



# The Lions Tale

Stainland monthly newsletter



John Bassinder

### From The Chair

The last ramblings from our Chair for 2023.

Debbie Grunhut-Hinds

### Race Reports

A summary of race reports from December 2023

Various

### Contributors

Maria - Ladies Update; Steve - Club Championship; Jim Harris - Fell Running Championship; Coaching with Colin; Away Run; In the Lion's Den with Gav.

# From the Chair

## John Bassinder



Hope everyone has enjoyed Christmas and had a happy start to their New Year. Don't know about everybody else but December went by in a flash for us. We got into the Christmas spirit early, a few days in Berkshire and into Windsor to see its amazing decorations, then York and the Christmas market, Halifax Minster helping to decorate a tree for their Christmas tree festival (inside the Minster was absolutely amazing when all the lights were first switched on. Carol's choirs' concert at All Saints in Elland, back to our old 'Homes' to watch the Youth Theatre Group performing a Christmas concert and the City of Bradford Brass Band playing carols, both of us out for respective Christmas dinner / committee meetings. A girls' night out for Carol, lads' day out for me (ok, average age 70, but still lads). Adjudicated and ran the 'Bah Humbug' – definitely one for your list next year – a very muddy 10k race around the Lakers' cross country course in Christmas fancy dress; fantastic. Loved our own Christmas Tree run a few days later, thanks again to JP for sorting the venue and Debbie for sorting the food, brilliant evening. Then it was all thanks to Martin for another great Lions' night out, beer and curry of course like the proper athletes that we are (and even a visit to Roxy's for the elite group).

Marathon draw at the away run and congratulations to Laura Goodwin on getting the Club's place for 2024. Laura said she had tears when she heard her name had been drawn out, sorry to say it Laura but they won't be the last! If I remember my London training there were a lot more tears through February and March with the delights of long runs on cold, wet mornings, but then the unforgettable tears of happiness (or maybe relief) when you cross that line in April. Whatever else, with the sights, the crowds and the amazing support from strangers along the way, London is a unique and every emotional experience. Enjoy it!

Most of you were hopefully able to switch off and enjoy Christmas itself, one person who probably didn't was Cat with her thoughts no doubt on Boxing Day (though I can never imagine Cat sitting down and taking it easy anyway!). Even with all the planning beforehand it's still a stressful time hoping you've thought of everything. She had, and it was a brilliant success not just for us but for Forget-Me-Not and the Bowling and Cricket Club who provided a perfect venue once again. 188 runners and walkers from 6 years old to 83 years old, including runners from New Zealand, Denmark, Wales and Scotland! We see so many regulars now and it's lovely to think how our Boxing Day run has become part of their Christmas traditions. A big Thank You to Cat and everyone who helped with it.

I missed it myself this time as I was away for a family Christmas but I promise, like Cat, I wasn't sitting around either. The busy few weeks and family gatherings had resulted in another seasonal tradition for me – the annual cold and chest infection. I had to miss the Coley Canter and no runs for 2 weeks, but since the Lions literally hit the ground running at the beginning of each year I found plenty to do. Agendas and presentations to sort for our Trustees Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January and the AGM on the 15<sup>th</sup>, planning the Winter Handicap for the 14<sup>th</sup>, sorting the trophies and ordering the awards for Presentation Evening, and so on. Another one not sitting around was Lorraine, busy planning our Cross Country race for 25<sup>th</sup> February. Catherine McHugh has kindly volunteered to be Chief Marshal again and will soon be inviting applications for the prestigious roles of Marshals. Please, please help with this. Winter leaguers will know what sadly happened at Bramley with just one marshal being out of position. One little thing led to a very stressful few days for all involved and ultimately a voided race. The Breezers' Race Director is experienced, extremely capable and a lovely guy, he'd planned a fantastic route, put a lot of work in and was really upset afterwards. Please let's make sure we have enough marshals to cover our race in good time to recce it and be sure of our positions.

So, a busy start to the year and a lot of events to look forward to, the first of which are:

**Winter Handicap – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January, look out for FB post.**

**AGM – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January, see separate post below.**

And that's it! You'll all be pleased to know that's my final ramble as I come to the end of the second year of my second (and final) stint in the Chair. So much has changed since my first Chairmanship eleven years ago – social media, data protection, safeguarding, more events, more races, more red tape, chip timing everywhere and go-faster vests. I've been extremely lucky to have been supported by a committee who knew what was going on even when I didn't (which as most of the time) and I'm very grateful to them for putting up with me for the last two years. I'm even more grateful to Paul Armitage who is relieving me for my duties. Paul, like me, never seems to learn and has volunteered for what will also be his second stint in the chair. I'll be staying on the committee for a little while as the 'Ghost of Chairman post' or whatever but I'd like to thank last year's committee once again and wish the very best of luck to those who have volunteered to steer us through 2024.

Happy New Year everybody  
John B.

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### **AGM – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January**

A detailed post will be on Facebook nearer the time, but for now:

There's a lot of business to get through so we're aiming to start at 8pm prompt following the runs, and we'll be ordering pizza as usual. Paul will post a list of the Committee / Non-committee roles and candidates ahead of the elections.

We'll have a summary of last year with reports from the various Captains, plus of course the Treasurer's Report with full details of our finances. These reports will be followed by the election of the new committee for 2024 and a speech from the new Chair outlining our aims for the coming year.

We know we never have any grumblers (as if) but just in case anyone is tempted, please don't grumble afterwards if you haven't attended the AGM, because this is the best opportunity to ask us questions about absolutely anything (though my nuclear physics may be a bit rusty!).



### **2024 Championship Races:**

- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January: Stainland Winter Handicap.
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January: Meltham 10k.
- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March: Hot Toddy.
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April: Willow Valley Flyer.
- Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May: Blackstone Edge Fell Race.
- May/June (TBC): The Full Bronte (Bronte 5).
- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June: Norman Cole Penistone 10k.
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July: Stoodley Pike Fell Race.
- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July: Eccup 10 mile.
- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July: Hepworth Trail Race.
- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August: Hopwood Trot.
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August: Piethorne 10k.
- September (TBC): Meanwood Valley Trail Race.
- October (TBC): Holmfirth 10k.
- Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October: Macclesfield Half Marathon.
- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November: Guy Fawkes 10.
- December (TBC): Coley Canter.
  
