



Dear Abbeys!

As I am writing this, the Spod group invitations are just going out for the return of our Tuesday and Thursday evening training sessions - very exciting! Without wanting to jinx it, let's hope they are now here to stay! Well done to you all for keeping up with your training through the winter months. The evenings are now getting a lot lighter and soon we will be able to re-introduce some off-road training too.

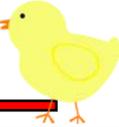
Races are starting to re-emerge, and I would encourage you all to get yourselves entered into some. Why? Because you will always push yourself harder in a race than you would do in training. You just do. So those of you that have been clocking PB's during lockdown will smash it even more!

Well done to our brilliant Juniors who have kept up their magic over the last few months, working hard in their training and continuing to do really well in the Virtual Challenges.

Finally, please keep two dates free in your diaries - Sunday, 27th June (Eccup 10) and evening of Tuesday, 6th July (Golden Acre Relay), when we need as many of the club as possible to marshal our two club races. These two races fund our club and raise lots of money for our nominated charities so please try to help make these races go smoothly.

Have a lovely Easter break, everyone!

Jim



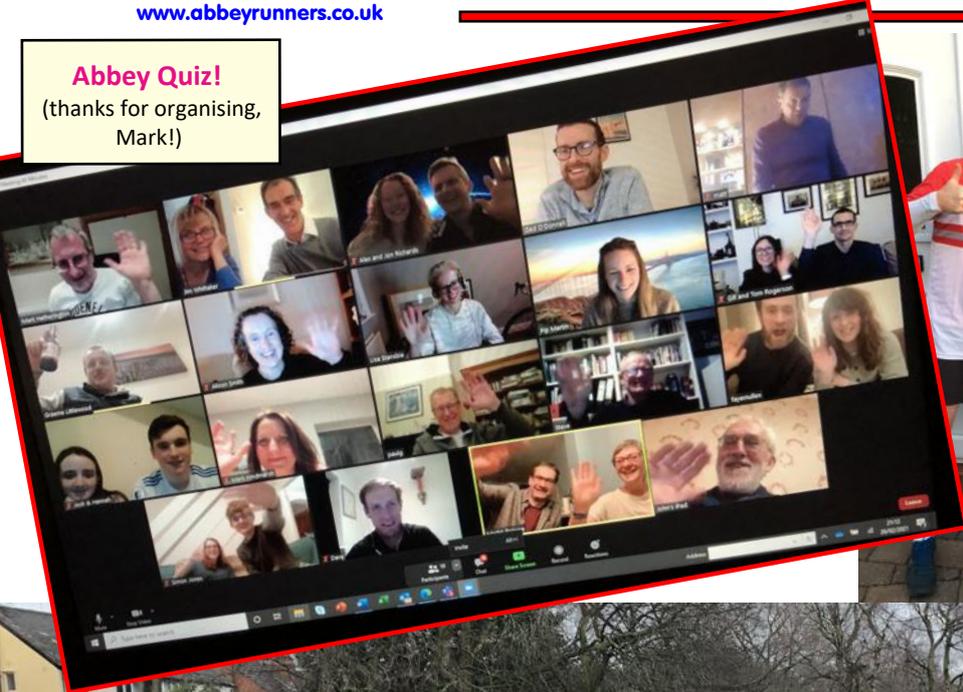
Your 2021 Committee!!

- Jim Whittaker, President
- Graeme Littlewood, Secretary
- Simon Jones, Treasurer
- Helen Roden, Juniors
- John Ward, Membership
- Tony Bastin, Website
- Alex Kilcoyne, Ladies' Captain
- Ross Armstrong, Men's Captain
- Jo Callaghan, Social
- Jasmine Salih, Club Coach
- Ordinary Members: Gill Nesbitt, Steve Hodgkinson, Adam Ellis, Ali Ameri, Duncan Clark

www.abbeyrunners.co.uk

Abbey Quiz!

(thanks for organising, Mark!)



Secret Santa!



