



#READREDANDORANGE

The very occasional newsletter of BCRC

Christmas Edition

December 2024

NOW WE ARE 10

Happy 10th Birthday to the Club and thanks to everyone who helped organise the party! It was an incredible night of Tequila Sunrise cocktails, quizzes, a feast fit for kings and banging tunes.

It is great to see how much the Club has grown over its decade of existence, from a small group of friends meeting for a social run to having around 50 members and becoming affiliated with England Athletics.

We are excited for the next milestone!



HALLOWEEN

The traditional Halloween run (a short village 2 miler in spooky costumes) included the usual stop off at the chippy for fish and chips and a gathering back at the Lant with family and friends to enjoy Scott's ever popular Halloween quiz.

A great turn out with some delicious cakes courtesy of our social events team with voluntary donations to add to Nicky's fund raising for the Myton Hospice.

Another great BCRC evening!



WELCOME AGAIN

No - it wasn't a one-off! This is the *second* edition of the Balsall Common Run Club newsletter - a bumper Winter edition with added 'match reports' gratefully received from members who have run events in 'exotic' locations. Many thanks to Emily Baker who did the hard work and led the production of this edition - the Committee is very grateful!

- We now have 50 members - a warm welcome again to our new members who made the right choice and joined BCRC and to those who have stuck with us!
- Jill and Mike featured on Balsall Common local radio to talk about all things BCRC. You can catch up on what they said on the listen again part of the station's website (Steve Lee's "Spotlight on the Common" programme of 9 September - the interview is around half way through the episode).
- A shiny new notice board has been installed at the Lant (thanks, again, Steve!) which gives us a greater presence at the Club.

Following last edition's spotlighting our Inclusion Policy this time we look at Health & Safety and why it is important to us...and you! There are also a few social events over the festive period - see "Dates for your Diary".

The Club wishes you, your families and friends a peaceful and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

BALSALL COMMON FUN RUN

The annual village Fun Run on 15 September featured a 5k and 2 lap 10k in the road race league. There were loads of people (and dragons!) out running, a big turn out from our Club, and plenty of supporters on the route including the Scouts at the water station.



MORE FUN RUN!



**RELAYS IN THE
PARK**



KENILWORTH HALF



COOMBE 8



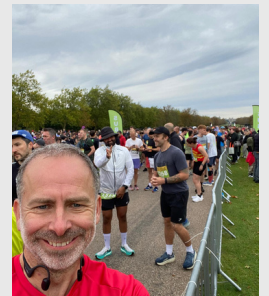
RUGBY HALF



**LOCH RANNOCH
MARATHON**



WINDSOR HALF



RUNNING AROUND

Team Red and Orange continue to run in places near and less near over the last few months (apologies again for any we have accidentally missed!)

TISSINGTON TRAIL



**AMSTERDAM
MARATHON**



PINCHBECK 10KM



ELF & SAFETY – IT'S SNOW JOKE!!

OK, so we know this is not the most exciting of topics but bear with, it is important that we all understand what we need to do to keep everyone – you, our leaders, the public and the Club itself, safe.

We realise you are all adults and most of you are experienced runners who happily run solo and with friends outside of Club runs, but sometimes the unexpected happens. People get lost, fall over, get bitten or have medical issues (don't laugh all of these have happened during Club runs) and, if they're alone and/or have no access to a charged mobile phone, what started off as a minor problem can quickly become a lot more serious. That's why we have plans and protocols in place to make sure we all have a fun and safe running experience.

Of course our EA affiliation, and associated insurance policy, requires us to have all kinds of official documents in place including a H&S policy and Risk Assessment, but affiliated or not we as a Club recognise the importance of doing everything we can to (a) prevent incidents happening and (b) take the right steps if they do happen.

Our Run Leaders are volunteers who take on a responsibility to keep us all safe – and it is only fair that we have measures in place to help them to help you, so we ask our members to be familiar with and respect the spirit as well as the letter of the 'rules'.

