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www.abbeyrunners.co.uk

President's Notes

Dear Abbeys!

This Newsletter underlines how busy the club has been in the last few months and how much has been going on. Lots of socials, races and relays! The Eccup 10 and Golden Acre Relay races were both hugely successful events, thanks to our race directors, Simon Jones, Mark Hetherington and Helen Roden. It is great that the club has increased its donations this year to our club charities, Hollybank Trust and Leeds North & West Foodbank, and we hope to be able to welcome both charities to our AGM in November. Thanks once again to all who helped out, marshal, serve cake and drinks, etc and made both of those events possible.

As we head into the final quarter of 2022, as runners we begin to focus on our autumn races and training goals and (perhaps) which races we might want to start planning for the New Year, whether it be a Spring marathon (Leeds in May anyone?) or just run your first 10k. We also, of course, have the PECO cross country league to keep us motivated and fit throughout the Winter. As ever, I encourage EVERYONE in the club to have a go and take part in these. They are genuinely for runners of all abilities and the club team spirit is always fantastic.

But I always say that if you ever do one thing with this club, it is keep up your regular Tuesday and/or Thursday night club training. It is by running regularly with others that you naturally improve and get fitter. And it makes you feel good too. So make club training one of your "non-negotiables" in life...every week!

Jim

Peter Leach Memorial Run
see inside



"HOT STUFF!!"



Yep! It certainly was hot stuff on the Club Trip at the Blackpool Music Run, right at the peak of the heat wave. Race Report inside!

Plus lots more!



Abbey spotlight on....

Kathryn Ashworth

1. When did you join Abbey Runners?

About 5 or 6 years ago.

2. Why did you join us?

My first experience of running with a group was with a "run together" group at Leeds Beckett designed to give confidence to people new to running. This was part of the many things promoted as a result of the London Olympics legacy via the BBC "get inspired" campaign. It worked! The lovely run leaders there encouraged us to consider joining a running club, something I never thought I would do in a million years! I confess that I chose Abbey Runners because it met on the only night I was free. However it turned out to be the right choice!

The first time I came along on a Tuesday night I was very nervous and didn't know what to expect. It turned out that on that particular evening everyone was doing a special event at the Chevin and so I sat at Holt Park by myself for a bit and then went home! Not to be discouraged, I tried again the following week and was made to feel very welcome by David Leslie and Jasmine and I've never looked back.

I was inspired to start running by the atmosphere whilst watching Richard run at the Great North Run, the Leeds Half and the Eccup 10. I gave him the ultimate gift of Abbey Runners membership for his birthday so that he could have the joy of running the PECOs. I think he has just about forgiven me!

3. What is your favourite running distance race?

Hmm, tricky question. Definitely not 5k, far too much pressure to run fast the whole time. Maybe 10k, but I do also enjoy the longer distances when I can take it steady and enjoy the whole thing.

4. What is your greatest running achievement?

Perhaps enjoying Coniston 14 so much, or completing my 1st half marathon. Or maybe even the first time I got round parkrun without stopping. Or was it successfully getting Becky and Richard to join a running club with me??

5. What is your greatest running disaster?

I don't think I've had any running disasters, which perhaps suggests that I'm just not taking it seriously enough? I just wish that I had started running with others sooner and not waited until I could run 5k before having the confidence to join in. I would have got there a lot quicker!

6. Which is your favourite race in the running calendar?

I really enjoy Kirkstall 7, but I think Coniston topped it by being so beautiful. I will definitely do it again even though it's the longest distance I've done and I've still got scars on my knees from falling over! I also love the craziness of PECO. The team spirit at these mad occasions and at all the relay events is great to be a part of.

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

At the moment the trip to Blackpool is at the top of my mind. The whole day was slightly surreal! From the "Full Monty" dancing in the toilet queue (thanks Alastair) to the all out high intensity aerobics session in 30 degree as a "warm up", to the fact that we were running 10k in that heat in the first place, just makes me smile to think about it. Being able to swim in the sea afterwards was lovely though and reminded me what a fabulous bunch of people Abbey Runners are! Thanks, Donna, for organising and thanks, Aidan, for the pastries on the bus! .

Continued....

Abbey spotlight on....

