

Valley Striders AC Newsletter

January 2025



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- PECO Update
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Things to know

- PECO League, two remaining races left - enter before 2pm Friday 3rd Jan:
[PECO Entry](#)
- Volunteers required for MVT Committee and Handicap Organisation
- Congratulations to our trophy winners this year, Hannah, Maddy, Marcos and James
- Well done to all of our Grand Prix winners
- Join and invite others to our MVT7 Strava group:
<https://strava.app.link/aW2iOxRrtNb>
- AGM will take place 21st January at Beck and Call, 8pm
- Please ensure you have replied to the email sent 10th December

Membership Email

You will have received an email from membershipvalleystriders@gmail.com on 10th December detailing important information regarding membership, please ensure you have read this and replied.

Volunteers Required

- To ensure the continuation of our much loved Meanwood Valley Trail Race and VS Handicap we need more volunteers to help with organisation. It doesn't take up lots of your time so please email steph@valleystriders.org.uk to volunteer.
- Massive thanks to Sue Sunderland who has organised the Handicap Races for the past 8-9 years, without her dedication we wouldn't have the opportunity to race against each other where anyone could win the trophy regardless of their race pace. Thank you Sue, you are a star.
- Also huge thanks to Alan Hutchinson who after 25 years is stepping down from organising the Grand Prix, such brilliant dedication.
- Our club's success is due to the dedication of volunteers like Sue and Alan, please help us continue that success into 2025 and beyond.

Congratulations to our trophy winners

Marathon Trophy – awarded to the best overall marathon performance by a Valley Strider: **Winner: Hannah Brown**

Vadim Kuznetsov Trophy: awarded to the fastest age graded performance at Leeds Half Marathon: **Winner: Maddy Illingworth**

Max Jones Trophy: awarded to the person with the best age grading performance at any event: **Winner: Marcos Valero**

Also Ran – awarded to a runner who has had a brilliant years running but unfortunately has not won anything: **Winner: James Slater**

Marathon Trophy – Hannah Brown

London Marathon: 21st April 2024, 2:55:49, 76.40% Age Grading

Of the three Valley Striders ‘performance awards’, this is the only one which is not age graded. Whilst there were some very notable age-graded performances from our former winners:

Amanda Spencer: London Marathon: 3:13:06, 83.46%

Jonathan Ball: Valencia Marathon – Dec 23, 2:43:12, 82.11%

And from new member **Nick Robinson:** London Marathon, 2:46:06, 76.73%

Marathon Trophy – Hannah Brown

It was the unanimous decision of the committee to award this trophy to Hannah Brown, for her 2:55:49 at the London marathon. This was the fastest marathon by a female strider, not only this year, but for the past 18 years. In fact, it was the joint 2nd fastest time ever by a female strider. The only person ahead of her achieved her times at the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. Only five Valley Striders ladies have ever run sub-3 hours for a marathon.

(Sonia Dear 2:58:33 1989, Kaithy Kaiser 2:55 1998, Jules Barltrop 2:58 2005, Tracey Morris 2:33 2006).

Hannah is not a prolific racer, in fact, for the most part, she doesn't race at all. In this context, her meticulous preparation and the perfect execution of her goal, were all the more impressive. A huge congratulation to Hannah on her achievement.

Given the significance of the sub-3 goal, we should, perhaps, also give a special mention to former strider, Faith Bowman. Faith has improved her PBs massively over the past couple of years, and she was so, so close to the 3 hour mark this year, running a highly impressive 3:00:20 at the Berlin Marathon with a 74.34% age grading.

Vadim Kuznetsov Trophy – Maddy Illingworth

Leeds Half Marathon: 12th May 2024, 2:01:38, 76.81%

Vadim was a club member in the early 2000s, and like many members, his main, possibly only, race of the year was the Leeds Half marathon. It is therefore very fitting that this year's winner also has a similar racing schedule. Maddy has been a member of Valley Strider since 1992, and now as a V65 she is still able to complete the Leeds Half in a fantastic 2:01:28, which gives her an age grading of just under 77%. Congratulations, Maddy.

Max Jones – Marcos Valero

Leeds Even Splits 5k: 12th April 2024, 00:14:57, 85.95%

Max was a long-standing member of the club and age-grading expert! Take a look on the archive website for Max's training advice. This trophy cannot be awarded to same person twice, so despite it looking like Amanda might win everything this year, we unfortunately cannot award her the trophy for her phenomenal 89% age-grading at the Trafford 10K. She ran a time of 39:57. (Don't worry, Amanda, you have already put in strong early bid for next year's marathon trophy!)

