



The Metro Mouthpiece

The newsletter for Metro Aberdeen Running Club members

Issue 2 January 2008

www.metroaberdeen.co.uk

Issue Number 2

Welcome to Issue Number 2 of the "New Look" Metro Mouthpiece. Once again I would like to apologise for the lateness of this issue, I was aiming to get out 4 editions in 2007 but several factors (excuses) meant that this plan went "t**s up". I will be endeavouring to get back on schedule for 2008, so get those articles, race reports, jokes, funny stories, pictures and results to me for inclusion as soon as possible at rthomson@talktalk.net

Hopefully everyone had a successful and injury free year of running in 2007? Personally I had a decent enough year, running small personal best times at all distances raced and, most importantly, I managed to avoid serious injury. However, how I managed to avoid hurting myself never mind how I got home in one piece after Bjoern Reiss' leaving night drinks (pictured right) I'll never know. My excuse is that I'd been in the pub all day, without food watching the Scotland v Ukraine match so by the time I'd met up with the others I was a wee bit cumbersome on my feet. Thanks to Bjoern for the photographic evidence.



Janet McRoberts' initial attempts at selling club kit needed a little refining

Inside this issue

On the back page you will find a membership renewal form for 2008. Please complete this as soon as possible and send along with your payment of £12 to:

Colin MacKay, 15 Fare View, Torphins, Aberdeenshire, AB31 4DZ.

Thanks for everyone who submitted race reports etc, I hope everyone enjoys reading them as much as I did. There is a distinct international feel to this issue with reports on races in India, Sweden, Switzerland and even Fife.

Making a decision on which one to award the £20 worth of Run-4-It vouchers was very difficult - turn to page 4 to find out the winning article.

Thanks too for the large amount of caption competition entries received - the winner of £10 worth of Run-4-It vouchers is announced on page 12 along with this issue's competition photo - it's not a pretty sight so be warned, those of a nervous disposition may want to avoid that page altogether.

A new (hopefully regular) section is **Charles Corner** where "legendary" north east runner Charlie Noble's words of wisdom are featured. If you've heard any recently or if you have any classics from the past then let me know on rthomson@talktalk.net and I'll add them to the list for future use.

The inside back page is a fixture list of upcoming local and not so local races for early 2008. Feel free to submit any that you feel I may miss e.g. If you ran, plan to run an obscure race, a race abroad etc.

For more information on these and other races and for a full and comprehensive race listings and results service visit www.born2run.co.uk or www.scottishathletics.org.uk

Interested?

WANTED: Somebody to go back in time with me. This is not a joke. P.O. Box 322, Oakview, CA 93022. You'll get paid after we get back. Must bring your own weapons. Safety not guaranteed. I have only done this once before.

Stockholm Marathon

9 June 2007

Jane MacAskill

As I sat on the 9.30am flight to Copenhagen from Aberdeen I was both excited and a bit nervous. My frequent checks on the weather in Stockholm were all for about 20 degree plus heat and wall to wall sunshine. As I was carbo loading, I quickly ate my way through 2 packets of crisps and 2 bananas on the 2 hour flight to Copenhagen before our short flight on to Stockholm. Me and my husband Alan arrived in Stockholm and picked up our hire car for the short drive into the city. We found a lovely restaurant for lunch and had fish stew and an extra side of potatoes outside in the lovely sunshine. We drove to our friend Goran's house in Lidingo and I got my first sight of the 1912 Olympic Stadium where I could see the preparations for the next day in full swing. We went to 2 parties in the early evening: it was the last day of school and each family invites neighbours, family and friends to celebrate their son or daughter leaving school. That evening we drove away from Stockholm to a lovely café' by the shore where we watched the ferry boats.

I woke nice and early and had my first breakfast before setting off on the 5-10 min drive to the Olympic Stadium to pick up my number, it was already 23 degrees at 9am. I got my personalised number with my name and flag printed on it, had a quick tour round the expo to buy a cap and bottles of water then it was back to Gorans to have my second breakfast and to get ready for the race, this involved covering any bare skin in sun cream. In my bum bag I had a small sponge, small water bottle and Kendal mint cake.

I was dropped off at the start by Alan and Goran just after 1pm, everywhere people were sitting under what shade they could find and sipping water. It was easy to spot the Finnish runners as many of them were sporting the Finnish flag in their caps or had it painted on their faces. I lined up in my starting pen and thought "this sunshine would be lovely if I was lying on a beach somewhere".

At 2pm I set off at a fairly steady pace and it didn't feel too bad. At 5km we came to our first hill which climbed up through a park, where I could I ran on the shaded side of the road. Every couple of miles there were huge water barrels where we soaked our sponges and caps before running through a shower. I was still keeping a fairly steady pace but was losing about a min per mile getting water, soaking my cap and running through the showers. At 12km we climb over the Vasterbron Bridge, the highest point of the course, still feeling okay but then I was running slower than I would normally. Near the end of the first lap a cheer went up and those of us on the right hand side of the road watched the leader and winner of the marathon go past us on the left hand side of the road, I saw a few more go by before I started on my second lap which takes a slightly different route to the first. Food started to be offered at points between the water stations this included bananas, sweets, gherkins, soup, coffee, energy bars and chocolate but I stuck to my Kendal Mint cake and water. At around 30km my stomach started to hurt, it felt full, I walked a bit, ran a bit walked a bit, ran a bit... I was now walking more than I was running but on doing a quick calculation I knew I would make the cut-off even if I walked the whole way to the finish. All around me were weary runners walking with determination to the finish, I had never seen so many runners walking so late into a marathon before. Every km I would try to run a bit after every water station but my stomach wouldn't let me.

Allan and Goran decided to have a drink in my honour, they had been cycling round Stockholm and popping up at various points round the course (usually sited close to a pleasant bar). I was at the 40km point and decided no matter what I was running the last 1km, there ahead of me was the Olympic Stadium and I was running. it felt great to enter that stadium and the running track felt like a sponge under my feet. I decided to try to pick up the pace and pass a few runners on the track. I had made it, in a PW and in 30 degrees, my toughest marathon yet. I felt a bit disappointed with my time, but I'm over it now. I found out later than nearly 2,000 runners had dropped out around the course with many of them pulling out after the first lap.