Kathryn Ashworth

Continued...

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

I would really like to get a bit faster and be more consistent, but my main goal is to continue to run the slightly longer distances as I enjoy it a lot, but find it hard to fit in sometimes. When training for the Half Marathon and Coniston I got into more of a pattern of early long runs at the weekend with a few other Abbeyes. I would really like to pick this up again, and then beat my PB at Monsal and Coniston next year!!

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

Tuesday of course and as many Thursday sessions as I can manage. (Thursday sessions really do make a difference to fitness and confidence, so if you haven't already tried them give it a go.) The Ashworths are parkrun fans so this is our usual start to a Saturday. Recently I've been inspired by David Leslie to get involved with the Great Owl Grand Prix so have appreciated the encouragement and company of other Abbeyes on Monday night runs, then when possible a longer weekend run depending on mood and enthusiasm! I should also mention the fantastic Abbey "Pilates for Runners" on Wednesday nights as well. I find this really helps with strength and flexibility and really notice the difference if I miss a few sessions.

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

Sometimes it's the simple desire to get a time I'm pleased with at an upcoming race or to beat a PB at a particular event. I can't remember the last time I ran by myself so I rely on the knowledge that there will be other encouraging Abbeyes around to run with. I probably wouldn't stay motivated if other people didn't organise routes and training sessions and of course it's lovely to have someone say "well done" no matter how well I consider I've done.

When I start to think that I'm not getting any fitter or faster and feel a bit de-motivated I remind myself that a year ago I couldn't run up a particular hill, or that it wasn't that long ago when I thought I would never be able to run 5k without stopping. It's only when I look back over a longer period of time that I notice I have improved. More often than not I just remind myself that I run to stay fit and healthy and to enjoy myself. If I'm finding it tough and hard going then something's gone wrong! I slow down, or run a route that's really beautiful, or just enjoy having a laugh about it and generally stop taking it all so seriously. Abbeyes are very good at helping with any sense of humour failures and just get on with it.

At a recent Target Parkrun with a particularly good Abbey turnout, it was pointed out that 8 out of the top 10 finishers were Abbeyes which was a great achievement. Someone jokingly said that we would probably have 8 out of the bottom 10 finishers as well, but followed it up straight away saying "wouldn't that be brilliant, and show what a great club Abbey Runners is to celebrate everyone". That's very motivating!



Peter & Janet Leach Memorial Run



MEMORIAL RUN FOR PETER AND JANET LEACH - 26th JULY

Many of you will remember Peter Leach who, until prostate cancer took him way to soon, was a leading member of Abbey Runners, and an inspiration to many. He was Membership Secretary, Run Leader for the 'Steady Group' and started off 'Abbey Riders'. He is chiefly remembered for being warm and welcoming to new members and for inspiring all Abbeys, to enjoy their running and to strive to go faster and further.

A few years after Peter died, his widow Janet also passed away and both are greatly missed by many. **The Peter Leach Fun Run** at the Eccup 10 was set up in his honour and in the last years of her life, Janet used to help with the Juniors and Fun Run registration. The Peter Leach Fun Run is still an integral part of the Eccup 10.

In their memory, the Club ran from Holt Park Active to Peter and Janet's Memorial Bench in Horsforth Park on the evening of Tuesday 26th July. It was a lovely evening, attracted a huge club turnout, and many former Abbeys donned their vests to remember Peter and run with their fellow Abbeys again. (loved seeing all the retro vests!)

It was great also to see a number of Abbey legends on the night too, including Hetta Morath, Bernard Foster, Derek Martin and Roger Wilson.

A big thank you to Paul Greene and Jane Oughton for organising, and to Donna for the Abbey cafe afterwards.

Jim

Club Trip to Blackpool



Club trip to Blackpool (cont.)



Early start for us meeting up at Asda. I was there with my checklist, making sure everyone was accounted for. We had an enjoyable drive to Blackpool and our lovely driver dropped us right at the start. We all collected our numbers and T-shirt. I've never seen a donkey wearing trainers before.

We found a base and dumped our bags with Chief Bag-Watcher, Freddie, and did the usual toilets/ drinks/ game of football. Now the weather in Blackpool is usually dark, damp and very wet... NO! I managed to pick the hottest weekend Blackpool has seen in years!

