

No.674 / Vol.131 Reports & News

2020/21

**BLACKHEATH & BROMLEY HARRIERS AC**

# GAZETTE



*These fashionable protective masks are large enough to cover the facial ravages of Covid 19*

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### CONTENTS

#### Club News

3. Extending the Presidency of Nick Corry
4. New Vice Presidents for 2021
5. Blackheath & Bromley lockdown
8. Virtual Race Reports
7. Covid in 150 words

#### Athletics Reports 2019/20

12. Track and field competitions 20-21
14. Indoor track season 2021

#### Move to Norman Park

16. Development of Norman Park 2019-20
18. Extract from Alan Pickering's Easter message
19. Norman Park Update April-September 2020
21. Norman Park Update September-December 2020
25. Club AGM March 2021 re Norman Park Development
27. Tokyo Olympiad 1964
30. Regional Awards
31. Athletics Weekly Rankings

#### Obituaries

32. Ian Wilson

#### Club News

33. Letters to the editor

## From the Editor



Now, with the 150th Anniversary year behind us, the advent of a worldwide debilitating pandemic and its deadly virus has for the time being put paid to any prospect of serious athletic competition particularly in the summer season. That means fewer races and events reports although some competitive activity did return in later summer and in the new year was being held on the US College circuit and in European venues as well. Nevertheless a highly reduced material quota for consumption in this latest issue. Even if

the effect of the Covid 19 (also known as the Corona) Virus is likely to be lessened in the summer months, and some of the lockdown restrictions are relaxed, then it cannot be predicted as to when the production of the Gazette returns to normal or whether it re-appears in its former state.

Having faithfully kept up the editorship of this long standing periodical for the last eleven years, I have expressed to the Executive Committee the desire to stand down from my role as editor to make way for new blood to come on to the team, who may have new ideas as to how the magazine can be produced to appeal to a wider readership. I hope that those with an interest in producing a publication such as this will be willing to come forward, and take up the baton which at some stage I must relinquish.

Meanwhile however I will agree to soldier on until that time to ensure that the Gazette which is the club's archive continues its existence, particularly as it is a resource required in order to produce an update of the Club's History which has been requested to mark the 150th Anniversary celebrations which have recently been passed and concluded.

Finally what you the readers will see here are accounts of the developments concerning the proposed move to a new home for the club at Norman Park which are entering a new and hopefully conclusive stage and we hope that in the future a relocation to new premises will provide the impetus for the club community.

**Wilf Orton, Sometime during the summer of 2021**

Before signing off I wish to offer grateful thanks to the following for willingly providing articles and reports for this issue: PP Tim Souter, Chris Hilditch VP, PP Alan Pickering, President Nick Corry, PP Nick Brooks, Ian Firla VP, Adrian Stocks VP, Alan Stevens VP, PP John Baldwin, PP Chris Haines, PP Pat Calnan, Chris Woodcock. Peter Rogers VP, former assistant editor, for standing in at short notice and designing and providing graphics and making production of this edition possible.

**Given the disruptions caused by the pandemic and due to lack of material it has proved difficult to maintain a definite deadline for publication of further issues of this magazine, suffice to say that it will be a matter of when active athletics recommences. It may be necessary to combine the issues of Summer 2021 and Winter 2021/22 in which cases all reports from team managers and other material will be most welcome.**

## Club President

### Nick Corry to serve for a second year



*In the early days of the club a president's term in office did not necessarily last for just the single year until constitutional changes laid down the principle of a single year in office with the sitting presidential personally selecting their successor.*

*One president in modern times has served more than one term in office, Sydney Wooderson in 1948/49 and again 1969/70, this being to mark the club's Centenary Year.*

*However a different set of circumstances has caused the club to consider asking the President who is currently in office, Nic Corry to continue to do so for an additional year.*

Clubs and countries around the world are currently reviewing the interaction between their presidential traditions and contemporary society. Our Club is no exception. Now that we are a charity and need to interact with regulatory authorities and potential sources of finance, we need to make sure that our governance arrangements around the appointment of the President pass muster. At the annual joint meeting of the Club Management Committee and Directors of the Trustee Board scheduled for early 2021, consideration will be given to any constitutional changes that may be needed to blend our traditions with the regulatory requirements of the world in which we operate.

Any constitutional changes that may be required will be put before the membership in the usual way. It is unlikely that all or any of these changes can be implemented before the beginning of the Club year commencing April 2021.

