

No.665 / Vol.126 Reports & News

Winter 2015/16

BLACKHEATH & BROMLEY HARRIERS AC

GAZETTE



Sarah Belton breaks new ground...

A club well worth backing

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From the Editor



With the Olympics having taken place by the time this issue goes into print, readers and members will no doubt be fully aware of how our athletes have fared in the Games in August. In particular the impressive performances of Dina Asher Smith who won a bronze in the sprint relay team, and Adam Gemili who so narrowly missed out on a medal in the Final of the Men's 100 metres. As the

Olympics does not come within the period covered by this issue it will nevertheless be reported in the next one for the Summer now gone.

Meanwhile the question of the move to new headquarters has taken on a new direction and despite the doubts and potential obstacles emanating from the result of the EU Referendum, and the project being turned down by Sport England, together with challenges for the site from other bidders there may be a new development which could be more affordable.

The proposed celebrations marking the Club's 150th anniversary are now in progress with ideas for events now taking more tangible shape. At a recent meeting, the steering committee for the anniversary considered venues for a dinner, the arranging of an anniversary invitation meeting, the official logos for the anniversary season, designed by my assistant editor Peter Rogers, and an update to the club history for which I am one of the authors.

In most issues of the Gazette it is unfortunate that we have to report the passing of those members who have made invaluable contributions to the club over many years. Two past presidents are given ample tribute and mentioning the Club History of course one of these is Tony Weeks-Pearson whose remarkable athletics career was just one of many talents he displayed in a long association with the club.

I must however mention one concern regarding the future of this publication, and that is we shall need the services of a new layout graphic designer to be able to take over from Peter Rogers and Ozzie Adams whose other commitments may require them to relinquish the roles they have played for some years now. It would therefore be helpful if anyone can recommend designers or graphic artists to take over from them in the near future so please let us know.

Before signing off I wish to offer grateful thanks to the following for willingly providing articles for this issue:

IPP Dave Cordell, President Bill Foster, Paul Austridge VP, PP Pat Calnan, PP Dick Griffin, Jesse Jones, Sarah Belaon, Hugh Stanbury, PP Peter Baigant and Martyn Mitchell.

The next issue covering the summer 2016 season is due for release in March 2017 and the deadline for submission is Late January 2017.

Your President for 2016-17...

Bill Foster



I was born in Leeds in 1958 and my parents owned a dairy farm at Weeton, a small village near Harrogate in Yorkshire. I'm an identical twin and have an older sister and a younger sister. My brother and I had a very active childhood on the farm and also at school, playing many sports including rugby, hockey and cricket. I always enjoyed running in school competitions, although we didn't train very hard as other sports were the main priority. My best time was 4.11 for 1500m when I was 16 years old.

In 1976 I went to Newcastle University to study Agriculture and joined the Cross Country and Athletics Club. We had a strong squad at Newcastle and often challenged the bigger Universities. Richard

Coles was our best cross country runner at that time and I heard quite a lot about Blackheath Harriers from him.

In 1979, my last year at University, I became more serious about my athletics and shared a flat in Gateshead with Kevin Forster (who went on to run a 2.10 Marathon and finish 2nd in London). I was the Newcastle University Athletics' Club captain and finished second at 1500m in the Universities' Championships. It was a good time to be a runner in the North East with so many fantastic athletes around, including Brendan Foster, Mike McLeod and a promising young Steve Cram. My 1500m PB improved from 4.01 to 3.49 in 1979 and I also

ran a reasonable 10 miles time of 50.01 in the Chas Kendal road race.

In September 1979, after finishing at Newcastle, I started a job at the Milk Marketing Board Head Office at Thames Ditton in Surrey. Running was now an important part in my life and it was Richard Coles who persuaded me that Blackheath was the ideal club for an 800/1500 runner like me – at that time the club was in Division 5 of the British League.

Blackheath gained promotion every year for the next four years to join Division 1 and it was a great time for the club! We had a fantastic team atmosphere – the track athletes supported the field

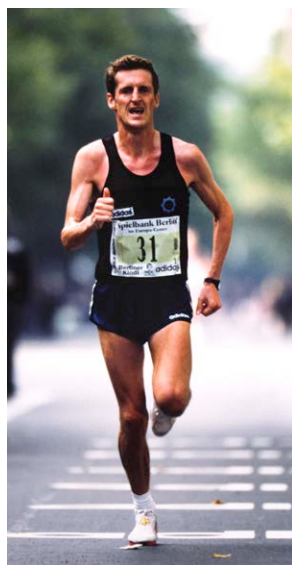


Bill running in the 1994 European Championships in Helsinki

Continued

event athletes and vice versa. We also had a large group of supporters, with many 'Heathens coming along to watch the team. Bob Taylor and team manager Andy Frankish played a large part in the success, a role which Pat Calnan has done very successfully in more recent years.

The knowledge that experienced athletes pass on to younger club members is a key factor in the success of our sport and many people at Blackheath gave me good advice in my early years at the club, including Richard Coles,



11th place in the Berlin Marathon with a time of 2hrs 15mins

Ian Wilson, John Baldwin, Chris Haines and Graham Botley.

The four British league races were the highlight of the summer track season at that time and I used to run 800m and/or 1500m and often the 4x400m relay. There were no BMC meetings and very few open meetings to take the limelight away from club competition. The BMC do a fantastic job and allow people the opportunity to run fast times but in many ways it is a shame that club competition isn't considered such a high priority for today's runners. The County Championships (always Yorkshire for me!), Southern and AAAs Championships were also key races for me, as I felt that trying to win Championship medals was more important than running fast times.

During the 1980s I gradually improved my track times, clocking 1:51.1 for 800m (1982) 3:44.9 for 1500m (1986) and 13:59 for 5000m (1988).

During the 1980s Blackheath's cross country and road teams also got better and better, directed by club captain Graham Botley. In 1986 we won the Southern Cross Country Championships and that was the start of many successful years for the club at both

Southern and National level. One of the highlights was winning the National 12 stage road relay in 1995, clocking one of the fastest times ever recorded on the well known Sutton Park course.

By that time I had moved to Loughborough, having started a new job at Sutton Bonington with the Milk Marketing Board. In the 1990s I concentrated more on longer distances and ran PBs of 29:14 for 10,000m, 63:50 for Half Marathon and 2:15.49 for the Marathon. I ran five Marathons for GB, including a 2:17 clocking at the 1994 European Championships in Helsinki and a 2:18 run in the 1995 World Cup in Athens. Perhaps Athens was my best ever marathon as I finished 18th and first GB on the tough course which runs from the village of Marathon and finishes in the 1896 Panathinaikon Stadium in Athens.

Although I lived in Loughborough, I was always a loyal Blackheath athlete and competed in league races whenever possible. Over the years I managed to win club championships at 5000m, 5 miles cross country, 7½ miles cross country and four marathon club titles in London.



I continued to run in open and Masters' competitions after turning 40, clocking 3:59 for 1500m, 14:40 for 5000m and 30:14 for 10,000m. I thought these were reasonable times but then Dave Taylor came along and relieved me of all my club records! I believe I still hold the club record for M50 3000m at 9:11 but Dave Heath has been running rather well recently so that will not last long either!

I managed to win a few medals at various World Masters' championships, over a range of distances from 1500m to 10,000m, including gold medals at 3000m indoors as an M45 and M50. In 2008 I ran 73:26 to finish first M50 in the Great North Run half marathon. However, following a knee injury four

years ago, I now just go jogging twice a week and go swimming in Loughborough's 50m pool.

Since turning 40 my main priority has been coaching, rather than competing, and in 2001 I was appointed the Club coach for the girls' middle/long distance squad at Loughborough University. Coaching is very rewarding, helping athletes develop and progress towards their goals. It's a big commitment and I have a group of 30-35 girls doing the main Tuesday and Saturday sessions, but I really enjoy it. Lauren Deadman was my most successful athlete in 2015, running 9.04 for 3000m, 15.45 for 5000m and 33.16 for 10k road.

Blackheath and Bromley Harriers AC has been a big

Chasing down Sebastian Coe at a British League meeting.

part of my life for the last 35 years and it is an honour to be asked to be Club President. I hope club members will accept a Yorkshire man as President! I'm really keen to do all I can in the coming year to help in the continued success of our fantastic club!

Dave Cordell/Bill Foster

Your outgoing President

Dave Cordell (2015-16)



Despite not being featured in an interview to mark his elevation to the Club Presidency, the decision being his own from undue modesty, we couldn't let the year pass without a tribute to Dave Cordell, arguably the hardest working of all Presidents for the club in recent years. This then was what IPP Dick Griffin had to say about his year in office at the AGM in March.

Dave Cordell was made a VP by Denis Lawrie in 2011. Then four years later he became Club President.

I asked Dave to be Club President as during my year as President I was amazed at the amount of time he and Hanna dedicated to the Club. When I asked him to be Club President he didn't hesitate and accepted immediately although I think Hanna had a few worries. Almost every weekend they were involved with athletics in some shape or other so to take over the Presidency on top of everything else was a big ask. I'm sure he and Hanna must have put the club tents up and down at least 150 times during the year.

He has attended the National XC, Kent Young Athletes, Southern League, British

league in Edinburgh went to Istanbul with the Girl's team and Hanna wonders why her house is not getting decorated. Istanbul was a test of his stamina staying up to 4am on chairs in the corridor guarding the girls with Jay Galley. Enjoyed being treated as a VIP and going as a technical director to the meeting the night before and having a free dinner after.

The Youth Development League at Norman Park was so wet but after sending out 50 invites to local councillors only 2 came but the Mayor did attend and stayed for some considerable time. The BBQ and beer tent was a great success.

The Southern League meeting was another great success and the club received letters of thanks saying how



Dave handing over the baton to Bill Foster

well the meeting had been arranged.

Dave got a great speaker in Mike Gratton for the Club Dinner and the evening was sold out with a waiting list.

He is the first Club President for many a year to actually make the Christmas cake that is traditionally provided by the President at the Boxing Day run. Although Dave does not run any more he did complete in the annual walking race, The Johnson Bowl on the new course at Norman Park.

As well as being Club President Dave is on The House and Social Committee apart from a couple of weeks when he temporary resigned.

Has continued to support all the club social events and even spends time doing a lot of the shopping for us. All Social Events apart from Punchbowl were completely sold out so the Club made a great profit.

Very often I go to Norman Park where I have found Dave repairing the ladies' loos, mowing the lawns, painting the building, cleaning the shop and just generally being a good egg.

Wednesdays he has helped me a lot by opening the track to let all my ladies use the toilets and Wendy in setting up all the catering.



The President and his first Lady have been constant ambassadors for the club

Dave, with the support of Ken Daniel and Wendy Leach has revolutionised the tuck shop. From making a profit of a few hundred pounds a year to a profit of many thousands a year. Dave gets considerable pleasure almost daily seeing how custom increases and Dave is always helping out opening up, getting stock and meeting everyone.

Dave has helped the success of The Youth Club a great deal, always happy to open up and lock up when necessary and happily spends all evening sitting at the bar chatting with the parents. Claire Austridge has asked me to thank him for this involvement.

His two big jobs of the year were finding a speaker for the club dinner and he certainly did that with Mike Gratton. He seems to have chosen well for the new President and may

I congratulate him on making a superb choice in choosing Bill Foster. In November 2014 Graham Botley took me aside and told me that Bill would make a superb Club President. He will be looking down on us tonight with a great big smile on his face.