What can I say about Stockholm Marathon, it was well organised and an interesting course with a mixture of tree lined streets, medieval buildings, royal parks, and along the sea front with a few bridges. Not flat but not too hilly. Would I do it again? yes, but only if it's below 20 degrees and raining.

After the marathon Allan and I spent a few days touring Sweden and found the people and the country to be lovely and friendly.



Jane crosses the line undeterred by the added discomfort of being attacked by a swarm of giant writing

Zermatt Marathon

Switzerland - 07 July 2007

Bjoern Reiss

The idea to run the Zermatt-Marathon developed during a skiing holiday. My friend Joerg, who's lives in Switzerland and with whom we were staying, had finished a gruelling 28k mountain race across an Alpine Pass during the summer, was now looking for a new, even tougher, challenge and had chosen the Zermatt mountain marathon for his debut at the classic distance. The prospect of a warm sunny weekend in Switzerland enjoying Toblerone and running continuously uphill for hours convinced me immediately, so I decided to join him and entered the race online.

I arrived in Geneva by plane two days before the race and travelled by train to Brig, where my friend stayed. After a good night out with pizza, beer and red wine for carboloading and hydration, I went for a wee training run the next morning to get used the Alps. After more than half an hour of uphill running I decided to run back down again – in just 20 minutes – not a very clever idea: The moment I stopped my thighs were immediately sore - perfect preparation for the marathon!

After breakfast we travelled to Zermatt (the race number – sent in advance - serves as a train ticket for connections!) to have a look around and take in some of the atmosphere. Zermatt itself is a nice village worth a visit as there are lots of souvenir shops around as well as a fantastic chocolate shop, not to mention the view. After another carboloading session in an Italian restaurant we watched brass bands performing typical swiss “Guggemusik” – a type of music played mainly during the carnival season. Usually cover versions of pop and rock tunes played slightly out of tune... on purpose !!!

Next morning we left early for the start in St. Niklaus, a small town located halfway between Brig and Zermatt. The sun was shining and there were no clouds in the sky – no weather for marathon running but I was here for sightseeing anyway.

After the start of the elite and relay runners it was our turn. The first half is partly undulating, with about 500m of climb and is mainly on tarmac roads and streets through typical Swiss villages into Zermatt. We wanted to start conservatively in order to have something left for the tougher second part. That was the plan. but the problem was that my friend wouldn't stick to it. He told me that he was feeling great (“I'm strong as an ox”), I had difficulties slowing him down.

At about 10k, to my surprise, someone approached me in English. He had noticed my Metro vest and was wondering what someone from Scotland was doing here! After explaining what brought me to Aberdeen, it turned out that Stephen himself, from Leeds, had lived in Germany for 8 years. We had a chat for several kilometres switching between English and German. I learned that he was a mountain marathon fanatic and had just finished the Liechtenstein Marathon and was planning to do the Jungfrau Marathon – apparently there are more crazy runners around than I thought. Meanwhile, the kilometres were flying by and we were already getting close to half way. The last kilometres before entering the town were a foretaste for the later climbs. We crossed the half way line in 2 hours and 20 minutes and ran the next kilometres on a flat loop out of town and then back in again before the course started to rise at about 25k. The climb leading up to Sunnegga (2288m above sea level) was where the real fun started – it reminded me of the Stonehaven half except that it was a bit steeper and it didn't end after half a mile, instead there's a “the only way is up” section for about 7k. While some people around us tried to actually “run” this bit, most (including us) switched to a walk, helping save energy for later stages and wasn't much slower anyway. Although this ascent is a tough one, there was time to enjoy the panoramic view with the Matterhorn and several other mountains of over 4000m getting closer with each step. At around 32k the course finally levelled off and we arrived on top of Sunnegga. While my friend was doing well so far, this was the first time he seemed a bit exhausted but after two tasty energy gels and a banana we were running again. The following kilometres were on narrow but fairly even paths through the fantastic mountain landscape then mainly downhill alongside a small but beautiful lake. While this bit was nice after the long ascent, it wasn't east due to stones, roots and the uneven surface and I was really happy when we had to climb again. The final ascent is horrible: It starts at about 2355m above sea level in front of a posh hotel and leads alongside a mountain railway line up to Riffelberg – an elevation of nearly 400 meters in 3k. Not only did we have to tackle this climb, we were also watched with amazement by members of the high society, slurping champagne in the hotel's beer garden. Halfway through the climb my friend wasn't happy anymore and even me cracking (I admit: flat) jokes couldn't cheer him up. At least he was in good company as most struggled and had to stop for a minute or two in order to catch their breath. After that last part of the hill there was a nice surprise for the runners, especially the ones with links to Scotland. There was a piper standing on top of the hill cheering the runners on! As we were in no hurry, I couldn't resist having a picture taken. I rejoined my friend and we crossed the line together in 5 hours and 50 minutes. It had taken us about 45 minutes to “race” the last 3k.

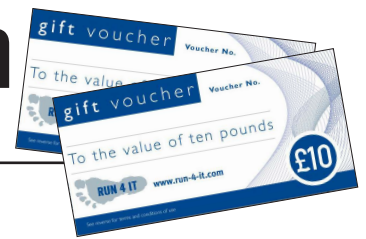
10 minutes and a big coke later, my friend had finally managed to compose himself and commented on the run: “I might do another marathon some time, but I will never ever do this one again”, so apparently he enjoyed it! After a shower and massage we finished the day on top of the Gornergrat viewpoint (3089m above sea level), allowing us to take lots of fantastic panorama pictures of the mountains before going home – a perfect end of our mountain adventure.



Is that Bennachie?

Mumbai Half Marathon

21 January 2007



George McPherson

Scheduling an offshore trip in India to coincide with the Mumbai Half Marathon seemed like a good idea at the time. It didn't seem so smart on the morning of the race however – standing amongst thousands of others in the dark, I was already sweating and my guts were churning with the onset of Delhi belly. The race started at dawn in downtown Mumbai, but I hadn't a clue exactly where the start was. I only realized the race had begun when this sea of humanity started moving in the same direction. It took a couple of miles to get out of the argy-bahji and into my stride, by which time the sun was up, and we were onto Marine Drive, a sea front dual carriageway which formed most of the out-and-back course. The temperature was steadily rising, and the strangely hot, sticky road surface was smooth and shiny – a bit like Neil Jackson's heid. I promise never to winge about horizontal sleet at Inverdee ever again.