New Years Day Double parkrun!!

Abbey spotlight on....

Alison Smith



1. When did you join Abbey Runners?

I can't remember exactly but I think about 10 years ago.

2. Why did you join us?

I had started running to help lose some weight - when I first started I couldn't run the 2 mile loop round the block and used to always go super early so no one would see me! I ran on my own through the summer but as the days started getting shorter I needed someone to run with. I was quite intimidated about getting in touch with a running club but I sent an email to the membership secretary at the time, Peter Leach. He replied really quickly and put me at ease, so I turned up to join his "steady" group ... I was pretty nervous but he made me so welcome and gave me such encouragement to keep going and progress, enter my first 10k and then to move up to Jane Hallam's group, who was equally encouraging. I've now got such brilliant friends and done so many wonderful things (see below!) because of getting into running and I have Abbey Runners and Peter to thank for that.

3. What is your favourite running distance race?

Probably 10 miles - anything shorter is just too painful (I really struggle at 10k) and much as I love the sense of achievement of completing a marathon or ultra they do involve a big commitment to training - 10 miles is a nice balance.

4. What is your greatest running achievement?

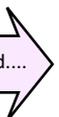
I think my greatest achievement is qualifying for team GB in my age group in duathlon (OK not strictly running but includes running). It was Alex Richards who first said she thought that was achievable (I hadn't previously really known anything about it) so without any expectation I entered a qualifier. I was such a rookie she even had to tell me to take the saddle pack with all my tools in it off my bike before the race (I can still see her face when she asked me what was in it....). But despite all the odds, I squeaked in and have since competed in Romania and Spain, and should have added Austria and Holland to that last year if it wasn't for covid. For running on its own, it's probably finishing my first marathon and getting a good for age qualifier for London, or finally running a sub-22 minute 5k after hitting 22.00 twice (if only I could get near that now!).

5. What is your greatest running disaster?

Mike and I took a career break and went travelling in South America. We decided to enter a couple of races while away and signed up for a 10k in Bogota, Colombia, which sits at over 2600m altitude. Everyone seems to get their souvenir t-shirts there before the race and wears them to race in, and locating the pick-up point in downtown Bogota was difficult enough, but the race I couldn't run more than about 5 minutes without getting stitch due to the altitude and having to walk. The saving grace was, about half way through, the whole race had to be stopped for a train to go across a level crossing, so we got a good rest! It was definitely a PW but still a brilliant experience! A close second was the club trip to Chase the Train when loads of us were suffering with some sort of food-borne virus from the club barbeque the day before and it was about 30 degrees too...people were dropping like flies. I made it to the end eventually but it was a really close run thing. I'm pretty sure I was getting overtaken by people walking.



Continued...



Abbey spotlight on....

Alison Smith

Continued...

6. Which is your favourite race in the running calendar? (pre-Covid!)

My favourite race is definitely Leeds Country Way relay. I think I've run every leg at some point and they are all great, I love doing the reces in the summer, running as a pair and the extra interest of trying to get the baton round for your team. Liz Willis and I got into the routine of going to as many changeover points as possible during the day to cheer the team on which made it a fun day out too. A close second is the Chevin Chase which is a great post-Christmas blast, a fun atmosphere, really well supported and means you can go home and enjoy your turkey sandwiches and Christmas cake and watch films all afternoon with a clear conscience. Sometimes you get a bonus Brownlee showing up too.

7. Which is your most memorable Abbey event (club trip, party, etc)?

The most memorable club trip has to be the first trip to Gdansk and Gdynia parkrun, Poland. It was just a laugh from start to finish, it was the year of the "Beast from the East", and we ran the parkrun (which was directly on the Baltic Sea front) in basically all the clothes we had brought with us, including our coats, and still suffering from the after-effects of too much Polish beer the night before. I think the local organisers thought we were mad visiting in February but made us very welcome. Can't wait till we can go on tour again!