Dave loves all meetings especially as he is a Kent Athletic Official. He attends more matches than we can count so he is a great ambassador for us.

Dave has had a tremendous year as Club President but now he can return to the job he loves more than anything else at the Club, House and Social and running the bar. Despite his best efforts we lost all 3 Mob Matches so new Mr President over to you.

So thank you Dave from the bottom of my heart for all your hard work.

PP Dick Griffin

Your new Vice Presidents



Steve Timmins

He joined the club aged 11 having grown up at the foot of Mead Way. One of our senior men who always seems to have to compete in so many events. Someone the club relies on in the British Athletics League and Southern League to get us the points. A PE teacher at Darrick Wood School, he holds the club over 40 hammer throw record and has held the club U17 hammer record for a period of time. He used to compete in decathlon and as a junior was a 400 metre hurdler, winning a bronze medal at the English Schools Championships in the early 1990s. He can be seen at Norman Park training and he also coaches field events.

I give you Steve Timmins



Claire Austridge

Here we have a multiple winner of the Cornish Cross Country Championships who ran in five English Schools Championships. She ran a 36 minute 10km aged 16 and is

a past member of Cornwall AC and Bromley Ladies AC and now you may see her everywhere. She is still a runner in a family of athletes, including a husband who is also a team manager and coach. This person is a great club member and probably the instigator of the Youth Club in 2014, something that raises considerable funds for the club. She is also a member of the Parents Council and will always organise events and raise money selling raffle tickets and the second-hand kit.

I give you Claire Austridge



Andy Rayner

He joined in May 1994 age 12. As an U15 at Hoo he was second in the 1500 metres in 4.21.9. He has run a 2.32 Marathon, a 30.56 10km and 15.18 in the parkrun. One of his best runs for the club was coming 18th in the National Cross Country Championships and was in the men's team in 2009 at Mansfield with Mike Skinner, Steve Gibbins and Scott Overall who won the Silver Medal at the Nationals. For his leg he took over from Mike Skinner and arguably had the best run of the day, as, not only did he hold off the challenges of Internationals

Phil Nicholls (Tipton) and Andy Vernon (Aldershot), he moved the team up to 7th place with a time of 15.28.45. This was crucial in setting up the team's push to gain the silver medal.

If not injured he can always be seen competing in the National and Southern 6 and 12 stage Road Relays, National and Southern Cross Country Championships, the Kent League, the BAL, Southern Men's League. A true Club member who also acts as a team leader.

I give you Andy Rayner



Shaunagh Brown

Originally came from Nunhead and near to where our club started back in 1869. She joined in May 2002 aged 12. She can be seen in black leathers on a motor bike and competes both nationally and internationally. She has competed in the Commonwealth Games and is a key member of the UK Women's League and Southern League. She will always help out, even doing a leg in the 4x100 metres relay. She holds the Club U15, U17, U20 Discus Record and the Junior Women's Hammer Record.

I give you Shaunagh Brown

Senior Women's Team

Winter 2015/16

Overall it has been a very successful winter season for the Blackheath and Bromley Senior Women's team, with a good turn out at the majority of events and some class performances from everyone involved!!



In the Kent League

We were very fortunate to feature Niamh Bridson-Hubbard, U20, running as a senior woman and leading the team to victory in both the 3 and 6 to score competitions. In the 3 to score category, the women won 2 of the 4 matches and finished in the top 3 teams in every race, fighting off fierce competition from Paddock Wood AC. In the 6 to score category we dropped only 1 match point and managed a spectacular conclusion in the final race where we won by over 100 points. We took back both these titles from Tonbridge AC. With 11 different runners across the season, it was brilliant to have such a consistent turn out despite a busy and injury-ridden season for some, and this no-doubt was the key to us securing our titles. It was

also a great season for Sara Elmquist, who despite some trouble with injury, was the highest B&B finisher in the overall results, finishing 8th.

Our season got off to a positive start

In September at the SEAA Road Relays in Aldershot, our team of Sophie Kelleher, Sarah Belaon and team managers Jenny Neal and Jess Jones finished in a respectable position of 41st.

London Cross Country Championships

A very cold and wet day at the London Cross Country Championships at Parliament Hill produced some brilliant runs from our ladies. An outstanding run from Carole Penlington finishing 25th backed up by Jennie Butler brought the team home in 8th place.

National Cross Country Relays

A dedicated team of Elaine Rayner, Carole and Jane Bradshaw ventured to Mansfield for the National Cross Country Relays. A strong run from Elaine helped the team to finish in a fantastic 38th place out of over 100 teams.

Kent County Cross Country Championships

It was another very grey, rainy day at Brands Hatch for the team. Having just recovered from New Year, we fielded 6 runners. Another strong run from Carole, with Amber



Reed home from Keele University and a great run from Sarah Belaon meant the 3 to score team finished comfortably in 3rd place. With help from Lisa May, Danielle Critchley and Jess, the 6 to score team finished in 2nd, proving our Kent League results were no fluke!

We were brought back to Parliament Hill

As the team's season concluded with the SEAA Championships, 4 brave women took on the infamous course over 8km. Again strong runs from Carole, Amber, Sarah and Jenny proving their consistent season meant the team finished in a well deserved 18th place.

A mention must also go to team manager Jenny Neal who was the fastest B&B Woman at the London Marathon in an impressive time of 3.20.04!

Thank you to everyone who turned out this season to support the team – those who were at every event and those who filled in when we needed a runner! Here's to a great summer!

Jesse Jones

Junior Men and Women Winter 2015-2016

For the age group directly below the seniors the prevailing challenge is always to be able to field teams given the challenges of university commitments and the lure of appearing in the senior men and women's teams and the challenges posed there. However the incentives for making a mark are always there particularly when potential call ups for International status are at stake.



Kent League

In Match 1 at Stanhill Farm Wilmington Charlotte Rhule did well to finish 3rd in the U20 women's race as did Bertie Harrington finishing 7th in the men's U20 race. U20 Thomas Desborough, having survived "freshers week" at Brighton University thought he would punish himself more by stepping up to the senior race but did well finishing 51st in a very competitive field.

In Match 2 at Somerhill School Tonbridge, two U20 BB men competed and Bertie Harrington finished a creditable 10th in the U20 race while Tom Desborough chose to do twice the distance in the senior men's race but still finished in a fine 40th place.

We also had two U20 women running but both chose to run the longer more competitive race of the seniors and what an inspired choice it was for Niamh Bridson Hubbard as she powered through the 5k course winning by 44 seconds. Great also to see Sam Leighton finish high up the field of over hundred in 28th.

In Match 3 at Sparrows Den, Charlotte Rhule ran well to finish 3rd in the U20 race and our only BB in the U20 men's race was Bertie Harrington who did well finishing 10th. Thomas Desborough also an U20 ran in the senior race but made the right decision to pull out after the first lap after repeatedly turning his ankle on the numerous tree roots. Thomas was soon



Charlotte Rhule in a chasing group on her way to 3rd place at Sparrows Den



A phalanx of young thoroughbreds set the pace at Danson Park

team position of 20th was excellent. Will Fuller (Loughborough) handed over in 5th, running the 7th fastest time of the day, Richard Webb (Cardiff) had a strong run and holding 8th handing over to Thomas Desborough (Brighton) who ran his quickest ever leg in Mansfield on the tough last leg.

being looked after by first aiders and hopefully won't be out of action for too long.

In Match 4 Danson Park, Bexley Bertie Harrington was our sole representative in the U20 men's race and his 20th position added to his three other Kent League races had him sitting nicely in 6th place in the individual league table.

A few athletes did not race at Danson Park because they were in Liverpool at the British Cross Challenge. Will Fuller had what he described as his best ever cross country race finishing a fantastic 8th. With this race being a qualifier for the European cross country champs (and other Internationals) we hope that Will will soon get his first international call up. Likewise Niamh Bridson Hubbard's 11th place will surely put her in the reckoning for more International selection.

Richard Webb took time off Uni and finished 69th in the U20.

Relays

Berry Hill Park, Mansfield. 11.00am sharp and the first race was off. What we lacked in numbers in the U20 girls age group, we certainly made up for with quality as Niamh Hubbard stormed around the 2.5k finishing in a fantastic 3rd position and in doing so earning herself an England call up. Niamh will now represent England in Burgos, Spain on 15th November, a brilliant achievement. This performance proves how important it is to run, whether in a complete team or not, as selectors look at individual performances.

Next up were our Uni boys (U20) and considering they are probably concentrating more on their new campus surroundings to socialise than to train, their collective

Championships

In the South Eastern England Championships Sam Leighton was our only representative in the U20 age group and represented us well finishing 6th in the U20 girls race. In the Nationals we only had two U20s competing but both Niamh Bridson Hubbard in 9th and Thomas Desborough in 69th had strong runs.

Paul Austridge



The Kent League 2015-2016

Match 1. Wilmington 15th October

A brand new farming venue, record numbers of athletes, two individual winners, two team victories and several Blackheath and Bromley debuts all welcomed the start of the 2015/16 Kent League cross country series, on a bright but blowy day. Stanhill Farm, Wilmington opened its gates to allow KCAA to set up a new course amongst all the produce including strawberries, sweet corn and pumpkins. The course was relatively flat but firm underfoot, well laid out and was great for both athlete and spectator to follow all the action.

Over 600 athletes, through all age groups and clubs, finished and this is the largest number recorded, for at least the last seven years. Its also pleasing to see that B&B had over 60 young athlete contribution to that large number.

BBHAC U13 girls and boys got proceedings off to a winning start with victories in both. Ellie Dolby led from start to finish in the girls race and Jess Neal 5th and Morgan Squibb 7th ensured team victory. Brilliant numbers in the younger age group saw a further seven girls cross the line, Daniella Harper 16th,

Niamh Milmo 20th, then three in a row, Ella Smith on her winter debut 22nd, Abbie Leeves 23rd and Olivia Berry also on her B&B debut in 24th. Emily Davies finished in 28th and Daisy Bates 46th on her very first race for B&B.

Like Ellie, Rowan Fuss led from gun to tape and looked relaxed throughout winning by over 30 seconds. Sam Reardon finished strongly to post a 7th place finish with Justin Strover just two

Kitteridge back from injury 46th and Barnaby Corry just behind in 47th.

The U15 girls had good numbers running and a fantastic effort from Mille Smith gave her a well deserved 2nd behind Tonbridge's National Champion Kathleen Faes. The team scoring three, were made up by Millie, a great run from Kelsi Cornish in 6th and Stephanie Taylor in 9th combining to finish 2nd to Tonbridge once again.



The winning sextet who regained the senior ladies title from Tonbridge AC

places behind in 9th. With three athletes to score in the team competition this trios aggregate score was enough to place second behind a strong Tonbridge side. Thomas Penlington looked good as he finished 14th. Eddie Sellar was a great 21st but had to run as a guest while he waits for EA registration to clear from his old club! Alex Sibley continues to run well in 26th and Charles Winton looked strong in 37th and Ethan

Grace Scopes had a good run in 11th with Lily Tappenden finishing well in 16th. Alice Prentice 25th, Isabelle Bridge 29th, Claudia Pickup in 31st and Zoe Austridge in 33rd completed the B&B contingent.