Start of the race was approaching so we all gathered to do the warm up (we all overdid it I think). The 5k set off and Neil Baxter's son, Charlie, finished 3rd - amazing!

Then it was our turn. Oh my word! - the heat. It was so hot but the atmosphere was great with bands playing music. We ran up to the Pleasure Beach and back - twice! Always giving each other a wave or a cheer as we passed one another. We all survived and after the race we headed to the beach where most of us had a swim (it was well needed and so nice to be cool) and then either fish & chips or a picnic.

Then everyone has some time to go do what they wanted and YES Tony did go to the pub. Everyone arrived on time at the pick up point (checklist ticked off) and on the way home, on the coach, we had a rundown of our times and age category finishes and everyone got a cheer and a clap.

Overall we all had a great day. We all finished with a smile on our faces and the weather was great - what more could you want from a club trip. Can't wait for the next one - I'm already looking!

Donna



Abbey spotlight on..

Peter Blinston

1. When did you join Abbey Runners?

September 2021.

2. Why did you join us?

I have played team sports all my life but less so in the last few years and I reckon something was missing. My eldest daughter (Hannah, also an Abbey member now) got me into running I suppose. I then started parkrun and then during the first lockdown all my children did C25K with me and I probably never looked back from there. I've got to name check Paul C and Donna S though, we'd see each other as they'd walk past the house during the pandemic. Looking back, I can't tell you how important those chats were to me. They would tell me all these great things about the club and really encouraged me to join, and so I did.

3. What is your favourite running distance race?

It's as far as I get done in an hour. I think some of that is psychological and what I've trained my body and probably more importantly my mind to do.

4. What is your greatest running achievement?

Well, beating Paul Craven in a track handicap just before Christmas comes immediately to mind, but really it was completing my first half marathon a week or so before I joined the club. I entered that race ages beforehand with full of good intentions to do lots of training and prep but in reality, that didn't happen. It was a real slog turning right up towards Horsforth from Hawksworth Road, but I don't think I've felt happier to finish a race than when I went over the finish line outside Kirkstall Brewery. For me it was a real and tangible sense of achievement. Yes, I could run 13 miles in go! And it got me thinking, what's next....

5. What is your greatest running disaster?

I've been quite lucky I suppose as I haven't had any disasters. Well, unless you count nearly falling / diving into the River Aire whilst out with members of the club you've never run with before.

6. Which is your favourite race in the running calendar?

I've not really done many races to be honest as I'm relatively new to this running, however the PECO XC series of races I've loved (even though I didn't even run any of them). I think it was the whole event, just rock up and run, no matter what your ability is. Have a laugh, enjoy the atmosphere, be part of the club and yes of course the flying tent! Also, I'd say any race where I can run with Hannah. We did the Derby half marathon earlier this year, super proud moment. [see pic]

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

I haven't been on many with me being such a newbie. Hence, I think I'm going to go for the Target parkruns, it's great to meet up with everyone and then once the run starts it's that encouragement and togetherness that I really enjoy plus a bit of competition as well. Kathryn A and Mohammed R have both pipped me on the line at the target events! I suppose it gives me that connection to team sports which I've been involved in since I was a young lad. I keep hearing stories of trips abroad to do parkruns on foreign soil and I'd love to do something like that.

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

I have lots of them going on in my head, from a sub 25 min parkrun, through to beating Alastair White up Stairfoot Lane, from a sub 2hr Half through to being followed by David Leslie on Strava. However, short term is to have run 1,000 miles in 2022. That's the great thing about running with the club - I was out on the night Paul Greene achieved this last year and I thought that's a cracking idea. I'm a little behind because of the summer recess but I'm hoping to get there. Before this time next year, I think it's got to be a marathon. I'm really tempted by the Leeds one next May, but I often drive back from Silsden and that incline from Otley is putting me off. Good to have goals though :)

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

Usually out with the Orange group on a Tuesday, then the Thursday training session (though that's been a bit hit and miss during the summer) and then parkrun on a Saturday. I'd badge parkrun as being more wellbeing training, especially mental wellbeing.