The first half was quite entertaining, with a few bands breaking up the monotony, and a lot of noise from the crowd. Not long after the turn however, I spotted a group of local runners crossing the carriageway, and so taking a couple of miles off the course. I was having naan of it, and incensed, I set off in a pursuit hotter than a Nazma tindaloo. I don't think they understood my Doric expletives when I told them where to Goa, but they got the sign language all raita.

By now the field was well stretched, and I was running alone most of the time – the only runners I met were runners I could have sworn I passed in the first half. Mmmmm. The urge to stop and 'do a Paula' was overwhelming, and I was praying that the trickle running down the back of my legs was sweat. In the last couple of miles the chants from the crowd of 'Run, foreigner, run!' became louder and more frequent, and I felt both encouraged, while at the same time completely alone, a solitary insignificant alien in a city of more than 20 million people.



George comes in second in the annual Mumbai "Who's the biggest balloon competition"

I've never been so glad to see the finish of a race, and like Forrest Gump, I didn't stop, instead heading straight across the road, buttocks clenched, and into the bog in the Chatrapati Shivaji Central Railway Station. That was one of the most rancid bogs I've ever been in, and it was a whole lot worse by the time I'd finished. As I sat there wondering what Gillian McKeith would have made of it, I recalled my last unpleasant lavatorial running experience. Coming out of the communal shower after a local race, a certain runner from Fraserburgh (yes, him) told me he always pees on his feet in the shower, as it stops him getting blisters. I wished he'd shared this nugget of running wisdom with me on the way into the shower. Never shower with anyone fae the Broch.

Anyway, half an hour later and a few pounds lighter I headed back to the finish to hand in my chip, and collect my finishers certificate – imagine my surprise to discover that I'd finished 55th out of 7000, was 3rd vet, and won \$150 and a big bronze gong. Now to put things into perspective, my chip time was 1:30, clock time 1:34, and it was my second slowest half ever, which says more about the general quality of Indian running than it does about my performance. Nonetheless, I was dead chuffed, and I realized that like being with the Dons in Gothenburg, me winning a prize in a big city race was a once in a lifetime, never to be repeated experience. The old adage of 'it depends who turns up on the day' can never have been more true.

Generally the race was pretty well organised, traffic free, with plenty of bottled water, and a big crowd. Mumbai is an interesting place for a few days, and I'd recommend it to anyone with a strong constitution, and who doesn't get too distressed by the sight of thousands of kids living on the street.

Editors note - Even though the race was nearly a year ago, there was no competition for the winner of the best article this issue I'm afraid. Any 6 paragraph race report containing such a plethora of puns and reference to very nearly shitting himself (more than once), Neil Jackson's heid and Charlie Noble pishing on his feet in the shower gets my vote - not to mention the "balloon" photo. Well done George, the £20 Run-4-It vouchers are in the post.

I must remember never to be in the shower at the same time or after a certain mister Noble in future.

London Marathon

22 April 2007

Barry Moir

Nothing is impossible....and Nell McAndrew, a Marathon first timer story

It was back in September 2006 during a lunchtime run round Hazelhead when I suggested to my running buddy and fellow Metro member Alastair Blain "do you fancy training for a Marathon"? After I had picked him up, he took a couple of days to speak to me again and asked if I was sure as he had seen the state of me after the Inverness half marathon in 2005 where I walked like Robocop for about a week (soon after this I joined Metro I hasten to add). I must admit I did have second thoughts but we agreed to enter the 2007 London Marathon and posted our applications in anticipation.

In November 2006 the fear of being accepted became a reality, I was accepted for London whilst Alastair had to put up with a £33 fleece that he would never wear. All was not lost though as with some website fixing from Kevin and Jackie, Alastair gained entry to the Lochaber Marathon on the same day – Sunday 22 April 2007. We both had thoughts of fu**ing hell but in November we started off on our training runs that Jackie had planned for us. I was taking it all very seriously and even subscribed to Runners World, Mrs Moir looking at me in disbelief when the first edition landed on the door mat.

The months of training that followed provided enough incidents to make a movie including;

1. November 2006 - Smashed my coupon off of the deck in Duthie Park as I came off the Deeside railway line during the Metro 10k time trial run. To make matters worse it was my Company Dinner Dance that night so Mrs M was far from happy being accompanied by someone who looked like they had been punched by Mike Tyson.
2. February 2006 - Cracked my ribs after falling onto an upturned stool in my garage. At A&E I was told 4-6 weeks recovery - being a boy from Kincorth, I was back running within a week and completed the Inverness half in some discomfort (again).
3. March 2006 – During a training run in Newburgh I was mowed down by a car. I had my yellow Metro top on that you could probably have seen from Peterhead but when the driver and her passenger got out of the car to see if I was ok I realised why they didn't see me as they were both about 100 years old..... and female.

Even having played Highland League and Junior football for a period of 20 years I had never had as many injuries as I had training for London, this running lark is a dangerous game!

Nevertheless, through some terrible weather we managed to cover almost 800 miles in training and in doing so I completed the Kinloss and Inverness half marathons in decent times. The training was enjoyable and done mainly on muddy trails around Hazelhead but the banter kept us going and we stuck to our schedule pretty well with only the occasional missed run to save me from divorce.

April 19th - Before we knew it me and Mrs M had handed the kids over to the Grandparents and did a runner for the airport. I thought nothing else could happen now but we discovered that Mrs M's passport had expired.... and she's a travel agent, priceless! We got away with it as only photographic evidence is required for domestic flights. I probably would have been as well travelling on my own anyway as for much of Saturday I was nervous about Sunday and just wanting to chill out whilst Mrs M wanted to shop so we spent most of Saturday "nae spikin". Registration went without a hitch but the temperature outside was beginning to worry me slightly, the forecast for Sunday was even hotter, not good for a milk bottle tanned boy from the Granite City. I filled up with pasta on Saturday night and drifted off to sleep excited and nervous.