By far the best represented age group were the U15 boys with a fantastic 14 boys racing, the best turn out for many a year. Joseph Georgiadis is running with great confidence and ability

and it was no surprise to see him at the front of the field fully involved in the action and crossing the line in a very pleasing 4th spot. Michael Eagling 17th and a strong finishing Callum Myatt 18th helped the team take second place overall. Our strength in depth saw six of our athletes taking consecutive spots from Michael 17th, Callum 18th, Coleman Corry 19th, Ben Gardiner 20th, Robert sucking 21st and George Pope 22nd, all those black vests was a great site to see. But still we had more and great runs from the fast finishing Cameron Swatton 25th, Charlie Andrews 26th, Keir Lundy 28th, Lewis Warren 33rd, Lewis Sticking 44th, Leo Braden 45th and on his first ever race for Blackheath and Bromley, Seb Large in 56th.

The U17 men also had great numbers running with seven toeing the start line. Team captain Marco Arcuri dragged himself away from his duties of walking the course and issuing race numbers (amongst other things!) to produce a fine run finishing high up the field in 9th. A strong finishing Lewis Mills 13th and getting back to form Charlie Davis 14th completed the scoring trio that secured third spot behind Tonbridge



and Medway & Maidstone. The three were well backed up by James Crawley 23rd, Oscar Hussey, despite having played school hockey in the morning, 26th, Frankie Scrivener 39th and Harry Keene 41st.

The U17 girls also had good numbers with eight girls racing. Jess Keene in her first winter outing cruised round to finish 3rd followed by Yasmin Austridge 4th and the ever improving Amy Leach 5th. This trio won the team race by a single point to a strong Dartford team who were 1st and 2nd in the race. Kelsey Fuss was 6th, Georgina Taylor 8th, a strong run from Joanna Clowes in 12th, Shannon Risky 19th and Chloe Kibblewhite 20th completed the B&B compliment.

Andy Frankish had an unavoidable clash of events but he was ably replaced

(only temporarily, Andy will be pleased to hear!) by his team captain Niamh Bridson Hubbard and her dad John. Niamh did a sterling job of walking the young athletes around the various parts of the course, differing for each gender and age group and dad John was all over the admin side of things posting results, maps etc on the team tent along with other duties associate with race days!

As with Marco, Niamh's priority is of course her running and she stepped up an age group to contest the senior women race and ran brilliantly to finish in a solid second place, despite still being an U20.

Niamh along with Elaine Murty and Thomas Penlington's mum Carole, did fantastically well to take the senior women team title from a strong Tonbridge side.

Our young athletes obviously

Continued

inspire their parents as several ran in the senior races. Thomas' mum as already mentioned, Barnaby's dad Nic, Bertie and Angus' dad Rod and Cameron's dad Nick all did their bit to help the senior teams score some great results. It was also pleasing to see Nick Swatton wearing proper kit in the form of the black vest of BBHAC and not the normal red and black hoops of Herne Hill Harriers, his 1st claim club! Claudia's mum Andrea also ran but unfortunately had to pull out after aggravating her hamstring. On a plus side they would have been able to beat the rush to the tea and cake stall provided by the farmers!

Coach Mick Jones was seen all over the course supporting dozens of his training group athletes and two of his own family in the form of daughter and women Senior team manager Jess Jones and nephew Chris Tuck in the senior men's race, I've never seen Mick move so fast or so far!!

This weeks boys managers award goes to Joseph Georgiadis for having the confidence in himself to go and run the race in such a determined fashion. Well done Joe.

Match 2. Somerhill School, Tonbridge 24th October

The stunning buildings and grounds of Somerhill School, Tonbridge were the setting for round two of the Kent league cross country series that saw three individual winners, two team victories and loads of great individual running from Blackheath and Bromley young athletes.

As usual the U13 girls got us off to a winning start and Ellie Dolby made it two wins in two with a comfortable victory. Jess Neal and Morgan Squibb also had strong runs in 4th and 5th ensuring 1st place in the 'three to score' team race. The team were well backed up by more great runs from Daniella Harper 16th, Ella Smith 19th, Niamh Milmo 24th, Emily Davis 27th, Olivia Berry 29th, Abbie Leeves 32nd and Daisy Bates 50th. Half way through the season the girls currently top the league table.

Not to be out done the U13 boys also secured victory with an emphatic win from Rowan Fuss crossing the line just short of a minute clear of the rest of the field. Sam Reardon continued his good form with a fine 5th place and a great run from Jake Leng in 16th combined to place the team a solid second behind a strong

Tonbridge team. Further great runs from Thomas Penlington 22nd, Alex Sibley 23rd, Ethan Kitteridge 28th, Nicholas Paddington, on his club debut in 40th, Barnaby Corry 48th and Charles Winton 51st prove the age group to be in a healthy state.

Eight Blackheath and Bromley girls toed the line for the start of the U15 girls race and most pleasing was to see Lydia Taylor back running after a lengthy period out of the sport. Millie Smith had another strong run finishing 2nd, Kelsi Cornish a great 5th and a gutsy 7th place from Grace Scopes was good enough for 2nd in the team competition. Lily Tappenden had a good run in 16th, Imogen Meers and Isabelle Bridge fought it out in a sprint finish 25th and 26th respectively and Zoe Austridge was 31st.

The biggest age group was the U15 boys with 10 BB youngsters racing. Joe Georgiadis is running with great confidence (and ability) and no surprise to see him in the leading group on lap one but a little more surprising to see him leading the field by 20m on lap two! The pack paced the race well and were able to claw Joe back but his final position of 4th matched his great Stanhill

farm run. Two more boys who have raised their game were Callum Myatt 14th and Charlie Andrews 15th both having superb runs. Great Blackheath packing then saw four cross the line one after the other with Robert Suckling 17th, Keir Lundy 18th, Ben Gardiner 19th and Cameron Swatton 20th. Coleman Corry was showing signs of fatigue after his great previous weekend efforts in the South of England relays and the club 5 mile championships as he finished 25th and Lewis Warren crossed the line in 36th and Seb Large smiled his way around the course in 51st.

The U17 girls were once again dominant in the team competition with tight packing high up the field with Jess Keene 3rd, Kelsey Fuss 4th, Yasmin Austridge 5th, Amy Leach 6th, Georgina Taylor 10th and Chloe Kibblewhite 15th. Joanna Clowes had a difficult afternoon but made the right decision to pull out mid way through the race due to breathing difficulties, Jo can now look forward and prepare for the next race. With two races remaining the girls are looking good to retain Kent team title.

Marco Arcuri, the boys team captain lead the BB charge in

the U17 men's race and got involved in the action from the gun mixing it up with the leading pack. His efforts were rewarded with a fantastic 5th place finished in a competitive age group. Likewise Lewis Mills 9th place finish was a great run and a significant



improvement on the last fixture. James Crawley, despite having a “work do” the previous evening had a good run in 20th as did fast finishing Frankie Scrivener 26th, Oscar Hussey 27th and Harry Keene 37th. The team finished third on the day. Charlie Davis started well but had to pull out three quarters of the way around the course but it was a great afternoon for his mum to get out and enjoy the lovely fresh air!

This weeks team managers award goes to Charlie Andrews for his gutsy run in the U15 boys race and improving his best ever Kent league finish by 19 places.

Match 3. Sparrows Den 7th November

Horizontal rain and high winds did little to deter the young athletes of Kent as Blackheath and Bromley hosted the 3rd fixture in the Kent league cross country series.

Sparrows Den was the venue and the tough course with fields, muddy woods and challenging hills wasn't made any easier by the weather!

Down to the action and the U13 girls couldn't have given us a better start with a clean sweep, 1, 2, 3. Ellie Dolby made in three wins in three, Morgan Squibb finished strongly for her best ever Kent league result in 2nd and Jess Neal put in another great run finishing 3rd. Rosanna Allan, in her first outing for the club this winter, was a strong 7th, Daniella Harper with another great run was 14th and Niamh Milmo 20th. Great strength in depth saw Ella Smith 21st, Abbie Leeves 26th, Emily Davis 28th and making her BBHAC debut Heidi Forsyth 32nd, Olivia Berry was 34th and Daisy Bates 50th. With one match to go the U13 girls are looking likely to retain their Kent title.

Rowan Fuss comfortably led the U13 boys home as

Continued

he also made it 3 wins in 3, the only disappointment was when the Kent schools team manager found out Rowan goes to school in Surrey! Sam Reardon had his highest finish to date with a fantastic 4th and Justin Strover ran well in 13th. Thomas Penlington continues to run well and finished 17th, followed by a strong run from Alex Sibley in 22nd just in front of Jake Leng in 23rd. Eddie Sellar, in his first official outing for the club went off in committed

Stephanie Taylor had a great run bringing the BB U15 girls home in a best ever KL finish of 5th. Grace Scopes also had a great run mixing with the leading pack and crossing the line in 7th with Imogen Meers working her way through the field to finish 14th. A strong run saw Hanna O'Flynn finish 17th and Lily Tappenden 19th. A fast finishing Isabelle Bridge was 26th just in front of Gracie Horton in 27th with Claudia Pickup 31st and closing the team in 32nd was Zoe Austridge.

Great packing from the thirteen boys who started had Michael Eagling in 11th, Joe Georgiadis in 12th, Callum Myatt in 14th and Robert Suckling 17th. A few places behind, the boys packed out again with Charlie Andrews in 21st, Keir Lundy in 23rd and Cameron Swatton in 24th. Ben Gardiner was 33rd, Lewis Warren 40th and Lewis Stickings 43rd. Matthew Pond making his Blackheath debut was a creditable 46th having used his 103rd park run in the morning as a steady warm up. Seb Large smiling all the way around finished 54th before dashing off to see James Bond. George Pope started but sensibly pulled out at the top of the first hill, after suffering from recurring heel pains.

Like the U13 girls, the U17 girls have dominated the Kent League all winter and yesterday was no different as BB took 5 of the top 6 positions. This is a fantastic set of results when you consider the top spot was taken by current International and English schools XC champion Sabrina Sinha from Cambridge Harriers. Not to be out done our own English Schools Champions were 2nd and 3rd with Jess Keene (3000m) and Yasmin Austridge (1500m steeplechase) respectively.



A quartet of junior men under starters orders at Sparrows Den fashion and finished 30th with Ethan Kitteridge in 31st. Charles Winton had a strong run wearing spikes for the first time (definitely needed now) was 36th and Nicholas Paddington completed the BB contingent in 40th.

Peter Guy and Angus Harrington, both currently recovering from injury, boosted the U15 boys by turning up and supporting. I'm sure watching their team mates competing (despite the awful conditions) fuelled their desire to be back up and running. I hope so.

CATEGORY	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
U13 girls	Ellie Dolby	Morgan Squibb	Jessica Neal
U13 boys	Rowan Fuss	Sam Reardon	Justine Strover
U15 girls	Stephanie Taylor	Grace Scopes	Imogen Meers
U15 boys	Michael Eagling	Joseph Georgiadis	Callum Myatt
U17 women	Jessica Keene	Yasmin Austridge	Amy Leach
U17 men	Joss Barber	Marco Arcuri	Lewis Mills

Yasmin got an extra cheer as she slipped on the final bend before re gaining her composure as though nothing had happened! Amy Leach was a fantastic 4th, Kelsey Fuss a great 6th and Jenny Allan, on her 1st run for the club this winter a fine 6th. Joanna Clowes back running well again was 10th with Chloe Kibblewhite 13th and Mary Guy 14th. A brilliant set of results and should prove good enough for the U17 girls to retain their Kent title.