8. What are your running goals for the next 12 months?

I'm focusing on doing a couple of half ironman triathlons this year, fingers crossed. I've done a couple before but never really made them full focus and I'd like to give them a proper go... Considering that time-wise they are about 50% longer than a marathon they need some respect!

9. What does your typical week's training look like?

A typical week's training at the moment will involve about 3-4 runs and 3-4 bikes (I'll add the swimming back in once the pools are open or the lakes are a bit warmer), plus I try to do a couple of yoga sessions and a couple of strength sessions, just short ones involving a few squats, lunges, planks etc. I've been following the 80/20 triathlon plan so the sets include both very gentle "slow" runs and interval sets, same on the bike. It has been good for me as I usually tend to do everything at the same pace.

10. What drives you? How do you keep yourself motivated?

I guess I just enjoy being out running or being on my bike - am I allowed to say I've not really missed the racing so much? I'm sure it will be good to get some races in again though.



Runner(s) of the Month

Simon Jones
December

**Congratulations to our latest
Runners of the Month!**



Simon was nominated for his superb performance at the Short Circuit Ultra on the 12th of December. The route was off-road and extremely muddy and the weather wasn't particularly kind either. The course was 32.5 miles/52.3 km with 4,000 ft of climb, which Simon completed in 5 hrs 29mins, placing him a very impressive 6th overall! All of this was fitted in around helping out at Junior training, which he attended the day after the ultra!

Ali Ameri
January



Not only did Ali run 350km in January (despite the terrible weather) in aid of the respiratory care unit where he works, along the way he achieved a 5km PB and ran his very first marathon - sub 4 hours too!!

Alastair White
February



Alastair ran every day in December up to Christmas as part of the 'marathon' challenge, and was at it again running every day in February for Cancer Research. He ran over 200km in February!

Well done also to our other nominees for Dec, Jan and Feb - you're all heroes!!
Sunny Cheema, Shauna Corrigan, Boe Claybourn, Joseph Ibrahim, John Ackroyd, Adam Ellis, Martin Jones, Meg House, Ged O'Donnell, Paul Craven, Martin Browne

Clickity-click, it's.....

Abbey Bingo!

After the news of ANOTHER lockdown, so to another virtual challenge to keep us occupied. And with the shocking weather in January and February, something to encourage us out the door! It wasn't easy to decide on this challenge as 2020 was such a jam packed year (perversely) with all our Abbey virtual challenges and other virtual events/races. So we went back to basics with Bingo!!



Ged's card - taking good shape!



Strava Art:
This masterpiece courtesy of Tom Rogerson (attempt no.2)

16 x challenges purely based on fun; varying and flexible distances and terrain. So far we've seen happy looking folk exploring new trails on the 'Release your inner Peco' run, a 'Show me the love' Valentine's Day run, Strava segment PBs galore and Abbeys reuniting (1:1 as per current guidelines) for social runs...we'll take all we can get! It's been great to see the Facebook posts.



There is no time limit and no leader board. Just have a bash, tick off a square and happy days. Although for anyone who completes "BINGO" there is the virtual special edition Bingo Bell to ring!

Ross



Abbey spotlight on.....

★ Scott Macdonald

1. When did you join Abbey Runners?

I joined in June 2019.

2. Why did you join us?

Originally my aim was to be able to do at least 10K once a week... and not hurt afterwards! I also wanted to run with a group, as it was far too easy to find some excuse for not going for a run by myself.

3. What is your favourite running distance race?

Not sure I have a favourite distance; anything from 10K to Half marathon is fair game; although I do enjoy having a 5K parkrun blast too.

4. What is your greatest running achievement?

Surviving some of David Leslie's routes? Does that count? I did complete the London Marathon in 1999 (showing my age now), and won a few races as a lad; but my best performance as an Abbey was at Lightwater Valley 10K where I was delighted to go sub 45 mins for 10K on a slightly hilly mixed trail/road course.

5. What is your greatest running disaster?

At the London Marathon in 99, when (aged 21) I decided to 'Carb load' before the race. Which meant I decided to eat about a dozen shredded wheat for breakfast about an hour before the race. I got to about 14 miles... then began visiting a succession of portaloos for the remainder of the race.