- 3k Track Race – dates to be confirmed.
- Halifax & Huddersfield/Brighouse Parkruns – Every Saturday.

### **West Yorkshire Winter League 2023/24:**

- 7<sup>th</sup> January: Stadium
- 21<sup>st</sup> January: Lakers
- 18<sup>th</sup> February: Pudsey (**Note: date has been changed from the 11<sup>th</sup> Feb**).
- 25<sup>th</sup> February: Stainland
- 10<sup>th</sup> March: Crossgates

### **Club Events:**

- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024: Stainland Lions AGM, Heath Rugby Club
- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024: Stainland Lions Presentation Night & Party, Bradley Hall Golf Club.
- February 25<sup>th</sup> 2024 – Stainland hosting WYWL Cross Country.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> 2024 – Bluebell Trail.

# Lions Publicity Officer

## Debbie Grunhut-Hinds



### Race Report for December 2023

#### **Mytholmroyd Fell Race (3<sup>rd</sup> Dec):**

On an icy morning Club Chairman John Bassinder decided to tackle the Mytholmroyd Fell Race – a BS Category race of 6 miles with over 1600ft of ascent! The race started near Burnley Road Primary School with a tough climb up through fields to Wicken Hill. Runners then have to cross an open section of Midgley Moor before following the track to Churn Milk Joan. It's then rough moorland and over Crow Hill. The route takes runners along the Luddenden Valley to the Gate House at Castle Carr, before making a steep climb up onto the moor and joining the Calderdale Way, heading back to Wicken Hill and descending back to the finish at Mytholmroyd. John completed the race in 1:24:03.



Pictures by Mark O'Connor (CVFR)

**Moors The Merrier Fell Race (9<sup>th</sup> Dec):**

Aileen Baldwin headed to Hebden Bridge for a very wet and boggy Moors the Merrier 21, a counter in this year's Club Fell Running Championship. The circular 21-mile route started and finished at Hebden Bridge Golf Club and took runners over Midgley Moor, Wadsworth Moor, Heptonstall Moor, Erringden Moor, and a final big climb out of the valley back to the golf club. Aileen finished in a time of 7:28:44.

**South Leeds Bah Humbug 10k (10<sup>th</sup> Dec):**

Two Lions tackled the hilly and muddy South Leeds Bah Humbug 10k on Sunday. Martin O'Brien was first Lion home and finished in 58:25, whilst John Bassinder ran in 1:00:01. Runners were treated to Humbug sweets and mince pies on completion.

**Travellers 6 (17<sup>th</sup> Dec):**

Steve Hallam & Louise Williamson travelled to Denby Dale for the Travellers 6 – a challenging rural course which started from the Denby Dale Pie Hall – the course is what race organisers describe as 'undulating', maybe not a PB course but definitely good fun. Steve Hallam finished in 49:47 with Louise Williamson in 53:20.

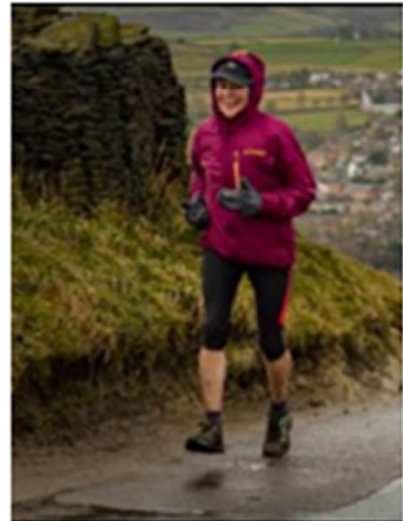
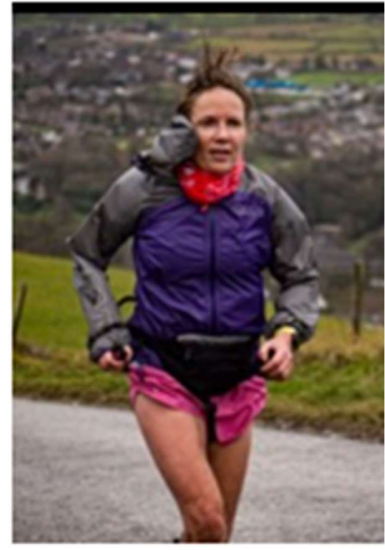


Steve Hallam & Louise Williamson at Travellers 6 (Pic: Philip Bland)

**Ambles Revenge (28<sup>th</sup> Dec):**

The Lions Club Championship drew to a close with the final race of the season – the Ambles Revenge. The race is a mixture of cross-country, road and fell, with the route going in a clockwise direction, starting on the Trans Pennine Trail at Oxspring. It proceeds for 8 miles with over 1,200ft of elevation, over farmers' fields, quiet country lanes, through woodland and over many stiles towards Green Moor and back to Oxspring. Unfortunately conditions on the day were "wet, wild and muddy".

Gavin Foster led the Lions home in 12<sup>th</sup> place in 59:38 followed by Andrew Earnshaw 1:10:52, Jim Harris 1:16:37, Lorraine Naylor 1:17:26 (1<sup>st</sup> FV50), Paul Patrick 1:19:07, Ray Mooney 1:21:50, Aileen Baldwin 1:24:53 (1<sup>st</sup> FV70), Steve Hallam 1:26:24, Mark Preston 1:30:10, Steve Crowther 1:32:03, Paula Pickersgill 1:39:41 (2<sup>nd</sup> FV55) and Sandy Gee 1:40:31.