I woke up on race morning feeling pretty good and nipped down for my pre race breakfast. We were staying at the Tower Thistle, the official hotel of the Marathon, so whilst I was munching away the elites were out doing their 2-3 mile warm up runs – wise up! Kevin Tulloch joined me and the legend of nearly 70 marathons did a great job in keeping me calm as we were bussed to the start. I kept the toilet facilities busy as the clock ticked away to start time, I wished Kev all the best and he was off with me just setting my watch to go. Pacing was the key as Kev kept telling me, I was hoping for a 3:30 so 8 min miles should do it, just stick to that Baz, Mile 1 – 7:15, slow down min, Mile 2 – 7:00, Christ sake – Mile 3 – 7:30 – right, just get a grip – I then managed to settle into some sort of decent pacing. It has to be said that I did not quite believe what everyone had told me about London being a fantastic event but hand on heart the atmosphere was absolutely amazing. The race itself is a bit of a blur as the heat took it's toll but the sights I remember best were the pipe band starting up at mile 10, Tower Bridge at and Canary Wharf where the noise generated by the crowds reverberated around the tall buildings. Anyway at the half way point I was on schedule for a 3:30 but from mile 16 onwards I just focussed on completion as there were casualties everywhere, guys being sick, one passing out in front of me etc. I read after that St John's treated almost 5,000 people for ailments ranging from blisters to heat exhaustion\dehydration. Anyway I waddled on and a bonus for me was at what I thought was mile 22 was actually mile 23 so it put a spring in my step for about 15 metres and then I settled into my slow stride again and with a tear in my eye I crossed that line in 3h:48m, what a feeling.

Continues over....

....Cont

Hopefully this amusing story will show you that nothing is impossible - I was seriously ill in 2001, unable to walk and 6 years later here I am completing a Marathon. Was it worth it? you bet for that chunk of metal - my London Marathon medal that can never be taken away from me along with the memories of an amazing day. Next to the birth of my kids and my wedding day (I had to say that) it's right up there... along with our photo of Nell McAndrew as attached, great advertising for Metro! This came courtesy of me winning a competition to start with the celebrities so me and Kev only wanted our photo taken with Nell and not Gordon Ramsay as you can understand.

Keep on running... nothing is impossible - my thanks to Jackie Stewart, Kevin Tulloch and Alistair Blain for their guidance, motivation and tips through those months of training.

Editors note - This article was shortlisted for the vouchers prize but I think meeting Nell McAndrew was reward enough.



Nell McAndrew starts to panic as Kevin Tulloch's right hand disappears from shot

Elgin 10 Mile

15 July 2007

Kevin Tulloch

Five hardy Metro souls turned out for the recent Elgin 10 mile road race on possibly the only fine day we have had this summer, this event used to be in conjunction with the highland games but they have long since passed away just leaving the 10 mile race which itself has been on one year and cancelled the next.

Inspired by news of Charlie Noble running over 100 miles in a 24 hr race in Hull the day before, John Matheson set off in pursuit of early leader Alan Reid, overhauling him just after 3 miles and going on to win the race by 800m with Alan finishing second and winning the North district championship in the process.

Further along the field the Metro ladies were having a ding dong battle with each other with the places changing frequently as the race went along. Jane Macaskill eventually got the better of training partners Caroline Kelly and Jean Cowie in the final miles.

Kevin Tulloch finished in 6th place, 6th Vet! to complete the Metro finishers.

As usual with the Moray races there was a fine spread of sarnies and cakes awaiting all finishers at the end of the warm and hilly race with John, Kevin and Jane heading back to Aberdeen with their alcohol prizes tucked away in the kit bags, 5 Metro runners taking part winning 3 prizes can't be bad.

Run-4-it have 4 stores throughout Scotland - Aberdeen, Edinburgh and 2 in Glasgow and are Scotland's only independent chain of running shops. They carry a huge stock of running shoes, clothing and accessories and have a dedicated team of knowledgeable staff on hand for any help or advice you may require.

Metro members will get a 10% discount at any of their stores, just discretely show your membership card when making a purchase.

Find Run-4-It at:

Aberdeen
21 Holburn Street
Tel: 01224 594400

Edinburgh
108 - 110 Lothian Road
Tel: 0131 2283444

Glasgow City
57 Bothwell Street
Tel: 0141 2214300

Glasgow - Tiso Outdoor Experience
50 Couper Street, Townhead
Tel: 0141 5595450





Meet the Boyz

Name: Bjoern Reiss

Age: 31

Occupation:

Research Fellow in biomedical sciences



Bjoern chases down Andy Reid's right leg



How long have you been running and what triggered your interest?:

I started running during my studies in Muenster (Germany), this was far from being structured or sensible, usually it was just running a few kilometers once a week as fast as possible in order to get it over with. I began to train properly six years ago after four colleagues finished the Cologne Marathon. Around the same time it was announced that a marathon was going to take place in Muenster, so there was my target. After months of preparation I finished my first marathon, I've been hooked ever since.

Why did you join Metro and how long have you been a member of the club?:

I joined Metro shortly after arriving in Scotland in early summer 2006. The reason I joined Metro was therefore not only to improve my running but also to get to know some people in addition to my colleagues at work – and learn some new Scottish words !

What's the best thing about being a member of Metro?:

I don't think there's just "one best thing". I like the very friendly, sociable atmosphere among members as well as the competitive runs on Tuesdays or Jackie's rep sessions on Thursday. And it's always a good day out going to competitions together.

Any secrets/scandals/embarrassing stories about any fellow club member/s?:

There's a story about G. R. nominated as driver to take us down to the XC championships in Cumbernauld but turned up in the passenger seat next to Dave Nugent instead because of being in a "special" state, but I think this is hardly a secret :-)

Personal bests

3k 10:06; 5k: 17.23; 10K: 35.40; 10m: 58.20; Half Marathon: 1.16.45; Marathon: 2.49



Most memorable/favourite race:

I really enjoyed doing the Zermatt marathon last year - the scenery was fantastic but my favourite race is, and will always be the Muenster Marathon. Not only was it my first (and you'll never forget that one...), but there's also a special connection to the city itself as I've lived there for nearly 10 years and have lots of friends and family there or nearby. Muenster provides a flat, fast course, a mixture between city and landscape marathon and a really enthusiastic crowd. So, if there's a space in your race calendar on the second Sunday in September and you fancy a run abroad, just let me know (I promise a free city tour).

Most uplifting running experience:

The Lossiemouth half this year: I improved my old PB by more than 4 minutes on an absolutely perfect day for running – cool, no wind and sunshine.

