

Newsletter 013

Winter 2025

Notification of AGM

Monday 26 January 2026, 6.45 for 7pm @ Brown Cow, Keighley

The AGM is for all members. Please come along to hear updates on what's happening at the Club and to have your say on issues affecting us all. The AGM Agenda will be circulated closer to the meeting date – items led by committee members. If there are any other topics you want to raise please email kcacmembers@gmail.com by 19 January – these will be taken at the end of the meeting under Any Other Business.

Also, if you can let us know if you're intending to come then that would be good – we'll email you the draft AGM Minutes and Accounts for 2025 in advance. You'll be welcome if you just come along on the evening, but it will also help to have an idea of numbers as pizza will (again) be provided – come a few minutes early for this!

Words by Richard Hindle

Charity of the Year

I thought the Winter KCAC Newsletter would be a great place to celebrate just how much we have raised for our Charity of the Year – Airedale Hospital & Community Charity.

The current total we have raised is £1705.77.

This is made up of monies from the following events:

The Hobble – £250

March Track Mile – £157.77

September Track Mile – £264

Yorkshireman – £300

Bronte Way – £300

Charity Quiz Night – £369

Junior Shoe Swap – £65

Huge thanks to everyone who supported any of these events, to all the race directors, runners, helpers, shoe swappers and quizzers. We know there will be further money to come from members who have opted for an additional voluntary donation attached to our memberships, and also from the Haworth Hobble. I will let you know the grand total at a future date.

Well done everyone.

Words by Helen Fuggle



2026 Charity of the Year

We are now asking for nominations for next year's Charity of the Year. The committee has decided that any past charity can be nominated along with any other charity. Along with previous years, we would encourage you to nominate a charity with some local connection.

Senior Race News

Team GB Representation at European XC Championship

Massive congratulations to Joe Hudson on qualifying to run for Team GB at the European Cross Country Championships in Portugal. What an amazing achievement after what was already a fantastic cross country season.



National XC Relays

Fantastic running from the Women at the National Cross Country Relays. Well done Maggie, Lara and Katie, 17th out of 41 teams.

Northern XC Relay

A huge representation from KCAC, both male and female, senior and juniors, at the Northern Cross Country Relays.



British Fell Relays

A few seniors ventured across to North Wales for the British Fell Relays and finished 108th out of 188.

Northern Road Relays

What a fantastic day with these amazing six. 5th in the Northern qualifiers and now 20th in the Nationals. This made them the 3rd fastest Northern team in the relays. Absolutely incredible effort which led to a fantastic result. Another very proud moment for the club. Well done boys, you superstars (L-R - Joe C, Callum J, Archie P, Ewen W, Owen A and Joe H).



Absolutely brilliant to have 2 women's teams at the Northern Road Relays, finishing 39th & 47th out of 82 teams.

Strong running from all, first senior relay for Maggie, Alice, Eve & Harisah and first relay for Benedicte & Amanda.





YVAA Road Relays
Well done to everyone racing at the YVAA road relays, especially the women's team who were 2nd in the VW45-54 category.

Kilnsey Cragg Race
Congratulations to Maggie & Joe Hudson for taking the wins at the famous Kilsney Fell Race.

Club Championships
Plenty of Keighley seniors have taken part in the club championships this year which has been great to see. The final races are the Stoop and Ribble Valley 10k, later on this month.

Junior Race News

West Yorkshire League - Rothwell - 7th December
Some great running over a soggy and muddy course in Rothwell, for the third West Yorkshire league race!

Joseph led home the U13 boys with ease, with U17s Clara (2nd) and Bethan (4th), and U20s Katie (2nd), Thomas (CVFR) (3rd) and Alice (5th) all placed in the top few. Sarah and James represented the seniors well, both finishing 3rd in their age groups!

Team wise, our U11 girls squad of 7, led home by Annabel in 6th, smashed it to take the 1st team spot again, showing excellent strength in depth!

Photos (sorry, U11 and U13 only... I escaped home as the rain started, abandoning my husband too!)



Winter Track and Field Athletics Series
KCAC were out in force for the first of the winter track and field athletics series hosted at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield. It's an indoor stadium, with banked turns and shorter sprints – a great experience for our athletes and they did us proud!!! It was the first time out for many, but the event was so well organised and with lots of friendly faces the kids loved it!

We had KCAC members competing in the 600m, 200m, 60m, Shot Put and Long Jump. Well done to Norah, Eshan, Isabel, Mia, Sophie, Freddie and Ronnie, you were all brilliant.