Lions a final Championship Race – Ambles Revenge (Pics: Helen Royles Jones)

**Coley Canter (30<sup>th</sup> Dec):**

Lions headed over to Puma territory to tackle the multi-terrain race which takes in some great trails, footpaths, hills, plus lots of mud and a bit of a stream! Mags Beever was first Lady back with a time of 1:04:19. Both Moira Alderson and Aileen Baldwin won their age categories.

**Results:** Mags Beever 1:04:19, Fraser Ambrose 1:09:50, Moira Alderson 1:15:13, Martin O'Brien 1:20:03, Aileen Baldwin 1:20:49, Louise Williamson 1:21:20, Sally Caton 1:23:34, David Culpan 1:27:46, Michelle Rogerson 1:20:09, Paula Pickersgill 1:42:56 & Alan Whiteley 1:54:50.

**Daleside Auld Lange Syne Fell Race (31<sup>st</sup> Dec):**

Five Lions took part in this year's race; with 1000ft of ascent the race starts from Penistone Hill Country Park and heads towards Top Withens, the upper reaches of Ponden Clough & Stanbury Moor. The race is a traditional opportunity for the fell running community to have a bit of a party with the help of a free bottle of beer for each runner. Andrew Earnshaw led the Lions home & Aileen Baldwin won her age category for the second day in a row!

**Results:**

Andrew Earnshaw 1:02:59, Jim Harris 1:07:02, Aileen Baldwin 1:15:28 (1<sup>st</sup> LV70), Tim Walker 1:19:49 & Claire Haigh 1:38:33.





# PB Corner

## Parkrun PB's

### 9<sup>th</sup> December:

Lowestoft: **Moira Alderson** took 6 seconds off, coming in at 23:49 (1<sup>st</sup> VW50-54).

### 16<sup>th</sup> December:

Brighouse: **Wayne Underwood** ran a PB of 25:40, taking 18 seconds off his previous course best.

### 23<sup>rd</sup> December:

Brighouse: **Wayne Underwood** knocked 49 seconds off his previous best, giving him a time of 24:51.

Goole:

**Ben Golding-Smith** ran a PB of 24:01 taking 42 seconds off his previous best.

Rothwell:

**Clare Smith** took 1 second off her previous best, giving her a PB of 26:36.

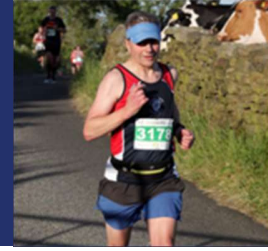
### 30<sup>th</sup> December:

Halifax: **Laura Goodwin** clocked up a PB of 25:34, knocking 1 min 57 seconds off her previous course best.

Endcliffe:

**Sue Cash** ran a PB of 25:46, taking 19 seconds off.

# Championship Update - Steve Hallam



## Championship Update – December 2023

10 reasons to be involved with the Club Championship this year:

1. Whilst it's a genuine competition, what could be more fun than turning up to these events and being part of something special? You instantly become an integral part of "Team Stainland" and represent your Club whether you're near the front, middle or back of the field. There's no feeling like it.
2. Extra Motivation – most runners want to improve their running and regular races competing with your nearest rivals (including those from other clubs) provide you with that additional impetus to try that bit harder.
3. Utilisation of club resources – of course, it's not just about working hard but also training smarter. The club offer several free opportunities to do just that, especially at our track and hill sessions. Running under the guidance of our qualified coaches is much more likely to be successful than simply relying on "more pain, more gain" efforts (who in their right mind wants to do it that way anyway!?).
4. Silverware to win – for those who complete at least 9 of our chosen events over the year, you qualify for a possible top 3 position in your division. Trophies are presented at the Annual Awards Night. No big deal if you miss out though – I've ended up in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place many more times than I've won anything! There's always next year.
5. This year I've introduced an age-graded league in addition to the usual divisions, therefore more chances to win based on your age-related performances. There will be separate categories for both male and female (I will need to collect everyone's date of birth at some point).
6. Events have been carefully chosen to include something for everyone. We have Road, Trail, Multi-Terrain and Fell races, all at various distances and grades of elevation.
7. Mini-targets – what do I mean by that? You may be building up to a Marathon or an Ultra and want to focus just on that. But why not build into your plan a handful of Championship races to determine if you are on track and test the progress you are making?
8. Make more friends (and rivals!). Because you see many of the same faces, it really does increase your social circle. Chatting tactics and experiences with others can really give you some perspective and focus your mind on where and how to take your training.
9. You can become a much better runner – it's true! Complete these events on a regular basis and in time you can perform beyond your wildest dreams! How do I know? Because I've done it and astounded myself how much progress has been made over the last decade or so. All it takes is consistency and smart application, with adequate rest and recovery with some supplementary Core and Strength work. Hence why I'm such an

advocate of being involved.

10. What else would you be doing that would be any better!?

As usual at this time of year, most of the regulars have already committed to joining in. However, we are currently a bit down on numbers, therefore if you are not yet sure or haven't got around to it yet, then please let me know if you want to be included. The whole thing generally works better with more people rather than fewer. So in my best Delia Smith voice:

“WHERE ARE YOU? LET'S BE HAVING YOU!”

If you don't understand that, google it!

First key event: Stainland Winter Handicap - Sunday 14th January. Be there or be square!

Steve H.

## Fell Running Championship - Jim Harris



A flurry of year tail-end activity brought the 2023 SLRC 🐾 fellrunning season to an exciting end with only two pints in it right at the top.

Andrew Earnshaw finally tackled a “Long” race at Soyland Moor on the 5th November to give him his sixth qualifier, an impressive 79 points and a position four points clear of James Penson at the top of the leaderboard. This was submitted as his “any FRA long” fell race, as did Paul Patrick and Martin O'Brien - still jostling for position in the Vets race, and John Bassinder whose early season injuries left him without time to complete the necessary six races.

Rattled, James Penson blagged a lift on the Meltham AC minibus to the Roaches fell race, where “only” 69 points was enough to put him back at the top of the table.