Most depressing running experience:

My debut at London in 2007 - I was in very good shape and confident after having set PBs for 10 k and half marathon during the spring but it just didn't work on the day, whether it was the lack of sleep the night before (I can not really recommend staying in a "cheap" hotel in Bayswater), the stressful travel to the start, the warmish weather (at least compared to Aberdeen) or me being daft and starting too quick. I was slowing down from about 25 k and ended up jogging the last few miles. I lost about 9 min during the second half and finished about 3 min above my PB – my muscles were sore like never before afterwards.

Funniest running experience:

During last year's Metro 10 k time trial on the Deeside footpath a medium-sized dog apparently thought that we were playing some sort of funny game and decided to join in.... It followed me for a good few hundred meters while nudging my backside (at least it refrained from biting it...). While I usually stop running if a dog is chasing me (they are always faster than you - so you better face it :-)) I didn't want to do it this time - it was a race after all ! It finally stopped after its owner has cried her lungs out for about a minute or two and I could finish the run properly without having to look behind me every two seconds.

Any other interests:

I surf the internet quite a lot and like reading scottish crime fiction (e.g. Ian Rankin and Stuart McBride) as well as watching a good movie now and then.

Any advice for a new runner/member?:

Be patient - it's the consistency that counts - and always follow Jackie's instructions !

Any regrets?:

Not really, although...sometimes it's a pity I'm not equipped with a pair of these long, thin flying Kenyan legs

Meet the Girlies

Name:

Ali Hughes

Age:

27

Occupation:

Legal Contracts Specialist



Ali after the Firenze Marathon

How long have you been running and what triggered your interest?:

My passion for running started at High School - especially cross country, at that time I was also passionate about another 40 sports! However, it was about 3 or 4 years ago that I started to dabble in the local races...the rest is history.

Why did you join Metro and how long have you been a member of the club?:

Mr Tulloch used his special powers of persuasion - he had noticed that I was "unattached" but still entering many the local races. I didn't think I'd enjoy it... but lo and behold... I am still here after more than 3 years.

What's the best thing about being a member of Metro?:

Team spirit! It's great to attend races and be surrounded by fellow team members. I've met a super group of people from all walks of life.

Any secrets/scandals/embarrassing stories about any fellow club member/s?:

Alan hatched Marion's penguin...

Personal bests

5k: 22:04 at Run-4-It at RGU 2005 (*this is the only 5km race I've done...note to self...make a concerted effort to enter more 5k races from now on!!*); 10K: 43:21 at the Beach 10k in 2006; 10 Mile: 1:14:15 at the Arbroath Smokies in 2006; Half Marathon: 1:37:05 in Inverness 2005; Marathon: 3:31 in Elgin 2007

Most memorable/favourite race:

The Inverness Half Marathon in 2005 in which I ran my PB. It was a cold snowy day, and I didn't wear a watch, so I was surprised to see my time as I crossed the line.

Most uplifting running experience:

I have two that spring to mind - the Beach 10k last year in which I was 4th female overall, and 1st Metro female, also the Dyce half marathon last year in which I was 3rd female overall, and 2nd Metro female.

Most depressing running experience:

The Amsterdam half marathon in 2005. I had been pretty ill earlier that year, and I thought I had given myself enough time to recover, despite Jackie trying to tell me otherwise and he was right enough. I hadn't recovered and ended up running 10 minutes slower than the previous year. I decided not to go back and run it again in 2006 because I was scared of it.

Funniest running experience:

Probably when I was out running with Lynne P and Jim H on a Thursday evening earlier in the year... we were trotting along the Langstracht on a cold and windy night and I somehow managed to trip myself up and splatted all over the road...thankfully my BRIGHT YELLOW Metro gilet was enough to dazzle the oncoming cars, all of which swerved graciously in time to avoid ironing me flat into the road! Once Jim scraped me up of the ground, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry (Jim and Lynne had no doubts about opting for the former though, I'm STILL picking away at my scabby knees and hands!

Any other interests:

I have a horse and he certainly takes up a lot of my time. I love skiing and I also travel a lot for both work and pleasure.

Any advice for a new runner/member?:

Stick in and enjoy it. Metro is more than a running club!

Any regrets?:

I've had a few...however, keeping within the boundaries of "running"...the main one would have to be an ongoing one which involves not resting enough during or after an injury or an illness (I can hear Jackie now..."I told her so!!!")

Tour of Fife

1- 5 August 2007

Janet McRoberts

Day 1 Wednesday 1 August – Chariots of Fire Beach Race

Being at a loose end for 6 weeks over the summer occasionally makes a person sign up to do silly things...not that I'm saying this was one of them, but a race each day for 5 days... I'll let you decide.

I headed to St Andrews for the first race, getting there was straightforward... but as the Ladies Open Golf was on, finding somewhere to park was slightly more challenging. Once registered I put my number on and as this piece of paper had to last 5 races, I managed to rip it within 30 seconds. God knows what it'll be like by Sunday. We lined up behind a line drawn in the sand, the horn went and so did we. There was a sea of white and red Fife AC vests, and a large smattering of the green and orange of Carnegie Harriers. I ran as hard as I could for the first mile while the sand was hard packed, then it started to soften, tough going. We turned at the breakwater which was 2.1 miles and headed back to the finish. With the end in sight I put in a bit of a sprint and finished in 30.32.

Day 2 Thursday 2 August – East Lomond Hill Race

I drove to Falkland to register in the village hall car park. As we were encouraged to car share to the start, I hopped into a car with the enemy camp, 4 Fife AC members, who were actually very friendly! At the start it was easy to spot the two leaders of the Tour as they had been issued with the "maillot jaune" which was a cool touch. The race started with a large loop of a field, then hill tracks, over a stile and up the rocky path, it was slow but steady going at first. Then came the tough bit, hands on legs, heaving myself up the hill, no running here, some were using grass tussocks to pull themselves up. Luckily I found it ok and overtook a few (including 3 of the 4 that I car shared with). Once at the top it was straight down the other side, a longer descent on fairly good tracks. After negotiating another couple of stiles and gates the finish line was in sight. I finished in 35.20 and pleased with my first ever hill race

Day 3 Friday 3 August – Uphill Road Time Trial

If there was ever a time throughout this series that I wondered what I was doing, it was tonight. After registering once again in Falkland Village Hall car park (beginning to feel like my second home) we all jumped into cars to share to the car park at the top of the hill. The second gear drive up the road, gave some clue as to how we would run it (slowly). At the top there was a sheet of paper with start times on. Pairs of people were being set off at 30 second intervals. First we had to make our way again to the bottom of the hill, a nice easy jog to warm up the muscles. At the bottom 2 very official Fife AC men were there with clip boards and stopwatches. At exactly 7.30 the first pair set off uphill, 6 minutes later my name was called, there was a countdown and then GO...off I set, 2.25km of uphill ahead of me. I cannot type some of the words that were going through my head as they weren't ladylike. As I rounded the final bend I saw the radio masts that were at the finish. There were runners already finished cheering me on, this really was like a mountain stage in "le Tour". A final push brought me home in just over 15 minutes. Hard, hard work.

