

Loughton & Buckhurst Hill Recorder

Thursday April 21, 2011

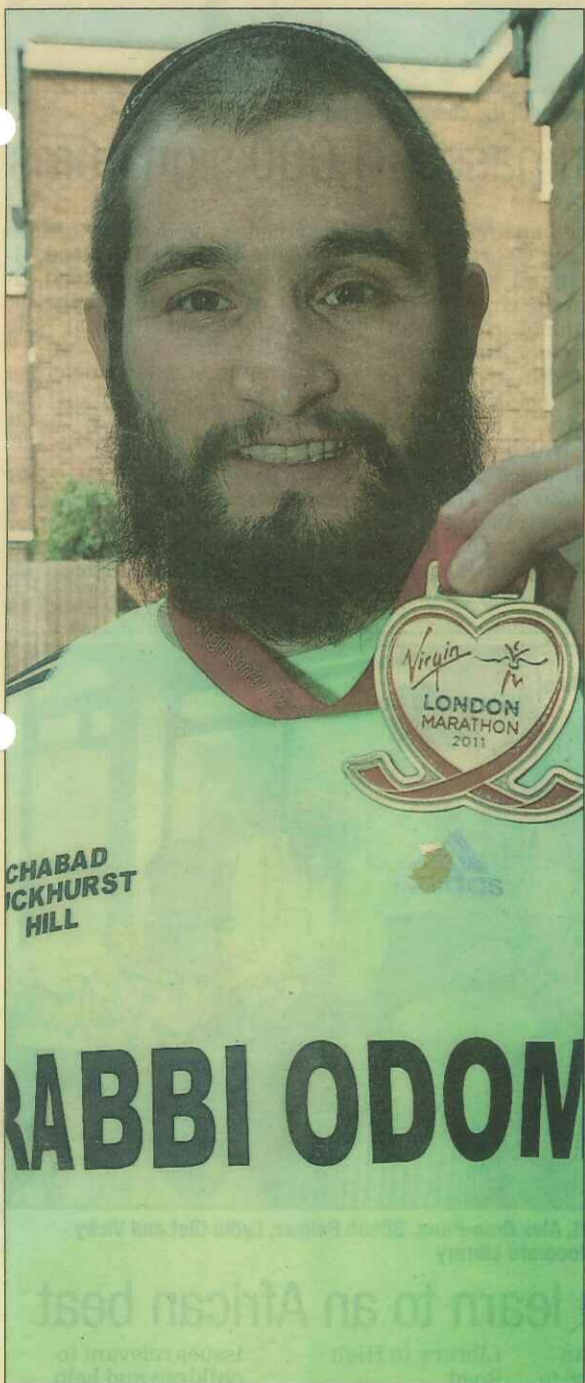
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News | Sport | Entertainment | What's

Listings guide big screen and

Thursday April 21, 2011, Recorder

3



Rabbi Brandman finished in under five hours

Rabbi run makes history

Rabbi Odom Brandman believes he is the first Orthodox Rabbi to run the London Marathon.

He raised money for the Jewish Community

Centre he runs in Buckhurst Hill and he said: "The support from the crowd was just amazing."

See story p3



Rabbi Odom Brandman during Sunday's London Marathon

Running Rabbi Odom claims marathon first

'I had to finish in under 5hrs – thank God, I did'

by Kira Agass

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A Buckhurst Hill man believes he is the first Orthodox Rabbi to run the London Marathon after he raised more than £8,000 for the Jewish community centre he founded with his wife.

Rabbi Odom Brandman completed the gruelling 26.2-mile course in 4hrs 45mins and 40 secs.

He said: "I was adamant I had to finish in under five hours and, thank God, I did."

"It got really difficult at the 21-mile mark, but I was determined and refused to slow."

"I was given a great tip, to put my name on my front so everyone was yelling 'Go Rabbi' which really pushed me on."

"The support from the crowd was just amazing, and the atmosphere was incredible. I don't think there was one stretch of the entire run that wasn't lined with people cheering."

The thousands of pounds raised will be spent on the ongoing running costs of the Chabad Centre in Princes Road, Buckhurst Hill, and some will be put towards its development fund.

Rabbi Brandman explained: "My wife and I established the centre six years ago and are hoping to find more permanent premises."



Rabbi Odom Brandman, pictured with supporters from the Jewish Community Centre he runs, held a special prayer for himself and fellow runners before the race

"We organise a host of fun social events, delightful services, family meals, Sabbath and festival programs and many other activities serving a broad spectrum of people from around the community. We survive on donations, so the marathon has been really important in helping raise our profile."

Tassels

"I also ran in my traditional garb, including an under-vest with Tzitzit tassels, which some were shocked by because it gets quite hot."

"To me, it was important to show people that you do not have to compromise your religious beliefs and way of life to take part in things."

The religious leader, who spent the past five months in training for the big day, told the Recorder his family are all proud of him.

He said: "My eldest son is only four, but he came to watch me and hasn't stopped talking about it."

"I'm certainly not an athlete and don't even do any formal exercise usually, so this has been a real achievement for me."

Rabbi Brandman has produced a training video, which is available to view on YouTube by searching Go Rabbi Go!

The hilarious clip has already received more than 4,400 views.

Jack Tweed ran the marathon on Sunday to raise money for a cancer charity.

The 23-year-old, of Buckhurst Hill, completed the course and raised almost £1,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support – in honour of his wife Jade Goody who died of cancer in 2009.