Three Lions at the last race of the year Moors the Merrier ran in horrific conditions (Monsoon the Merrier?) with Ed Hyland taking the overall win, Aileen Baldwin winning her category and Helen Hudson sadly retiring - full credit for even turning up to the start line on that day though!

So (drumroll) final results:

- Male - James Penson 475 points
- Female - Aileen Baldwin 390 points
- Vet (50+) - Paul Patrick 430 points
- Spirit of Fellrunning - announced at awards evening

2023	Championship Score	Best three Short Race Scores			Best three Medium Race Scores			Best three Long Race Scores			Best Scores from each category plus best three from remainder	Qualifying Races	Total number of races
		#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3			
<a href="#">2022 results</a>											6		
<a href="#">2019 results</a>													
James Penson	475	87	79		85	80	75	69	63		475	6	7
Andrew Earnshaw	473	86	81	80	74	73		79			473	6	8
Jim Harris	456	80	78	75	82	70		71	62		456	6	7
Paul Patrick	430	74	71	71	74	69	69	71			430	6	9
Martin O'Brien	408	72	68		67	62		71	68		408	6	6
Stephen Hall	407	104	102		102	99					407	4	4
Aileen Baldwin	390	68	67	66	65	64	58	60	52	42	390	6	11
Helen Hudson	318	66	65		62	61		64			318	5	5
Damien Pearson	290	73	72		73	72					290	4	4
Raymond Mooney	257	66			65	65	61				257	4	4
John Bassinder	251	63			63			64	61		251	4	4
Kevin Robinson	235	84	80					71			235	3	3
Lindsay Upton	188	63	60		65						188	3	3
Rikki Hammond	185	63	61		61						185	3	3
Paula Pickersgill	173	57			59	57					173	3	3
Leon Severn	153	77			76						153	2	2
Martin Wood	146	71			75						146	2	2
LORRAINE NAYLOR	140	71			69						140	2	2
Steve Hallam	133	70			63						133	2	2
Steven Crowther	129				67	62					129	2	2
Susan Cash	109				56	53					109	2	2
ED HYLAND	204				103			101			204	2	2
Alex Whyte	103				51			52			103	2	2

Next year's races sees the Trunce included on same basis as the Bunny Runs (i.e. only the best score counts) but lots of opportunities to chalk up a time. Scoring etc. is exactly as per last year, and you will be able to submit any one FRA "long" race in addition to the runs below. It's likely that the "Spirit of Fellrunning" will be retired (TBC) . Full details at: <https://fellrunninglions.home.blog/>

Flower Scar (8.1 miles, 2165 ft of ascent) AM - <b>Sun 11 Feb 2024</b> at 10:00
Hoppits Hill (3.3 miles, 820ft of ascent) BS - <b>Sun 25 Feb 2024</b> at 11:00
Boulsworth Bog (7.2 miles, 1280ft of ascent) BM - <b>Sat 23 Mar 2024</b> at 13:00
Trunce 1 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 1 Apr 2024</b> at 18:45
Trunce 2 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 22 Apr 2024</b> at 18:45
Bunny Run 1 (3 miles, 328ft of ascent) CS - <b>Tue 2 Apr 2024</b> at 19:00
Bunny Run 2 (3 miles, 328ft of ascent) CS - <b>Tue 9 Apr 2024</b> at 19:00

Bunny Run 3 (3 miles, 328ft of ascent) CS - <b>Tue 16 Apr 2024</b> at 19:00
Coiners (6.7 miles, 968ft of ascent) BM - <b>Mon 6 May 2024</b> at 13:30
Trunce 3 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 13 May 2024</b> at 18:45
<i>Calderdale Way Relay – Sun 19 May 2024- just a date for your diary</i>
Blackstone Edge (3.5 miles, 1201ft of ascent) AS - <b>Wed 22 May 2024</b> at 19:00
Trunce 4 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 3 Jun 2024</b> at 18:45
Trunce 5 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 24 Jun 2024</b> at 18:45
Kinder Trog (16 miles, 3500ft of ascent) BL - <b>Sun 30 Jun 2024</b> at 11:00
Trunce 6 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 15 Jul 2024</b> at 18:45
Trunce 7 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 5 Aug 2024</b> at 18:45
Trunce 8 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 19 Aug 2024</b> at 18:45
Trunce 9 (4 miles, 558ft of ascent) BS - <b>Mon 9 Sep 2024</b> at 18:45
Thats So Hebden Bridge (6.5 miles, 1150ft of ascent) BM - <b>Thu 23 May 2024</b> at 18:45
Stoodley Pike (3.1 miles, 700ft of ascent) BS - <b>Tue 2 Jul 2024</b> at 19:30
Piethorne (6.2 miles, 900ft of ascent) BS - <b>Sun 18 Aug 2024</b> at 10:00
Five Trigs (18.6 miles, 2953ft of ascent) BL - <b>Sat 28 Sep 2024</b> at 10:00
Castle C'Alf (7.5 miles, 1600ft of ascent) BM - <b>Sun 6 Oct 2024</b> at 11:30
<i>British Fell relays – Sun 19 Oct 2024- just a date for your diary</i>
Shepherd's Skyline (6.2 miles, 1148ft of ascent) BS - <b>Sat 2 Nov 2024</b> at 13:00
Mytholmroyd (6.2 miles, 1640ft of ascent) BM - <b>Sun 1 Dec 2024</b> at 11:00
Moors the Merrier (21.1 miles, 4000ft of ascent) BL - <b>Sat 14 Dec 2024</b> at 9:00

## Ladies Captain's Update - Maria Harron



This time last year I was writing my final report as the Ladies' Captain but here I am writing my final report again following another year in the position! However, I am very excited that two ladies have come forward to take over from Helen and myself and I hope you will support them and vote that in at the AGM on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January. All to be revealed on the night.

As this is my last report I would like to say how much I have enjoyed my position. It has been amazing to get to know so many wonderful ladies and to hear about the fantastic running you have been doing. I had never been on a committee before and it has been really interesting to be part of behind the scenes and see how much work the committee do, so much commitment, time and energy.