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

Fitness and mental wellbeing are my main motivations. I like the fact that running can be for all levels of ability, and I can see that by continuing to run, I am improving myself both physically and mentally. I do like to set targets and goals, and step by step up these, pushing myself to do more each time.



10 go wild on...

...Hadrian's Wall



by Paul Greene

At the end of April and early May, straddling the Bank Holiday weekend, 10 of us - David, Laura, Simon, Alison, Mike, Tony, Alastair and myself, plus Liz and Kevin (Kirkstall Harriers First Claimers) - ran the whole 84 miles of Hadrian's Wall over 4 days from Wallsend (good title) near Newcastle to Bowness on Solway on the West Coast. This Abbey Odyssey was one of the most amazing runs that any of us have ever done.

David's plan to run the Wall represented a quantum leap from Sunday long runs and marathon training; a long run on steroids. Would our legs be able to handle roughly 20 miles a day over 4 days? Would we be creaking with blistered feet every morning? I can report that with hearty breakfasts, a gentle pace, lunchtime tea and flapjack, incorporating blister repair, mammoth carby evening meals washed down with isotonic alcohol, followed by deep sleeps, we all not only got through it, but enjoyed it immensely.

The route from East to West traverses some of the most beautiful and dramatic scenery on this Island. The Wall itself is amazing how it follows the contours, particularly in the middle two parts either side of Sycamore Gap. You just can't help but feel wonder at the age, construction and sheer vision of the Wall and Vellum (a ditch running behind to capture any marauding Picts).

We all got on really well and supported each other. Any worries for any of us that we might not be able to keep up were banished by the teamwork and humour. After only 2 miles, Liz had fallen over, closely followed a bit further on by David, our Team Leader. But we all pooled plasters and sympathy and that set the template for the miles and hills to come. I thought it particularly wonderful how Simon would sprint ahead and hold gates open for the rest of us before closing them and leaping ahead to the next one. Tony regaled us throughout with 'alternative facts', challenging and dubious historical statements that we had to guess, true or false. For example, did you know that the Romans invented concrete? And there was me thinking it was the Flintstones. Kevin kept us entertained in the evenings with board and card games.

The middle 2 stages are the most impressive in terms of the dramatic scenery and preserved state of the Wall, Mile-Forts and other features. Sycamore Gap is awesomely beautiful and was the virtual midpoint of our efforts. We stayed at the nearby 'Twice Brewed' pub after Stage 2's tough and undulating 22 miles and headed straight to the bar after some necessary post run stretching (Jasmine would have been impressed!). We were joined that night by Judith Smith who ran leg 3 with us the next day.

On day 4 many of us were flagging during what was after all a punishing 24 miler after the preceding 60 miles. But we all got to the finish point at Bowness on Solway in 3 groups within half an hour or so of each other and fell into the pub for loaded plates of 'dirty chips', carbo-heaven laden with cheese and much else - the perfect food at that time.

Continued...

Hadrian's Wall (cont.)

We were lucky with the weather, not too hot and only the occasional bit of drizzle. We had all the gear - trail shoes, hydration packs, gels - and used a company, Contours Holidays, who had booked great accommodation and transported our luggage between stages. But the spirit of the group, the teamwork, camaraderie and massive Abbeyness, stayed high throughout.

We all felt amazed and enthused at what we had achieved - I am still in wonder as I write this now. Hats off to David for inspiring and organising before and during. And after - we all enjoyed it so much that we're going to do it again - it's the Cleveland Way in 2023! And the more the merrier, particularly if any other Abbeys want to join us for a stage or two.