Kent U17 boys are amongst the strongest in the country and so Joss Barber's 4th place in his first Kent League outing this winter was a fantastic result. Marco Arcuri's strong 8th place finish was equally impressive when you consider he hardly had time to race, in between all his team management work. Marco was such a

great help to both boys and girls team managers that Hanna described him as "A Godsend"! Lewis Mills had a great run crossing the line in 13th backed up by a 21st placing for Oscar Hussey, James Crawley 26th, Charlie Davis on home turf 31st and Frankie Scrivener 33rd, representing great numbers in this age group.

This week's girls' team manager's award, nominated by Andy goes to Stephanie Taylor for her great run improving 4 places on the last race and having her highest ever Kent League finish. The boys team manager award, nominated by Paul goes to Joss Barber for his quality run in the U17 boys race.

Incorporated into our home fixture at the Sparrows Den, Kent League fixture was the BBHAC cross country club championship and medals

were (or will be) awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd Blackheath athletes in each age group.

Match 4 Danson Park 28th November.

The final race of the Kent League cross country series concluded in Danson Park, Bexley on a previously unused part of the park and offered great spectator views, if a little boring for the athletes! Blackheath and Bromley once again provided large numbers of athletes and supporters and finished the day with one individual winner, three individual league winners and two team victories.

A total number of 73 young athletes from BBHAC have competed in this years league and 34 of them competed in all four races, a fantastic number. Their efforts were all rewarded with some great team results.

Continued



Ellie Dolby set the day up nicely doing the grand slam, winning her fourth Kent League race and therefore winning the individual league title and collecting a lovely 1st place plaque for her efforts. This is a fabulous achievement especially considering Ellie is still an U13 next year. Our U13 girls are very strong and proved the point by doing the 1,2,3! Ellie 1st, Morgan Squibb 2nd and Jess Neal 3rd, a great sight to see. Morgan's great season saw her finish 4th in the league overall with Jess picking up the bronze plaque for a great 3rd overall. Rosie Allen had a strong run finishing 5th. Seven other U13 girls did all four races and so feature well in the individual league. Danielle Harper was 16th on the day (finishing 13th overall), Ella Smith 17th on the day (15th overall), Niamh Milmo 19th (17th overall), Abbie Leeves 24th (19th overall) a fast

finishing Emily Davis was 28th (20th overall). Heidi Forsythe was 29th, Olivia Berry 30th (22nd overall) and Daisy Bates was 43rd and (30th overall).

All the girls efforts helped the U13 girls team retain the Kent team trophy.

Rowan Fuss also finished the day as individual league winner despite dropping back to third on the day. Rowan, not feeling 100%, had won the previous three fixtures helping to secure his victory. A year young Sam Reardon has had a great season so far as he finished in 4th giving him an overall 4th place as well. Great numbers from the U13 boys had Justin Strover 12th, Thomas Penlington 13th (10th overall in the league), Eddie Sellar 19th and Jake Leng 21st. Charles Winton had his best run of the season pushing himself to a great 26th (17th overall). Tom Brash on his

BBHAC debut looked good and did well finishing 31st and Nicholas Paddington completed the line up in 34th. The team were a respectable 2nd behind a strong Tonbridge team.

The U17 girls have dominated the Kent league all season and yesterday was no different with six girls in the top eight. Jess Keene was 2nd on the day, Yasmin Austridge 3rd, Amy Leach 4th, Kelsey Fuss 5th, Genny Allen 6th and Lottie Weitzel 8th. Having run in all four races Jess came out on top with the best aggregate score and collected the gold plaque, Yasmin was 2nd overall, Amy was 3rd and Kelsey was 4th, all Blackheath in the top four, impressive result.

These results inevitably gave the U17 girls the Kent team title.

The U15 boys age group has had the largest number of BB athletes (sixteen) and eleven raced at Danson Park. Fresh back from time off injured was Angus Harrington and great to see him battling out near the front finishing 6th. Joe Georgiadis continue to run well and had a great 9th place finish giving him 4th overall individually just missing out on a plaque. Robert Suckling finished

well in 14th (11th overall), Charlie Andrews 17th (13th overall), Ben Gardiner 22nd (15th overall) and Keir Lundy 26th (16th overall). Lewis Stickings looked good crossing the line in 32nd as did Matthew Pond in 36th. Cameron Swatton was 37th and 19th individually overall and smiling Seb Large was 41st (28th overall). Callum Myatt was on for a great performance and would have finished high up the table but unfortunately had to pull out half way through the race.

Similar to the U13 boys, their performances gave them a second team position behind a strong Tonbridge team.

Stephanie Taylor lead the U15 girls home in a strong 8th place with Lily Tappenden just behind in a great 10th giving her a fine 8th place individually, Grace Scopes was 12th and her great season gave her a 4th place overall just missing out on an individual plaque. Isabelle Bridge and Zoe Austridge had their best and highest positions of the season and having done all four finished well up the league table. Isabelle's 22nd left her 14th overall and Zoe's 23rd place saw her finish 16th overall. Millie Smith was unable to compete due to recent illness but was well enough to

stand in for Niamh Bridson Hubbard as team captain and took the role seriously walking the course with the young athletes and collecting kit from the girls before each race. Well done Millie.

The team finished second overall.

Marco Arcuri led the U17 BB boys home in 12th and was rewarded for his consistency with a third place individual plaque. Team captain Marco had worked tirelessly all morning walking the course several times, carrying out team management roles for both boys and girls teams in the finishing funnel and even helped with first aid when called upon, so we can forgive him for leaving just before his presentation and thank coach Mick Jones for collecting his plaque in his absence! Charlie Davis stormed back to form with a great 17th place finish. Lewis Mills 20th place left him with a great 5th overall. Oscar Hussey was 22nd (13th overall) and Frankie Scrivener 26th (16th overall).

The team only managed a fourth place finish on the day but ended the season in third.

In the U15 girls race Yasmin Marghini was 9th and Sophie Hoare was 12th and Kelsi Cornish was 36th. We also

had the Radus sisters making their club debut yesterday with Lia 13th in the U15 race and younger sister Maayan a great 8th in the U13 girls race.

This week's team manager award for the girls goes to Lily Tappenden who had her best Kent League finish of the season, improving by 6 places on her previous best.

The boys' team manager award goes to Charles Winton for his best ever Kent League finish and for the way he ran his race, determined to run well from the start.

A great Kent league concluded now leads us into Championship season with the Kents, South of England and Nationals (amongst other events) to look forward to.

Paul Austridge



The young athletes at the major cross country



Kent County Cross Country Championships 9th January 2016

2016 began in winning ways for Blackheath and Bromley young athletes as Will Fuller wins his first GB International vest running in Edinburgh and Blackheath youngsters picked up team medals in all age groups.

Brands Hatch was this year's venue for the Kent County Cross Country Championships and the weather was more than appropriate with cold rain and blustery winds.

The challenging, course, despite being in one field, was long, had hills, long lush grass and mud.

The U13 girls typically started the day's action in winning ways, comfortably taking the team title and retaining the trophy for another year. Morgan Squibb

paced her race well to finish a strong 2nd followed by a determined run from Ellie Dolby in 3rd and an equally determined run from Rosie Allen finishing 5th. Jess Neal, only 3 seconds behind Rosie crossed the line in 6th, followed by a great 11th place for Daniella Harper, Niamh Milmo was 21st, Abigail Leeves 22nd, Emilie Davis 33rd and Olivia Berry completed the squad in 34th.

Rowan Fuss confirmed his dominance of the U13 boys age group with a seemingly easy run that saw him 200m clear of the field and earns him the right to keep the county trophy for another year.

Sam Reardon was having a great run high up the field but due to his having been nursing a knee injury of late with recurring aggravating pain he sensibly had to pull out half way through the race.

The start of the U13 boys race which was dominated by Rowan Fuss

Justin Strover looked strong finishing 10th with Thomas Penlington in 17th and Eddie Sellar in 21st completing the scoring four and picking up team bronze for their efforts. A great effort from Ethan Kitteridge in 23rd and Jake Leng in 27th and Charles Winton in 35th backed the team up well.

Next up were the U15 girls and their performances were good enough to collect team silver. Kelsi Cornish sped off from the gun in a brave determined fashion and she maintained her great pace earning a fantastic individual bronze, Millie Smith ran a strong 6th with Lily Tappenden 13th, Stephanie Taylor 14th, Imogen Meers 17th and Isabelle Bridge 19th.

The best turn out of the day was from the U15 boys

championships 2016

sporting eleven athletes. Angus Harrington, recently back from time off with an injury, flew off the line as though fully fit and led for some of the way, finally crossing the line in a very respectable 4th place. Joe Georgiadis ran strong and finished high up in 9th as did Robert Suckling in 19th and Coleman Corry in 21st, securing silver medals in the team competition. Great backing up with strong runs from Charlie Andrews in 25th, Keir Lundy in 27th, George Pope in 31st, Cameron Swatton in 33rd, Ben Gardiner in 39th, Leo Braden in 42nd and the smiling Seb Large in 44th.

The U17 girls retained their county team trophy and won the individual trophy in style as Jess Keene perfectly paced her race to go one better than last year. Holly Page, a Dartford international athlete, had opened up a sizeable lead over the field but Jess didn't panic and ran her own race slowly increasing her pace and closing the gap. A very strong final hill from Jess saw her catch, pass and open up a 15 second gap to take the gold comfortably. The ever improving Amy Leech had a great run finishing a solid 5th with Yasmin Austridge in 7th completing the scoring

trio who collected the team trophy. Strong runs saw Genny Allen cross the line in 9th, Lottie Weitzel 10th, Joanna Clowes 12th, Chloe Kibblewhite 20th and Mary Guy 21st.

Marco Arcuri led the U17 boys home having had a great run finishing a fine 7th with Joss Barber just behind in 8th. A well paced race from Lewis Mills in 19th and good to see Charlie Davis back running and finishing 26th and James Crawley completed the quad in 35th. These collective results earned the team a well deserved bronze medal.

Kelsi wins the girls' team manager's award for her fantastic, determined run at the Kent cross country Championships and in doing so picked up a great county bronze.

Marco wins the boys' team manager's award for his well paced and gutsy run that saw him finish 7th in a very strong Kent field.

South of England Cross Country Championships 30th January 2016

Parliament Hill once again tested all our young athletes in this winters South of England Cross Country Championships and as usual the course didn't disappoint.

The long uphill start, lush grass, deep mud, short sharp hills, woodlands and more mud make for one of the toughest cross country courses, hard enough for spectators to navigate let alone the athletes.

Highlight of the day for Blackheath and Bromley was a fantastic silver for Rowan Fuss in the U13 boys 3k race. Sam Reardon, with another year in this age group, had a strong run finishing a great 27th with Thomas Penlington 111th and Justin Strover 128th earning them a 10th team place overall. Ethan Kitteridge looked strong crossing the line in 159th as did Charles Winton in 165th. Jake Leng was 209th with Barnaby Corry 245th.

More medals were won by the U17 girls who took team silver with some great runs from Jess Keene in 15th, Yasmin Austridge in 18th, Kelsey Fuss 21st and Amy leach in 35th. The U17 girls have great strength in depth as Genny Allen finished in 39th, Lottie Weitzel 60th, George Taylor 75th and Chloe Kibblewhite inside the top 100 in 98th.