Northern Athletics Cross Country Relay

Plenty of KCAC juniors ran the Northern Cross Country Relays (photos pictured above). Well done to the U13 boys and U17 girls for coming home with team medals.

The KCAC 2025 Junior Fell and Trail Championships

We look forward to presenting awards to our top point scorers and to those showing great commitment with high attendance at the Junior Celebration Evening on 31st January... then we start again with 2026!

Across the 11 races in the league, we had 72 Primary School-aged Juniors competing for KCAC, amounting to 412 individual performances – that's an average of 37 KCAC juniors at each event, with numbers and attendance notably higher than last year! Well done Juniors!

Thanks to all our parents for supporting the league this year, driving the kids around and buying the ice creams! Well done to the coaching team for encouraging these kids to give racing a go – I think we've done a pretty good job looking at these numbers!



Withins Skyline Fell Race

KCAC Juniors were out in force at the Withins Skyline race. Rarely is the weather so good, as regular Penistone Hill runners can attest to!

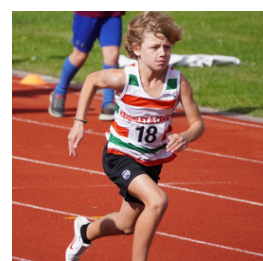
So on a glorious morning, 27 of our runners took part, claiming 13 of the prizes on offer. There were category wins for Alex, Raffy, Sophie, Hugo, Scarlett and Tommy, with Tommy only one second off the course record!



Thankyou as always to all the amazing volunteers who put the event on and everyone who comes to watch and support the runners. We hope to be there again on December 21st for the Stoop (can't guarantee the weather will be as good...)!

Blackpool Athletics Open

Well done to a small handful of juniors (plus a couple of the parents) who competed in a blustery and at times very wet Blackpool – including a few making their track and field debuts!



Ambleside Sports



Crowds enjoyed fine summer weather at Ambleside Sports, with a full programme of cycling, track and fell racing and wrestling drawing visitors in.

The fell races – always a highlight – saw exciting performances across all age groups. In the U9s, Ronnie stormed to first place in the fell race, with a determined run from Otto earning loud cheers from the crowd. The U12s saw Robyn crowned first girl, with spirited efforts from Felix and Phoebe drawing admiration from spectators.

The U14s race produced grit and determination in equal measure, with Raffy securing an impressive 6th place and Ruben close behind in 10th. In the U17s, Izzy and Annie delivered storming runs, Izzy taking the honour of first girl in a competitive field.

The senior races made history when Joe Hudson powered to victory in the men's event, while his sister Maggie claimed the women's title – a remarkable sibling double. Even more impressively, earlier in the day Joe had triumphed in the gruelling Rydal Round fell race. Organisers believe this is the first time in the event's long history that anyone has achieved the double of winning both races on the same day.

Otley 10 Mile Road Race

A very warm evening on Wednesday 11th June, saw a great turn out of hoops for a hot and surprisingly hilly Otley 10 mile race. There were at least 10 KCAC runners, plus supporters and some great performances. Joe Bashforth was first KCAC back in a time of 1:11, followed closely by Niamh Conroy, who just missed out on the prizes, coming 4th senior woman.

Amanda Alcock did a fantastic run to claim first V50 woman. Also rans were Perry Evans, Max Whitaker, Gaynor Anderson-Yates, Carl Pedley, Emma Dooks, Carl Whale and Nid Wongkalasin. Well done all!!



The Boston Marathon



My marathon journey began in 2020 when I was lucky enough to receive a coveted KCAC London Marathon place after many years of ballot rejections. I had wanted to tick off the distance and it felt imperative that it had to be the London Marathon.

I remember telling another club runner that it would be “One & Done”. She warned me that marathon running is addictive and not to be surprised if I sign up for further races. Due to Covid19, my first marathon became a 26.2-mile virtual run in the rolling hills of Haworth and Oxenhope. I completed the official race in London in the following year, 2021. Fast forward several years and 8 marathons later and in late April, I find myself standing on the start line of the 2025 Boston Marathon.

It is the oldest annual marathon, and uses the same basic route as the original in 1897. It has several iconic moments, such as Kathrine Switzer almost having her bib ripped off by a race official in 1967, due to women being prohibited from running, Roberta ‘Bobbi’ Gibb becoming the first woman to run the course in 1966 and of course the tragic terrorist bomb attack in 2013, which detonated close to the finish line. It’s difficult to get a spot with most of the places going to time qualifiers. So, the term BQ – Boston Qualifier, was born. As such, it features on many a marathon runner’s bucket list.