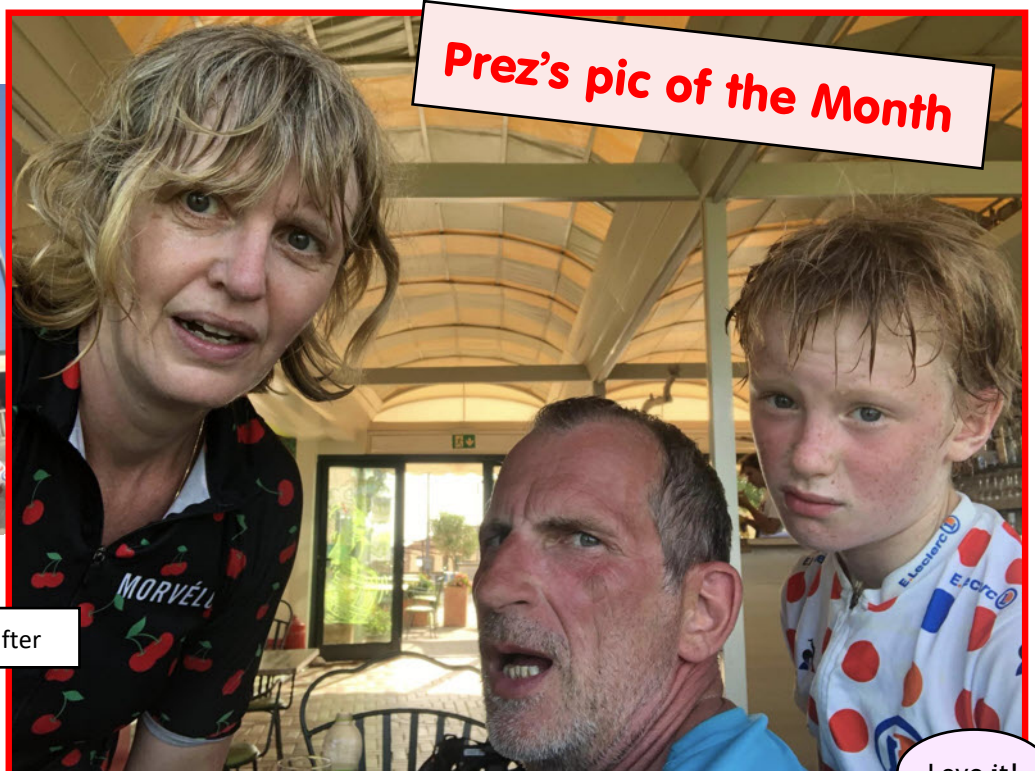
Paul



A lovely day of Italian cycling with the Hetherington-Salih family



Before...



Prez's pic of the Month

...after

Love it!

Leeds Country Way Relay



On a cool, suddenly very autumn-y feeling September morning at 8am, the first six Abbeys (two per team) set off from Garforth Leisure Centre to run 11 miles of trails heading towards Stanley where another six Abbeys awaited them to take the baton and head off towards Morley on more trails through the local countryside.

This went on for six legs covering some 64 miles, taking in some of the best trails the Leeds area has to offer.

36 Abbeys successfully completed their legs. Some veterans, running their umpteenth LCW and some competing in their first, all running as ONE CLUB and having a great time together whilst doing so as well.

There were many individual stand out performances but in an event like this it is all about the team and the Club which was done so proud. The "Open" team came 9th overall, and were the 4th Mixed team to finish, which I think is incredible and shows the talent we have from across the club.

Our two Vets teams came in 6th and 8th in the Vets category, but also 3rd and 5th out of the Mixed Vets teams which again demonstrates our broad talent across the club.

All in all, a great day for the Abbeys. We were really well represented and proved we can compete with the best. Everyone came away something to be proud of and I had volunteers for next year before the race had finished!