3rd March 2024: Trafford 10k, Amanda Spencer, 00:39:57, 89.35%

We also cannot award it to last year's winner, Gavin Taylor, for his 87% age-grading at the Telford 10K. His time was 30:16!

However, we can all agree that Marcos is a very worthy winner and the trophy is a particularly fitting recognition, not only of Marcos's fantastic sub-15 5K time, but of his contribution to competing and training with Valley Striders. We wish Marcos all the best for his future life in New Zealand.

Whilst the juniors have their own award presentation, it is worth noting that next in line for this award, was Simeon Tedd. Simeon is an U15 and he achieved an 84% age-grading when competing in the Northern Track Championships. His time for 1500m was 4:28 .

Also Ran Trophy: James Slater

This trophy is awarded to a runner who has had a brilliant years running however unfortunately has not won anything. There is one person who stands out amongst the crowd with over 25 Grand Prix events, and 6 PBs from mile to half marathon.

On top of that they debuted at marathon distance (however apparently never again, how many of us have said that at least once in the past!)

In addition to James' amazing year of running he really throws himself into all club activities, becoming Welfare Officer, volunteering for the handicap and MVT races and also running round muddy PECO's eve though he absolutely hates it (which made us all question why he chose to enter the TNT!)

Finally, James will be taking over from Alan Hutchinson managing the Grand Prix, very fitting for one of our most dedicated runners with the most Grand Prix events this year – 28.

Congratulations James, you really do deserve the award and the chocolate!

PECO Update – Sam Harris

Team Standings:

Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Overall
Men	3	2	3	3 rd
Ladies	1	1	4	1 st
Men's Vets	2	2	3	2 nd
Ladies' Vets	1	6	4	4 th

After a fantastic start to the 2024-25 PECO XC season the ladies were clearly in 1st place with team wins in the first two races. However, due to illness and work commitments there was a much-depleted team for the 3rd race and a lower than usual 4th place finish. Thankfully, the ladies narrowly retain their overall 1st place.

The men's team and the men's vets' teams have both had a mix of 2nd and 3rd place finishes so far. The men are currently in 3rd overall and the men's vets are in 2nd. A strong turnout for the remaining two races could easily see these positions improve.

The ladies' vets' team are currently in need of some older ladies! If you are over 55 or over 65, in fact if you are any age at all and would like to give the PECO XC a try, then please come along. It is the friendliest cross country race you will ever do – think 'mass participation road race, but with a more interesting course: trails, woodland, parkland, a few hills, a little bit of mud, and lots of support'.

PECO Update – Sam Harris

Individual Highlights

If you have taken part in PECO for the first time this year, then please get in touch and let us know, as we would love to give you a mention in the next newsletter.

Other individual highlights include notable overall and age-category placings. A special mention goes to Rebecca Whalley who is currently 2nd overall in the series. Hope Wearing is currently 2nd junior (to the best of my knowledge), Sarah Shanks is currently 2nd F40 and John Hussey is currently 2nd M75.

PECO Cross Country League 2024-25				
Position	Surname	First Name	Age Cat	Cat
6	Grant	Daniel	M35	4
9	Cheseldine	Edward	MSEN	5
35	Mann	Gary	M40	6
59	Grave	Paul	M45	6
125	Sanderson	Ian	M50	4
476	Brewster	Keith	M70	6
560	Hussey	John	M75	2

Position	Surname	First Name	Age Cat	Cat
2	Whalley	Rebecca	FSEN	2
11	Wearing	Hope	FSEN	7
13	Shanks	Sarah	F40	2
28	Gledhill	Steph	F45	4
78	Adams	Liz	F50	5
101	Sunderland	Sue	F60	4

PECO Update – Sam Harris

Participation Numbers:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Men	44	54	57	45
Ladies	27	25	24	24
Total	71	79	81	69

Valley Striders participation numbers have been gradually increasing since PECO returned after lockdown in 2021. This year, the numbers are not quite as high. However, there are still 2 races left! Can we beat our total of 81 and get our highest ever participations figures? If you haven't yet taken part, there is still time to enter... [PECO XC League 2024-25 - RaceBest](#)

Grand Prix Year End Results: Alan Hutchinson

At an excellent and well attended Striders Christmas party on Sunday I presented for my last time the prizes in the 2024 Grand Prix competition. Very many congratulations to all the winners.