I want to thank Helen for all her help and support as my Vice Captain, she has been a total superstar!

I am looking forward to concentrating more on my role as coach but will continue to help out in any way that I can.

Enough about me and moving on to you . . . .

Back in Summer 2023 the coaches and captains began our Stainland Lion of the Month. This has been great to be involved in and the nominations have been fantastic. We have struggled every month to narrow it down to one person but after much chat in our Messenger group we have always come to final decision. We would like to let you all know the people that have been nominated throughout this time and how we would have loved each one of you to have been a Lion of the Month as everyone has been very worthy of the vote. We look forward to all the 2024 nominations. Well done to all these Lions . . . .

Karen Carless  
Alex Whyte  
Mark Preston  
Annie Killeen  
Carol Heptonstall  
Chris Hall  
Aileen Baldwin  
Jackie Barker  
Joanne Hirst  
Maria Chandler  
Colin Duffield  
Dick Spendlove  
The Coaching Team

Becky Hill  
Claire Haigh  
Richard Crombie  
Jonathan Pybus  
John Bassinder  
Jamie Westwood  
Judith Greenwood  
Debbie Grunhut-Hinds  
Gav Mulholland  
Steve Hallam  
Roy Lunt  
Sandy Gee

At the end of another year I have asked two members to write about their first year as a Lion. John and Karen Carless have become fabulous members of the club, they have raced, supported at races, had fun at the socials and have become faster runners! They have shown a great commitment to the club and it is lovely to hear their stories, so I am now just going to pass over to them . . . . .

## Karen Carless

### From a Cub to a Lion (ess)!

I hated running for a long time . . . . until I learned to dislike it less. And then it became a love hate relationship, as it is with most runners (If I can call myself that? I'm still not sure).

I was neither fast, nor had great endurance, but I wanted to be better in all aspects. I wanted a faster parkrun time and a comfortable marathon pace, and I especially wanted to feel more comfortable running at the end of a triathlon (my passion). I'd thought about joining a club, but it seemed too intimidating because of my lack of confidence and ability. I dismissed the idea a few times.

In December 2022 I saw the incentive I needed to step outside of my comfort zone. A Facebook post on Stainland Lions page for their '*six-week track plan to improve your 5k time*'. It was the perfect wording to grab my attention and reel me in!!

I bit the bullet, contacted the club, and signed us up. I'm not sure I could have gone without John, but when we turned up to track everyone was extremely friendly and supportive. I relaxed very quickly and didn't feel out of place at all. I will always be grateful for the kindness and help we were given at that time, especially to Maria, Helen, and Colin. Their tips on form, cadence, stretching, and most importantly (for me) relaxing your shoulders, were invaluable. John and I loved every session and looked forward to the next one. My running form changed very quickly, my pace improved and the ability to control my breathing was improving. That had always been an issue, especially if I ran fast and my heart rate increased. The panic would hit my chest, I would lose my breath and I would have to walk to try calm myself down. After a few weeks at track this was happening less often.



The icing on the cake came after just three sessions. A Saturday morning at parkrun and I knocked 46 seconds from my Parkrun PB, taking me under 26 minutes. I couldn't wait to tell anyone who was interested (and people who weren't!). I was hooked. We finished the course and signed ourselves up as members.

My first year with Stainland Lions has been filled with highs and lows regarding running. Early year PB's, to a middle of the year accident and just over 3 months off. Having to miss my first, much trained for marathon and a couple of planned triathlons, to recently hitting some PB's, with a 23 minute 40 second 5km run and a 51 min 26 10k. Something I would have never thought possible for me.

During my enforced time out, I was lucky enough to have the chance to help marshal at a few events, and at various parkruns. I started to grow attached to the pink viz vests and the joy of encouraging people!! It was wonderful to be able support our members, and everyone else running! I loved taking plenty of photographs and watching the victories, it gave me as much pleasure as taking part and became a positive during the days where I desperately missed running and cycling. When exercise is a huge part of your life to lose that, AND everything associated with it would previously have affected my mental health too, but the club helped avoid that by

keeping me involved as much as possible. The social events have been filled with laughter, good food, and the chance to get to know people better.....and the ability to chat about running and triathlon with like-minded people is always a huge bonus. Sports day was full of giggles, and as competitive as it should have been (and being on the winning team was a huge bonus!!)



Through all those moments in 2023 the club were, and are, always very supportive. I know that I have so much to thank everyone for. Not only with my running, but with my confidence and outlook too.

To find a group of people who all genuinely celebrate each other's achievements and victories is a very special thing. Stainland Lions is a very special club and I am beyond proud to be a member.

To everyone at Stainland Lions –

Thank you for that initial Facebook post, for all of the wonderful tips and advice, for the group runs, for the lovely friendships, for the never ending encouragement and for all of the smiles you have given me in 2023.

Karen C.

## John Carless

### Secret Diary of a Stainland Lion aged 47 ½

I started running/jogging/fast walking, whatever it could have been described as, around 2019. Just doing the odd parkrun and short route along the canal. It was ok and a bit of fun but my true passion was eating pies and drinking beer (which actually comes in handy for the monthly away run that I was still not aware of at this stage)!!! Then COVID hit and like virtually half the population started running more to have something to look forward to when we were under house arrest. Started to enjoy it more and one autumn Friday night after a few too many of the afore mentioned beers decided to join a running club. Karen wanted to join the Sowerby Bridge Slugs but I was always leaning towards Stainland Lions because the vests matched my new running gear I had spent a small fortune on! (all the gear, no idea). All joking aside though we both wanted to join the Lions for various reasons. We heard really good reports from friends of friends and we had done the boxing day run a couple of times, so it felt like a no brainer.