The U13 girls equalled last year's great team performance with a fine 4th place. Ellie Dolby continued her great

Continued

season finishing 12th with Morgan Squibb a great 18th, a solid 39th from Rosie Allan and 53rd for Jess Neal. Good numbers in the age group saw Daniella Harper finish well in 74th, Niamh Milmo 100th, Emilie Davis 203rd and Olivia Berry 210th.

The U15 boys had the biggest squad on the day and finished collectively as a team in 11th. Angus Harrington made the top 50 coming 48th followed by a strong run from Keir Lundy in 83rd, Joe Georgiadis in 95th and Michael Eagling 99th. Charlie Andrews continues to compete consistently and was rewarded with an impressive 115th, Coleman Corry was 125th, Callum Myatt 151st and Cameron Swatton 160th. Leo Bradon got through the muddy conditions to finish 243rd as did Seb Large in 250th.

Millie Smith had a fantastic run in the U15 girls 4k race crossing the line in a very respectable 14th. Issy Bridge had a terrific run finishing 124th with Grace Scopes 131st, Lily Tappenden 149th and Zoe Austridge 223rd. The team were 15th overall.

The U17 boys could only field three athletes, not enough to complete a scoring team but the three that did run



all had great races. Marco Arcuri improved on last years performance by 11 places finishing a strong 35th, Oscar Hussey, in his first year in the age group was a great 77th and Charlie Davis completed the trio coming in a good 106th place.

The managers awards for performances at the South of England Cross Country Championships are awarded to Isabelle Bridge and Keir Lundy for their excellent runs at Parliament Hill and for their continued improvement. The managers monthly award for the girls goes to Jess Keene for her fantastic Kent County Cross Country Championship win.

The boys team managers award goes to Rowan Fuss for his dominant win in the Kent's and for a superb second in the South of England Championships.

National Cross Country Championships, Castle Donington 27th February 2016

The club enjoyed a very successful weekend at this year's National at Donington Park, Castle Donington, winning two individual medals and two team medals.

Over fifty of our young athletes and countless other members, parents, siblings and friends made the journey up north, most of them on the team coach, handled safely by ex para Simon Fitz!! After a short refuelling stop, KFC, Redbull and crispy creme doughnuts (young athletes staple diet it seems) we set up base at a new hotel venue in Nottingham, complete with a 25m swimming pool, enjoyed by all, except the life guards!

A good healthy breakfast the next day set us all up for a great days running and all age groups excelled starting with the U13s.

Morgan Squibb had her best run of the season as she powered through the field to finish a magnificent second, picking up the well deserved silver medal. With the rest of the team running superbly it was no surprise they won the team gold ahead of 47 other clubs. Ellie Dolby was a fantastic 19th, Maayan Radus a strong 26th, Jess Neal just behind in a great 30th and Daniella Harper finishing well in 35th. With strength in numbers we had Niamh Milmo cross the line in 167th, Abbie Leeves 186th, Emily Davis 215th and Olivia Berry 342nd.

Rowan Fuss was superb in the boys' race also winning the silver just behind the Northern champion who hasn't lost a cross country race all season. Sam Reardon continued his great season with a strong 58th finish as did Thomas Penglinton in 93rd. Justin Strover was a strong 112th with Eddie Sellar 127th, Jake Leng 203rd, Ethan Kitteridge 351st and Barnaby Cory completing the team in 394th. The boys 8th place in a field of 43 teams (over 400 individuals) was a brilliant result.

The U17s once again produced fine performances that deservedly won them team silver medals. A very strong determined run saw

Kelsey Fuss first home for BB in 20th place, Jess Keene was 27th, Yasmin Austridge 30th, Amy Leach 38th, Lottie Weitzel 91st, Joanna Clowes 135th and great to have Naomi Kingston back running for us in 184th.

The U15 girls had good numbers out and were unlucky not to medal but their fourth place finish was still very impressive (32 complete teams). Sophie Hoare was first BB home in a fine 18th place with Yasmin



Marghini in 34th, and Lia Radus just behind in 36th. Kelsi Cornish had a great run in 45th as did Millie Smith in 60th with Grace Scopes 154th, Stephanie Taylor 183rd, Lily Tappenden 195th, Isabelle Bridge 225th, Claudia Pickup 247th and Zoe Austridge 274th.

Five U17 boys produced great runs that gave them their

highest team position for many years with a satisfying 10th place. Team captain Marco Arcuri had a fine run finishing 63rd and Lewis Mills continued his great season in 84th and strong finishing James Crawley 118th, Oscar Hussey 125th and Charlie Davis 177th. Will Pope was there supporting his team mates but the 6k course was probably about 5600m too far for Will these days!

Girls' team captain Niamh Bridson Hubbard had another great performance finishing 6th in the high class field of GB and England international athletes in the U20 women's race. Leah Everson in her first cross country race for nearly two years finished 78th and just behind in 81st was Sam Leighton and their collective efforts helped them to secure a creditable 5th team placing.

Will Fuller, having recently represented GB and England over the country looked impressive in another high class field and did superbly crossing the line in 6th. Richard Webb was 84th and we would have been well up the team table but for two unfortunate injuries to Thomas Desborough during the race and Bertie Harrington the week before the race. However it's great

Continued

to have good numbers in the traditional quieter age group between young athlete and senior.

We had most athletes in the U15 boys age group and as a team we finished 12th. Angus Harrington once again led the boys home with a great run in 61st, Henry Cowie on his first run for the club since going to Millfield School was 80th and a fine improving run from Callum Myatt in 106th. Joseph Georgiadis was 155th, Charlie Andrews 157th, Michael Eagling 164th, Coleman Cory 239th, George Pope 249th and Ben Gardiner 328th. Keir Lundy was going well on the first lap but had to pulled out in some discomfort. Leo Braden was due to run but aggravated a hamstring while warming up. Cameron Swatton was

hoping to run but hadn't fully recovered from a recent calf injury picked up indoors (track not at home!), however Cameron didn't waste his time and was a great asset on the day supporting all age groups and helping out where he could.

The team managers awards for this years Nationals go to and Kelsey Fuss for her superb run and Thomas Penlington for his great top 100 finish in his first in the U13 age group.

The monthly awards and winners of this months 'Power of 10 watches' go to Daniella Harper for her great run and big improvement on her great South of England result and the boys monthly award goes to Callum Myatt for his great run and big improvement on his great South of England result.



Thanks to the back up team

Many thanks go to Mr and Mrs President Dave and Hanna Cordell for all they do on these busy weekends away, from pitching the tent, collecting numbers, sorting hotel/room issues and looking after PP Ken Daniel as he matures in years. Thanks also to PP Mike Peel for all his great action shots and to team managers Nic Cory and Nick Swatton and chaperone Claire Austridge for all their work they do instinctively to ensure the athletes have a fun and safe weekend. Also great to have so many Past Presidents and members there supporting all ages.

Final thanks from Andy Frankish and myself go to team captains Niamh and Marco who have done so much to help the teams run smoothly both on race days and before, their assistance has been massive and gratefully received.

Paul Austridge



The U13 girls setting out to retain their team title at the Kent County Championships

Relays on the road and over the country

2015-2016

South of England road relays 19th September 2015

The relay Championship season kicked off at a sunny Rushmoor arena, Aldershot with the annual South of England road relays. With Mr & Mrs President in Istanbul with our junior women's team it was left to some of our young athletes to struggle with marking out our territory in the form of our club tent. Over 40 BBHAC young athletes put in solid performances which sets them up nicely for the National road relays in two weeks time in Birmingham.

The U13 girls couldn't have given us a better start as they cruised home in first place, winning gold by a comfortable margin. Jess Neal led the team off with Morgan Squibb battling out second leg before first year U13 Ellie Dolby powered home in front, running the 3rd fastest time of the day. Very impressive. The second U13 team of Niamh Milmo, Abigail Leeves and Daniella Harper ran well finishing 32nd and Emily Davis completed the squad.

The U13 boys were up next and a mix of experienced, new and first year in the age group boys, fielded two strong teams and finished well in 18th and 26th place.



Sam Reardon, a year young, ran the 9th fastest leg of the day (over 150 in the race). Justin Strover, Eddie Sellar and Charles Winton all making their full debuts for the club, along with Brandon Back, Jake Leng, Alex Sibley and Barnaby Corry completed the line up.

The U15 girls went two places better than last year coming a high fourth place with great runs from Millie Smith, Stephanie Taylor and Kelsi Cornish. The B team of Lily Tappenden, Imogen Meers and Zoe Austridge were 44th and strong runs from Hanna O'Flynn and Claudia Pickup made up the U15 squad.

The U15 boys had two complete teams running and the A team in 19th were Angus Harrington, Michael Eagling, Callum Myatt and Robert Suckling. The B team of George Pope, Cameron Swatton, Leo Braden and Ben Gardiner were 42nd.

Kelsey Fuss, Amy Leach and Yasmin Austridge were the line up for the U17 girls who made the top 10 coming 9th and Carlotta Weitzel, Joanna Clowes and Mary Guy made up the B team finishing 25th.

Five U17 men were in attendance and the scoring four in the A team were led off by Lewis Mills followed by James Crawly, Oscar Hussey and Marco Arcuri. All showed that Mick Jones's speed drills are paying off as each one of them sprinted superbly to their finish. Charlie Davis ran the first leg but bizarrely lost a shoe on route.

National road relay Championships 3rd October 2015

Glorious autumn sunshine welcomed the countries best young athletes to this years National Road Relay Championship in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. Thirty five Blackheath and

Continued

Bromley athletes, Mr & Mrs President (Dave and Hanna Cordell), coaches, team managers and countless parents, grandparents and siblings made the long journey to Sutton Park but were all rewarded with some fantastic results.

The girls produced their best ever finishes with all three age groups U13, U15 and U17 in the top 4. The boys, with depleted numbers did themselves proud with an 11th place and 30th place finish.

Expectations were high for our U13 girls, recently crowned South of England Champions and they didn't disappoint winning a fabulous silver medal. Jess Neal led off in her normal determined fashion and handed over to Morgan Squibb in 6th position (having run the 14 fastest time of the day). Morgan had a great run passing three teams to hand over to Ellie Dolby in bronze medal position. Ellie powered around the course pulling back one of the teams in front, crossing the line in second and winning team silver (Ellie's run was the 4th fastest of the day). The U13 girls had another trio and all had good runs finishing 35th team. Emily Davis led the team off handing over



The opening leg of the U13 boys at the South of England Road Relays

to Daniella Harper leaving Niamh Milmo to bring the team home.

Sam Reardon led the U13 boys team off, running a very quick first leg, handing over to Alex Sibley who had a good run before passing over to Barnaby Corry. Barnaby worked hard all the way around the 3.8k road circuit bringing the team home in 30th. Interesting to note that all the U13 boys, Ellie and Daniella have another year left in this age group!

The U15 girls ran superbly in a high standard competition and were pleased to win bronze after a fantastic team performance. Yasmin Marghini got them off to a brilliant start handing over in first place (running the 2nd fastest leg of the day). Sophie Hoare did well holding the field back (running the 15th fastest leg) and handed over to Millie Smith in second. Millie had a race on her hands and pushed all the way sprinting up the home straight to hold

onto third securing bronze medals for the team.

