

President's News 4th March 2026

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Results

Please let me know of any results that need correcting or adding. Please also share with me any news or results you wish to publish in the News.

!!This is particularly needed whilst the Power of 10 website continues not to enable easy search of race times!!

Key News

Easter Bingo

Following the success of our January Bingo, where we raised £988 for the club, we have organised another one! This Easter Egg-travaganza will take place on the 27th March at 7pm. Free Chocolate will be involved, and the café and bar will be open. No upfront cost, but games will vary from £2-£12, depending on the boards.

If you've not attended one yet, this is the one to come to! Email bbharrisersac.volunteers@gmail.com to reserve a table.

U15/U17 National 5k Champs & U13 3K Champs

Entries for these races close Tuesday, 17th March. The club does not enter athletes for this race, but athletes/parents may enter.

The entry fee is £8 and will take part in Milton Keynes on the same day as the 12/6 stage road relays.

[Entry Details 12-6 RR 2026.pdf](#)

Southern Relays – the club is entering a team for the Southern 12 stage to be held on 29th March. Contact **Micah Evans**

Results

UKA Winter Long Throw Championships

Congratulations to **Zara Obamakinwa** and **Rory Whitcombe**, who both medalled in the winter long throw champs in Loughborough. Zara won the senior women's discus with a throw of 56.60m, almost 10m further than second place! Rory also threw well, finishing second with a new pb of 57.34m.

Bologna Half - Sam Douglass ran in 1.11.54 – this was the 10th fastest time on the day!

Brighton Half Marathon - James Meader was first home for the club in 1.14.41, **with Zakia Mossi** finishing in 1.31.10 and **Damian Hayes** running as a pacemaker for his daughter's boyfriend finishing in 1.44.14

Olympic Park Half - Bradley Amphlett ran a 1.23.15 in the latest of his half marathons, with **Mathieu Ducep** just 3 minutes behind in 1.26.16!

Newport Half Marathon – Dave Leal 2.09.39

National Cross Country Championships – the report in last week's News has been supplemented by a great summary of the weekend from Paul Austrdige. I have included Pauls report below.

Abbott Marathon Majors - Last Sunday was the Tokyo Marathon – I don't think anyone from the Club ran this year. It was the first Abbots series marathon since I competed my Abbott 6 star back in November. I have written a short article on my thoughts on the Abbots series and asked around those members who have also competed the series for their views – please see the end of the News if you want to read about this!

Parkrun 28th February 2026

59 runners at 21 events. Furthest from the clubhouse was **Ryan Alford-Smith** at Newborough Forest Parkrun in Wales.

Podiums – 3 this week!

Leonardus De Bruyn	1 st M	Beckenham Place	17:38
Jennie Butler	1 st F	Bethlem Royal Hospital	21:21
Harriet Hughes	3 rd F	Bromley	18:41

Fixtures

- U15/U17 National Indoor Combined Event Championships at the English Institute of Sport (EIS) Sheffield
- Paddock Wood Half Marathon 8th March
- London Marathon IX – a few members are running this event on Saturday – approximately the route of the original London marthon
- Our friends at BVAC are hosting their next 5 Mile Open Cross Country Race on Sunday 22nd March 2026, at Spring Park, West Wickham
<https://englandathletics.sport80.com/public/wizard/e/30267/>

Bonus Ball – won by **Matt Maddocks**

Tom Brash & Steve Pairman

The National Cross Country Championships, County Durham 2026 – Paul Austrdige

The iconic National cross-country champs returned to the North East for the first time in over a decade, with East Hardwick Park, Sedgefield, County Durham playing host. The weather was not cold, blowy but dry and the course more challenging than it first appeared.

Fifty-one Blackheath & Bromley young athletes had made the long journey up north, most of them on the team Coach. After a couple of fuel / comfort stops it was time for a shakeout run at the Country House hotel we were staying at, before a swim in the hotel spa and a little time to relax. Dinner was good and the evening was complete with coach Mike Reeves motivational challenge for each athlete, giving them the opportunity to speak positively about the person sitting next to them.

A full choice of breakfast the next morning before for a short journey to the course and some brilliant racing, that saw BBHAC win superb team gold for the under 17 boys and team silver for the under 13 boys.

Five of our large under 15 boy squad toed the line and placed 14th team with Johnny Lee placing an impressive 25th backed up by Ricardo Cervera-Tomlins (90 places higher than last year), Benj Evans (150 places higher than 2025), Jack Barlow and JP Bremerkamp completing the squad.

