it turns out my legs wanted to run at 9.30 minute miles and didn't really budge from that. There were about 1400 runners but the congestion disappeared pretty quickly, there was always space to run, and it was a friendly atmosphere, with a good mix of club and unaffiliated runners. The route is lovely: flat, mostly - hence its PB reputation - apart from a railway bridge near the beginning. The views were fields or woods or pretty villages, and supporters now and then: thank you to them. I liked the three in camping chairs who were sitting by the road in the first mile, and still there for the thirteenth. That's dedication, that is.

I'd guess half the route was sun-exposed and half went through beautiful shady woods, though I am probably misremembering because the woods are what I remember most. I didn't find it too hot but I know some people did (see Hannah's face in the team photo). I watched Burjor and Patrick overtake me and disappear, but I wasn't going to budge from my pace. The voice in my head said, "this is a training run. This is a training run." I made sure to drink at every water station and take a gel, and I felt properly hydrated and nourished all the way round. I loved that the water volunteers were bikers with big motorbikes, and I enjoyed the little girl spraying us with her hose-pipe. Being overtaken by a Dalmatian - a woman in dotty shorts with dotty legs and two black floppy ears who told me about Pet Rescue and how it does pet therapy with children - was fun. I ran alone for most of the race so had time to think my usual thoughts which are not, as most non-runners think, always the compassionate and caring kind, because sometimes I'm thinking, "your bum's a weird shape," or "you're going to get a hip injury with that flailing foot," or "for the love of god get a decent sports bra" or "TAKE THOSE

HEADPHONES OUT" to some veering numpty: those fleeting running brain thoughts that keep you going, like oil on wheels. I ran behind a tattooed woman for a while, but all I could see of her back tattoo underneath her vest was a wing and a nipple. That kept me entertained for a while, not least because I was trying desperately to speed up so I didn't have to look at it any more.

About four miles from the end, I thought, this doesn't feel too bad, and then, I'm going to be over two hours. This bothered me a lot at first: my PB is 1:49 and I've never run a half marathon in over two hours. But then I shoved my ego back in the box and thought, I'll have run 18.1 miles (actually Martin, it was 18.2), I've had a crappy few months with injury and it's amazing I'm running at all. Not only that, but my tendon doesn't hurt and I may actually be able to run a marathon. By the time I got to the final strait, I was still managing to overtake people, and getting cheered on by the purples - now all pretty in the pink technical t-shirt - and I was quite happy. Even if Burjor and Patrick both trounced me.

Vale of York has a reputation as a nice, fast race. It's definitely nice, and if you don't run five miles beforehand or have had a spotty running year, or if it's several degrees cooler, then it's probably fast too. (Our esteemed editor James didn't get on with the race this year either, but applause to him for resolutely finishing his three mile walk to the finish no matter how many people were urging him to sprint.) There were some grumbles about the bottles of water not having caps on - making the bottles difficult to run with - and about chaotic marshalling at the finish, so that the fast runners found themselves competing for space with an icecream van. But overall, it was smoothly organised and run. Also, how often do you get very polite young marshals in RAF uniform? Or a medal? There are rumours that the race may not survive building plans for the airfield land. I hope not, because I'll be back.

Race report:

The Unbearable Light-Ness of Being - Loch Ness Marathon

by Simon Smith

There is a little bit of a back story to my participation in this race. 10 years ago when I was a member of Nidd Valley Road Runners, a group of us ran the LNM as part of a birthday celebration weekend for a girl in the club who was turning 40. I only see her now very infrequently, but I had happened to mention to her casually about 18 months ago “wouldn’t it be great if we recreated that trip when you turn 50”? One thing led to another, she took me up on the idea and organised the trip. Accepting responsibility for this off the cuff brainchild, I felt duty bound to enter and, hey presto, have just completed the race for the 2nd time.

They always say “never go back”, but I had always felt as if I had some unfinished business with the Loch Ness Marathon. When I ran it in 2005, I had a bit of a shocker. It was only my second stab at the distance, and felt something of a novice. Both my knees gave me gip during the race, I ran what I felt was a below par 4:19, and it took me until the following Easter to get my knees ready to run again. It would be fair to say my recollections of the race were therefore not the fondest.