6. Which is your favourite race in the running calendar? (pre-Covid!)

Well, as I've not been an Abbey that long, I haven't had time to try that many of them yet. I loved the PECO's, especially for atmosphere and team spirit. I also enjoyed the Chevin Chase, despite being absolutely knackered.

7. Which is your most memorable Abbey event (club trip, party, etc)?

I think the many challenges that came about as a result of the Lockdown. At a time when the club could have become disparate, it probably came together better than ever. I loved events like Abbey Tag, and the relay challenges. Probably the craziest one was the downhill 5K, during which I disturbed many locals by belting down 'the Cookridge Flyer' dressed as a Frenchman, carrying a baguette as a baton and yelling "Bonjour" at everyone I passed on the way.

8. What are your running goals for the next 12 months?

So as many of you know, Naomi and I were blessed with the safe arrival of baby Robin in October last year. As a result we've both had a fair bit of time off from running. So my goals this year are to get back to running weekly with the club and to get out running with Robin in his buggy. We're coming up to him being 6 months now so you may see me at a parkrun (when we're allowed). I have 3 Triathlon entries and a place in the Great North Run carried over from last year; it'd be great to get fit enough to do those!

9. What does your typical week's training look like?

Sadly at the moment not much... but hoping to back to regular running when Robin's sleep pattern settles down a bit. Before Robin's arrival, a typical week involved Club on Tuesday, Speed training on a Thursday and maybe a longer 10-13 mile run on Sunday. I also enjoyed going out with the 'Abbey Riders' during the summer months.

10. What drives you? How do you keep yourself motivated?

I find the camaraderie and friendship of the club members is the thing that keeps me going. I really look forward to seeing everyone at training and events. At all levels there is encouragement and people challenging you to just push that bit harder. Seeing clubmates do well spurs you on too.





A very Muddy Christmas

Position	Name	Date Run	Team	Time
1	Freddie Roden	25/12/2020	Abbey Runners	00:46:45
3	David Barrick	26/12/2020	Abbey Runners	00:55:27
4	James Whittaker	26/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:02:02
5	Alison Smith	26/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:02:44
6	Craig Kent	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:02:50
8	Paul Greene	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:07:12
9	Ali Ameri	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:08:16
12	Helen Roden	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:10:17
17	Liz Wills	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:17:07
18	Adam Ellis	27/12/2020	Abbey Runners	01:19:58

Races have been few and far between over the last year, but our friends at Even-splits kept us occupied over the Christmas break with the Virtually Real Muddy Christmas, which was won by our very own Freddie Roden!

The race certainly lived up to its name. Starting from the Stairfoot Lane car park, you headed up and around Eccup reservoir, before heading towards yet more mud around the place where they film Emmerdale and then back across what was probably the muddiest field I have ever seen in my life (and that's including several UK childhood camping holidays).

Mud, mud and more lovely mud.

Jim



The Abbey Express

The **Juniors** section!!
by Sophie Brady



Welcome back to the 4th edition of the junior's newsletter. We are looking forward to seeing everyone again when training can resume on the 4th April 2021. But a lockdown certainly hasn't stopped our strong juniors. Let's see what they have been up to!!

Firstly, Congratulations to all the Juniors on an amazing 2020 season. We had a great end of season session with the junior awards.



I was proud to be presented with my Junior Runner of the Year shield by the 2020 Senior Runner of the Year, Jasmine!

Continued....

The Abbey Express (cont.)

Junior Awards 2020 (cont.):

Exceptional Achievement – Ollie Wright & Freddie Roden
Top Contribution – Alfie Hickman
Membership recognition – Connor Clark



The Abbey Express (cont.)

Junior Awards 2020 (cont.):

Best Newcomers – Jemima Coughlan & Katy Smith
Most improved – Daphne & Dominic Fanaroff
Most enthusiastic – Callum Holmes & Danielle Keren Paz



Continued...