Liam

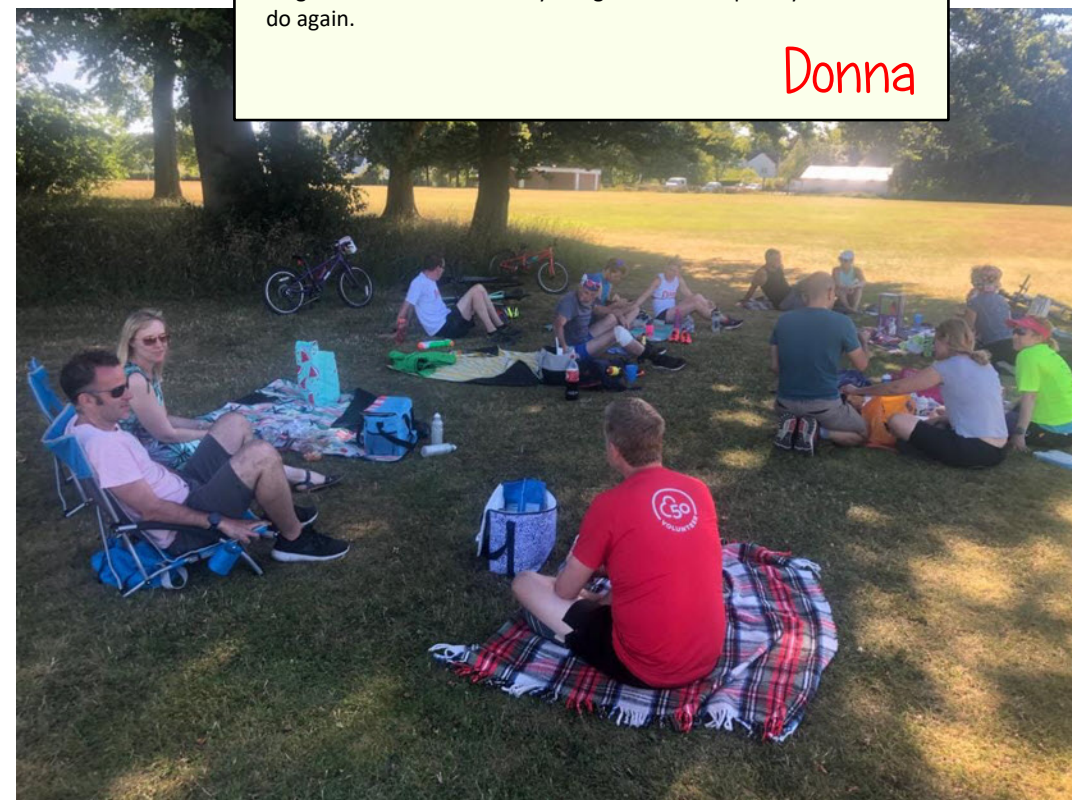


Club Social at Brownlee Track



Well, the weather was with us again - one boiling hot, sunny Sunday afternoon we organised a club social at Brownlee Track. It was for all senior and junior members for a bit of fun. We had bikes for hire or bring your own. Some people just wanted to have a ride, some were having a go at Triathlon bike transition. Then Helen and Jasmine organised a few relay races - mixed adult and kids teams, both running and then mixed run & bike. It was so much fun and some very competitive parents - Yes, Tom Rogerson, I'm looking at you! Everyone had such a laugh and was lovely to see the club all doing something together. It really worked and was enjoyed by everyone. A few of us after all that then went over to Bedquits and had a picnic sat under the Abbey juniors tree. The kids all played and the adults chatted and laughed. It was such a lovely thing to do and hopefully be able to do again.

Donna



“Epically brutal, epically stunning” Snowdonia Marathon

by David Leslie



A few Abbeys booked to race on Snowdonia Trails on 10 July and I for one did not fully appreciate what I was letting myself in for. Three of us did the Marathon, one the Half Marathon and one the 10K.

If I had read the race blurb, I would have known that the marathon route was 27 miles, climbing 1,685 metres, through Rhyd Ddu, Beddgelert, Nant Gwynant, Pen y Pass and Snowdon (via the Pyg Track to the Finger Stone) and then descending to the Finish Line via the Llanberis Path. This was not just up and down Snowdon – that came after the first 19 or so miles around lakes and foothills.

The weather forecast said it would be hot. And hot it was from 9am to the 5.50pm or so that I finished. I have never done a slower marathon and never in any race drank so much fluid on the way round. Starting at 9am, the huge field were waved and cheered off, out of the field and onto the road, round the corner and - no surprise - into the first hill of the day. There followed 19 miles of up and down mostly on gravel paths as we wound round the valley towards the miners track. Drink stations were every 4 or 5 miles and there was even an emergency drinks station just over the top of Snowdon – so the race was well organised and supported. After the first 19 miles it was up, up and away towards the top and then down for around 4 miles or so to the finish.

8 hours 48 minutes later, I was at the finish with Liz, my running buddy, hot, tired but triumphant. What a day and what a marathon. Always Aim High Events claim this race is the most striking trail marathon in the UK, and I definitely agree. For all the uphill, we were gifted with clear views and stunning scenery.