The Boston Marathon is held on Patriot’s Day. In New England this is a public holiday which commemorates the first battle in the American revolution. The Boston community really puts out a welcome to all on marathon weekend. It is a point-to-point race. The journey to the start involves runners piling onto traditional yellow school buses which transport participants from the centre of Boston to the start line in the pretty New England town of Hopkinton. The run progresses through six equally picturesque villages, past lakes and woods on mainly rural roads, which are undulating every step of the way. Very similar to Haworth and Oxenhope where I completed most of my training! It finishes with pomp and ceremony in the wonderful city of Boston. Surprisingly, there are wall to wall spectators and plenty of American razzmatazz all along the way.

My ‘why’ for marathon running started off as a tick the box exercise. I will be forever grateful to KCAC for enabling it with that original London Marathon club ballot place.

Words by Tina Cardamone

A tribute to John Dennis

Many of the club members will have fond memories of John's contribution to KCAC and, following his retirement from coaching for the club, I have, finally, put pen to paper. My first encounter with John was when he stood up and shared his vision of KCAC in the Pop and Pasty Working Men's Club at the AGM in January 1999. It was, certainly, something that all members present at the meeting found inspiring. As I have mentioned in the history pages on the website already, Keighley Hill Runners and Keighley Road Runners (KRR) had merged forces and KCAC had been formed in 1998. John was the first Chairperson of the new club.

His initial interest into coaching stemmed from his own experiences of being coached by Ted Forshaw in St Helens, who counted such athletes as Gerry Helme, Steve Anders and Benson Maysa amongst his athletes. As a member of KRR, John became involved in coaching working with Norman Harrison, Ian Eaton and John Woodcock amongst others. John became very keen on focusing on getting the female side of the club strong. It came with a great deal of success, arguably, due to the commitment he gave to the girls and ladies he coached on Tuesday and Thursday evenings on Greenhead track in all weathers – scorching, humid sunshine, rain that you wouldn't send a duck out in and the freezing cold of the dark, winter months.

There was always an icy stretch on the bends near Cliffe Castle woodland and a smell of something akin to gas.

The girls and ladies were eager to improve, whether he planned a pyramid, fartlek session, or a 2 minute threshold session on the whistle. I'd like to believe that John's desire was to get the balance right, in terms of “wimmin” and “blokes” because he championed for females. There was always a bit of banter and a standing joke about the “wimmin”. Getting Richard Taylor “in cahoots” as chief coach for the ladies was a brilliant move. Richard had exactly the right way to encourage them into the club and they flocked in and felt fabulous about themselves.

Going back to Greenhead track, John helped to orchestrate the track refurbishment there, becoming a community governor of Greenhead School and later UAK. Despite the school having had various name changes and new builds in the past 15+ years, the refurbished track, opened in 2010, has remained a constant fixture. As I've already mentioned in the history pages, it was John's efforts that permitted the club to use the school facilities – the gym, track and sports’ hall, with a cramped stock cupboard being the initial office premises. Certainly a far cry from what KCAC have now in terms of a permanent base to meet. John even ran an orienteering course in a classroom in 2013 for club runners new to off-road running. I should not forget to highlight his encouragement for members to gain coaching qualifications themselves. The junior side of the club increased dramatically with this surge in club coaches.

Time ticked on like a stopwatch and, sometimes, we'd have wished for a slower hand... John and his wife, Jackie, adopted 2 young boys, Patrick and George, and life was going well until Jackie was diagnosed with cancer. Both Jackie and John fought the best they could in her battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He got a “Team Jackie” event going to raise funds for HODU at Airedale Hospital and many of Jackie's non-running friends wore their t-shirts and did the route in Lister Park for one of the earliest “Race for Life” events. Following Jackie's death, John continued to raise funds for Manorlands and HODU. Not everyone will be aware of his involvement with Bronte MTB, Bronte Sportif, Race the Train and the creation of the BigK 10k (now Keighley 10k). He set up an annual event called “The Hill Climb” from the Willow Tree in Barley Cote to raise funds for HODU and some of the nurses attended. This event was all about inclusivity where juniors could enjoy the experience with their relatives. When the event moved to the Busfield Arms in East Morton, it became a race of “guess your time” on whatever form of travel to the top of Keighley Gate, with prizes for fastest, slowest, oldest, etc.

It was a terribly emotional blow to all club members when Club President Tony Minikin passed away in June 2014. John showed such a lot of compassion towards Tony's widow, Marilyn. He encouraged Marilyn and her family to become involved with the club themselves and, as time passed, he generously made the event a place to remember Tony.

