

# The



# Newsletter

Summer 2023!



## What's in this Issue?

- ♦ Notes from our club president
- ♦ Abbey couch to 5K quotes
- ♦ **Dalby's Inferno** by Carrick Armer
- ♦ **My First, My Last** by Richard Ashworth
- ♦ Rob Burrow Leeds marathon photos
- ♦ **The Achill half marathon** by Paul Greene
- ♦ **Mud, Blood and Jelly Babies. My Initiation into trial running** by Luis Palicio
- ♦ Upcoming events
- ♦ Coaches Corner



## Record Breaking Abbeys!

*All our club records broken since the last issue in March 2023.*

**Ross Hutchison** Male 5K M40 16:47  
Even Splits York 14-04-23

**John Ward** Male 5M M70 37:45 Vale of York 16-04-23

**David Leslie** Male Half Marathon M70  
2:04:22 Coniston 14 25-03-23

[www.abbeyrunners.co.uk](http://www.abbeyrunners.co.uk)



# President's Notes

Well, it certainly has been a busy few months! I hope that you have enjoyed the light summer evenings and being able to hit the trails on our club runs (even during a very wet July!)

I think the first thing to highlight is the successful running of the Hollybank Eccup 10 mile race and Golden Acre Relay. These races rely on the time and effort put in by our members, and so a huge thank you to all involved, especially to our race directors. Eccup raised a whopping £4500 for the Hollybank Trust and £1500 for this year's chosen charity, Zarach. Golden Acre Relay was a sell out which is testimony to it's continuing popularity amongst the local running community. Both races also have dedicated junior races which are well regarded and well attended by our younger athletes. We also rely on money raised for the club by these races to provide funding for vests for new members, the Abbey Cafe, the club trip, the Christmas party, investment in coaching and club kit and more so your contribution really does make a difference.

We've also had a very enjoyable club trip to run the Settle Saunter, with Abbeyes showing true club spirit and stepping up to drive to Settle when the coach didn't show on time. Abbeyes battled the heat and the hills to complete either a 1/2 marathon or the 10k, and 2 of our junior section tackling their first 10k! We were rewarded with a lovely garden cafe to relax in afterwards.

Judith, Adam and John took the lead in running a successful Couch to 5k course, culminating in a graduation parkrun at Woodhouse Moor, which was also an Abbey Runners parkrun takeover. I'm delighted to see so many of the group have stayed on and are now fully fledged members

Our men's and ladies' captains have been kept busy organising relay teams and we've had teams participating at Post Hill Relay, Danefield Relay, Golden Acre Relay and Leeds Country Way, and I'm sure anyone who has taken part can say how much fun it is to run as part of a relay team!

And then we had amazing Abbey representation at the Rob Burrow marathon and half marathon and an enthusiastic and noisy Abbey supporting station. Thank you also to the team who organised the handicap race. We had an incredible 36 participants taking part in the 5k and 27 in the junior 2k so well done to everyone involved. And finally, we had a successful Abbey Juniors social at Laser Quest which gave our juniors the opportunity to shoot each other and some of our coaches too!

So on to the autumn. I always think there's something to enjoy about running in every season and for me it is seeing the autumn colours and runs with early morning mist still hanging over the fields. We're also going to be coming into cross country season and you will start to hear the word 'PECO' mentioned. I would highly recommend giving these a go if you haven't before - the most fun you can have on a Sunday morning! There will be many people counting down the days until the start of the season, I know.

And of course, there's also time to get those last races in to complete the Grand Prix. Not to mention the regular Tuesday and Thursday sessions.

Lastly, we love to hear your ideas and suggestions so if there is something you think it would be good for us to do as a club, or if you want to get more involved, please come and have a word with one of the committee.

Happy Abbey Running everyone.

– Jasmine



Armley Target Parkrun  
26-08-23



# Abbey Couch to 5K



A Couch to 5k is a huge personal commitment, from start to finish. From no running to running three-times a week is a big step up. These 10 weeks also progressively get harder and harder, culminating in what can be a daunting 5k. This is why I would like to say a massive congratulations to our couch to 5k graduates. Well done all!

Judith, John, Adam and other abbey volunteers also deserve a big thank you for dedicating their time and effort to running this course! It couldn't have been done without you. Donna Swales also did a great job organising the abbey takeover of woodhouse moor parkrun on graduation day, I'm sure our graduates were very grateful for the support throughout!