The Abbey Express (cont.)

There has been some great training from home. A special mention to Thomas for his weekly training facebook posts. They have been very inspirational and helped motivated his teammates too. Great job!



TRAINING FROM HOME



Continued....

The Abbey Express (cont.)

WINTER GRAND PRIX LEAGUE

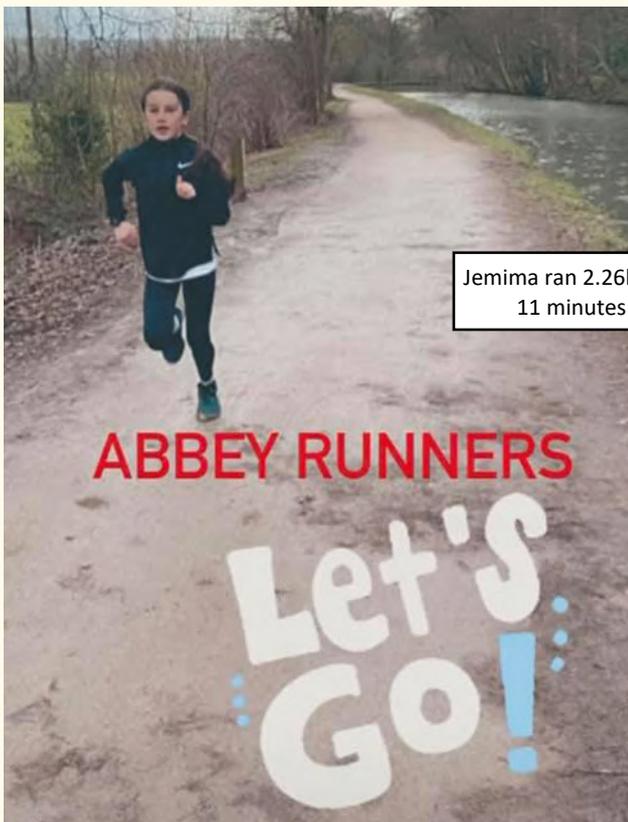
Congratulations to Harvey, Rebecca, Timothy and Sophie for taking part and representing the juniors in this challenge. Maybe we can get a picture of all of you wearing your prize abbe face masks for the next edition. Lol!

The juniors had their 5th virtual challenge 13th-21st February 2021.

"Run your Age" challenge



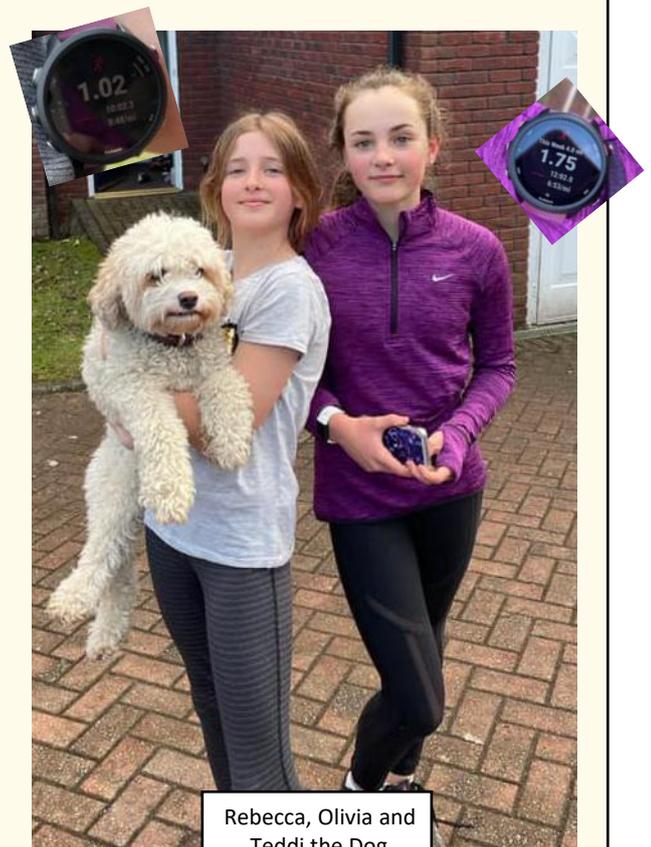
Timothy Hardy ran 2.17 km in 9 minutes. He set new 1 mile and 2km PB's too - 6.41 & 8.21.