Female:

V65 Ruth Warren 730 points

V55 Amanda Spencer 798 and 2nd female overall

V45 and Group C Steph Gledhill 787

V35 Sarah Shanks 783

Senior Rebecca Whalley 800 points Winner of Group A and Overall Female Winner

Group B Aga Felska 783

D Vicki Johnstone 739

E Pascale Fotherby 747

F Louise Jennings 717

Grand Prix Year End Results: Alan Hutchinson

Male:

V65 and Group B winner Ken Fox 735

V55 James Tarran 718

V45 Paul Grave 789

V35 John Shanks 799 Winner of Group A and Overall Male Winner

Senior Andy Parkinson 777

Group B Gary Mann 783

C Ian Sanderson 779

D Paul Smith 768

F Chris Sawyer 728

G Bob Jackson 678

And so to my earlier comment – After more than 2 decades of involvement in coordinating the Grand Prix I am pleased to be transferring my responsibilities to James Slater. Not only do I think James will make an excellent successor he has also embraced the Grand Prix enthusiastically and during this year he completed the most races in the competition, 26.

Signing off

Yours in running

Alan Hutchinson

2025 Grand Prix Update

This year's Grand Prix (which runs from December 2024 to November 2025) is now well underway, with the first 4 events having already taken place – these being;

1. PECO #2 at Pontefract on 1st December
2. PECO #3 at Middleton on 15th December
3. Chevin Chase on 26th December
4. Winter Handicap on 29th December

The next 4 Grand Prix events coming up are;

1. PECO #4 at Stockeld Park on 5th Jan
2. Dewsbury 10k on 2nd Feb
3. Evensplits 5k on 6th Feb
4. Potternewton Parkrun on 15th Feb

What is the Grand Prix?

- It's our internal club competition, which every member can participate in. You're automatically enrolled and you'll earn points whenever you participate in any of the 'Grand Prix events'. There are over 40 events planned for this year, across a wide range of distances and disciplines, including road, trail and cross country.
- You are placed into a category containing other members who are of a similar ability to yourself, so everyone competes on a 'level playing field' and therefore everyone has a chance to win a prize, regardless of your age or ability.
- For the last 25 years, the Grand Prix has been wonderfully led by Alan Hutchinson and the time has now come for Alan to take a well-earned break and step down from the role of co-ordinator. He's handing the proverbial baton over to James Slater, who will be taking over in January.
- When James takes over, he is planning to write to every member to let you know personally what category you are in, and provide a bit more information, detail and background about how the Grand Prix works. Look out for an e-mail from James landing in your inbox in the next few weeks.
- James will also provide a regular Grand Prix performance update within all forthcoming editions of our newsletter.

Valley Striders AGM

The VS AGM will take place at 8pm Tuesday 21st January at the Beck and Call pub in Meanwood.

Food will be available from the pub so if you want to order food please arrive by 7:30 to order, there should be space in the area we have reserved for you to eat during the AGM

They have an offer of buy one get one half price so you may want to bring a friend

Training will be on as usual meeting at the Beck and Call at 6:30 for Advanced, Intermediate and Improvers sessions.

Training Sessions

Tuesdays

6pm: Improvers, relaxed and friendly group, catering for all runners, sessions tend to be a combination of social runs with some intervals. Generally suitable for people starting out running, wanting to build fitness or those who'd prefer a gentler, more relaxed run.

6:15pm: Fast paced interval session at West Park, suitable for all runners under 19 minutes for a 5k and for runners 19-21 minutes who want a harder session.

6:30pm: Advanced (sub 24 5k) and Intermediate (24-30 5k). Intervals including monthly hill session. We all run together with options for shorter runs for Intermediates, people returning from injury. Good transition for those from Improvers who want to improve on their times, have a harder session.

Track Tuesdays: Available to all, second Tuesday of the month.

All sessions advertised on Spond: [Spond - Valley Striders](#)

Tuesday January Sessions

Date	6pm	6:15	6:30
January 7th	Leo's – Village Green	Ancaster Road	High Ashes
January 14th	Virgin Money, Moortown Corner	Ancaster Road	High Ashes
January 21 st AGM at – Beck & Call	Beck & Call, (6:30pm Start)	Ancaster Road	Carr Manor Hills – Meet at Beck & Call
January 28th	TBC – Look out on Spond	Ancaster Road	High Ashes
Track Session Friday Track and Pizza	Second Tuesday Look out for details on Spond	Leeds Met Sports Centre	£5 entry card payment

Thursday & Sunday Runs

- Thursday Social: 7pm Scott Hall Leisure Centre, 7-8 miles at 8:30 minute miles with stops to regroup.
- Intermediate Thursday Socials will restart on 9th January all at 6pm following locations: 9th – Scott Hall, 16th – Alwoodley Village Green, 23rd Scott Hall, 30th – Virgin Money, Moortown – Please say you are attending on Spond so the leader knows you are going
- Sunday: 8:45am, top of Church Lane, Meanwood, approximately 10-12 miles at 9 minute mile pace.