Let's hear from some of our graduates about what they gained from our couch to 5k and their running goals for the next year:



**First time ever running over 10 minutes! Amazing to run a 5K—great sense of achievement.**

**10K here we come!**

**- Donna Moreland**

**I increased my fitness level & want to maintain the weekly club run.**

**-Jonathan Crossley**

**Couch to 5K with Abbeys, gave me the confidence to start running and the motivation to carry on. I went from a reluctant runner, to surprising myself by actually enjoying it! My goal for the next year is to continue with the weekly running routine and build up to a 10K run.**

**- Lisa Cockerton**

**The friendliness and helpfulness of club members was much appreciated**

**- Anne Crossley**





# Dalby's Inferno



## And the 10 Circles of Minor Suffering

By Carrick Armer



Back in June I ran the Dalby's Inferno race, over at Dalby Forest in the North Yorks Moors, as a relatively early season short Ultra. The Inferno is a 50km (31 mile) Ultra, split down into 10 alternating clockwise/anticlockwise 'Circles', themed loosely on Dante's Inferno - It's also a fundraiser for Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue. You start the first lap at 9am, and run a 5km trail loop on the hour, every hour, for 10 hours. You can skip a lap by choice or if you are over an hour for a lap, but if you do so you can't run the final Centre of Hell lap, which is the only actual 'race' (at least if you want it to be).

We were in a minor heatwave so it was definitely going to be an inferno of some sort. Priority one was staying the right way up and making sure I was in a fit state to keep moving forward rather than wobbling around dehydrated and punch-drunk: Been there, done that before, would not recommend...

I took things steady and opted for a pace I felt I could maintain all day, setting some fixed mental markers on the harder parts of "I start walking \*here\*; I start running again \*there\*" that would come in useful later in the day. A leisurely 41:29 lap later, the first little paw print lap stamp on my race number, and back to base with more than enough time to eat, drink, stretch, nip to the loo without any stress!



**NEXT PAGE >>>**



I won't recap every single lap, but there were definitely a few little moments of joy in each Circle. My laps times varied very little, between 41:00 and 41:30 for all nine qualifier laps, despite just running by feel, and the run-rest-run-rest format meant I never felt properly dire.



**-Carrick**

With Lap 9 done, the first lady home on that lap got to choose the final 'race' direction. She picked anticlockwise, so we got a longer descent and steeper climb. Despite the laps in the legs already, I ran the rooty, twisty section probably the best I'd run it all day, feeling very flowy despite the choppy surface. Not quite a 'runner's high' but managing to move like my feet knew where they wanted to be without me thinking about it too much, a great feeling 40-something kilometres in. While my 'race' lap was only a minute quicker than my previous nine, I'd definitely achieved my aims, 50km done, no injuries, and an interesting and pleasant atmosphere to do it in. I ended up 55th out of 142 runners, over 100 of whom completed all ten laps. I spoke to a few people who were treating it as a 'safe' way to run their first Ultra, ticking off the laps one-by-one, if anyone fancies that as an aim for next year.



**Some of our Leeds Country Way Relay teams!**



# My First, My Last

## By Richard Ashworth



***“You’re the first, you’re the last, my everything”*** - B White, 1974

I have entered the ballot for the London Marathon loads of times, always inspired on that Sunday morning in April by thousands of people doing something amazing. And I have always been mightily relieved to be let down gently for another year. It was always London or nothing. I really didn’t want to run a marathon very much.

And then, national treasure and Leeds legend, Kevin Sinfield decides to set up a heart-warming, soul-stirring Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon on my doorstep. FFS. How could I resist? Surely it would be incredible to be part of it. Enthused (and probably a little drunk) whilst on holiday, I signed up. And instantly felt buyer’s remorse. What had I done? I mean, who in their right mind wants to train for a marathon?

My first objective was not to break myself. I had seen some amazing Abbey runners do themselves damage in pursuit of marathon glory. My second objective was to finish in less than 4 hours, which I thought was doable, until I saw the route!

In reluctant pursuit of those objectives, I googled the Runners World marathon training plan – sixteen weeks of hell! I quickly decided that technical terms such as ‘intervals’, ‘tempo’ and ‘threshold’ would be ignored, although ‘rest’ I was keen to engage with.

**CONTINUED...**

My first long run was one organised by **Tony Bastin** with some Abbeys and included 'that hill' up out of Otley which would become an infamous section of the marathon route.



This was the first time I had trained for anything in my life and I am happy to report that it does actually work! I started to notice quite an improvement in my running but even so, the final few weeks before the race was a scary time. I lived in constant fear of illness or injury.

It wasn't all bad though, a nutritionist friend gave me some advice about fuelling for a marathon. His advice was to 'eat as much as you can, of anything you want'! I was very happy to take this onboard but this highlight of the marathon training experience has taken some weening myself off since!