In our capacities as Chairman of the Trustee Board and Management Committee respectively we would like to raise an issue with Past Presidents and Vice-Presidents. We regard the former as custodians of our legacy and the latter as very special people who are, among other things, potential

presidents in waiting.

Being President is both an honour and responsibility. A number of club members have pointed out that, due to what is hopefully a very unusual year, Nic Corry has not been able to benefit from the honour or fulfil the responsibility to the best of his ability. Although it is generally accepted that Nic's skillset and personal attributes have equipped him splendidly to fulfil the role in very challenging times, it has therefore been suggested that Nic be asked to continue as president for what will hopefully be a more normal year in 2021-22.

The suggestion met with enthusiastic support from members of the Management Committee. While the Trustee Board was very aware of Nic's splendid fulfilment of the role so far, they wanted to give some thought to both the process and principle involved in providing Nic with a second year in office.

So far as the principle is concerned, very few people have undertaken the role for more than 12 months. Consideration was given to the precedent that might be set by providing such an extension. However, the present circumstances are truly exceptional and the issue of setting a precedent can probably be discounted. The other aspect of principle



Continued

to which the Trustee Board gave consideration was the fairness of asking Nic to do another year. The role is very challenging and has taken a toll on both the physical and mental wellness of some Past Presidents. Nic has assured us that he has sufficient physical and mental band-width to do another year.

Soon after being elevated to the position, Nic established a set of criteria which he would use to judge the credentials of potential successors. Like all good team managers, he understood the need to pass the baton to someone who would be sure-footed and possess sufficient stamina to see the role through to its conclusion. Nic has contacted four Vice-Presidents who meet these criteria and, with honour and regret in equal measure, all four have declined to take up the invitation in the light of current uncertain circumstances.

In advance of the next meeting of the Trustee Board and of Management Committee, we would be keen to hear confidentially the views of Past-Presidents and Vice-Presidents on the proposal that, in these unprecedented and challenging times, Nic Corry should be asked to fulfil a second year as our President.

*Alan Pickering and Nick Brooks*

## New Vice Presidents for 2021

*Having confirmed his willingness to continue in the office of President for a second consecutive year, continuing President Nic Corry has seen fit to create four new Vice Presidents who have in some cases joined it more recently, and have in their own way contributed to the club for which they are duly rewarded by this commendation.*



**John Hubbard**

John chosen for his work as track secretary and, more recently, officials

secretary and also his work as a track judge.



**Alice Platt**

Alice is the consummate volunteer, always willing to lend a hand when

there is the rallying cry for volunteers at the tuck shop, selling second hand kit, or putting on a high viz vest to be a friendly face at our Open Meetings. She has also been a key contributor to our social media and communications strategy. All this while being a mother to three BBHAC athletes and wife to one, ferrying all to training and competitions.



**Ian Firla**

Ian chosen for his contributions during lockdown including

organising the EA road relay course, entry and maintaining the push for a good BBHAC team over the initial round and National Round with the club ending up in the top 20 nationally. He has also taken on team Management for the U15 boys and the Junior Men. Further he has taken coaching courses to enable him to support the coaches for Junior Middle Distance.



**Holly Platt**

Holly's contributions to the club are plain to see on our social media pages.

She has showcased the club putting together exceptional montage videos of the club to be used at National Award ceremonies, as well as a continual flow of engaging posts and stories on the club's instagram, twitter and YouTube accounts. She filmed the open meetings over the summer and then put huge effort into converting and editing them into a format fit for our Youtube channel.

*President Nick Corry*

## 2020-2021 a year of lockdown and virtual challenges... Adrian Stocks recollects

*On a sunny 7 March 2020 a healthy contingent of club cross country runners made the journey across London to Petersham to race the 100th Ranelagh Harriers vs Blackheath and Bromley Mob match. 8 miles of racing around Richmond Park were followed by a warm reception in a small and very crowded clubhouse with refreshments served and specially brewed mob match ale and hospitality enjoyed without a face mask in sight. The coronavirus was sweeping across Asia and little did we know at that time this would be the last competitive and social outing for a long long time.*

### A society in lockdown

A few days later on 23 March Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that the government would introduce a national lockdown to curb a widening outbreak of COVID-19. The club was shut down and all running activities cancelled. The rules at this time did permit one form of exercise a day - for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household. The London marathon in April 2020 was one of the first major events to be officially postponed and rearranged for 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 when all this blew over. We still looked forward the 2020 Tokyo Olympic games as every other sporting fixture was cancelled but inevitably the games were

postponed by 1 year.