Our under 17 girls placed team 12th with strong runs from Naimah Mossi, Aoife McDonagh, Niamh Stanley all inside the top hundred and Charlotte Stevens and Lily Bridgeman just a few places behind.

The under 15 girls made the top 10 with an eighth-place team finish. Evie De Bruyn leading the team home in 33rd, backed up well by Harriet Hughes, Sofia Mossi, Alba Homans-Yau, Eva John, Beth McGillivray, Lily Day, Amelie Ramdeen (90 places higher than 2025), Aoife Stanley, Elliot Amos and Isabella Jenkins back to racing after injury, completing the squad.

Our U13 girl went one better placing seventh team with Jazzy Stephens coming a very strong 31st (50 places higher than 2025) backed up well by Lucy Junginger, Sofia James, Zara Lett and Elsa Matthews all making the top hundred. Holly Tallack, Ella Nixson, Molly Sedgwick, Arianne Paranjpe and Alice Bunn completing the strong large squad.

Team silver for our under 13 boys with a superb and gutsy sixth place finish for Zach Evans (60 places higher 2025) with Emery Aldridge not far behind and year young Luc Jones and Anthony Streich completing the scoring four. Great runs by Fletcher Kelly, Haydn Kenny and Alex Coe all making their national debuts.

National team Gold for our under 17 boys with a superb individual 3rd for Joe Scanes and a fast finishing fourth for Joseph Hill, backed up superbly by Oliver Ward in 35th and Ben O'Grady in 38th. Showing our strength in depth in this age group Aniket Iyenger was 41st and Kian Farrell not far behind with Nathan Clark and Madalitso Valema-Mwanza completing the strong squad.

Our U20 teams were both just one athlete short of a scoring team but this didn't stop a superb top 20 finish for Jed Starvis in 19th with Harry Fage just missing out on victory in the 1K bicarb challenge and Mark Constable finishing despite carrying a legend injury. Strong runs from Cary's Firth and Kyla Dervish in the under 20 girls completes our very impressive result round up.

Back to the hotel for downtime, including swimming and sauna before a lovely three course meal and then our awards, quiz and bingo evening. This year we awarded prizes for the most improved athletes from the South of England to the National cross-country champs, winning Adidas kit generously donated by Joe Scanes and Club kit .

The most improved awards this year went to

- U13 girls Zara Lett
- U13 boys Anthony Streich
- U15 girls Evie De Bruyn
- U15 boys Johnny Lee
- U17 girls Lily Bridgeman
- U17 boys Aniket Iyenger

A good night's sleep followed, before the long journey home!

A great weekend was had by all but huge thanks to past president Dave Cordell and daughter Alice Cordell for missing breakfast, to get to the course early, to pitch the club tent in the perfect spot.

Huge thanks also to Lynda Poyroo for finding and booking the posh hotel, Claire Austridge for organising and chaperone the weekend and coaches Andy Frankish and

Mike Reeves for all their chaperoning and coaching duties, Karen Barlow and Tim Soutar for their chaperoning duties, along with Steve Starvis who devised and perfectly delivered the quiz!

Already looking forward to the 2027 version! 🤖

(See last weeks report for the senior races, including the senior women finishing a best ever 4th place)

Abbott 6 star medal – Steve Pairman

Background

The Abbott Six Star is an achievement for runners who complete all six of the original Abbott World Marathon Majors races: Tokyo, Boston, London, Berlin, Chicago, and New York City. Runners are awarded a star for finishing each of these races, and upon completion of the sixth, they receive the prestigious Six Star medal.

The races that qualify for the Six Star medal are the Tokyo Marathon, Boston Marathon, London Marathon, Berlin Marathon, Chicago Marathon, and New York City Marathon.

Earning the medal: Once a runner completes one of these races, they earn a star. They do not have to complete the races in any specific order or within a certain timeframe.

The Sydney Marathon: The Sydney Marathon became the seventh Marathon Major in 2025, but its star does not count towards the original Six Star medal. Abbott World Marathon Majors has announced plans to introduce a Nine Star medal in the future to include more races as they become official Majors by adding Cape Town and Shanghai.

Why Do It – Personal View

Sense of achievement. I ran London on 6 occasions between 1984 and 2018. Having run 4 marathons in continental Europe in the late 20XX's, I looked at the worldwide challenge the Abbott brings. I started with an "easy" entry to Boston through GFA and the encouragement of fellow runners doing the same thing. So we started to focus on achieving the 6 star through further entries to Berlin and Chicago (GFA), Tokyo (local charity), and New York (sports travel company)

The positives:

- Achievement of the 6 star
- Seeing and touring great cities
- Atmosphere from the event, the city and the camaraderie of fellow runners
- All were enjoyable and worth the training

The challenges:

Cost and priority. I was fortunate to only have to pay sports package once. A typical Sports Tour package will see you paying double for a hotel room compared to even the expensive rates on booking.com for a marathon weekend. Some packages also require you to pay for flights, where there is also a mark up. For that difference, you get access to a tour guide, a drinks reception, sometimes better transport to the start and post marathon party.