So, after lots of running, eating and worrying, the big day arrived and typically it was the warmest day of the year! An emotional speech from King Kev sent us on our way through massive crowds, which were incredible all the way round – what an atmosphere! The Abbey cheering point was amazing – what a noise – as were the many Abbey supporters around the route.



Abbey Cheering Spot!



Fatigue had firmly set in by the foot of the climb in Otley. I wondered how I would cope with the hill that had been looming large, in every sense, in everyone's thoughts. The week before the marathon, **Ed Newbould** had gone and run up 42 (much bigger) hills in 24 hours. In a weird kind of way, hearing about Ed's run had helped ease my pre-race nerves. I figured that if he could do 42, then surely I could do one.

I made it to the top and pressed on back to the Abbey cheering point. It was here, in my excitement at seeing the Abbey crew and my efforts to high-five my family, that the dreaded cramp set in and I started twinging in places I didn't know you could twinge!

So, from there, I gingerly headed back to where it had started 26 miles ago, with all my muscles seemingly on the brink of failure. As I arrived at the stadium, all I could see was a set of stairs which, in my semi hallucinogenic state, I thought we had to run up. Fortunately not, it was a flat run onto the hallowed turf of the Leeds Rhinos and I finally allowed myself to believe that I had done it. I had survived a marathon without breaking and much faster than I could have hoped for! I was screaming like an idiot, as I approached the finish line and crossed it with an overwhelming feeling of relief and happiness.



Richard completing the Leeds Marathon with a time of 3:32:03

I waited to watch Kev and Rob finish – another emotional moment, in a day full of them, which again put my achievement firmly back into context!

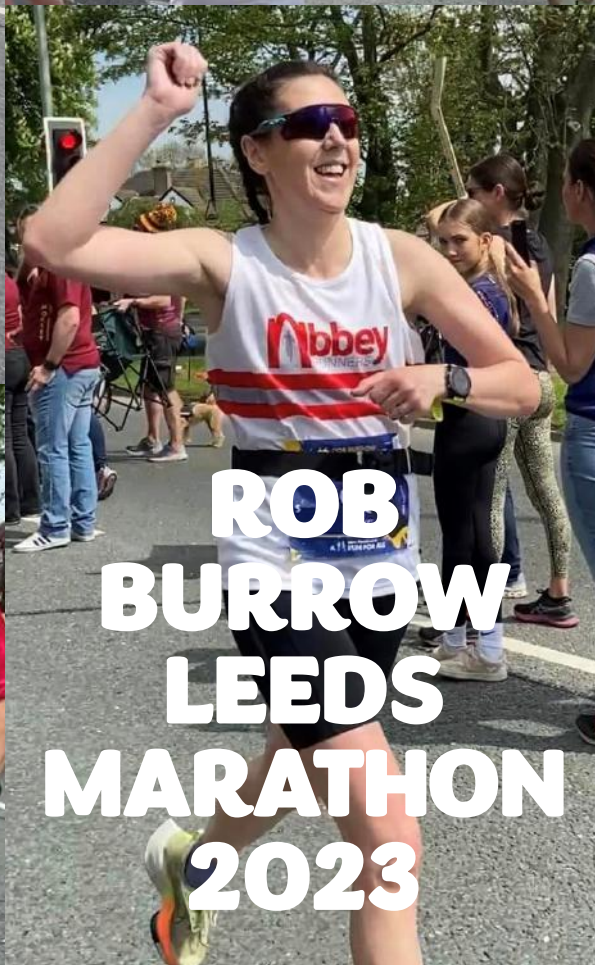
It was a crazy, magnificent, glorious day - and one that will surely never be bettered in my running 'career'. I am therefore fairly certain, that when it comes to marathons, this will be my first, my last, my everything. Cheers Barry!

**- Richard Ashworth**

***In the Leeds marathon mood? Next are two pages of photos taken from the day at the abbey cheering spot!***

**NEXT PAGE >>>**





# ROB BURROW LEADS MARATHON 2023





**SOME  
MORE  
PHOTOS!**





# THE ACHILL ISLAND HALF MARATHON

By Paul Greene

Achill Island, off the coast of County Mayo in Ireland, is a very special and beautiful place that I love visiting. With its Atlantic coastline, beaches and peaks, plus an interesting, though sad history, it is fascinating and awesome in equal measure. The Half Marathon and 10K races they stage each July have long been on my list; tough hilly courses, but with scenery stunning enough to dull the pain.

This year we hired a cottage in Keel with Angela's Sister Anne and I was booked in for the Half, and Angie the 10K. I've done a lot of solo running in Ireland over the years including half a dozen Park Runs, where I once ran alongside and chatted with the Lord Mayor of Dublin who later sent me a special pen! But the Achill Half was my first Irish race and it was rather special.