It was a time we will never forget, being locked in our homes, unable to visit friends, workplaces, pubs and only allowed out to shop for essentials and exercise. Fortunately, the weather was glorious that Spring and as runners we had something to help with our mental health. Families and friends were conducting zoom meetings, organising quizzes and making up our own entertainment whilst grimly watching the news and the daily death numbers from the virus. The committee met, virtually, to discuss the situation.

### The issuing of lockdown challenges

It became clear a few weeks in that there would be no club activities in the foreseeable future. The Wednesday nighters needed something to keep them occupied. I'd seen other friends and clubs starting to set challenges, a church-to-church time trial and hunting for things around town spring to mind. I had also been running new routes and looking around just to get out of the house and explore the area, I decided early on that no two lockdown runs should ever be the same and I began to explore the area more and visit places and roads I never been to before. The idea of a weekly Wednesday Nighters Lockdown Challenge #WNLC was born to keep us occupied and in touch and connected with our running friends near and far. The first challenge issued on 13 May 2020 was a 19 minute

time trial in a nod to COVID 19. We were all asked to run and report back to the group. Week 2 was a 5 mile time trial, this time taking in somewhere that you'd never run before to tempt people out to new places. There was a good uptake and feedback, not surprising as we were still in a deep lockdown and stuck at home. The challenges continued. Station Bagging, a tribute to the Mark Compton Wednesday night route taking in all the local stations. Easier for some of us here in Bromley, harder for more suburban folks who needed to cover some miles to tick off one or 2. We continued with the Passing Water week, running to ponds, brooks, rivers, and for some to bird baths and the sea, then running to golf courses, during the period of lockdown there was no golf played and we could find ways of running around and exploring golf courses and on to the Blue Plaque hunt challenge, inspired by the 'David Bowie Lived here' Plaque on a house in Sundridge Park.

### Opening up in the summer

After 3 months locked down, in July 2020 some restrictions were eased, it was announced that pubs, restaurants and hairdressers will be able to reopen, providing they adhere to COVID Secure guidelines, two households could meet up in any setting with social distancing measures. We were in a new world of staying 2 metres apart from each other and wearing facemasks. Some of us had wild long hair by

## Continued

now and were delighted to see the barbers open. Wednesday nights at the club began again, groups of up to six people from different households were able to meet outside and run. It was great to see friends again and run together, the bar moved to the garden of the clubhouse, social distancing measures were put in place and we were all extremely grateful for the work of the House and social committee in getting everything arranged to enable us to run and have a pint. The club went cashless and we were coated in disinfecting hand gel. It was during one of these nights that John E Turner suggested the post box challenge. This was one of my favourite #WNLC, each post-box has a royal cypher, we ran around the streets to see which monarch was on each one. There is a rare Edward VIII post-box in Beckenham to make the pilgrimage to. Bob Minting embraced the challenges wholeheartedly from afar in Exmouth and must have visited every post-box, road and landmark in the town. Few of us now can pass a post-box without looking.

We continued with the challenges as we still had no competitive or mass running events. Mo Farah set a new 1 hour run record of over 13 miles so we too had the one hour challenge to complete; Ron Hill ran every day for 52 years, so could we run every day for 7 days? We ran the hill challenge and searched for the different telephone kiosks. At this point there was an unexpected turn, to

catch up on missed challenges. Kate Pratten ran a mash up and completed about 8 challenges on 1 run, slightly bending the rules but inspirational.

### Moving back to restrictions

After the summer, things took a turn for the worse, and on 17 October 2020, the UK government announced that London, among other areas, would move to Tier 2 restrictions, following a spike in cases, banning people from mixing indoors privately. The London marathon was made an elite only race with the world's best running laps around St James Park. Runners with a place in the 2020 race, but not in the elite fields, would be able to compete virtually from any location around the world. They were invited to run or walk 26.2 miles on 4 October, logging their progress on the event app. Team Blackheath and Bromley came together to run 20+ laps of Norman Park with a support crew cheering them on.