Upcoming Races

	01-Jan	LDWA Hangover Hike / Captain Cook's Races / Nine Standards / Giant's Tooth
	04-Jan	The Drop, Leeds / Hardmoors 15/30 / YXC Lightwater Valley
GP	05-Jan	Peco#4 Stockeld Park
	05-Jan	Round Sheffield Run (winter) / Sir Titus Pie and Pickle Plod
	11-Jan	Winter Spine races start / Filey Flyer (LDWA) / Wild Deer HM/10k/5k Harewood / Great Owl Leeds Country Way Winter Ultra (Day 1)
	12-Jan	Temple Newsam 10 / Skipton Sweetie Skedaddle / Trigger Fell Race / Commondale Clart / Great Owl Leeds Country Way Winter Ultra (Part 2) / LCW Winter Trail 10k
	18-Jan	PP Green Gateways / The Hebden 15/22 (LDWA)
	19-Jan	Brass Monkey HM / Soreen Stanbury Splash (& juniors)
	24-Jan	Arc of Attrition 100/50/25 (until 26/1)
	25-Jan	Kirkstall Bridge 10k / Kirkstall Calverley Cutter (Great Owl) / Northern XC (Tatton Park) / Hoofstones Fell Race
	26-Jan	St Aidan's Winter Beast / Runable Half and Half, Soweby Bridge, Tigger Tor, Peak District / That's Lyth (LDWA)
	01-Feb	Rombalds Stride / Pendle Way In A Day / Wadsworth Trog
GP	02-Feb	Dewsbury 10k
	02-Feb	Hardmoors Saltburn Trail Marathon / Cod Beck Canter / Appletreewick Runners & Riders
	08-Feb	Arctic Spine (multi day) / PP Harrogate Hustle / Podium XC at Temple Newsam
GP	09-Feb	Peco#5 Roundhay Park
	Fri	Even Splits 5k (York)
GP	15-Feb	GP parkrun, Potternewton
	15-Feb	Roundhay 50 (LDWA) to 16/2 / At the Double
	16-Feb	Hoppits Hill / Midgley Moor / York Winter Warmer Run 5k,10k, HM
	22-Feb	High Cup Nick Fell Race / South Pennine 24 / Northumberland Coastal Trail Runs 10k/HM/Mar/Ultra / English National Cross Country Championships, Parliament Hill, The Billing (Great Owl) / Flower Scar Fell Race
	23-Feb	Snake Lane 10 / Leeds Winter Warmer Run 5k, 10k, HM Temple Newsam
GP	Weds	Even Splits 5k (Leeds)

Upcoming Races

	01-Mar	Saddleworth Ten Res's (with new 5 and 15 options)
	02-Mar	Eskdale Eureka / Ilkley Moor Fell Race / Liversedge HM / Trafford 10k / Middlesbrough HM / North Lincs 10k & HM
	Fri	Even Splits 5k (York)
	08-Mar	Haworth Hobble / Spring Canal Canter Day 1
	09-Mar	MARSHALLING Peco Relays / Spring Canal Canter Day 2 / 39th Two Crosses Circuit (LDWA) / Timpell 10k
GP	09-Mar	Trimpell 20 / Spen 20 (other March 20 mile races also count for GP)
	15-Mar	PP Welcome Way / Grindleford Gallop
	16-Mar	Thirsk 10 / Blakey Blitz / Bath Half / Wakefield Hospice 10k
	Fri???	Peco Presentation evening, Brudenell Social Club
	22-Mar	Chevin is BS / We Need to Talk About Chevin (Great Owl) / Hardmoors 55/ Flowerscar Fell Race
	23-Mar	East Hull 20
	23-Mar	Heptonstall Fell Race / Blubberhouses Moor (LDWA) / Edale Skyline / Sheffield HM
GP	Weds	Even Splits 5k (Leeds)
	29-Mar	Grasmere Trail Runs and Duathlon (Wild Deer) / Coledale Horseshoe
GP	30-Mar	MOTHERS DAY Vale of York 5m/10m
	30-Mar	MOTHERS DAY Keighley 10k/5k (Sue Ryder) / Northern 12&6 stage relays (Redcar)
	31-Mar	Hartlepool Marina 5 mile