The U15 girls are so strong they were able to field two more complete teams and one incomplete team. Stephanie Taylor, Gracie Horton and Grace Scopes teamed up well to finish 36th team as did Alice Prentice, Claudia Pickup and Lily Tappenden finishing 48th team. Also good to see Isabelle Bridge completely free of injury and back running again as she ran a strong first leg in the incomplete team.

Like the girls the U15 boys are strong and large in number. Coleman Corry, Joseph Georgiadis and Henry James combined well to finish a fine 11th with Henry running the 14th fastest leg. Cameron Swatton got the 2nd team off to a great start followed by Callum Myatt and Keir Lundy and they crossed the line in 45th and just behind in 48th were the trio of Ben Gardiner, Leo Braden and Lewis Warren.

The U17 girls were unlucky not to pick up a medal after three good legs from Amy Leach on 1 running her quickest leg ever. Katy Ann McDonald on 2 flew around the course in the 2nd fastest leg of the day handing over to Kelsey Fuss in second. Kelsey had the daunting task of trying to hold back a quality field behind her. Kelsey fought all the way and left nothing in the tank as she brought the girls home in a still creditable 4th place. Carlotta Weitzel and Shannon Risky made up a second incomplete but despite not having a third runner both put in good performances.

The U17 boys didn't have enough to form a complete team but the dynamic duo of "team and vice captain" Marco Arcuri and Charlie Davis more than made up for the short fall with great runs. Marco and Charlie were also tireless in their support of the club, team management and athletes ensuring the course was inspected, numbers handed out and that all athletes were at the starting pen in plenty of time for their leg. They also made light work of the complimentary biscuits and soft drinks on offer!

This week's girls' team manager's award goes to

Yasmin Marghini for her outstanding opening leg in the U15 girls race, well done.

The boys' team manager's award goes to Ben Gardiner for his impressive opening leg run despite having done an easy parkrun the day before!

National Cross Country Relays **31st October 2015**

Berry Hill Park, Mansfield was once again the perfect setting for 2015 National Cross Country Relays and having won two age group titles last year, hopes were high.

Thirty eight young Blackheath and Bromley athletes made the long journey to the Midlands, giving us great representation in all age groups.

No scoring team for the U20 women meant all eyes were on the two U17 girls team up next. Jess Keene, A team and Yasmin Austridge, B team both had strong runs bringing the teams home in 3rd and 7th respectively on the first leg (having run the 4th and 8th fastest times of the day). Jess passed to Kelsey Fuss who powered to the front, handing over to last years gold medalist Katy Ann McDonald in the lead. Katy would surely have held

onto first had she not been up against International Niamh Brown from Aldershot who ran the fastest individual time of the day, and just managed to pull past BB, leaving us with a still superb team silver. Mean while back in the second team Carlotta Weitzel had a great run handing to Amy Leach in 8th place. Amy ran a determined leg clawing one place back, finishing in a commendable 7th place and the first B team to finish.

A full U17 men's team then took to the course and Joss Barber had a great first leg in finishing 11th in fantastic company (running the 14th fastest leg of the day). Marco Arcuri and James Crawley both had strong runs combining to finish the same as the U20s in 20th place.

The U13 girls have already had a very successful season winning National Road Relay silver in Birmingham and they matched this over the cross country course winning silver again. A fantastic lead



Continued

off leg saw Jess Neal finish 4th (6th fastest leg of the day) handing over to Morgan Squibb who worked hard on her leg and gained one position handing over in 3rd. Ellie Dolby took up the challenge on the final leg and despite gaining one place and running the 5th fastest leg, the team had to settle for a fantastic silver. The B team of Ella Smith on 1, Abbie Leeves on 2 and Niamh Milmo on the final leg combined well to finish 38th team. Showing our strength in depth Olivia Berry led the in complete C team off on leg 1.

BBHAC U13 boys won the National title last year and our current boys, mostly first years, did well to finish 21st and 60th in the team competition but are looking strong for next year in the same age group. Sam Reardon led the team off in superb form (running the 10th fastest time of the day) handing over to Thomas Penlington who ran well passing to Alex Sibley, running in his first National, on the last leg. The ever improving Ethan Kitteridge had a strong run leading the B team off, passing to National debutant Nicholas Paddington, who handed over to Barnaby Corry bringing the team home.

Two solid teams ran in the U15 girls race and Millie Smith got the A team off to a good start in 20th, Grace Scopes picked up 5 places handing over to Yasmine Marghini in 15th. Yasmine



clawed a few places back to finish in a great 11th place. The B team of Lily Tappenden, Madalina Samoila back from injury and Issy Bridge collectively finished 32nd in the most competitive age group.

The U15 boys also had two complete teams and the A team of Joseph Georgiadis, Callum Myatt and Coleman Corry finished well in 29th place and the B team of Cameron Swatton, Charlie Andrews and Billy Keen finished 63rd.

This week's girls' team manager's awards goes to Yasmin Austridge for her strong run on the opening leg and the boys' team manager's award goes to Cameron

Swatton for another gutsy run improving on last year performance by nearly half a minute.

We are lucky enough this year to have secured some special prizes and therefore the team managers will select monthly awards (for months October, November, January and February). The criteria for these awards are either a special single performance or for a consistently high level of performance throughout the month.

October's special monthly award goes to Ellie Dolby for her consistently high performances in all league and Championships races and to Sam Reardon also for his consistently high performances in all league and Championships races. Well done to both Ellie and Sam.

To keep up to date, the girls' manager's award for Tonbridge, Kent League race went to Grace Scopes for her great run and for Stanhill, Kent League race went to Morgan Squibb (fifth in the U13 race) who improved by an average of 20 seconds against all the other athletes in the top 6 when compared with the first fixture.

Paul Austridge

The Bennett Cup Season 2015/16

The climax to The Bennett Cup season 2015-6 produced an exciting two horse race after the characteristic and in many ways nostalgic victory for Will Slack. This year the trophy was won for the first time by a lady club member, Sarah Belaon, signifying a breakthrough for the fairer sex and yet another significant stronghold captured by the ladies in their quest for equality since the first lady members were admitted in 1992.



The new finish by Coney Hall field is now established

After a relatively comfortable winning margin enjoyed by Will Slack last year this year's finish was a classic cliff-hanger as Sarah, coming second in the closing 5, overturned a nine point lead held by Steve Pairman to win the competition by a slender 2 points. After the lead was taken up by Nick Corry after two events it rotated amongst a large group of leading contenders most of whom were able to take part in all nine events, and passed first to Ian Taylor, then Chris Pike, and then to Steve Pairman who held it despite being supplanted by Sarah herself in the 10 mile championships (the seventh event) after a solid performance which saw her one point ahead of Steve Pairman. Most of those who were in the mix maintained a close presence behind these two but by that event a comfortable gap was opening up and in the later races it seemed increasingly likely that the cup would go to one of these two. Steve turned things around in the next race, the away match against Ranelagh Harriers being placed 36th out of 104 runners and establishing a 9 point lead over Sarah which then set up things nicely for a potentially storming contest between the top two.



The competition attracted a wide age range

On the last day itself Sarah pulled out the stops and produced an impressive time of 34.07, only in fact a few seconds slower than Steve himself but more importantly took second place and overhauled the nine point deficit to secure a Bennett Cup win which she had been promising most of the season. She was consistently placed in the top ten after each match, and was no doubt encouraged when told by a friend that she was in so lofty a position, moving steadily up to second by the sixth and tucking in behind the leader after that. The total of 422 points was made up of a consistent range of scores ranging from 34 points to 59, the score she attained in the Closing 5 and one which secured her one award in the handicap, that second place. Four scores were over 50.

As to the statistics of the competition, 110 athletes took part (89 men and boys and 21 women and girls with 405

Continued



total performances. The ages of the runners ranged from the oldest 74 (John Isaacs) to the youngest 10 (Amarisa Sibley). Nigel Haffenden took two awards, second and first in successive races, thus defying the handicapper. Of those 110 taking part in at least one race 30 were under 40 years old (27% of competitors). Of these runners 23 were under 20 years old, that is about a fifth of the field. However it could be argued that of these most, 17 out of 23, ran in only one or two events mainly the shorter ones such as the relays (in almost summer conditions) so perhaps cross country is still not attractive enough amongst the younger members and more so in the 20s and 30s. It seems that it is particularly competed for by those in their 50s which was the age range with most participants. (29).

If you run all nine you get a special medal for doing so, one of distinctive quality. 8 runners did all events over six months, more than last year with a further 3 completing 8 events although more than half the total sum of runners completed no more than 2 but in order to attain that medal those eight did a total of 56¼

miles (as opposed to just the one race of 26.2 miles) to get one of those. In some ways it's more valuable than getting a big city marathon finisher's medal.

So for Sarah, this winter, was one in which gender barriers were broken and after nearly 25 years of female membership in the club with the ladies steadily gaining more active influence in its activities, it is fitting that lady members now have inspiration to follow in a competition long dominated by men.

Wilf Orton



Dave Cordell, on his last day as President, presents the Bennett Cup to winner Sarah Belton

Sarah Belaon – a first lady's progress



Sarah Belaon's triumph in winning the Bennett Cup follows on from Wilf Slack's heartening success of last year, particularly as an opportunity taken to break new ground and was the first time that it had been won by a lady runner since its inauguration in 1930. There have been lady runners up in recent years such as Kate Pratten and Angela Cook, but this year new ground was broken at last. How did she feel about being the one who had this honour? Well "it was pretty amazing" she said and not quite expected until towards the end of the season. "I didn't realise that I was in with a chance until I was told that I had been in the top ten all season and could go for it".

Also she admitted that she hadn't realised that a woman had never won it, although the cup had been around so long (since 1930) and since lady members had been admitted into the club. Sarah's involvement in the club has been but a short time, as she had only competed in the Bennett Cup for the last 5 or 6 years. Her first race back then was in the autumn of 2010, and she had run impressively in the club 10 mile championships then. At first she ran in most if not all the races. This year was the first time that she had completed all nine, a desirable requirement in order to win the Bennett Cup.

It was however only recently that she had come to realise that these matches made up a series which was a competitive championship, and also the importance of completing all of them if she or anyone could have a realistic chance of winning the Bennett Cup. Aiming to complete all nine events formed the basis of whatever game plan she may have had to win the cup, but since she was not yet fully aware of the mechanics of the competition and how the handicap system worked (and quite frankly very few people are) then she did not have anything specific

in mind at the beginning of the season. If the significance of the cup had not yet been explained to her she has no doubt picked up what it means and how it can benefit the form and technique of runners of all shapes and sizes.

Did it encourage her running generally she was asked. As she was definitely interested in improving her technique she saw running in and competing in the races as means of improvement. She had done all of the Bennetts, some Kent League, and the Nationals and saw the benefit of racing where you can measure yourself against other runners and be stimulated by the competition, as opposed to the hard slog of training, and more training.

The Bennett Cup she observed was not just a means to an end. Previous winners of the cup have suggested that they often used the races to accumulate fitness and put miles in the bank for the London Marathon but Sarah had done this and found that for her it didn't necessarily work. Concentrating on the marathon might be detrimental to progress in the Bennett Cup. Tired legs from marathon training had held her back in the cup races

Continued

so this year she didn't run in London and concentrated her efforts on the cross country and duly experienced an improvement.