### New challenges for the winter

The challenges would continue, ideas had to keep coming. A Halloween challenge in October, running to War memorials for remembrance week, Christmas challenges took us into 2021 where we hoped life would return to normal. In February we were challenged to run 100 km or miles. The weather turned particularly cold and an indoor anagram challenge was set to test our Brains and provide a bit of much needed winter lockdown levity. See below for the full list. International Women's Day

in March we were challenged to find ladies names, keeping it topical. We lost HRH Prince Phillip in April and ran around searching for royal references. We searched for Latin, Years, ran to beat race walking times and searched for the 61 Great Trees of London. On Monday 22 February 2021, the UK Government published its 4-step plan to ease lockdown restrictions in England. The first step of the plan, which, amongst other easements, provides for school re-openings, took effect on Monday 8 March. The second step, which involved outdoor activities and trials of indoor activities, took effect on Monday 12 April. The third step, which allowed for limited indoor mixing and the reopening of indoor hospitality venues, took effect on Monday 17 May. This brought us nicely to week 52 and we'd completed a year of challenges.

### Completing a year of challenges

During this time, we all enjoyed messaging and sharing our runs and ticking off the challenges, the photos and stories shared each week kept us fit, entertained and connected during a tough time and in many cases were an education as to what is out there if you run and open your eyes rather than looking at a stopwatch. There were a few other challenges we didn't complete but I'll save those for the next time.

*Adrian Stocks*

### The Challenges

Andy Tucker	A Curdy Kent
Anne Ciilia	Acne I Nail
Ken Daniel	Anne Liked
Kate Pratten	Ate Park Tent
Swatton Iain	Attains Wino
Drew Grace	Cad Regrew
Luca Ercolani	Carolina Clue
NicCorry	Corny Ric
Chris Pike	Crisp Hike
Paul Byfield	Debi Playful
Jane Bradshaw	DNA Jab Washer
Mike Peel	Emile Pek
Dave Beadle	Evade Blade
Shaun Lightman	Halting Humans
Dave White	Heaved Wit
John Turner	Herr Jon Nut
Dennis Lawrie	Irena Swindle
Jason Short	John Roasts
Jackie Montgomery	Joyce Kermit Mango
Justine Eastbury	Jury Beasts Unite
Mark Ellison	Kill Moaners
Dina Asher Smith	Marinated Shish
Clem Leon	Mel Clone
Tony Pontifex	Next Nifty Poo
Robert Brown	Norbert Brow
Dave Appleton	Notepad Pavel
Steven Pairman	Permanent Visa
Adrian Stocks	Radiant Socks
Les Roberts	Ross Treble
Steve Hollingdale	Shovelled Genital
Aves Clayton	Tanya Cloves
Bob Minting	Tom Nibbling
Paul Kerekgyarto	Ugly Parrakeet
Stan Ridgwell	Walter Dingles
Maz Turner	Zen Rum Art

1	13 May	19 Minutes
2	20 May	5 mile/8km challenge. This should include a lap of a park or open space youve never been round before.
3	27 May	Station Bagging
4	3 June	Passing Water
5	10 June	A trip to the Pub
6	17 June	Fore! The Golf Courses Challenge
7	24 June	Blue Plaques
8	1 July	Lest We Forget Memorial Hunt
9	8 July	The Wake up 2-mile blast
10	15 July	The 10k Yo Yo Challenge
11	22 July	The Ron Hill Challenge
12	29 July	Strava Art
13	5 Aug	Post Box Curiosity
14	12 Aug	It's too hot to run
15	19 Aug	The Tennis Tour
16	26 Aug	Heartbeat Hill
17	2 Sept	Arboreal Run
18	9 Sept	How Mo are you?
19	16 Sept	The Graffiti Hunt
20	23 Sept	Ducks
21	30 Sept	Marathon Miles
22	7 Oct	Phone Box Quest
23	14 Oct	Blackheath & Bromley Gallops
24	21 Oct	Royal Run
25	28 Oct	Halloween Ephemera
26	4 Nov	Not a Pub Crawl
27	11 Nov	11/11 Remembrance Run
28	18 Nov	The Safari Run
29	25 Nov	The Not a Parkrun Run
30	2 Dec	Running Widdershins
31	9 Dec	Christmas Spirit
32	16 Dec	I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas
33	23 Dec	The Christmas Cheer Run
34	30 Dec	Farewell 2020

# Virtual Race Report

*In addition to the multifarious variety of challenges taking place locally there were also a large number of virtual races taking place that imitated actual club race events which in more normal times would have taken place. With in-person races at a minimum and various stages of lock down limiting activities, club members attempted to make the most of the circumstances.*

*Ian Firla reports on the performances of the club's athletes in these.*

## Virtual Grand Prix

Through May and June, club members participated in the first of the lockdown virtual races by taking part in a virtual Grand Prix consisting of four virtual 5 km and a single TT mile. 47 club members took part in some or all of the events with the top 3 being: Ian Firla on 133 points, Ross Braden on 114 and Tim Ayres on 94. The Handicap top 3 were: Tim Ayres, Karen Desborough and Ian Firla.

