Croydon pastor runs Adelaide Hills in training for mountain epic

When most of Adelaide was still asleep on Wednesday 15 April, the Revâ??d Ben Woodd was already on the trail at Belair, setting out on a 108-kilometre run through the Adelaide Hills with 4,000 metres of climbing ahead of him.

It was, by any ordinary measure, an extraordinary day out. For Ben, Pastor of St Barnabas Croydon, it was a training run.

In June, Ben will travel to the Lake District in the north-west of England to attempt the Bob Graham Round: a 106-kilometre fell-running circuit that takes in 42 mountain summits and a total elevation gain of 8,200 metres, close to the height of Everest. The challenge is to complete the loop within 24 hours. Only about a third of those who attempt it succeed.

Dawn, and Ben is already 12km in â?? only 96 to go

The 15 April outing â?? Belair to Athelstone and back â?? was, Ben said beforehand, â??the big test.â?• He dubbed it a â??Double Yurrebillaâ?• (being twice the length of the punishing Yurrebilla ultra marathon through the Mount Lofty Ranges and said that if he could get through 108 kilometres and 4,000 metres of climbing on Adelaide Hills trails, he would head into the final weeks of preparation with genuine confidence for what lies ahead in Cumbria.

Running for four causes

Ben is using the attempt to raise $20,000 for four charities close to his heart:

- **Running for Premature Babies Foundation**, which supplies neonatal equipment to hospitals across Australia and funds research into neonatal care
- **Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia)**, specifically the Aspect School in Adelaide that Benâ??s son attends
- **Southern Cross Kidsâ?? Camps**, which run camps for children aged 7 to 12 who have experienced abuse, neglect or abandonment
- **The Congregation of St Barnabas Croydon**, to support much-needed development at Benâ??s own parish.

The Adelaide Hills run carried particular weight. Ben dedicated the run to Running for Premature Babies in memory of his daughter Elsie, born at 32 weeks and who lived just two days. Elsieâ??s twin sister Moya joined her dad for a section of the run â?? a moment of family that made the training day something more than just distance and elevation.

Ben tackles a rough section of track as part of the 112km course

What is the Bob Graham Round?

The Bob Graham Round is one of British fell runningâ??s most storied challenges. First completed by Keswick guesthouse owner Bob Graham in 1932, the circuit begins and ends at the Moot Hall in Keswick and links 42 Lakeland peaks, including Skiddaw, Helvellyn and Scafell Pike â?? Englandâ??s highest mountain. Runners navigate their own route between the summits, typically supported by pacers who carry food, water and kit across five traditional legs.

The 24-hour cut-off is unforgiving. Bad weather, navigational errors, injury, or simply the cumulative toll of a day and night on the fells stop many attempts short. Success earns entry to the Bob Graham Club â?? a membership of a few thousand runners built up over more than nine decades.

Following along

Ben is documenting his preparation on his YouTube channel and through regular updates on his fundraising page. The attempt is set for 19 June 2026.

To support Benâ??s challenge, visit his fundraising page at mycause.com.au. More information about the Bob Graham Round can be found here.

Date Created
April 22, 2026