We initially signed up for a taster session in November 2021. I was asked how fast I run a 5k and was told to run with Helen's group. It felt like we ran every hill in Calderdale. Helen was very supportive when she realised she had a fat lad at the back but nothing really prepared me for 7.5 miles of hills. The route broke me. I thought I was so much better than I was. The next week I decided to go with a 'steadier' group and of course it felt easier. I was looking forward to being a full



paid up member in 2022 but unfortunately that week Karen injured herself quite seriously in a non-running accident and our newfound passion had to take a back seat.

Fast forward to January 2023 and Karen was ready to go again and signed us up for a 6 week track course at Spring Hall. Stainland Lions don't get rid of us that easily.... First time on a track, first time under the lights. I loved it. Maria took the group and she warned me I would ache in the morning because 'I'd give it some'. I didn't. I was expecting it but I was ok. So next week I give it some more!! Each week a different coach, Colin ,Gav and Helen. Each one sharing different coaching skills. By the end of the 6 weeks I had literally taken 2.5 minutes off of my parkrun time. I was so happy. This was all down to learning to do warmups, the different drills and cooling down. Something I never really bothered with. In the past I never really did any of this and therefore I got minor injuries all the time. It felt like I was made of glass. The knowledge all the coaches have shared has been invaluable on my running journey and I can't thank them enough.



We paid our subs, bought the vest, and after speaking to Steve Hallam we signed up for the club championship. We were both put in division 4. By this time it was now April and we had missed 6 races but I thought it would be good experience. My first race was the Northowrun 5. I loved turning out on sunny day in my club colours with a group of other Lions. Unfortunately, Karen had broken her femur in the bluebell run recently and my running buddy was to become cheerleader for the day. It was so bittersweet knowing she would have loved being on that start line. I was happy with my time and experience of the day.

Bring on the next event!!

Due to work commitments, I didn't race again until August but I felt fitter and faster with the Thursday night runs and track. Over the coming weeks and months, I entered all the races I could and slowly started moving up the table. In total I entered and ran 12 events and have great memories from each one and running with fellow Lions each weekend. It's all about the friendly competitiveness and I tried my hardest each race, some I would never have thought about entering like the Bronte Way Fell Race but I had a newfound confidence that meant I left nothing out on the course.

At the time of writing I'm really happy with my position in the table and look forward to going again next season.



Basically, due to the training from the coaches, lead runners and advice from fellow lions, my running has come on so much and touch wood hardly ever get daft little injuries and niggles.

In a nutshell I can't praise Stainland Lions and all our members enough. The running is second to none and I enjoy the social side of everything. I'm looking forward to the upcoming nights out in the near future and intend to do more away runs next year. Karen and I have made some great pals and recommend the Club to anybody who asks my opinion. I've enjoyed sharing this because each memory has made me smile and it will be good not being the new kid next year!!





Stainland Lions'  
Lions of the Month  
**COACHING TEAM**  
**RUN LEADERS**  
**MARSHALS**  
**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**  
**CAKE MAKERS**  
**SPONSORS**  
**TAIL RUNNERS**  
**CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
**VOLUNTEERS**  
**RACE DIRECTORS**  
**CAR PARKING**  
**PUBLICITY**  
**TRUSTEES**  
**NEWSLETTER**

December 2023

All an essential part of being a great club!

Top commitment!

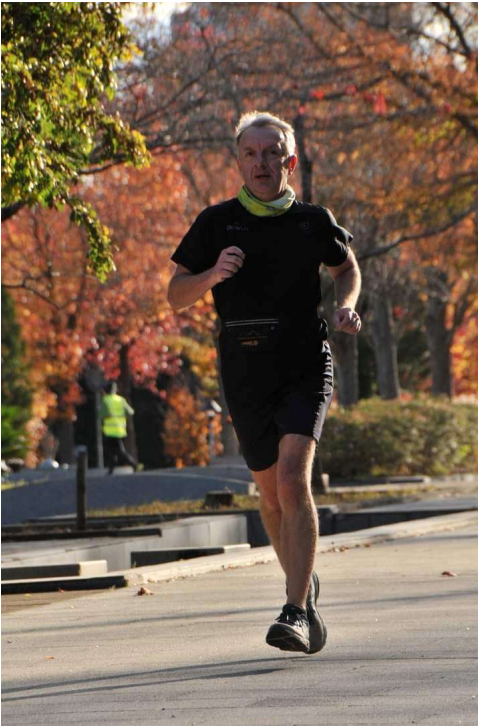
Very special thanks to all our coaches and run leaders who consistently volunteer to provide us with quality sessions and runs.

Thank you to everybody behind the scenes.

**CONGRATULATIONS EVERYONE!**

# Men's Report

## Park-running in Japan with John Ingles



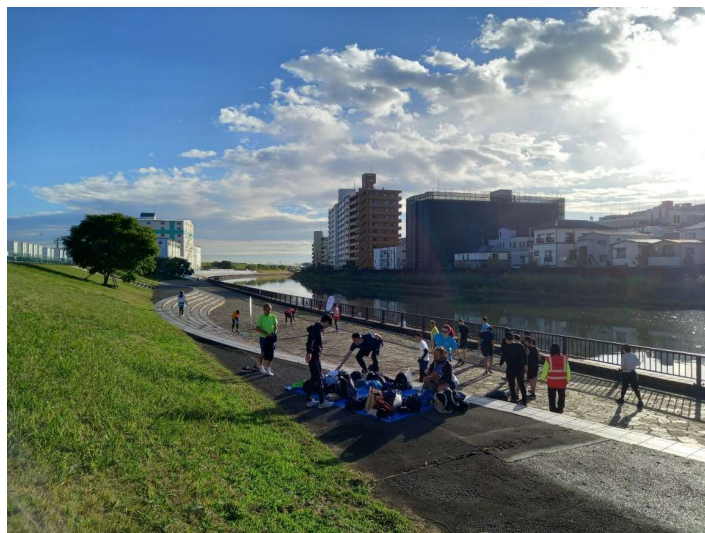
Daylight comes early in the land of the rising sun, even in November – the clocks don't change in Japan – so Parkrun time there is an hour earlier than we're used to at 8am. That means I need to start my journey at just after 7am from the station nearest to my hotel.