Day 4 Saturday 4 August – Road Race, Luthrie

At last, a road race, much more my thing. I arrived in Luthrie pre-warned that there was very limited parking (are you noticing a theme with these races?) and was directed into a cow barn to park. There were distinct rumblings about hills so I went to investigate - an uphill start of approximately a mile, oh hell, memories of yesterday's time trial were flooding back. As it turned out, yes it was a tough start to a race but in a circuit what goes up must come down and so it did. I finished strongly in 22.10, just 28 seconds outside my pb. this moved me up in the female rankings to 14th from Wednesdays 18th.

Day 5 Sunday 5 August – Trail Race, Falkland

For the first time in 5 days it was raining...a lot! It was going to be a messy race. There was a great atmosphere as lots of families had turned up to watch the last race. Off we set again, a nice gentle start before the hills and the mud. Through a field of fairly long grass then onto a forestry track and some uphill, then downhill on some steep, muddy tracks, a little slippery but nothing terminal, then uphill before doing the whole circuit again. This time, knowing the length of the uphill, I ran a better circuit. Nearing finish I really picked it up for the last half mile on tarmac, determined to pick up a couple of places. I finished strongly in 36.44.

Back at the hall there were cakes to be eaten and stories to be swapped. I finished The Tour as 14th Female overall and 6th Female Vet which I was delighted with in the face of the tough competition. I made new friends, discovered a liking of hill racing, explored some delightful villages in Fife and I can tell you now...I'll be back next year.

London Marathon

22 April 2007

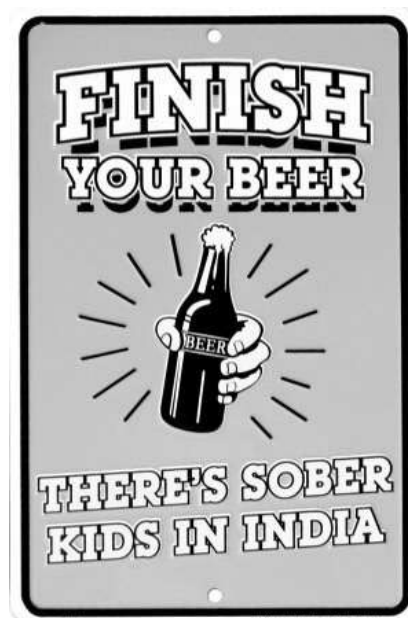
Gavin Reid

Here's Gavin Reid's unique London Marathon race report, I was going to try to edit it down to fit on a single page but soon realised that that would be a futile exercise, so here it is in all it's glory.

My London Marathon Day Gav's run down in the smoke

- 0600 - Rise
- 0615 - Out for a quick jog, feel good
- 0630 - Sky outside very clear, feels like a hot day brewing
- 0640 - Basic breaky
- 0650 - Finalise kit, all the junk I'm taking with me
- 0700 - Walk to London Bridge station
- 0715 - Train exists, its on its way and everyone seems primed
- 0740 - Train departs for start slightly latey
- 0810 - Stuck in big jam in carriage, some get out to walk
- 0811 - Arrive and walk to start
- 0812 - Sun seems worryingly strong for this time of day
- 0813 - Sit around on grass, its getting warm
- 0900 - Watch womens start standing on wheelie bins
- 0901 - Didn't manage to see any quines I kent!
- 0915 - Do a warm up
- 0930 - Final dump in excellent nearby bushes
- 0931 - Hope whoever left that yella sweatshirt doesn't come back for it.
- 0935 - Join Pen 1 on green start, am quite far back
- 0945 - OFF - Its a scrum
- 0950 - Still a scrum, I'm up and down pavements - B***S!
- 0955 - 10 mins in, I can just about run free - sweating more than normal
- 1000 - Feel a little bit sluggish, damn those tapers!
- 1005 - Running well now, but HR at 182, 10 higher than Half Mara pace
- 1006 - Shall I slow to 162? Its too high
- 1007 - B****cks to it, I feel good, just keep going lad!
- 1020 - Through 5 well under 35 mins, too quick, HR still too high
- 1021 - Pass humorous 'Welsh Plumbing Services' runner
- 1022 - See Ian just before Cutty Sark
- 1030 - It now feels baking, but I'm going well, but sweating a lot
- 1035 - Start to cover myself with water when I get a chance
- 1055 - I'm under seventy for 10 miles
- 1050 - I overtake 'Westy' who seems to have a lot of fans
- 1055 - I'm slowing a little, I'm struggling with sweat in my eyes
- 1115 - Tower bridge, I now feel crap, but I can't see what to do but plough on
- 1116 - I start downgrading the pace, but I still feel crap
- 1120 - It's the Royal Marines Endurance Course all over again in the Isle of Dogs
- 1125 - I'm really slowing, lots of overtakers
- 1133 - I'm finished, I have to stop and mournfully walk
- 1135 - Try a jog, but my legs are lead like
- 1145 - Here I am on one of running biggest stages running like a lemon
- 1149 - My pathetic jog comes to an end - Can I make it home?
- 1150 - 'Westy' surges through with loads of people shouting
- 1151 - 'Just run' shouts a trio of people to me, I think of Gordon Hamilton in 1991
- 1152 - Try another jog
- 1155 - That was quick - stitch on boths side, take a long water stop
- 1205 - I'm off again, was that Ian, Kev, Bjoern, Neil, Darren, no, it was Cliff

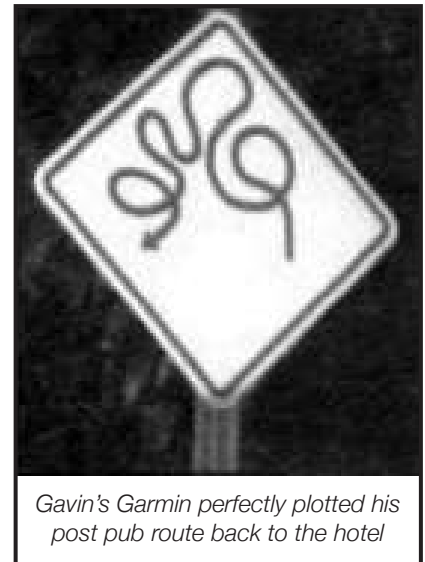
Continues over...