Of course she still has a lot in her favour having no parental responsibilities or being encumbered by family commitments.... "I can get to run races..... I do them and sometimes am the only female there..." But she accepts that it is hard for other ladies to compete due to their other commitments. That is why being the first lady to win the Bennett Cup is such an achievement. In doing so I asked her if

this was a sign of things to come? Well she replied, potentially.....

If the Cup has been in the past the preserve of the seasoned male veteran runner, usually middle aged and 'sporty' in pedigree, then it's about time that the barriers were broken and other categories were given the chance to show what they can do, particularly the young athletes coming through. She hopes that the kind of courses which the nine races are run over ought to become more attractive to young (pre-adult) runners and expressed her pleasant surprise to how

many of the 'kids' can do them. That in itself is more than just mere prescience. Hopefully with more younger runners coming through the club might be able to arrest the decline in mob match participation and lack of noticeable upcoming talent, and be able to field a larger contingent of runners at these events.

She acknowledged the fact that we have struggled to get decent turnouts at key cross country matches, and that switching home fixtures from Saturday afternoons to Sunday mornings has not seemed to make much difference. Sometimes though it is whether the appeal of running over rough country and in different degrees of mud would be an incentive for the youth of the club to take to the country. In the end it is probably more of an acquired taste which comes with maturity.

On the subject of running conditions underfoot she admits to being something of a purist. "I like the hillier courses and prefer it when they are wetter too". She feels less happy with firm ground especially the kind of rutted surfaces which when uneven are most likely to cause ambitious competitors to sustain a twisted ankle.





"I like hillier courses and prefer it when they are wetter too."

Not all cross country is, as the armchair critics claim is soft and yielding, but then she has experienced the kind of mud which in its own way is potentially hazardous.

Of all the races she was asked to rate she had two which stuck out as her favourites. On the one hand there was the Richmond Mob Match against Ranelagh, often considered by many to be a fast relatively flat course. She

was the first lady home and it gave her the satisfaction of keeping fairly close to Steve Pairman, her closest rival in the cup. "It was the first race in which I could see him at the end... so close I was to see him that I knew I'd done really well". On the other hand there was the closing 5 where she "ran as hard as I could". In this scenario where she had a specific target she knew that she had to go all out and she did, and knowing that she had to pass so many people to get the points her

second place ensured that she consolidated her position to clinch the cup by a slender margin of 2 points. It was, as she remarked, all good fun.

Finally the success in winning the Bennett Cup has been the icing on the cake for what has been for Sarah a distinguished athletic winter. Her achievement this past season have included getting a Kent vest and running in the inter counties championships for the first time. As she approaches another winter of competition she hopes to be selected again for the inter counties. Onwards and upwards.

Wilf Orton





The Special Olympics



The Olympics and Paralympics have, as we go to press, now been completed. However there are other Olympic movements designed to include all those who despite whatever their disability, are able to compete at whichever level they can. Such are the Special Olympics

What are the Special Olympics?

The Paralympics greatly caught the imagination in 2012 especially as Team GB had a highly impressive return of 120 medals including 34 golds and finished third in the medal table. It was a superb celebration and testament to how a small acorn had grown into a mighty oak. Its beginnings in the immediate post war period were humble enough when Dr Lutwig Guttman of Stoke Manderville Hospital organised a sports competition for British World War II veteran patients with spinal cord injuries and to some it seemed merely an afterthought to

the main event. But by 2012 the Olympiad had become recognised as a serious competitive sporting event.

There are in fact four Olympic movements and the other two are often forgotten. One is the Deaflympics for those with hearing impairment. This movement was sanctioned by the IOC in the 1920s. The fourth movement is the Special Olympics where at their World Summer Games in Los Angeles in 2015, 7000 athletes from 177 countries took part in 25 different sports. There was a contingent of 112 from the UK. There

the boycott at those Games, there were slightly fewer competitors in 1984 and only 140 competing Nations. So what are the Special Olympics and how are they different to the Paralympics?

The Paralympics are for those with a physical disability and of course there are many categories. They cater for those who have what is referred to as an 'intellectual disability'. The Special Olympics were founded by John F. Kennedy's sister Eunice Shriver in 1968. In 1971, The U.S. Olympic Committee gave the Special Olympics official approval to



were 500,000 spectators and 30,000 volunteers for an event that was 'full of joy and friendship'. This was the largest event in LA since the 1984 Olympics. And, probably because of

use the name 'Olympics'. In 1988, the Special Olympics was officially recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Like the International Paralympics Committee,

– truly the Feel-good Games



the Special Olympics organisation is recognised by the International Olympic Committee, but, unlike the same Paralympic Games, Special Olympics World Games are not held in conjunction with the Olympic Games. However as with the main Olympic movement, there is a Summer Games and also a Winter Games. The last Winter Games was in South Korea in 2013 and the next one will be in Austria in 2017.

Who qualifies?

Selection is not necessarily based on elitism which makes the Special Olympics very different. Competitors are graded according to ability and then compete within divisions. Each division might have somewhere between 5 and 8 competitors and there

are gold, silver and bronze medals in each division meaning that many more medal winning opportunities are available.

Skiing is a classic example of this need for selection and grading since there being relatively few Sport and Fitness opportunities for those of a certain disability and, almost perversely, skiing is one of the few. As an example, a competent skier who will never be very quick and will never be ultra competitive is graded as a middling intermediate and competes with others similarly graded. Up to intermediate and then advanced skiers. It is not solely about being the best but being a good ambassador for your Country.

What are its benefits?

Special Olympics programmes are available for athletes free of charge. More than 5.3 million athletes and Unified Sports partners are involved in Special Olympics sports training and competition in approximately 170 countries. The organisation offers year-round training and competition in 32 Olympic-style summer and winter sports.



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People with intellectual disabilities are encouraged to join Special Olympics for the physical activity, which among other health benefits, helps lower the rate of cardiovascular disease and obesity; also, they gain many emotional and psychological benefits, including self-confidence, social competence, building greater athletic skills and higher self-esteem as part of the self development process.

Special Olympics competitions are open to athletes of ages 8 and upwards. For young people with and without intellectual disabilities ages 2-7, Special Olympics has a Young Athletes programme – an inclusive sport and play programme with a focus on fun activities that are important to mental and physical growth. Children engage in games and activities that develop motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination.

Parents say their children in Young Athletes also develop better social skills. The confidence boost makes it easier for them to play and talk with other children on the playground and elsewhere.

The problem we have in the UK is that there are less active disabled people compared to those who are able bodied and there is more obesity amongst the disabled. All those with disabilities need more opportunities and more support. It takes very special people to volunteer and work among this community but those who do, will all testify to how rewarding it is.

As an advanced Nation we always fare very well at the Paralympics and did quite well at the Special Olympics World Summer Games despite the relative lack of coverage in the media. It would be great to see more coverage and hopefully this might lead

to more involvement and more opportunity for the disadvantaged. After all, it is really quite big globally with 4.5 million athletes in the best part of 200 countries. There are 32 individual and team sports, winter and summer, plus some demonstration sports and a total of 94,000 events each year.

The recent excellent TV coverage of the Ski Championships from France really captured the ethos of the Special Olympics movement with BBC South East Sports presenter, Neil Bell, commenting as follows: “I can genuinely say that I have never met a group of sportsmen and women who so enthusiastically cheer on their rivals, these truly are the Feel-good Games”.

Hugh Stanbury



**Special
Olympics
Montana**

And don't the kids love it!

The Blackheath and Bromley Youth Club



For around two years now the parents and track managers have been running a youth club for the club's young athletes of all ages from 11 upwards. The idea was the brainchild of Claire Austridge who was aware that a need existed for a group to encourage the boys and girls to socialise especially after athletics meetings.

After one such match in October 2014 it was decided that they should try setting up a youth club and so the idea was put in motion and has been running regularly since. The club meets once a month on the last Friday of each month and is open from 7pm to 9pm, although there is a special Christmas evening which is held until 11pm. The downstairs common room is used by the kids for games activities whilst the club common room is open for parents and coaches or anyone else, with the bar being open so that parents can stay for a drink whilst the kids take part in games. On a typical evening there are around 30 kids and a dozen parents attending.

The games on offer include tag football (played outside on the lawn in front of the club house in the summer), table football, pool and table tennis. There is good equipment available and

recently two young athletes Charlie Short and Henry Cowie donated their Jack Petchey Award money to the youth club which enabled the club to buy a table tennis table, pool table and table football. On a few occasions there have been guest speakers to the club such as Julie Asher Smith, although this is not a formal part of the club's activities. Generally speaking there is no attempt to impose a formal structure on what goes on, so that the kids are able to organise themselves.

The youngsters pay £1 and can then buy soft drinks and crisps at the bar. In fact the club is an effective money generator. Since its inception the youth club has, according to manager Claire Austridge, donated £1,250 to the main club and donated small sums to support the BBHAC girls' teams last year. The club is able to run at a profit.

How does the club benefit the kids? It gives young people somewhere to go on a Friday night, the chance to meet each other on a social basis away from the competitive environment of the track and field with its own pressures, and also meet kids from other schools where friendships can be nurtured outside the pressures of study and



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deadlines. In an age where many kids end up living in their own bubble with little social interaction, the club can encourage teenagers to develop their social skills and the art of conversation in order to exchange views and ideas.

“It’s a chance to do things you like to do” adds one teenager, Cameron, and “gives me something to look forward to”. Such is the appeal of the club that some of the young people have been clamouring for it to be made available every fortnight, although maybe the parents might not always agree!



For the parents as well there is the opportunity to meet each other as well and in some cases where they are new to the club the chance to introduce themselves and to find their way into the club’s structure to find such roles as coaching, supporting, driving in the various athletics meeting which take

place throughout the year. The youth club is then a vital funnel for attracting in volunteers to the club and these may in the future find themselves taking on the management responsibilities of teams for which there is always a need. It ensures that adults who come will stay and support their children when they compete in the full range of athletic competition.

On a more serious note though the youth club can be a propagator of good values and behaviour. The Code of Conduct for Young Athletes operates to remind young people of what is required of them. It includes matters of fair play, equality, responsibility and behaviour. Young athletes are requested to treat others with respect and fairness; encouraged to look out for themselves whilst being aware of the welfare of others, and to be ready to challenge behaviour of other which falls below the expected standards of the main club; and they should respect difference of race, ethnicity and religious beliefs.

On the subject of respecting others the youth club makes it clear what is not allowed and lays strong emphasis on good behaviour and respect for others. The club operates a card system in which a yellow

card is shown as a warning for unacceptable behaviour and a red card may be given to any offender if the misbehaviour is considered severe. In such a case a person’s parent or guardian will be called to collect them from the club. This underlines two essential things: that young people are given the chance to develop their social skills and to maintain a strong awareness of others. So as well as providing an outlet for fun and recreation the club is serving an educational and nurturing purpose designed to guide its young charges towards a state of maturity and awareness of the need for others. It might seem like old fashioned values but it helps to produce well rounded individuals.

In that sort of atmosphere, and encouraging the kids to be kids but bringing out their better qualities the Youth Club is a new dynamic, nurturing the coming generation of athletes and club members and serving the community in the process. And as the old expression goes “and don’t the kids love it”.