I’ve had far more enjoyable marathon experiences since, and after what I felt had been a really good 3 months training (even experiencing the unusual novelty of actually looking forward to my Sunday long run), I felt ready to return and show this race what I’d got. One of the first things you should consider if you decide to participate in this event is just how far it actually is to get up there. The Scottish Highlands are undoubtedly beautiful, but they feel like a long way away. A train trip from York to Inverness encompasses a change at

Edinburgh and a total journey time of around 7 hours. The views from the train window once you head north of the Lowlands do help pass the time however as well as firing your imagination. Inverness is where the race finishes, and is where you collect your race number and info pack. One of the regrets I have from the trip is not being able to spend time exploring the city, as it was a bit of a dash from there to our hotel in Drumnadrochit (good Scottish place name, that one) about 12 miles north on the banks of the Loch itself. Inverness Castle casts its impressive gaze across a small and green city centre with some architectural gems that the Victorians erected with the confidence of empire builders, knowing they would last for a long time. The same is unlikely to be said of the mercifully few buildings thrown up in the latter part of the 20th Century that wouldn’t have looked out of place in East Berlin circa 1972. I’d mark your card to try and explore if you have time.

Race day involved a coach pick up in Drumnadrochit and being bussed to the start, which I can only describe as being somewhere in the middle of nowhere – but what a stunning middle of nowhere. We nearly didn’t make it in time, as the driver wanted to take a wrong turn which would have seen us heading off in the direction of Fort William. “You’re going to have to help me out here guys, I haven’t done this before.....does anyone know where the start is”? “Er....you tell us mate, you’re the bus driver”. As he then tried his best to burn out the clutch as we wended a precarious road into the hills, I couldn’t help thinking that they’d have been better off sub-contracting the transportation arrangements to the Marx Brothers.

When I say the start is stunning and in the middle of nowhere, I mean it. The race has certainly grown in size and popularity over the course of 10

years. Back then, the field was only about 800 runners, this year’s edition had seen over 3,000 entering. A marching pipe band only added to the atmosphere at the start of what is rightly billed as one of the most scenic marathon races in the UK. If like me you usually feel that the skirl of the bagpipes is akin to the sound you’d hear if a trainee vet tried to remove a cat’s unmentionables using only a blunt penknife, you’d change your mind if you’d have been there.

The profile of the course route is perhaps unusual for this part of the world, in the sense it is nothing like as hilly as you’d expect it to be. It starts with a steady descent over the first few miles, so the eager runner has to work even harder to try and rein back that initial surge of enthusiasm to set off quicker than they really should. It flattens out a bit in the middle section (the term “flattens” is relative), and then climbs steeply around the 19 mile mark, just as you are most likely to be hitting “the wall”. Views of Loch Ness are ample and well worth drinking in as you go along – the sort of thing you see on boxes of shortbread.

I’m generally ambivalent about crowd support during a marathon, as tend to go into my own little bubble, but if you thrive on the noisy support of a big city race, this one might not be for you. Until you hit the outskirts of Inverness, crowd support is minimal as you only pass through a handful of small villages and rural hamlets. Marshals were plentiful however, and water and energy drink stations were well manned and efficient, even for runners at the very back end of the field (who sometimes get a bit of a raw deal from race organisers).

Continued...

Race report continued:

The Unbearable Light-Ness of Being - Loch Ness Marathon

by Simon Smith

What I didn't anticipate was just how warm race day was going to be. If I had a pound for every time I've agonised whether to race in a base layer with my vest over the top, or just my vest, I'd be a man of some means. And, is this just me, but why do I make the wrong choice every time? Put the base layer on and you are too hot. Opt for vest only and you are too cold. It's a losing battle akin only to trying to win an argument with my Mother in Law. This time, I went for base layer and vest and.....yup, it was hot. Damn hot!

Part of me harboured genuine hopes of a PB in this one, but I developed a feeling quite early in the race that it wasn't going to happen. One of the fascinating but infuriating aspects of marathon running is that training can have gone incredibly well, you feel great, but it doesn't quite happen on the day in the way you'd hoped. Other times, you don't feel so great but the race goes well. This is a conundrum I have yet to solve, and is just one of the reasons why my love-hate relationship with this distance eventually sees me coming back for more even when I've said "never again" with the vehemence of a hangover sufferer. I suspect I'll never run the "perfect" marathon, but I'm either cursed or blessed to keep trying until I do.

A word of warning if you find yourself doing this race. It has one of those cruel twists where you can hear the finish an awfully long time before you see it. The last 1.5 miles are run along the banks of the River Ness as you head into Inverness city centre, but you have to go out, run across a bridge and effectively double-back on yourself. I found this a real challenge mentally, as could see runners nearing the finish on the opposite side of the bank who I felt I could almost reach out and touch – to the point of harbouring the very darkest thoughts to quit even that close to the end.