Some things were different. I've never started and finished on a beach. And we got our Finisher T-Shirts the night before the races and most wore them in the event. I wore mine under my Abbey vest - I was a tad chilly at the start, standing in the Atlantic wind. And the Irish Civil Defence Forces were present at the start and finish; Angie and Anne have had a few family arguments over the years, but I thought this was going over the top.



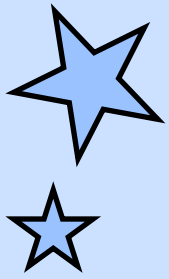
We had a very energetic pre-race motivational speaker who clambered onto the back of a trailer and urged us all to love the race and ourselves. Then it was the disco warm-up, great fun with a 1000 runners gyrating in the wind.

Soon though, it was time to set off on a tough Half Marathon. Starting on the flat by the sea we were soon heading up. And up, through beautiful countryside with stunning views. We then swooped down to join the opposite coast at Doogort before heading up and down towards Slievemore, one of Achill's brooding peaks and past a deserted village de-populated by the famine. But after a few more inclines, we then gained the downhill road back to Keel and I managed a good mile long sprint to the finish, passing Angie and many 10K runners on the way. 1:52 and 3<sup>rd</sup> in my age category. I looked out for Ged O'Donnell's parents who are also Achill race regulars. His Dad John did though spot the Abbey colours and got a great photo; thanks John!

The carnival atmosphere at the finish was soon boosted by several pints of Guinness - muscle rub and isotonic goodness in a glass - at the wonderful Amethyst Pub in Keel Village. There, with several hundred happy runners, the craic was mighty. Many do the race every year and I'm tempted myself!

**- Paul**





# **Mud, Blood and Jelly Babies.**

## **My Initiation into trail running**

**By Luis Palicio**



Despite growing up in one of the paradises of trail running in Spain, it wasn't until this year that I finally decided to sign up for a trail race. When I knew that my family was going to be away for a weekend, instead of booking a night out with the lads I decided to look for trail running races. Eventually, I found a race called Swainby Sweep, I had no idea where Swainby was but the race looked fairly well organised and the elevation of around 650 meters didn't look too bad. I had between two distances to choose from 7 miles or 13 miles which both felt achievable, so I decided to sign up for the longest distance. On the week of the race, I got an email in my inbox, it was my last chance to drop down to the shorter race, the one I was really prepared for (at least distance-wise). However, my Northern-Spanish stubbornness made me delete that email, I was either finishing the long one or giving up trying.

On the day of the race I didn't even need to wait for the alarm as I was awake well before it rang, prepared myself a coffee, couple of toasts dipped in peanut butter, and got to the road. As I was driving around the hills of Yorkshire on that sunny day I was really excited about the race. I arrive with enough time to get my bib and have a warm-up. The race kit came with some extra fuel so at this time I was sure I had enough food to survive a couple of days, gels, energy bars, raisins, flapjack, you name it.

The race started and I set off quite strong, like if I was at a road race, but after only one mile we crossed some grassy fields. At that time I remembered my first PECO, where I was wearing the same shoes I was running on the day, and as I was stepping into the muddy fields I had to put some effort into not losing my balance. I had a near-miss when my left foot got stuck into the mud, I thought that would be it but in the next step I slipped and "Bump-dived into the mud". That wasn't a great start, was my first thought when I was trying to get back to my feet. My feet, shorts, and Abbey's vest were all covered in mud and it was feeling quite cold. "Do you like playing in the mud?" joked one fella as he ran past my eyes, I could only roll my eyes as I imagined Peppa Pig jumping in the mud with her wellies (sorry I have a toddler at home), and then I set off again.

Checkpoints passed and steep hills powerwalked, we were now 19km in. I could only think that if I would have done the short course I would have already finished when I saw another big uphill section in front of me. "Don't worry lads, you pass this forest and it's all downhill!", said the marshall trying to infuse some enthusiasm into the crowd of tired runners. As I was going up that hill I could feel knots forming in my calves and quads. I had been running for about 2 hours and I was clearly in pain.

**MORE ON NEXT PAGE!**



Finally, we reach the top of that hill, despite the pain that was inundating every muscle in my body I started to jog again with so much enthusiasm that I hit a rock with my left foot and fell to the ground. I don't remember how I fell but both my knees and my left elbow were covered in blood and as I fell my calves went solid and painful. For a couple of minutes, I was laying on the floor rolling in pain with my legs up, thinking that I would probably have to quit with only 3 miles of downhill left. As the muscles of my legs began to relax I managed to stand up. A fellow runner that saw me falling from afar asked me if I needed medical assistance, "We are only 5km to the finish I'll finish that limping" I responded as I began to jog slowly.