Wilf Orton

Alan Edward Ball

1929-2016



The Club has lost another long-time member with the passing of P.P. Alan Ball on 23rd January this year, joining in November 1949 a year after his brother Michael. With his prime interest in the country he was quickly recruited and enjoyed running in the various Club cross country teams over the years, usually to be found in the upper third of the field. In 1954 he teamed up with Michael as the hares for the traditional Boxing Day Paper Chase, with numerous false trails they appeared to have confused the hounds such that a majority never came within striking distance. His move to a new house in Otford enabled him to satisfy his love of gardening something he retained throughout his life. He and Ann were regular attenders at the Saturday evening suppers, so successful were they in the raffles with the Johnson's and the Oldfield's that they were nicknamed the 'Darent Valley Mafia'. In 1962 Alan became the Treasurer, a post he was to occupy for the next six years. A period of financial changes in the Club when his professional qualification as an accountant proved helpful. He became Vice-President in 1972 and President just 2 years later. A few years later he became Company Secretary

of BHHQ during a period when a Debenture issue was raised to pay for an extension to the Clubhouse. On his retirement he returned to his Devonian roots, moving to Kingsbridge, an area where they owned a holiday home. In the earlier years he used to make the journey to attend the Past Presidents' Supper however with Ann's deteriorating health this became impractical, whilst remaining in touch. Alan was a temperate individual who just got on with things without fuss, very family originated and he will be sadly missed. The funeral took place at Stokenham on 13th February which Past Presidents John Baldwin and Chris Haines attended. We send our condolences to Roger and Joanna.

Peter Baigent

Tony Weeks-Pearson

1932-2016



Past President Tony Weeks-Pearson's long and eventful life came to an end in March 2016 at the age of 84. He had been in poor health for some time, suffered with dementia and had almost totally lost his sight.

Tony's long association with the club dates back to 1949 when he was elected to membership on 4 April that year. His application was in the name of Anthony James Pearson of Hastings, Sussex and as an under 19, he paid 10/6 for a year's subscriptions. He had been proposed for membership by Sydney Wooderson, who also became his Coach, and seconded by Sydney's brother Stanley. He remained close to the Wooderson family and spoke so eloquently at Sydney's funeral in January 2007 and again at the Memorial Service held the following September.

In his prime he was a top class athlete, who represented Britain in the World Festival of Youth and Students (now called the World Student Games) of 1953,

where he won the silver medal in the 5000m with an excellent 14.49. He was also a UK record holder for 3000m indoors, won several mob matches and county titles and was a consistently good performer at the highest level.

He was twice 11th in the National Cross Country Championships in 1955 and 1958 and also 11th in the Southern in 1956. He was twice joint winner of the Varsity Cross Country race, the first time with Chris Chataway in 1952, and was Cross Country Captain at Oxford.

He never won the Kent Senior Cross Country title but was an individual medalist 5 times and four times in successive years was either 2nd or 3rd. He did win Kent 20 and Kent Marathon titles. Other achievements included being Army 1 mile Champion and junior champion in the Sussex 1 mile and Kent Cross-Country titles. In 1960 he won the Club 10 mile championship with a time of 54.59.

In time he moved on to the Marathon and in the 1957 Poly Marathon he would have broken Charlie Busby's existing Club record of 2.34.06, but on a blistering hot June day he came 5th in 2.41 some 4 minutes behind the winner. This winning time was some 15 minutes slower than usual. He ran his fastest marathon in 1967, 2.31.23, missing the Club record by just 15 seconds.

Blackheath's Johnny Withers was 8 minutes behind Tony in the Poly Marathon and he, about 7 weeks later, ran 2.31.08, an 18 minutes improvement on his Poly run, and this was still the Club record when Tony missed it by just 15 seconds 10 years later in 1967.

He did the questionnaire in Athletics Weekly in 1958 and one question was: "which performance gave you most personal satisfaction and why". His reply was: "the 2nd handicap spoon in the mob match against SLH, I always thought this impossible under handicapper George Brooks". Anyone thinking today that they have been hard done by Club handicapper, Chris Haines, it was ever thus!

Alan Brent made him a Vice President in 1967 and the late Don Gillate chose him as his successor, as Club President in 1990. In his message to the club in the Summer 1990 Gazette he stressed the importance of progress for new heights of achievement by the club. He outlined his aims and objectives for Blackheath Harriers during his term in office, which included social evenings for parents, a series of informal club coaching/training forums and a club coaching/advice Register which would "list some of the dozens of experienced athletes who could be approached for consultation and help".

He urged members and friends to attend Young Athletes

fixtures, run in mob matches, help with activities and run at the Norman Park Track, which had then established itself as the club's main track and field base. He was open to new ideas and wanted the club very much to project a positive, modern image which belied its supposed old-fashioned-ness. He emphasized encouragement and integration with the President as a focal point for all progressive activity.

Even as President, having reached an age when other club members might well have hung up their running shoes, Tony could still be regarded as an active athlete. In his year as Club President, he ran all the major CC races, including the Club 10. He was also a member of the winning National Vets Over 50s Cross Country Team.

In 1991 after his year of Presidential office he handed over to Gary Botley. Coincidentally Gary was the last Club visitor to Tony in his farewell tour in March 2015. Graham remarked afterwards that this was probably the last time he would see Tony. It was a sad occasion as Tony really didn't recognise his visitor and

could not communicate in his usual and entertaining way.

Then after many years association with the club



Even as President Tony could still be regarded as an active athlete

he sadly left it in 1997 for very personal reasons which are best left unmentioned. However in 2007 as a result of the death of Sydney Wooderson and his massive contribution to the subsequent memorial service he returned to the fold. His support with the preparations for the Memorial Service was crucial to its success and led to the offer of Life Membership which he was delighted to accept. The Service was generally considered to be a successful and fitting tribute to the Club's most famous member and greatest ever 'Heathen. He rejoined having been offered Life Membership in 2008 and was presented with his 50 year membership award in 2010. Having lost a son he and Christine presented the Club with a trophy named after that late son Robert Weeks-Pearson.

Tony's career was in teaching and his academic abilities were reflected in one of his greatest achievements, the production of the Club History. A comment in the 1990 Club Gazette praised this achievement: "We are, above all, grateful to Tony for all the work that has gone into our

two priceless histories". These were 1969 Centennial Club History and the 1989 update.

This original undertaking was done in collaboration with D.K. Saunders and in defiance of previously held opinions that such a history could never be written. But "for better or worse this has been achieved" he commented in the forward to the first edition. This work he believed was a history and not a simple record of events and performances. "We hope" he said "that it will be of interest not only to members but to a wider public who may see in our small affairs a vital fragment of social history".

Perhaps not so well known was that he was also a novelist. His novel 'DODO' contained in the words of an observer "a fundamental symbolism, inescapable, indicating care for, and championing of an endangered species." Under his influence as President, and at a time when Harrier clubs were being looked on in the running boom of the 1980s as an anachronism, Blackheath Harriers would be anything but an endangered species.

Martyn Mitchell

The Centenary History of the Blackheath Harriers



Executive Committee 2015/16

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Bill R G Foster

Immediate Past President:

David Cordell IPP

Chairman of Committee:

John Baldwin PP

Hon Secretary:

Hanna Cordell VP

Hon Treasurer:

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Past Presidents

Existing Past Presidents of Blackheath Harriers AC:

Alan J Brent (1966/7), Peter J G Baigent (1971/2), John R Baldwin (1975/6), Colin M Brand (1978/9), Brian G Stone (1979/80), Ian C Wilson (1981/2), Derek L Gregory (1986/7), Alan M Pickering (1992/3), Steve H Cluney (1994/5), David White (1995/6), Mike J Mahoney (1997/8), Chris R Haines (1998/9), Richard J Coles (1999/2000), Mike Davies (2000/1), Mike Peel (2001/2), Pat Calnan (2002/3).

Existing Past Presidents of Bromley AC: (to 2003)

Daphne Reed, Joyce Hefher, Junior Field, Paul Jearum, Maureen Miller.

Past Presidents of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC:

John Robinson (2003/4), Margaret Baldwin (2004/5), Anne Cilia (2005/6), Ken Daniel (2006/7), Les Roberts (2007/8), Tim Soutar (2008/9), Alison Brand (2009/10), Richard Coe (2010/11), Denis Lawrie (2011/12), Steve Hollingdale (2012/13), Robert Cliff (2013/14), Dick Griffin (2014/15). David Cordell (2015/16)

Vice Presidents

Existing Vice Presidents of Blackheath Harriers AC:

John E Lindblom (1962), Derek F E Hogg (1964), Tony V Hayday (1968), Richard J Edmonds (1969), Robert Richardson (1969), John Lissaman (1972), Barry M Shapcott (1973), Geoff R Last (1974), Gordon Hickey (1975), Frank C Rogers (1976), Frank J Dyter (1977), Jerry C W Friend (1977), Andy W Frankish (1979), Peter E Shephard (1979), Jack Braughton (1980), Peter C Hannell (1980), Mike A Winch (1981), Ian K Young (1982), Gordon Brooks (1986), Simon Parsons (1990), Jim Phelan (1990), Nigel Keogh (1991), Trevor Llewellyn (1991), Nick Brooks (1992), Mark I L Watling (1993), Steve J Freemantle (1995), R Colin Poole (1995), Alan R Stevens (1995), Peter A Long (1996), Nick Nuttall (1997), John E Turner (1997), Peter Lester (1998), Garry F P Spencer (1998), Bill Clapham (1999-2013), Mike J Cronin (1999), David Liston (2000), Roger A Michell (2000), Brenda Brent (2001), Paul Byfield (2001), Roger Counter (2002), Len Dalmon (2002), Roy Smith (2002).

Existing Vice President of Bromley AC:

David Green.

Vice Presidents of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC:

John Blackie (2003 ex BAC), Willem Buttinger (2003 ex BH), Ian Dibbens (2003 ex BAC), Hilary Gibbs (2003 ex BAC), David Taylor (2003 ex BH), Simon Tolson (2003 ex BH), Myrtle Augee (2004), Julian Golding (2004), Helen Godsell (2004), Simon Lloyd (2004), Anthony Pontifex (2004), Brian Power (2004), Nick Gasson (2005), Brendan McShane (2005), Brian Hartley (2006), Paul Patten (2006), Michael Skinner (2006), Ray Gibson (2007), Richard Holt (2007), Mark Purser (2007), Rob Brown (2007), Bob Minting (2007), Costas Karageorghis (2008), Tom Phillips (2008), Terri Shotton (2008), Andy Tucker (2009), Roy Watkins (2009), Allan Williams (2009), David Appleton (2010), Peter Lovell (2010), Steve Pairman (2010), Colin Rowe (2010), Paul Austridge (2011), Con Griffin (2011), Deniz Mehmed (2011), Wilf Orton (2012), Hanna Cordell (2013), Mick Jones (2013), Mike Sheppard (2013), Dave McKinlay (2014), Alex Gibbins (2014), Richard Hall (2014), Jane Bradshaw (2014), Julie Asher-Smith (2014), Marion (Maz) Turner (2015), Sheila Griffin (2015), Jackie Montgomery (2015), Adrian Stocks (2015), Tim Ayres (2015). Claire Austridge (2016), Shaunagh Brown (2016), Andy Rayner (2106), Steve Timmins (2016).

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The editing team wish to express their thanks for all those who contributed articles and photographs for this issue. The editorial team make every effort to correctly identify and credit all the photographers but occasionally this is not possible. If you took a photograph but haven't been credited please let us know and we will publish the details in the next Gazette.

