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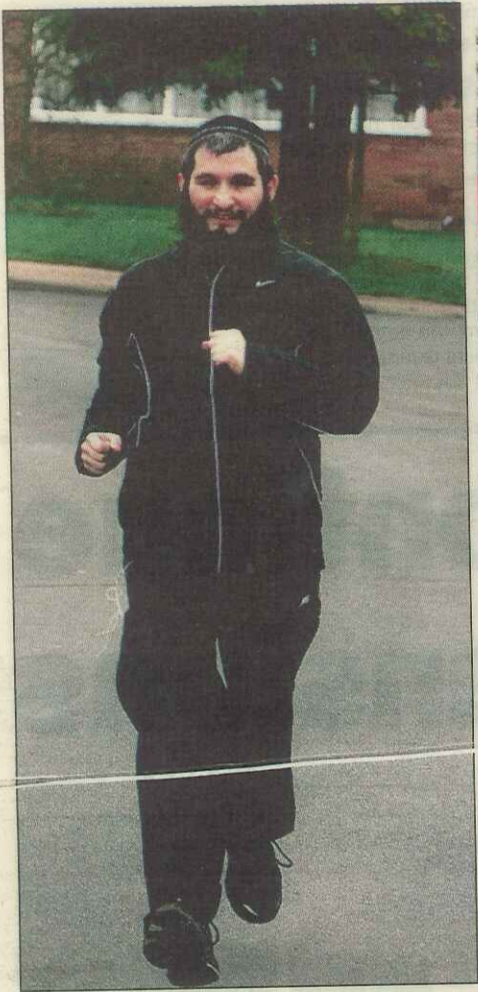
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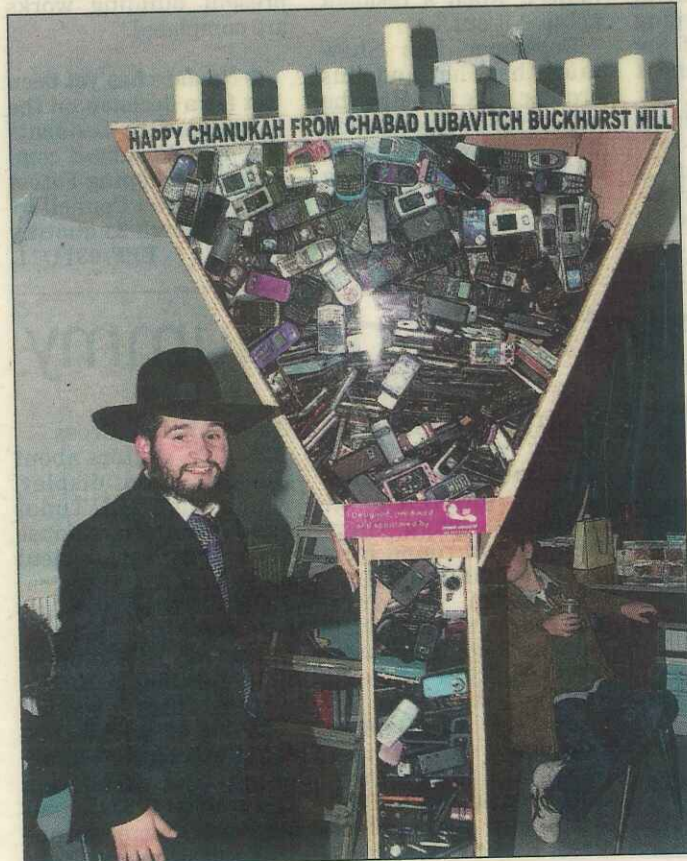
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First rabbi to run marathon

Rabbi Odom Brandman limbering up for the London marathon



By **TOM PORTER**

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AN ENERGETIC rabbi is set to become the first Jewish orthodox priest to enter the London Marathon.

Rabbi Odom Brandman, 29, of the Buckhurst Hill Chabad will be taking part in the 26-mile marathon on April 17 to raise money for a new community centre.

He said: "As far as I know I am the first rabbi to take part in the London Marathon.

"I have Googled it and can't find any others. I know some Orthodox rabbis have run the New York Marathon but not the London marathon.

"I want to show, firstly that rabbis are real people, that we can be approachable, down to earth and that I'm ready to take on challenges out of my comfort zone.

"I want to spread the message that if we work hard at something we can achieve it."

The young rabbi has already won a following with his imaginative take on the Jewish festival of lights.

In successive years he has filled the ceremonial candlesticks – called menorahs – with 65 litres of scotch whisky, and hundreds of mobile phones.

He said: "We usually hold a big fund raising dinner and I thought why not think outside the box and put the energy in to training for a marathon instead.

"The training is going well and I am up to 13-and-a-half miles. I am enjoying the time to myself and I listen to lectures so I am learning while I run.

"It's hard work though and I have to fit in my community work round getting up at 5am for an hour-and-a-half run every morning, which is pretty tiring."

● To sponsor Rabbi Odom go to virginmoneygiving.com/odombrandman



Rabbi Odom Brandman with his not so orthodox use for menorahs

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