For example: If you run with the Club, we ask you to attend the warm-up to reduce the risk of injury from a 'cold start' and to listen to the briefing so you know the route and are less likely to become lost. We expect members to stick with the group they have chosen to sign up with throughout the session (mustering and circling back as necessary) so no one gets left behind, no one is running alone or out of sight, we all go in the right direction and we can call for help if anyone suffers an injury or gets taken ill.

We don't think this is unreasonable – after all you couldn't turn up halfway through a tennis match or leave early just because it suited you better.

We insist everyone wears lights on Thursday evenings in winter, so you are visible to traffic. We ask you to complete your medical details on Run Together so, in the event of an incident, the run leader can advise emergency services of any conditions you have or medication you may be on.

Please help us by completing this if you have not yet done so!

All members 'tick the box' to say they have read and will abide by our H&S Policy and Risk Assessment and that's is what we expect you to do. This is not just a tick-box exercise, we are not wrapping ourselves up in unnecessary red tape, we are a small club genuinely trying to do the best by our members, the Club and EA.

So please go with us as we try to keep everyone safe. Familiarise yourself with the documents – they will only take a few minutes of your time. and accept that the 'rules' are there for a purpose and not to stop you enjoying your Club running experience.

Thank you for listening and for your understanding.

THANKYOU



NEWS FROM BCRC 'ST. ANDREWS BRANCH': Carron turns 62 into 26



Loch Rannoch Marathon, 13th October 2024

Where? Up the A9 and turn left by Pitlochry. What three words? Scenic. Scenic. Scenic.

The Loch Rannoch Marathon is not one of the 'big' marathons but the distance is the distance wherever you do it. This is a Run Nation event and, for this one, there is no need to enter a ballot. Numbers have increased over the last couple of years. Dan Jones posted a YouTube video of his race in October 2022 so people had more information. There is also a video on the half marathon course, taking place the same day. To give an indication of size: this year there were 503 entries for the marathon (not all started) and 319 finishers.

The course is mostly one lap anti clockwise of the loch with an extra triangle at the start and finish and 0.7 of a mile up the road towards Rannoch Station where the turn point is. The half marathon route is an out and back on the south side of the loch. The marathon course is described as undulating which for the most part it is, however at the far end of the Loch there are definitely some 'big undulations'. Think a couple of NELs. Remember though, for every uphill there is a downhill and you will also be distracted by the scenery. Strava showed my elevation gain as 942 feet. Water stations every 3 miles. Portaloos at the start, halfway turn point and somewhere later on....probably around the turn point of the half marathon. The road is 'open' during the race but this is absolutely not an issue, there is minimal traffic on what is a minor B road.

Bibs can be collected 11:30-13:00 on the day before the race (after the end of the 10k race) or on race day morning between 08:00 and 09:00. We decided to stay the night before and the night after and this allowed me to pick up my bib before race day. The road to Kinloch Rannoch from the A9 is narrow and twisty. In the first mile of the marathon I saw a huge queue of cars arriving for the half marathon start. There is a small bridge which must be crossed to reach the start area which is only one car width and had all the marathon runners coming over it. So if you think of coming for the half marathon allow plenty of time to arrive BEFORE the marathon start at 09:30! Also note the small village shop does NOT open on Sundays. Accommodation is best booked early. There are various self-catering places if you want to stay for longer and a couple of hotels. We stayed in the Loch Rannoch Hotel and really liked it.

After a very chilly start, there was beautiful weather for this year's race; cloudy sunshine and no wind to speak of. Had the race been the day before runners would have experienced sunshine, horizontal hail, sleaty snow, rain and windy conditions. So no weather guarantees!

At the finish line there is a nice medal and cool looking technical t-shirt with Schiehallion outlined on it.

Would I do it again? In a heartbeat.