Jemima ran 2.26km in 11 minutes

ABBHEY RUNNERS

Let's Go!



Rebecca, Olivia and Teddi the Dog

The Abbey Express (cont.)

Get to know....

Callum Holmes

1. How old are you?

8 years old

2. When did you join the Abbey Juniors?

October 2019

3. Why did you join the club?

My friend Saif had started going to Abbey Juniors and we both loved running at school. Also my Mum had joined the adult Abbey Runners after doing couch to 5K.

4. What has motivated you to run in lockdown?

My Mum and Dad have both got me out running a lot during lockdown, especially during the first lockdown. Also I have taken part in all the junior virtual challenges, and I completed all the Abbey Lockdown League weekly running challenges in 2020. My favourite challenge was the Pub Crawl one [!!] as I did that with my Dad and I nearly ran 10K!

5. What are your running (club or school or parkrun, etc) accomplishments so far?

I was really proud to be awarded the Abbey Juniors Most Enthusiastic Trophy in 2020.

6. What are 3 things we don't know about you?

I love drawing and during lockdown I have done all the #DrawWithRob drawings, that's over 80 drawings. I support Leeds United and my favourite player is Bamford. My favourite food is calamari!

7. What does the Abbey club mean to you?

The Abbey club means a lot to me (and my family) because it has kept me motivated to run, and I love running with other boys and girls who like running too!

8. What are your future running goals/By the end of 2021 I want to.....

smash my Boddington Junior parkrun PB as I know I can do it!



The Abbey Express (cont.)

VIRTUAL CHALLENGE

The juniors had their 5th virtual challenge in February. This was to run your age in minutes. See some pictures on page 12.

Abbey year 6 and under took 2nd place

Abbey year 7 and up took 3rd place.

What a fantastic result!

As we go to print, the Juniors are competing in the 6th virtual club challenge, a re-match of the last one : run your age 20th-28th March 2021.

Can they bring home the crown? **Come on Abbeys. We can do this!**

(Looks like you will have to wait to until the next edition to find out the result though.)



Sophie

Saif, Timothy and
Ollie with their Virtual
Race Trophies



Coaches' Corner

This is a regular feature brought to you by your coaching team. We love running and we have a suspicion that you do too! These exercises are important to help keep you injury free and are likely to help you run faster to boot.

Jasmine, Helen & Mark

GLUTE KICKS BACKS (aka Donkey kicks!)

This is another good glute exercise in our quest for the perfect butts! And don't forget, strong glutes help provide stability and power for running.



So here is how:

Step 1: Kneel on the floor or on an exercise mat with your arms extended in front of you. You should be in a kneeling push-up position with your arms shoulder width apart. This is the starting position.

Step 2: Lift your right leg until your hamstrings are in line with your back. Contract your glutes while performing this part of the exercise and hold the contraction at the top for a second.

Step 3: Return to the starting position and repeat the process with your left leg.

Step 4: Alternate legs until you have complete the number of reps in your set.



Do 3 sets of 10 reps for each leg with a short rest in between each set.

Progression:

On the 10th rep of each set, hold your leg in the position and pulse for 10 ie, contract your glute to produce a small upward movement of your leg x10.

Things to watch out for: Make sure you keep your core engaged (belly button sucked into your spine) so that your back stays level and does not curve, and so that you do not tilt when you raise your leg.

Helen, Jasmine & Mark

If you would like to contribute any articles, features, race reports, etc for the next newsletter, then please email them to the Newsletter Editorial Department at abbeyweekly@outlook.com

See you next issue,
fans!