....Cont

- 1206 - Stopped again, bloody hell this is crap! Chat to another walker
- 1207 - More shouts of 'Run'
- 1208 - Jon bursts past saying 'Come on', I shake my head
- 1209 - 'Westy' comes past, murmurs something about feeling terrible
- 1210 - I decide to try and keep up with Jon, it might help me to get home
- 1211 - Catch 'Westy', he is in a worse state than me
- 1212 - I pass him some water, but he is now going very slow
- 1213 - 'I've never felt this bad' he says, feel a bit guilty but I need to press a bit
- 1214 - Up the pace a bit, not much more than 6 to go - 20's only half-way
- 1220 - Pass Welsh Plumbing again
- 1223 - 3 hour pacer sails past, he seems to be going too quick
- 1225 - Screams of Elvis all around me
- 1226 - Elvis comes past on the inside, not only is he alive, he is sub 7 minute miling
- 1228 - Up pace and pass Elvis, I'm not having that!
- 1232 - Past stationary 'Westy', one of many casualties littered everywhere
- 1238 - Feeling quite good and up pace again
- 1240 - Now motoring along, shame about the walk stops
- 1242 - Pass the 3:30 pacer who has gone too fast
- 1243 - Elvis again, how many are in this race?
- 1307 - Finished! 3.21.44. Personal worst. Must remember to bring a brain next time
- 1315 - Meet others at meeting point to moan
- 1315 - Others have suffered in sun too
- 1355 - Walk to pub, delayed by someone keeling over
- 1455 - Leave pub, delayed by someone keeling over
- 1500 - Shower etc, drink some comfort Guinness in hotel
- 1530 - Guinness at Pub
- 1800 - More comfort Guinness
- 1830 - Strong lagers
- 2130 - More bar action, feel a bit knackered
- 2230 - Home, balmy night descends in London
- 2300 - Oblivion

Moral : Think, heed you HR monitor, dont be a dawkl



Gavin's Garmin perfectly plotted his post pub route back to the hotel

Charlies Corner



Picture stolen from the Fraserburgh RC website

This section is for quotes and stories dedicated to the North East running scene's legendary oracle of wisdom - Charlie Noble. This editions "words of wisdom" are submitted by Steve Forbes who had the dubious honour of running alongside Charlie at 2007's Lochaber Marathon:

at 5 miles

Charlie: "...fazatt Metro loon beating me?"

Steve: "that's Richard, he's going for 2:50."

Charlie: "nah nah, he canna run that quick, he should slow doon he's nae that good."

at 10 miles

Charlie: "...fazatt wifie beating me?"

Steve: "sorry Charlie I dont know, but she's a good runner to keep this pace going."

Charlie: "nah nah she canna beat me, look at her she's got a fat bum."

at 15 miles

Charlie: "...fits a dee Steve? you're slowin' doon. I'm awa to speed up to catch the leaders, dinna try to keep up wi me, you winna manage."

Cr@p Caption Competition

For your chance to win BIG (i.e. a £10 Run-4-it voucher). all you have to do is simply come up with a "witty" caption to go with the photograph below.

This months belter of a picture shows a couple of young lads getting a telling off for mucking about in the Asda carpark. Although I would never condone such neddish behavior, I recon we could get a decent amount of abusive entries containing reference to such things as "Peter Jennings' grandson" etc etc.

Have as many attempts as you like and Email entries titled "Metro Cr@p Caption Competition" to rthomson@talktalk.net



It was a tough decision to decide on a winner for the last edition as all entries were fairly dreadful, only joking, the winning entry comes from **Colin Youngson**, congratulations, the £10 voucher is on its way.



"A club renamed Comic Bogsniffers hope for more success in their new sport than they had in their old one"

Thanks to all the other entrants, better luck next time - Here's a selection:

"Poor Mother Clanger tried every door hunting for Soup Dragon"

One bloke to the other "Is that Charlie Noble in the mask ?"

"London, New York, Paris, Loch Ness, Marathon bogs smell the same the world over"

"There was always a rush to get to the toilet before Peter Jennings on Tuesday night"

"These bogs smell so bad I was going to blow them up.....but I'm pretty sure that's John Smeaton in the mask over there so I wont bother !"

"After almost throwing up whilst waiting for the portaloos at the Loch Ness Marathon, Susan made an important addition to her racing kit."

Race Fixtures

If like me (i.e. a wee bit obsessive and anal) you like to plan your races well in advance then here is a list of some local and not so local events taking place over the next few months. If you have a race you would like to be included then please let me know the details on rthomson@talktalk.net

In future I aim to add a section on Metro members race results but for the moment and for more information on these and other races and for full and comprehensive race listings and results service visit www.born2run.co.uk or www.scottishathletics.org.uk

January

- 12 Jan 2008 (Sat) - BUPA Great Winter Run - 5K, Holyrood Park, Edinburgh
- 12 Jan 2008 (Sat) - Jack Crawford Springburn Cup 10K. Bishopbriggs, Glasgow
- 12 Jan 2008 (Sat) - Edinburgh RC Winter Duathlon Series. Round 3 of 3. Kirkliston, Edinburgh
- 19 Jan 2008 (Sat) - Scottish East District CC League #3 of 3. Livingston
- 20 Jan 2008 (Sun) - Tri Changing Gear - Aberdeenshire Winter Duathlon Series (Race 2 of 4). Westhill Academy
- 20 Jan 2008 (Sun) - The Running Shop Round the Castles Series #2 of 3. Drum Castle, Deeside
- 26 Jan 2008 (Sat) - Devil's Burden Relay. Falkland, Fife
- 27 Jan 2008 (Sun) - SA Senior Men & Women's 4k CC Championships. Bellahouston Park, Glasgow