NIGEL ON THE BERLIN MARATHON AND 70TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



Berlin Marathon 29th September

Having failed to get into the London Marathon this year, I was looking for an alternative later in the year and managed to get a place at the Berlin event. One of the so-called "majors" (the others being London, Tokyo, Chicago, New York and Boston). Berlin is regarded as the fastest because it is flat, run on wide roads and has predictable early autumn temperatures suited to long distance running. All of that turned out to be true and I was hoping to finish inside my London time from 2023, but I lacked one piece of knowledge that worked against that ambition. In most aspects the organisation of this event is what you would expect in Germany - very good, with one critical exception which was the start. The field of 58,000 runners (apparently the largest ever in any marathon) was divided into four starting waves. I was in the last, slowest, wave and there were literally thousands of us waiting at the assembly point. Unlike other events I have run we were all started together so it was pretty congested. It wasn't until mile five that I got up to my planned starting pace and I was still having to evade slower runners almost to the end. Chasing a finish time in the back half of a marathon was beyond my capabilities and I ended up a few minutes outside my London time. Three minutes isn't a lot over 26.2 miles and I know I lost more than that in the first four miles so overall I was happy. I certainly left everything out there! I was glad I did it and it was great to be a part of the 50th running of this event in one of the most cosmopolitan and interesting cities in the world.

70th Birthday Celebrations

I turned 70 (!) on 16th October and we had a small celebration at the Lant the week before. This was partly a celebration and partly a big Thank You to all the members of the Run Club, that have become a second family to me. Without your encouragement and support I never would have attempted, let alone achieved, many of the events I have run since I became a member six years ago. The small celebration was very well attended, of course nothing to do with the free bar and food laid on! I'm grateful to all of you for your best wishes on the day and subsequently. Here's to many more years of active participation in the BCRC family.



Before



After

A RUNNER YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT!

Nick Griggs recently set a new Parkrun World Record of 13 minutes 44 seconds at Victoria Park in Belfast. That's one for us all to aim for - Babbs Mill here we come!





MANCHESTER TO AMSTERDAM (THE LONG WAY!) WITH NICKY AND EMILY



Amsterdam Marathon 20th October

After hours of airport delays and being stuck at train turnstiles, we finally arrived on Friday at our (first and quirkiest) hotel in Amsterdam. It was booked for us by Sports Tours International, the company who organised our marathon weekend.

The Saturday was filled with far too much walking pre marathon. First, to the Expo to pick up our race numbers with the rest of the Sports Tours group. Next up, our first round of poffertjes (Dutch Pancakes) a strong feature of our trip. Then, it was the Rijksmuseum to gain a little bit of culture before our all you can eat pasta buffet with the other runners! Finally, we were off for a very early night in anticipation of the next day's event.

The marathon starts in the Olympic Stadium and after bag drop and a few nervous wees we were off! The course has an exciting start, running the length of Vondelpark, the most famous park in the Netherlands, and through the middle of the Rijksmuseum. At 14 miles, having passed canals, windmills and numerous orange wig clad supporters, Emily was struggling with horrendous blisters and aching legs. But then we met Rob. Rob had never run this far before in his life. A quick pact, and we were off as a united team, determined and enthusiastic to finish.

By the time we had shared our life stories, 20 miles had been and gone, and just like that we were back in the city, soon hitting the home straight through Vondelpark. The last 6 miles, like any marathon, were clinging on for the finish line, and the experience did not disappoint. Holding hands and celebrating, we turned the corner back into the Olympic stadium to thunderous cheers. And just like that, the whole journey, Manchester to Amsterdam was over.

Following a hobbling slog back to the hotel (after an obligatory beer and poffertjes of course) Sports Tours International provided us with a FREE BAR! Celebrating with numerous new found friends, sharing tales of marathon exploits, was a perfect end to the day.

Amsterdam is an incredible city. Although our sightseeing was curtailed by our inability to navigate stairs, we still had a few days to enjoy all it had to offer (within reason of course).