There are 37 Parkruns in Japan with nearly half of them in the Tokyo region. I'm making for Shingashigawa Ukima Parkrun, north of central Tokyo, which is a relatively new one, having staged its first event in June 2021, and is the closest one to where I'm staying. At least as the crow flies, though it's going to take me three trains to get there. Probably not something I'd take a chance on in this country, but with none of those individual journeys being longer than ten minutes and the trains in Tokyo running like clockwork – punctual and frequent – all I need to worry about is making sure I get on the right ones.

'Excuse me, are you going to parkrun?' asks a female voice in English behind me. I suppose being the only other person in running gear waiting on the platform at Akabane station is a bit of a give-away. The Canadian lady who asks the question joins me for the final leg of the journey, literally just a two-minute hop to the next station, Kita-Akabane, and from there it's a short walk down to the left bank of the Shingashi River where we find a

small group of runners and volunteers.

A very small group of runners, in fact, as there's just the 20 of us, but that's four more than their average attendance! Admittedly it's not the most exciting route which perhaps explains why it doesn't attract more of Tokyo's population of many millions. It's an out-and-back course repeated three times on a flat and almost dead-straight path. But it's a beautiful sunny morning by the river, and already quite warm despite the early hour.

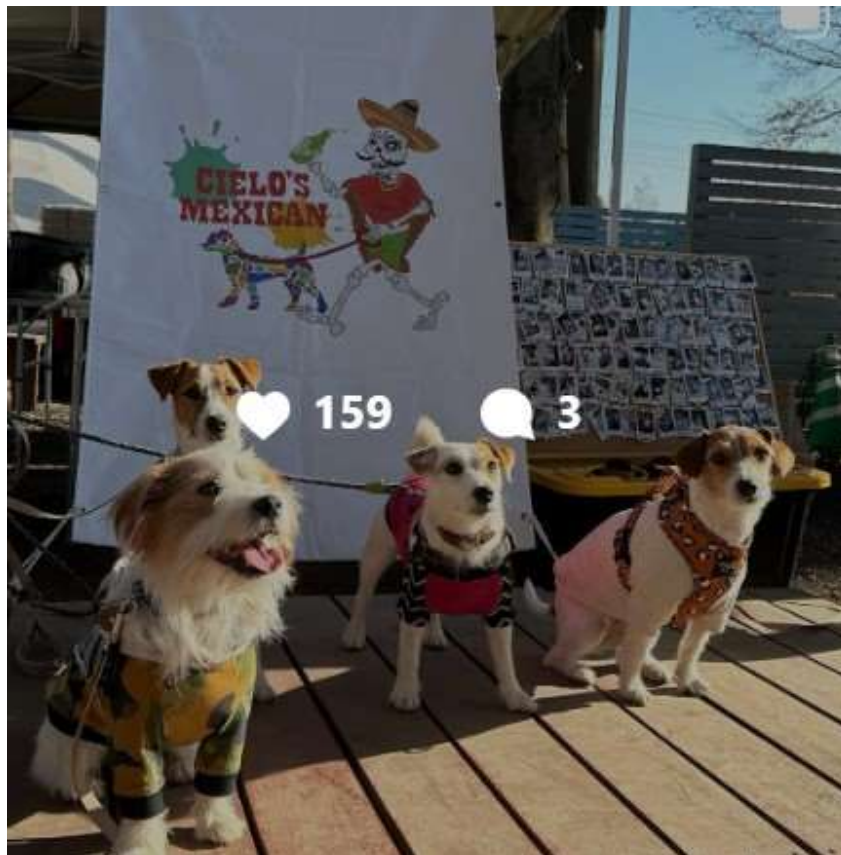


Many photos are taken both before the run – individual ones on the start line of all those attending for the first time – as well as during and afterwards, but unfortunately none of these seemed to be published on Facebook the week I ran – the above photo is my own. For the benefit of us visitors – there are Australians on the start-line too – the briefing is given in English and early enough so that we're under way at 8am on the dot – everything runs bang on time in Japan, not just the trains.

I figure this might be the sort of course where it's easy to get lured into going off too fast so I take it steady for the first couple of out-and-backs with a plan to speed up on the last one. All the to-ing and fro-ing means it's easy to keep track of your position and as I count the runners heading back the other way I find I'm running 11<sup>th</sup>. The tenth-place runner looks to be flagging though as he heads away from the start/finish for the final time, and after we've turned at the railway bridge at the other end of the course, I overtake him on the last run for home to claim a rare top ten spot, even if this was much the smallest parkrun I've ever contested.

The tail-walker combined his duties with doing a litter-pick of the riverside path but this being Japan there isn't much rubbish to collect by the time he finishes. The intimate nature of the parkrun also made it one of the friendliest I've ever done and afterwards the run director invites everyone to a nearby café just round the corner.

As the name suggests, Cielo's has a Mexican theme, so that the run director tucks into the traditional Japanese breakfast of Mexican beer and quesadillas while I opt for a hot chocolate. It's a dog-friendly sort of place, with a photo gallery of their canine customers displayed outside, and things get stranger still by the time I leave when several of the locals – dogs, that is – have turned up dressed to impress. Fortunately, I tracked them down on Instagram to prove this wasn't some kind of weird dream.



A week later and it's parkrun time again but a different one this time. It's another sunny Saturday morning but cooler and more autumnal than the week before. On my first trip to Japan four years ago I'd planned to do a couple of parkruns then as well but Japan's biggest typhoon for years on one of the Saturdays restricted me to doing just the one. That was Kashiwanoha and I'm looking forward to a return visit. Although a bit further from where I'm staying, it's a more straightforward train journey of about half an hour to the north-east of Tokyo on the Tsukuba Express.

This is a very different venue from last week's. As well as being a beautiful park with a large lake and trees in their autumn colours, Kashiwanoha ('oak leaf' in English) includes an athletics stadium, baseball pitch and a sports centre outside which the parkrun starts. It's another flat course, three laps anti-clockwise around the lake before peeling off onto a finishing straight.



