

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Our previous year – 2024 – was an ambitious year for the Committee; we had set ourselves the objective of bringing U18s into PRR. This necessitated a number of changes and new measures and occupied much of our bandwidth for some months.

2025, by contrast, has been a less immediately ambitious year: it has been one of consolidation and Business As Usual. This is not, however, to understate the effort and work inputs – and the successful outcomes of the Committee and the wider club. Many of those efforts and outcomes are set out in more detail in the sections of our yearly report (see separate links on the AGM webpage).

A key challenge – perhaps our largest one - remains that of **participation**, both in our racing series and at our Club Runs and training nights. Both are in good shape – and are much improved on the levels immediately after the pandemic - but remain some way shy of what a club of 200 runners should witness. As reported by Champs Organiser Alan, numbers have climbed again (slightly) at two of our three racing series, and especially at our internal races, Tuesday Club Runs and track training. Indeed, we've seen some of our best numbers for many years on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Inclusion remains crucial and underpins our stated objectives as a charity. Compared with many running clubs and ACs, our membership spans a wider spectrum of abilities and speeds. Providing training, events and an ethos for 15-minute parkrunners and 60-minute parkrunners alike is challenging ... but we seek to do so. Most larger towns see two (or more clubs) being needed to provide that attention. Our internal races (again a great success in 2025, due in large part to their organisers), race series, training and events seek to be as all-ability as practically possible, without diluting the competitive spirit under which PRR was formed. With ideas and a steer from members, we will always seek to improve our offering here.

As Clive reports, **membership** remained high in 2025, falling one place short of 200 places (*we had perhaps hoped for a slight increase in the 205 of 2024*). Our U18 membership grew to 8 athletes (who stay defined in this category for only a short period!). Our openness to this category – in and despite a world of ever-more-stringent safeguarding – remains a key part of the inclusion mentioned above.

Our **open races** – the Tay Ten (TT) and Brig Bash – were again a great success. We saw entry numbers climb to 370 at the TT and achieved a record number of starters – 260 - at the (unseasonably damp) BB; these numbers fully tested the event's capacity! The TT continues to grow in fame and popularity, while the BB has achieved something of a cult status and is surely now Scotland's premier 5-miler (*much as we love Cupar and Fife AC*). Both races sell out rapidly (the BB *ultra*-rapidly... in 43 minutes this year!) and, combinedly, they provided £4700+ to club coffers, ie some 60% of our working income, allowing us to pursue the activities we do and hold membership fees at our daftly-good-value levels.

Overall, **financially**, we fared very well, adding £1700 to club coffers even without claiming Gift Aid (instead deferring this –some £1100 – into our next financial year). This we achieved despite

fully funding many of the key activities of the club – internal races, track training, cross-country entries, Mob Matches etc – and reducing the entry costs of others (eg the awards dinner).

There have, of course, been **great individual and team performances**, many of which are listed elsewhere in our reports; others will be detailed at the AGM as part of the awards announced there.

Ah yes. We also won the **Mob Match** against Kinross RR ... and on their patch, too, albeit by the very (very) slimmest of margins. 60 PRRs competed that evening – that's some turnout (although we were still outnumbered by the opposition)! The Mob Match is Coming Home in 2026 and we shall seek to Retain The Rabbit at Kinclaven Bluebell Woods. I doubt that that will be easy: it never is, nor would we have it so. We challenged Dundee RR to a parkrun Mob Match against them ... and alas lost. But we shall pursue a tricky revenge at Camperdown in February.

All of the above testify to a fine club doing fine things. But we can be finer yet. As noted, participation is *good* but falls some way short of *great*, when we look at, and compare with, our recent history. The race series, some XC matches, hill/trail training, this forthcoming Hartley Relay teams ... they're all some way below what we saw pre-COVID, what our neighbouring clubs see and what a club of 200 members should be able to provide. This slight disengagement is writ larger at the organisational level. Kenny manages – with major effort - to staff our open races, but it is far harder work that it should be. We struggle more with our 'strategic' organisation ie our main Committee and Race Committee. We really **do** need a few more people to 'own' more areas of what we do. I write this pointedly as we approach the AGM. Please step forward if you can. Strong (and very stolen) words they may be, and I apologise: *ask not what Perth Road Runners can do for you, but what you can do for Perth Road Runners*. Please. 😊

Almost every Chair writes this line at this point: "*we are only as good as our membership*". It was again true in 2025. Huge thanks are due to this year's Committee: Paige, Ronnie, Charlie, Clive, Finlay, Richard, Tom, Jo, Alan and Mike. They have been thoroughly excellent and double-determined to bring about our usual welter of activities and the running of the club and charity. We alas lose Paige, Ronnie and Alan at the AGM, and I'd like to thank all three for their major efforts this year. The Race Committee worked flat out again to produce our two open races. Our XC Captains (Fabienne and Kevin Riddell), our kit quartermasters (the Dales), our coaches (Richard, Lorraine, Fiona Morrisson and Amy) and our new Coaching Assistants (Stuart, Lucy and Tessa), our internal race organisers (Kristen Bain, Richard Hughes, Caroline Hogarth, Clive again)... they all deserve huge thanks. As do many others that would fill a few more paragraphs yet. And big thanks are extended to all our volunteers – at all of our events in 2025 – that made it a fine year. To you all: **THANK YOU**. Let's do it all again ... but even bigger and better!

Mark Crawford, Chair 2025