I would thoroughly recommend an international marathon and the proximity of Amsterdam, as well it's friendly and enthusiastic support all around the route, would make it one to applaud. Not wanting to make an unsolicited plug, but Sports Tours International were pretty awesome too.



The Challenge in Numbers:



3 PAIR OF TRAINERS

6 MONTHS

AT LEAST 50 PANCAKES EATEN



OVER 700 MILES RUN



5 TOENAILS LOST



£6,801 RAISED

130%

In other charity news.....



Supporting Balsall Common Lions

Club volunteers turned out to help put up (and take down) posters for the annual Bonfire and Fireworks Display which raises money for the local Lions. We also raised £140 for the Lions through sale of raffle tickets. The Lions do a lot of great work in the Community including gifts and Xmas parties for young carers, supporting youth and arranging diabetes and prostate screening sessions in the village

Hannah's Kingdom and the Benidorm Half Marathon

Benidorm Half Mazza - 23 November 2024

I have to admit I was a 'lil tipsy when I signed up, but having a 'non event husband', this is one he's more than willing to come along and support (even if it will be from a pub..!)

It's an evening run with kick off at 17:30 so hopefully there'll be a few beers at the water stops.

Hannah's Kingdom

I set up 'Hannah's Kingdom' after being approached by Brain Tumour Research to create a fundraising group. It's been set up to inspire others the fundraise for Brain Tumour Research in my name and create their own challenge or event. There's been craft sales, sky dives, fire walks, marathons, fun runs, coffee mornings, as well as the famous BCRC Curryoke. My little mini charity over the last 3 years has raised over £21,000 - which is quite frankly ruddy outstanding!!

I can't begin to thank Team BCRC for their unwavering and continued support to everything I do and get them to do - anyone up for another fire walk?!

Donate to Hannah's Justgiving:
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/HannahsKingdom>



KIT UPDATE

We still have some items of kit in certain sizes in stock - please contact Nigel or Dawn Court if you are interested in acquiring - why not treat yourself to a red and orange snood for Christmas?!

We are also sourcing samples for a new supply and hope to bring them to Club sessions soon. And we are exploring setting up an 'on line' shop to make it easier to purchase. More news to follow in due course






KIM AND ALISON ON THE TISSINGTON TRAIL

The Tissington Trail Half is 80% down hill - they tell you that at the start. They don't say that the other 20% is slightly up hill! It's a point to point half with a bus from the finish in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, to the start up at Parsley Hay. The trail is an ex railway line with a decent gravelly surface. It's quite scenic, nice views of rolling hills and dry stone walls. The event we did was only about 350 people - the trail is quite narrow and it was a little crowded for the first kilometre or so, but soon settled down as everyone found their pace. There were a few horses and bikes to avoid, again not too much of a problem, and a short, sharp uphill at 13 miles to test the stamina. Overall a pleasant and fast course, good for a half marathon PB.

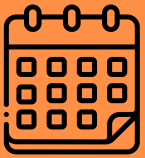


WHAT BCRC MEANS TO OUR MEMBERS

To me, BCRC is my 'normal' where I feel completely comfortable and a million miles away from being a cancer patient. I bloody love BCRC - Hannah 

Thanks to everyone for a lovely few months. Good luck to everyone running in upcoming races. Merry Christmas!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Tuesday 10th December: Curryoke

Please let us know if you are coming via the poll on the WhatsApp 9102 chat. A suggested donation of £15 to Hannah's Kingdom in aid of Brain Tumour Research can be made at www.justgiving.com/campaign/HannahsKingdom

Thursday 12th December: Christmas Jumper Jog

Sunday 22nd December: Santa Dash

**Monday 31st December:
New Years Eve Party at the Lant**
Tickets £5 for members, £10 for adult guests, and free for children - includes free welcome Prosecco/juice and generous buffet. Please message on WhatsApp if you would like to come along and then pay into the Club's account

Weekend 25-26th January: National Running Show, NEC