Another of John's passions was having the local parks for everyone to enjoy. Not just content with the senior scene, he ran the Keighley and Craven Schools XC in Cliffe Castle, securing a fixed cross country course there. It's a terrible shame that the posts are still there but the km markers are almost obsolete now. A wonderful memory for many of us will be the opening event for it – with Filbert Bayi (a middle distance Tanzanian runner) and David Hemery (1968 Olympic hurdler). Gold medallist! No idea how John managed to pull that one off!

As well as creating the Keighley 10k, he also set up “Race the Train” in July and “Gathering Winter Fools” in December, when the Calderdale Way event moved to the summer, which still continues to get the hardy ones out every winter. I do believe the Headteacher turned a

blind eye to the “punch” offered on its premiere.

Despite the tremendous work he had put into shaping KCAC into the club it is today, creating all the sporting events and races, all on a voluntary basis, and being a single parent, he was also working at setting up things further afield in the capacity of Chair of Bradford Athletics Network and the steering group for CityConnect, which saw the development of City Runs, Green Miles and work at the sports village in Bradford. John was instrumental in advising England Athletics on facilities development too.

His paid employment saw him travelling down to Wales to work on the Cardiff Ice Arena project, which I can say I found very impressive indeed when Nev and I visited. He is currently still working on Wrexham AFC ground development for the actor, Ryan Reynolds!

John retired from coaching at KCAC earlier this year after years and years of dedication to the club and its members. I have always admired and respected him greatly and am tremendously proud of the way he has raised his two grown-up sons. I hope what I have written captures a great deal of what he has done for sport. I believe he is one of those unsung heroes in society and is fully deserving of this tribute of recognition.

Words by Debbie Spur

Ready to Run

Ready to run started in the mid 2000s, after a bit of a resurgence of people, especially women, wanting to get into running. I had previously coached at the junior section of Keighley and Craven as it moved from Greenhead School to UAK. I had taken some time away from coaching at the club to focus on my new sports coaching business, when I was asked by the club to start up this new section, Ready to Run.

For the first few weeks, we had a limited take up of about 5 or 6 ladies and we stayed on the track at the club's location, slowly building up the fitness and stamina of the ladies. One of the best quotes from this time came after I had asked the ladies to try and run a full lap of the track. We took things really steady to begin with and the quote came from member Jayne Sedgwick, and was “One year ago, if you had asked me to run a lap of the track I would have fallen off the sofa and spilt my ashtray!”

As this core group got stronger and began enjoying their running more, we started doing extra sessions on a Sunday morning, with a longer run in and around the local area. We were still running sessions on the normal club nights, but were spending more time running around the local streets. Some of these runs were memorable, including one in pouring rain when one of the ladies, who was wearing gym pants, was so wet she spent the end of the run simply trying to keep her pants from falling down. Another run in very icy conditions had us skating all over the place as we tried to run up some cobbles at the end of Fell Lane.

This core group also started running in local races and some of our popularity came from running the Keighley 10k. In the run up to the event we used to have practice runs on the course and invited others who were new to the event to come out and join us. The one thing I always focused on was the “Finishing Face” to make sure that no matter how hard the run was, the ladies always put on a big smile as they finished the race.

What happened next was brilliant. The group suddenly grew in a matter of weeks, from a core of about 10-12 ladies, to 50+ runners wanting to start running, both men and women.

One training night, I took them down on to the road behind B&Q to do some speed work on the lampposts there and there were that many of us running that we actually stopped the traffic and the police came to see what was happening.

As the group was that popular now, it was difficult for one person to deliver to the whole group, so we arranged for a number of the core runners to become Run Leaders and a number of us completed the course down at Marley ACC.

From that point on there was no stopping the group. On a normal club night, we would have 3-4 groups going out and pounding the streets around Keighley. One group would be the beginners, working on about 3 mile runs, another would be around 4 miles and the top group running over 6 miles in the time available to us. The leaders would swap and change within the groups and each one would come up with a different route or a way of training.

As the group developed, many of the runners started competing in local and regional races and many went on to become core members of the club teams, competing in a variety of events for the club.

As the group continued to grow I stepped away from the club again to focus on my business, but I am aware that this section of the club is still going strong, and it is all down to the enthusiasm of the leaders who take the groups out.

Words by Richard Taylor

Senior Presentation Night

The Senior Presentation & Social Evening will take place at Branshaw Golf Club on Saturday 24th January. Further information and how you can purchase tickets will be posted on Facebook in the coming weeks.