Last time I was here I finished managed to finish sixth but not only have I slowed down a bit since then, it evidently attracts some much more serious athletes these days. There are 59 runners this time – I'm one of just a handful of foreigners – and about a quarter of the field manage to fly round in under 20 minutes. Even back in the field the pace feels hot and on the final lap I get into a battle with another runner. But that helps me run my best parkrun time since I came back from injury in the summer, even if I'm a couple of minutes slower than four years ago and finish only 35<sup>th</sup> this time.

I don't suppose the original park-runners at Bushy nearly twenty years ago could have imagined the concept spreading to the other side of the world, but Japan strikes me as an ideal country to embrace the idea of parkrun. Running is popular, the population is fit and healthy-looking and doing things collectively and for the good of others is very much part of daily Japanese life. It's a wonderful place to visit and welcoming to visitors, especially if you make some effort with the language, and I really hope to be back, setting my alarm for some more early Saturday morning starts.

# Coaching with Colin Duffield

A relatively short Coaches Corner this month. It's the time of resolutions and I suggest you make at least one running promise to yourself.

Here are my 'dirty dozen' suggestions:

1. Have fun, don't make it miserable. If it starts making you miserable do something different.
2. Accept that consistency beats intensity. Stop overtraining. Calm down.
3. Build the base. Do lots of long slow running.
4. Do at least one running specific strength/stability session every week.
5. When you've built the base and sorted your body, add a session at effort.
6. Listen to your body, respond to it. Don't ignore injury or fatigue.
7. Don't judge your achievements against other people's. Equally don't judge yourself against how you were 20 years ago.
8. Don't follow any training schedule based around mileage. Your body adapts to time and effort not miles.
9. Do small things. Take the stairs, walk to the shop, improve your diet. Running is only part of the plan.
10. Accept the improvement takes time. Trust, and enjoy the process.
11. Understand that a disappointing race doesn't mean that your next race will be equally poor. A good race doesn't mean that your next race will be equally positive.
12. Don't limit yourself. Look for new running experiences. Have adventures.

Happy 2024 and hope to see you at track or hills.

# Away Run - December 2023 - Debbie Grunhut-Hinds

## Christmas Tree Away Run – 14<sup>th</sup> December

This year's Christmas Tree away run saw us heading to a new venue – The New Inn at Sowood.

Thankfully this was (I think) a great success with around 50-ish Lions heading to the first Christmas tree at Outline to serenade the locals with two carols – including Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer. The passing motorists seemed to enjoy it – well they kept beeping their horns at us anyway (probably because we were stood in the road!).



Next we all headed to the second tree by the Scape House pub. The plan had been to split into three groups to run here – fast, medium and steady – but in true Lion style the faster two groups looped back for us steadies so we all arrived at Scape together, to sing a dodgy rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas!





From the Scape House we split into two groups, with Helen taking the faster group off for a longer run back to Sowood. The rest of us re-traced our route (thankfully now downhill) back to Outline to have another sing at their Christmas tree before heading back to The New Inn to enjoy a very large helping of Beef / Veggie stew with crusty bread!

I personally think this was a definite winner which I'm very much looking forward to again next Christmas.

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#### **Provisional Dates for 2024 Away Runs:**

Below are the provisional dates for 2024 away runs – venues to be confirmed – keep an eye out on Facebook. There is no away run in January.

- February – 8<sup>th</sup>
- March – 14<sup>th</sup>
- April – 11<sup>th</sup>
- May – 9<sup>th</sup>
- June – 13<sup>th</sup>
- July – 11<sup>th</sup>
- August – 8<sup>th</sup> (will be at the Lord Nelson, Luddenden)
- September – 12<sup>th</sup>
- October – 10<sup>th</sup>
- November – 14<sup>th</sup>
- December – 12<sup>th</sup> (Christmas Tree Away Run – The New Inn, Sowood).

# In The Lion's Den with Gav Dodd



**Paul Armitage  
(our Chair for 2024)**



<b>How long have you been running and how did you first start?</b>
I started running in April 2013, joining the Lions beginners course.
<b>What made you join the Lions?</b>
A work colleague had tried the beginners course a couple of years earlier, and failed miserably, she wanted to try again so I said I would come down with her. After about a quarter of a mile I could have happily murdered her.
<b>What's been your best running experience/race to date?</b>
In honesty there have been lots but if you were to press me I would say my 10k PB at Trafford. I have never felt so strong running a race and knocked in the region of three minutes off my previous best.
<b>Do you have any advice for a beginner?</b>
Gosh yes – find another sport! Being more serious, take your time. A slow and steady start works well, just build up those miles the rest will come.
<b>What's your go to running shoe?</b>
Brookes Adrenaline every time, I deviated twice and suffered both times.
<b>What do you do for work?</b>
I am currently a Team Leader in a Motor Insurance claims area. I have also managed an accident repair centre and was trained as a Diesel Fuel Equipment Engineer and if anyone is really interested I will explain what that is if you ask me.
<b>Favourite meal / restaurant?</b>
I love all sorts of food but my favourite is always my Christmas Dinner.
<b>Favourite tippie?</b>
I am a real ale fan, with the River Head Tap brews amongst my favourites.
<b>Favourite holiday destination?</b>
Always the last one I went to. I love a holiday and most places I have been have some merits. I think the people you go with are more important.
<b>Any running or non-running bucket list items</b>
Not sure I have. There is nothing that I have a burning desire to do.
<b>Any non-running related hobbies?</b>
Golf. I love the battle against the course.
<b>What's your Desert Island Disc (favourite group, album, concert)?</b>

If I was alone on a desert island I would have to have a collection of Queens songs. I do however have an eclectic taste in music so most things would keep me tapping my foot. Except Jazz.



**WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE NEWSLETTER - SMALL OR GREAT, THEY ARE ALL IMPORTANT. PLEASE ALSO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEWSLETTER GOING FORWARD**