Tokyo is very difficult to get a place for as there are restricted numbers for international runners. Best option may be to enter via a local charity – this does cost £'00s, but at least the money goes to a charity rather than a profit-making business.

Abbotts have set up a useful website and impressively created a “majors” database that auto loaded all my events into a single dashboard. However, I was a little underwhelmed at the finish when presented with the medals, as I was a little out of it! It would have been nice to have had a chance to chat with some of the others who had finished their 6 star on the same race. It had been one of the highlights talking to people from around the world in the start pen who noticed my “I am completing my 6 star” bib.

7, 8 9 Stars – and Beyond?

- The 6 star is now feels a little less impressive due to there now being a 7th star (Sydney) and likely 2 others in Cape Town and Shanghai.
- My debate - do I go for a 9 star - or by the time I compete this will it be 12 star?
- Abbotts seem to be taking this more and more commercially. Understandable that cities like the concept (Sydney number increase).

Summary

The award is a great personal achievement and one I am proud of. Overall, I feel positive towards the Abbotts, seeing as it has taken me to visit some fantastic locations and cities, and obtain a reward for the effort I put in. However, there are two aspects that I am less happy with:

1. the uniqueness has been tainted a little by the adding of more races
2. the costs – the overall amount spent is considerable. I am privileged to be able to afford to do this – and combine it with long holidays - but many others who raise more funds for charity, are better runners are unable to do this easily

PS – I did manage to get an appearance in the 6 star poster post New York!

Fellow BBHAC Members view

1. Will Brindley

I achieved my Abbotts Six Star in February 2024. I thoroughly enjoyed the journey and felt very motivated to progress as an amateur athlete to perform at my best in these events. Following on, I then went on to run Sydney in 2025 and have a place in Cape Town in 2026, very much targeting the proposed nine star medal.

Positives:

- 1) Excitement of taking part in a big city marathon, enjoying a local “buzz”
- 2) The prestige of taking part in these events is a huge motivation to train and perform at my best
- 3) The opportunity to combine with a holiday to a location I would not otherwise visit.

Negatives:

- 1) The events are not necessarily personal best races. The courses, weather conditions and number of participants can be a hindrance to quick running times.
- 2) The events are typically overseas, leading to acclimatisation (not to mention jet lag) issues to overcome. Different climatic conditions, unfamiliar surroundings, dietary differences and sometimes a language barrier all need to be overcome.
- 3) It is not a pure, traditional running experience and is undoubtedly more commercial.

There may well be other events added in the future after the proposed nine. After all, the objective is to make the competition more global in nature. There is no South American event currently, for example.

Whilst there is a cost to international runners, they do enjoy the above-mentioned benefits. The local community also benefits commercially from having their home event classified as an Abbotts Major.

The event typically brings a huge number of national and international tourists to a city in an otherwise quiet weekend with their associated spending power. I recall the Boston community reportedly receives an annual \$250 million boost to its local economy as a consequence of hosting the event.

In some cases, local runners benefit from being given preferential access to their home Abbotts Marathon Majors event over international runners. These local runners benefit from having a world class event (attracting an elite field) on their doorstep to participate in.

I feel the Abbotts Marathon Major series of events has been a hugely beneficial and rewarding part of the running and marathon experience. I look forward to continuing to participate in them.

2. Matt Bullen - Abbott's journey;

For me, there were some good reasons for completing the Abbott marathons from the outset. In no particular order;

- The opportunity to visit some great cities and run some of the most iconic marathons in the world. There's no doubt Abbott's inclusion supercharges the event, motivating the whole city to support and celebrate the run; it's a real party.
- The camaraderie of training, organising and support from family and friends was special, essential and made for some great memories.
- The organisation can be challenging at times and the inevitable costs kept down with GFA places or getting lucky with ballot (unbelievably for me - Tokyo !!) . We squeezed as much sightseeing as possible , including a great back packing trip around Japan with son James .

Sum up ; Abbotts were a fantastic experience and proud to have completed. I have to say very different from events I'm used to, mainly in remote locations with few hundred runners and lucky to get a cup of tea at the finish line !! If you decide to go for it , have a great time !!