February

- 01 Feb 2008 (Fri) - Run 4 It Metro Promenade 3k Winter Series 2007/2008 (5 of 6). The Beach Esplanade, Aberdeen
- 03 Feb 2008 (Sun) - Forfar Road Runners Multi Terrain Half Marathon. Forfar
- 03 Feb 2008 (Sun) - Angus Bike Chain / SG Baker Winter Duathlon Series 3 of 3 Monikie Country Park, by Dundee
- 10 Feb 2008 (Sun) - Tri Changing Gear - Aberdeenshire Winter Duathlon Series (Race 1 of 4 TBC). Inverurie
- 10 Feb 2008 (Sun) - The Run-4-It Tartan Shorts 5Km Series (#1 of 2) and Kid's fun run 2Km. Castle Fraser, Aberdeenshire
- 16 Feb 2008 (Sat) - Tiso Carnethy 5 hills. Silverburn, by Penicuik
- 17 Feb 2008 (Sun) - Kinloss to Lossiemouth half marathon, Lossiemouth
- 23 Feb 2008 (Sat) - Scottish Power Scottish National Cross Country. Falkirk
- 24 Feb 2008 (Sun) - Tri Changing Gear - Aberdeenshire Winter Duathlon Series (Race 3 of 4). bennachie Centre

March

- 02 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Lasswade AC 10 mile road race. Near Rosewell, Midlothian
- 02 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Smokies 10 mile. Ladies only, Arbroath
- 02 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Nairn 10K and 5K Fun Run. Nairn
- 02 Mar 2008 (Sun) - The Running Shop Round the Castles Series (3 of 3). House of Dun, by Montrose
- 07 Mar 2008 (Fri) - Run 4 It Metro Promenade 3k Winter Series 2007/2008 (6 of 6). The Beach Esplanade, Aberdeen
- 09 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Balloch to Clydebank Half Marathon. Loch Lomond Shores, Balloch,
- 09 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Inverness Half Marathon. Inverness Sports Centre, Inverness
- 16 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Sport Relief Mile. Duthie Park, Aberdeen
- 16 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Dumfries Marathon. Leisure Centre, Dumfries
- 16 Mar 2008 (Sun) - The Run-4-It Tartan Shorts 5Km Series (2 of 2). Haddo House
- 16 Mar 2008 (Sun) - The Edinburgh Half Marathon, Relay and Fun Run. Ocean Terminal
- 22 Mar 2008 (Sat) - CATERAN Trail Race (+ Fun Easter weekend). Blairgowrie
- 23 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Running Sisters (Tayside) 5K Fun Run for Ladies. Monikie Country Park
- 30 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Tri Changing Gear - Winter Duathlon (4 of 4). Knockburn Loch, Banchory
- 30 Mar 2008 (Sun) - Moray Road Runners 10K and 3K Fun Run, Elgin, Moray

April

- 01 Apr 2008 (Tue) - Krunce Series - Race 1. Rotten O'Gairn Car Park, west of Aberdeen
- 06 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Heaven and Hell Half Marathon. Perth aerodrome, Scone
- 12 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Clachnaben Hill Race. South of Strachan, by Banchory,
- 13 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Tom Scott Memorial Road Races. Strathclyde Park, Motherwell
- 13 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Garioch 10K. Garioch Sports Centre, Inverurie
- 13 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Flora London Marathon and Mini Marathon. London
- 16 Apr 2008 (Wed) - St Andrews 5,000m Race. St.Andrews University Sports Centre
- 17 Apr 2008 (Thu) - Race in Culloden Woods. Culloden Woods, by Inverness
- 19 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Hunters Bog Trot. Holyrood Park, Edinburgh
- 19 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Cioch Mhor Hill Race. Dingwall Sports centre, Dingwall
- 20 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Fyvie Castle and Lake 5K and 2k fun run. Fyvie Estate, Aberdeenshire
- 24 Apr 2008 (Thu) - Kinross 10K. Kinross House Grounds, Kinross, Fife
- 26 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Glen Bash (Trail Race). Old Bridge Claggan, Glen Nevis, Fort William
- 26 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Balmoral (Stena Drilling) Tartan 10K. Balmoral Castle, Aberdeenshire
- 26 Apr 2008 (Sat) - Balmoral (ConocoPhillips) 5K. Balmoral Castle, Aberdeenshire
- 27 Apr 2008 (Sun) - Orkney Half Marathon and Fun Run. Finstown, Orkney
- 27 Apr 2008 (Sun) - 25th Team Strides Lochaber Marathon. An Aird, Fort William



Heavy overnight rain introduced another hazard to the Highland Cross

AGM:

The club AGM took place on the 6th of November in the Health Board Club on King Street, the minutes are now available. Thanks go to the committee for their continued hard work throughout the year for trying to progress the club. This is a thankless task that involves a lot of hassle especially around the numerous races that we organise.

A new committee was elected with a rush of willing volunteers to take up places that resulted in:

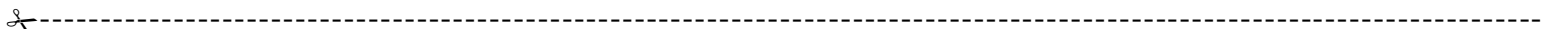
- Chairperson Janet McRoberts
- Secretary Kevin Tulloch
- Ass Secretary Cliff Leith
- Treasurer Colin MacKay
- Ladies Captain Claire smith
- Mens Captain Peter Jennings

Ordinary Committee Members

Ali Hughes, Neil Jackson, Richard Thomson, Karin McAvoy, Rowena Dustan, Paul Matthews

If you have any issues you wish brought up at a committee meeting let one of the above know. The meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month.

Please find attached a membership renewal form, it would help our admin if you could complete this and return with your fees to ensure our records are kept up to date



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM 2008, fees due 01/01/2008

SURNAME..... FIRST NAMES.....

AGE..... DOB..... (Mr / Mrs / Miss)..... 1ST / 2ND CLAIM.....

ADDRESS.....

..... E-MAIL.....

POST CODE..... SAF No (if member).....

TEL Home.....work.....mob.....

PB's while a Metro Member (for information only)

3k..... 10k..... 10miles.....1/2 mar.....Marathon.....

The club will hold your details on a database for their sole use.

ANNUAL FEE **£12.00** PAYABLE TO "METRO ABERDEEN RUNNING CLUB"

Send to: Colin MacKay, 15 Fare View, Torphins, Aberdeenshire, AB31 4DZ