They say you learn a lot about yourself during a marathon, and this being my 12th, I fully concur. The mind wants you to listen to your body, because your body is yelling very loudly at you to stop. You have to dig deep to find the will from somewhere to keep going in the face of all logic and reason. I knew that my PB quest had gone, but what I hadn't bargained on was the prospect of finishing beyond 4 hours, a barrier it took me a few good goes to break. There would have been no shame in that, but I wanted my time to start

with a 3, not a 4. A final spurt (how long does the .2 bit of 26.2 miles seem to go on for?) saw me come home with a chip time of 3.57.10. I'm still a bit disappointed by that as I write this just over 24 hours after completing the race (my fingers being about the only part of me that isn't hurting), but it was what it was and is what it is. This battle may have been lost, but I made it round and live on to try and win the war another day.



Czech running legend Emil Zatopek said "Some people run the marathon to find out who is the quickest. I run the marathon to find out who is the toughest". I think anyone who finishes a marathon irrespective of their time, has to be mentally tough to pay the respect due to the distance. A dash of lunacy does no harm either.

I recommend this race highly if you fancy a marathon that is a bit different and one that will live long in your memory. It's well run and slickly organised, is scenically stunning and has become popular whilst still retaining a certain homespun charm. Just don't drink the beetroot juice in your goody bag (provided by race sponsor Baxters) unless you've long had an itch to see what purple coloured vomit looks like. And the showers could have been a bit nearer the finish line. It's not terribly pleasant being in close proximity to a bunch of sweaty, hairy-ar5ed men in varying states of undress comparing notes about how many toenails they are going to lose (you are free to disagree), but walking what felt like half a mile to savour that experience was not high on my post event wish list.

And if you thought I could get through a review of this race without mentioning the Loch Ness Monster, I've just disappointed you. For the record, Nessie was nowhere to be seen.

PECO Cross Country 2015/16

by Adam Moger

The committee have recently voted to fund the timing chips and race entry for this season's PECO XC series (dates below). With decent income from the races we host, it's a natural extension from those already funded: Nationals, Northern's, Yorkshires, Calderdale/Bradford/Leeds Country Way relays, and the three summer relays of Danefield, Washburn and Golden Acre. Future years will depend largely on race income, so make the most of it whilst you can!

For those new to PECO, they're a brilliant series of local cross country races of about five miles, with competition between clubs and individuals (best 4 from 5 races), plus usually a "free gift" at the end of the season if you run all 5. It's the most popular series by far with members, with many running at least one race and average KH turnout of 40-50.

Our men's team is in Division 2 (of 3), and our always-strong ladies are in the Premiership.

Race 1: Nov 22nd at Temple Newsam

Race 2: Dec 13th at West Park

Race 3: Jan 3rd at Middleton Park

Race 4: Jan 24th at Golden Acre Park (date is set, but venue is to be confirmed)

Race 5: Feb 14th at Meanwood (date is set, but venue is to be confirmed)

Photo of the month



*Chris Hutson and Ben Coldwell find something amusing under the Monk's habit!
Could it be something short? (like shorts?)*

Member birthdays for October

Jennifer Berg
Kevin Blackhurst
Helen Burgess
Colin Chapman
Paul Glover
Carol Moran
Paul Newton
Anne Pinches
Chris Scott
Collette Spencer
Marie Turton
Sandra Warren

Happy birthday y'all!

Kirkstall Harriers meet every Monday and Wednesday in the lounge at Kirkstall Leisure Centre, Kirkstall Lane, LS5 3BE at 6.50pm for a 7pm start.

All standards of runners are welcome to join us, just turn up and say hello (we are very friendly!)

Please visit our website for more info: kirkstallharriers.org.uk

Please email kirkstallharriers@googlemail.com with any questions about the club, or if you would like to contribute to the newsletter.

All articles are gratefully received.



Kirkstall Harriers



@KHarriers



**DARK NIGHTS ARE HERE
PLEASE WEAR HI VIS
FOR TRAINING NIGHTS**



And finally...

Autumn leads us towards panto season and Editor Jim has taken it upon himself to:

- A) refer to himself in the third person
- B) fill this last portion of the newsletter with an advert for a pantomime he is performing in (in the band, on drums)

If you fancy being thoroughly entertained this festive period, be sure to consider this show! Good clean family fun, (well, with a sprinkling of adult gags the kids won't get) and a lot of audience participation.

Castleford Phoenix Theatre is on the Airedale High School campus, Crewe Road, Castleford, WF10 3JU, a couple of mins away from Xscape.

Try it - you might like it!

etc...
encore theatre company

**OUR BRAND NEW
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