Speedy Abbey, Simon Jones, did the same race – he came second in 4 hours 30 minutes – so half the time it took me. And in typical Simon style, he had time to go back to our lodgings, get showered and drive back to meet us as we made our way out from the finish line.

In summary a grand day out indeed... sign up for next year.... go on, you know you want to! And if the marathon is not quite right there is an ultra, a half marathon and a 10K race all on the same day.

David



Coaches' Corner

Stretches - part 2

Brought here are some further stretches for you to try after your run.

We looked at some of the big running muscles last time – calves, quads and hamstrings, and these stretches are for some of our other muscles that can become tight with running.

Just a reminder on those general do's and don'ts:

1. In general, it is not recommended to do stretches before your run. Cold muscles do not stretch well and may tear!
2. Hold your stretch for about 30 seconds.
3. Stop if it hurts.
4. Try not to 'bounce' into a stretch.

Jasmine, Helen, Ali, Kirsten & Simon



Seated adductor stretch

Sit tall, on your sitting bones and put the soles of your feet together. Gently lower your knees towards the floor, to feel the stretch on your inner thigh.

Crossbody stretch

Our upper bodies can also get stiff from running, so adding in a couple of upper body stretches is not a bad idea.

Extend your arm out in front of you and then cross it in front of your chest at shoulder height.

Use your other arm to pull your arm into your chest in order to feel the stretch. Now bring your back leg in a little, and bend your back knee. Sit down slightly and you should feel the stretch in the lower part of your calf this time.



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Coaches' Corner (cont.)

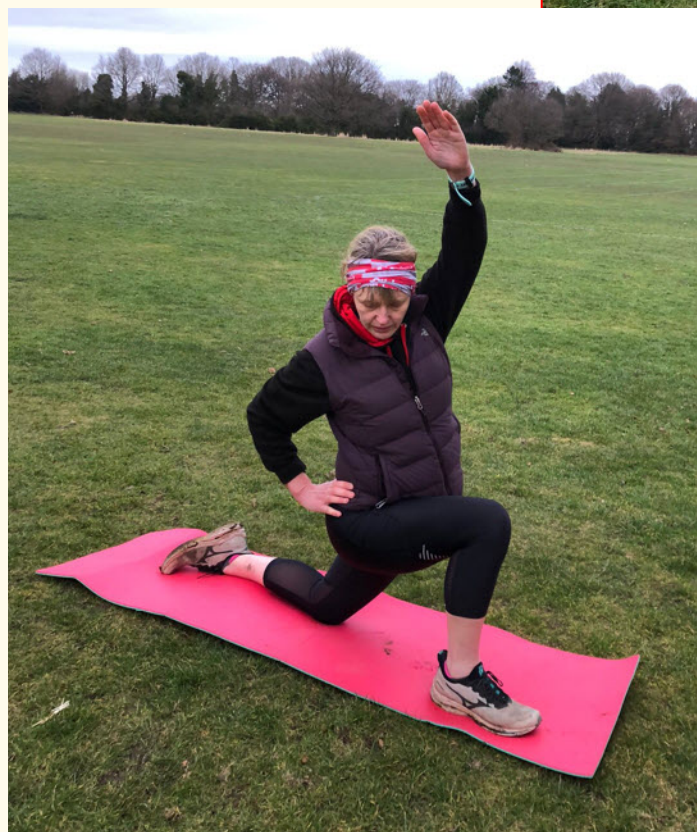


Outer glute stretch

Sit tall, on your sitting bones, with your legs straight out in front of you. Bend one leg at the knee and cross it over the other, straight leg. Use the arm on the side of your straight leg to hug your bent leg towards the straight leg, and at the same time, twist your body so that you are facing towards the side of your bent leg.

Another good glute stretch

Lie on your front with one leg bent underneath your body and the other out straight behind you. Lower your upper body down towards the floor.



Hip flexor stretch

Start kneeling on one knee, with both your hip and knee at right angles (note, in the photo my leg is pointing backwards at the hip and it should be at a right angle). Your other leg should be in front of your body.

Tilt your pelvis under to feel a stretch down the front/inner thigh of the leg that you are kneeling on. To enhance, raise the arm on the side that you are kneeling on/stretching and start a side bend (or a twist can stretch your inner thigh as well).

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!