Suddenly we began a steep and rocky downhill where I had to run extra carefully with the fear of falling again until we came back to the road. After stopping with a marshall to clean my wounds I restarted my journey to the finish line and after a final uptick in the road, the route started going downhill again. My legs were so heavy that I was struggling to even run on the downhills, we finally started seeing the first houses of Swainby village.

As I ran past the village signpost is touched it slightly with my fingers as I was slowly approaching the finish line. I have to admit that the tiny village of Swainby felt like the longest village in England as I was crossing its streets. At this point the locals were cheering, "After 16 miles I would be crawling on my knees" shouted one lady, "I literally did" was my thought as I finally crossed the finish line.

I managed to finish in just under 3 hours which might not be an impressive time but I was fairly happy after such an eventful race. It probably wasn't the kind of debut I was expecting but I have learned good lessons and it definitely won't be my last one.

- Luis 

## Upcoming Events

**Its almost PECO season!** Preliminary dates are below. If you've not heard of the PECO cross country league it is a series of 5 races organised in and around Leeds. The races are usually 4-5 miles, often hilly and almost always muddy. Hope to see many of you there!

<i>Dates and venues are subject to landowner permission</i>				
2023/24	Date	Host	Assistant	Venue
Race 1	Sun 12 November	Rothwell Harriers/Hyde Park - joint hosting		Middleton Park
Race 2	Sun 3 December	STAC	Kippax Harriers	Temple Newsam
Race 3	Sun 17 December	Abbey Runners	Horsforth Harriers	West Park/Becketts Pk
Race 4	Sun 28 January	Wetherby Runners	Nidd Valley	Wetherby
Race 5	Sun 18 February	Roundhay Runners	Chapel Allerton	Roundhay Park
Relays	Sun 10 March	Valley Striders		Bramley Fall Park
AWARDS	TBC	Presentation Night at Brudenell Social Club		

If you've still got races to do for the Abbey Grand Prix here are a few coming up:

### Short Races:

Morley 10K (08-10-23)

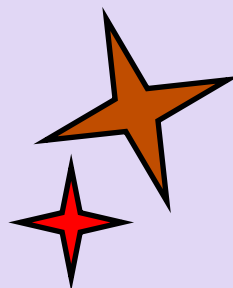
Post Hill (11-11-23)

PECO XC race 1- Middleton Park (12-11-23)

### Medium Races:

Tadcaster 10 (19-11-23)

Guy Fawkes 10 (05-11-23)



**Don't forget to do  
your target  
parkruns too!**



# ! Coaches Corner !

## Fit Ball Frenzy Edition (Part 2)

*Here it is - the eagerly awaited 2nd instalment of Fit Ball Frenzy. You can do each as a stand alone session, or run both sets together.*

### Warm up

The warm up is the same as for the first session:

Sit on your fit ball, start to bounce up and down. Gradually make the bounces bigger until you are jumping up off the fit ball.

Sit on your fit ball, and then side to side on the fit ball, gradually increasing the movement so that the leg in the direction you are moving come out straight, and then roll all the way to the

### Exercise 1. Abdominals

Lay on your back with your arms and legs stretched out straight. Hold the ball between your hands. Use your abdominals to bring your arms and legs towards each other, keeping your arms and legs straight. Transfer the ball to hold it in between your feet and lower arms and legs until you reach the starting position. Repeat but this time, transfer the ball from your feet to your hands. Do 3 sets of 10 reps.



### Exercise 2. Glute Bridge

Lie on your back with your feet on the ball and your legs straight. Squeeze your glutes until your body is in a straight line. Lower back down. Do 3 sets of 10 reps.



### Exercise 3. Superman.

Lie with your stomach on the ball. Stretch out one arm and the opposite leg. Lower and repeat on the other arm and leg. 3 sets 12 reps (ie 6 on each side). Time - keep your abdominals engaged to help with balance and protect your back.



Continued!



#### Exercise 4. Obliques.

Lie on your side with the fit ball in between your straight legs. Lift both legs of the ground, whilst holding the ball and then lower again. 3 sets of 12 reps.



#### Exercise 5. Balance.

Just for fun! Stand with your shins against the ball. Kneel on the ball and balance.



#### Exercise 6. A nice stretch.

Kneel in front of the ball (with your bottom on your feet) and place your hands on the ball. Push it away so that your arms are straight and feel the stretch on you back and shoulders.



Thank you for reading this summer edition of the abbey newsletter, see you next issue!