

## RUNNING THE MARATHON

Simon, who is a Fleet Sales Executive at M&O London, tells Taxi Globe of his marathon experience.

“On Sunday 26th April, after 6 months of training, I found myself standing on the start line of my second London marathon. As the sun shone I was prepared and ready to run 26.2 miles for two well deserving charities, VICTA (Visually Impaired Children Taking Action) and The Children’s Magical Taxi Tour, which is organised by The

Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers.

The run went as well as I’d hoped and with a time of 5 hours 5 minutes, shaving 30 minutes off my previous attempt in 2004, I was pretty pleased. More importantly having crossed the finish line it meant I could now collect over £3,000 for the two charities. It also means that I will be sponsoring my own taxi for this year’s trip to Disneyland, Paris.

I would like to say a massive THANK YOU to all my family,

friends, work colleagues and customers for their sponsorship and support and for all the donations collected at the Disney Gala dinner hosted at the Marriott Hotel, West India Quay in December. Thank you to everyone who donated.

Also a big THANK YOU to my wife, Catherine, who has been a great motivator, kit cleaner, and provider of my dietary requirements to keep me in trim. I will be there on the start line next year, am I mad... no just addicted!!!”



Peter Rigden, General Manager at M&O London said: “Everyone here at Brewery Road is extremely proud of Simon’s achievement in the London Marathon. He is a true credit both to our dealership and the wider LTI business.”

## PUBLIC CARRIAGE OFFICE REVOKES THREE OPERATOR LICENCES *by John Kennedy*

Well it seems that the Public Carriage Office is starting to understand that the London taxi-cab driver has had enough of this disastrous “safer travel at night project” which placed mini-cab offices inside nightclubs to assist members of the public getting home late at night.

The project is not only damaging the London taxi trade but it is now leading to action against the first operators who are breaking the law. So much for safer travel at night for people have been touted on the pavement and therefore placed in uninsured vehicles. All this under the noses of the authorities who have only taken action after a rather large demonstration, many hundreds of emails complaining at their inaction from members of LTCPR and subscribers to the LTDF and at least three further meetings with the LTDA, UNITE and the LCDC which I’m led to believe included the threat of many more demonstrations.

In the press release regarding this problem the PCO inform us that each site and venue is visited by them to ensure the premises and arrangements are suitable, well could the director of taxi and mini-cabs please explain what has been going on for it appears at every venue where you’ve placed an operating centre the operator is standing there in a day-glow jacket offering the services of a taxi-cab outside. The drivers then rank “illegally” on the PUBLIC highway and at nearly every location park illegally even blocking taxi-cab ranks/stands. Mr Ed Thompson what did your compliance officers actually check?

Now it seems this PCO Notice leads me to ask another question for it appears this project (mini-cab offices in bars and clubs, sorry safer travel at night project). Started under the previous Mayor Ken Livingstone when two of our trade organisations had the “ear” of him and his advisors so we must ask an awkward but relevant question. Did either or both of these organisations agree to this project with Transport for London/PCO?

I work nights like many of you and have been sickened to see the inaction of those who take a good wage from the public purse but it has taken a group of decent hardworking drivers starting with Thomas the taxi at the Anderson Shelter and many of you subscribing to the London Taxi Drivers Forum (LTDF) to have complained to your associations, the PCO, transport for London, the Mayor of London and even your MPs. The London taxi trade needs economic and political stability and not just taxi ranks/stands outside bars and venues. Members of the public should be encouraged to hail a taxi-cab or book a mini-cab, but that choice should be theirs and not a whim of a civil servant seeking a brownie point from a political leader. We need the Police to be proactive in the wider battle against touting and we need local councils to stop closing roads and ignoring those who park illegally at night within the capital. Traffic congestion at night reduces the supply of available taxi-cabs, councils need to keep roads clear of obstructions so we can serve

those who have enjoyed a evening out and wish to travel home safely in a real taxi-cab.

The actions of drivers hasn’t been led by any trade organisation but by a group of drivers from the circuit Dial-a-Cab and a equally great bunch of drivers from the London Taxi Drivers Forum, you should be proud of what you have achieved in a very small space of time and it certainly complemented the ongoing negotiations. We should though build on this unity and demand the closure of all operating centres within licensed premises.

Then we can seek the reorganisation and splitting of the PCO in two..... PS DON’T FORGET 9.00AM ON 24.06.09 DEMONSTRATION STOP NOTICE AT CITY HALL!

## TOURISM CAMPAIGN GETS UNDERWAY

“Only in London” is the latest campaign to attract visitors to London, which in turn should benefit the cab trade, amongst other businesses in the capital. With a £400,000 cash injection from four central London boroughs at the start of the campaign, the Mayor was joined by representatives from the four boroughs at the launch of “West End – It’s Time” in Covent Garden. The latest campaign follows on from Visit London’s highly successful £600,000 winter marketing campaigns. Boris Johnson said: “With all this hard work and investment London is weathering the downturn well, resulting in a two per cent increase last year in UK and overseas visitors. Whilst we kick off our marketing drive today with ‘West End it’s Time’, a unique initiative to drive visitors into the centre of London, it is crucial that we take nothing for granted and continue shouting from the rooftops that London is a fantastic city to visit, whether filling your shopping bags, visiting one of our incredible museums, or grabbing a meal.”

Mayor Boris Johnson launches Visit London’s ‘Only in London’ campaign with borough representatives from Camden, City of London, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster.  
L-R: Cllr Keith Moffitt, Leader, Camden Council, Chris Duffield, Town Clerk and Chief Executive at the City of London Corporation, Mayor of London Boris Johnson, Leader of Westminster City Council, Cllr Colin Barrow Cllr Paget-Brown, Cabinet Member for Transportation, Environment and Leisure at Kensington & Chelsea

