AA Member Monthly News Bulletin - October 2026

- Welcome – Wednesday venue change
- Another busy month – around the world!
- Important run news
- Fancy some winter sunshine?
- Club places for the London Marathon
- Club Charity Support through 2026/27
- NEW! 2027 Almost Athletes Club race series is on the way
- Runner of the Month nominations
- Other key events and dates

Welcome to all members, old and new as we hunt around for our warmer kit, head torches and hi-viz kit. Plenty going on with Almost Athletes over the coming months and we look forward to seeing you on the roads, trail, track, skittle alley, dance floor, and even Weston super Mare beach! Check out Facebook and the website for more information or just come and have a chat.

It's great to see all the member photos on Facebook. Some wonderful ones, this weekend from Cirencester and Tewkesbury. Do add your pictures to the albums set up by Zakhia Hussain BUT please, please, please wear your club purple tops when representing Almost Athletes. We love to see you in club colours. Of course, for points qualification and certain fixtures, such as Cross Country this becomes a mandatory requirement. There will also be times when this may not be right for you – eg charity events, Christmas fun events, parkrun for example. But as a general guide for club members – purple tops when "signed up" as an AA please. Thank you.

Our usual run and coached sessions take place throughout the week – Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Thursday morning plus the additional 5pm, first Thursday in the month, track session - all welcome. This Wednesday, club night moves to Bishop's Cleeve where we will have a new run route. Same start point at Lidl's at 7pm and drinks afterwards in the Kings Head. See the club website and Facebook for the latest updates.

A year ago we lost one of our members, the much-loved Piotr Michalski. Remember him and other loved ones as you go about your running this month. Piotr epitomised the joy of running and we will mark his passing with a quiet moment before the club run on Wednesday 11th November.

Another busy month – *around the world!*

Reading through this month's race reports, the amount of run tourism from AA members for parkrun and marathons has been awe inspiring. Too many to mention but they include Chicago, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Maryland, USA, Italy, Morocco and even Gloucester! We had a super turn out at York with 12 members running either the marathon or 10 mile events. We ended the month with a beautiful sunny afternoon at Cirencester Park where our men and women fielded teams for the cross country.

What wonderful experiences and memories! Well done to everyone, especially the supporters - sometimes theirs is the toughest job of all.

Important Run News – 2027 club race series and 2 race entries for your diary

- **NEW** Almost Athletes (AA) club race series with full details to be announced at the London Marathon Club draw on 13th November at Old Patesians Club.
- Part of the new, exciting 2027 AA race series and **open for entries now - Run Upcote on 4th April** – a lovely country 5 mile trail race organised and run by Club coach and long term member, James Clay.
- Part of the new, exciting 2027 AA race series and **open for entries at 12:00pm on Sunday 8th November – Linda Franks 5** – our celebrated fast and flat club road race around Hatherley, Cheltenham. A proportion of funds will go to good causes as voted for by members at the 2025 AGM.

Fancy some winter sunshine?

For more years than we can remember, many members have made the self-organised trip across to Torremolinos on the Costa del Sol for the 5km and half marathon. 2027 will be no different and if that is something you like the sound of then get in touch. All welcome, it's a fun weekend with the 5km on 6th February and the half marathon on 7th February. Some members are even trying to work the logistics of doing Gibraltar parkrun on Saturday morning.

Club places for the London Marathon

As with all other clubs affiliated to England Athletics we are still waiting to hear on our allocation. You might recall that last year we had 2 places. Paul Jones has issued a communication to members giving details of the Club London Marathon ballot draw. We are planning to hold the draw at the Club social/skittles evening on 13th November at Old Patesians Club – details to follow. It is essential that if you qualify for the ballot you send your London Marathon rejection email to the club ASAP. The deadline for this is 23:59 on Tuesday 10th November. Send to almostathletes@hotmail.com.

You will see from Paul's e mail that you must a) have been a paid up first claim member of the Club for one calendar year at the date of the draw, b) never ran London Marathon before. Good luck to those taking part.

Club Charity support through 2026/27

As agreed at the May AGM we are supporting 4 main charities this year, all put forward by club members. They are:
Cots for Tots – nominated by Sandra Stuart
Endometriosis UK – Zakia Hussain
Teenage Cancer Trust – Kevin Keegan
Ward Buddies – Patricia Dendy

We have been in touch with each of these charities and they are all delighted to be chosen. Traditionally the club makes a donation from funds and seeks to engage with the charity where possible. The amounts can vary and typically run into several

thousand pounds, For example, last year we donated a total of over £3,000. More on this over the coming months.

Runner of the month nominations

Who is your member who deserves the accolade of Runner of the Month? Supporters, speedsters, encouragers, all nominations welcome. Email your October nominations by 22nd November to almostathletes@hotmail.com.

Some Other Key Events and Dates

15th November – Roly's Run, Meon Valley, Hampshire – 15/20/40 mile options. Annual trail running and walking event. In memory of member, Rich "Roly" Walklate, who passed away unexpectedly in May 2018.

5th December – Christmas Party night – Tickets now on sale at £20 per person – partners very welcome. United Services Club, North Place, Cheltenham GL50 4DW.

13th December – Club trip to Weston super Mare and the Weston Christmas Cracker 10km – booking details now announced. £15 per head for coach transport. You will need to enter the Weston Christmas Cracker 10km separately if you want to run it.

15th January 2027 – 2026 Almost Athletes Race Series awards night at Old Patesians Club, Cheltenham.

Let's go for a run!

Your Committee, Almost Athletes
1st November 2026

PS. "Good luck" to Des Beer and Natalie Greening who are off to run the Athens Marathon this month. The race takes place on 14th November.

Want to know more?

Linktree – https://linktr.ee/Almost_Athletes_Cheltenham

More details about all of our regular training sessions and social runs can be found on the "where we meet" section of our club website and on our Facebook page.

Club Merchandise – see "merchandise" section of the club website