## Asics Virtual Ekiden

The next event that the club took on was the first of a number of team challenges with global participation. The Asics Virtual Ekiden saw teams of 6 runners tackle a marathon by taking on legs ranging between 5km and 10km. The Club fielded 5 full teams with 30 runners taking part. The top BBHAC team (Tom Desborough, Josh Schofield, Ross Braden, Roger Vilardell and Alessio Tutt) ran a time of 2:21:35 which was good enough for 49<sup>th</sup> out of over 8400 teams. The B team (Martin Richardson, Dan Kennedy, Fintan Parkinson, Gareth Evans and George Shaw 2:26:29) and the C team (Josh Dowling, Luca Ercolani, Ian Firla, Alex Gibbins, Ted Marston and Callum Horton 2:27:48) squads helped the club

dominate the global running clubs category by scoring 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> places overall.

## Virtual London Marathon

With the London Marathon being postponed and then made into a virtual event, the club marathon championship followed suit. 15 club members ran virtual marathons with many opting to take on 23 socially distant laps of Norman Park. The top 3 men were: Ian Firla (2:46:41), Luca Ercolani (2:49:37) and Alex Gibbins (2:50:49). The top 3 women were: Ashley Pearson (3:32:49), Zoe Kingsmill (4:33:00) and Anita Evenden (5:10:31)

## Virtual Club 5 mile

As lockdown continued on through the winter, the club organised a virtual 5 mile cross country event. Many members took the opportunity to resurrect the historical "old club 5". The top 3 men were: Luca Ercolani (32:33), Gareth Evans (33:17) and Fintan Parkinson (34:22). The top 3 women finishers were: Jennie Butler (38:23), Ashley Pearson (40:16) and Jane Bradshaw (41:58). The handicap top 3 were: Clem Leon, Andrew Kingsmill and Luca Ercolani.

## Virtual Club 10 mile

2020 rolled into 2021 and with lockdown showing no

respite, many club members took on the old club 10 mile route for the club's annual 10 mile race. The winners of the 10 mile were: Luca Ercolani 1:06:27, Ian Firla 1:08:34 and Martin Richardson 1:16:37. The handicap results were: Roger Vilardell, David Leal and Micah Evans.

## EA Virtual Road Relays

With the annual National Road Relays also falling victim to the pandemic, EA decided to organise a virtual event in a unique format: each team would be formed of 4 men and 4 women. The first round would see the top 50 clubs make it through to the second round and the winner of that round would go on to compete in GB kit in an international round.

20 club members tried their efforts at the 5 mile distance in the first round with the top scorers bringing the club to the 10th place over all: 12: Charlie Davis (24:25), 14: Ross Braden (24:37), 177: Martin Richardson (27:33), 216: Angus Harrington (27:57), 693: Ellie Osmond (31:00), 724: Jessica Keene (31:12), 730: Zoe Katie White (31:18), 978: Lily Meers (32:53)

19 club members tackled the 2nd round and despite improving our overall time, we slipped slightly in the rankings to 20<sup>th</sup>

and did not qualify for the international round 21: Ross Braden (24:41), 96: Charlie Davis (26:13), 117: Roger Vilardell (26:32), 133: Angus Harrington (26:42), 497: Zoe Katie White (31:11), 505: Ellie Osmond (31:16), 525: Lily Meers (31:35), 623: Ailbhe Barnes (32:35)

It should be added that in competing for the club, many individuals scored top 5 and top 10 age group results on a national level. The unique nature of the virtual competition brought together runners across many age groups and abilities and really emphasised the spirit and depth of talent in the club.

## BMAA Virtual Mile

18 masters athletes took part in the BMAA virtual mile. While runners were ranked individually, this was also a team event with age group runners being brought together into teams of 3. As with the EA Road Relays, the depth of the club really came to the forefront with many superb individual achievements but the highlight being the team of Carole Coulon, Jennie Butler and Ashley Pearson winning the W45-54 category.

Additional individual achievements that should be highlighted included: Roger Vilardell top BBHAC runner (4:51) and 16th overall in

the M40 category. Carole Coulon finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the W45 category followed by Jennie Butler in 7<sup>th</sup> and Ashley Pearson in 14<sup>th</sup>.

*Ian Firla*



# The experience Covid in 150 words.

## Observations of club members

*From an obscure virus gestating in China and first reported in December 2019 the Corona virus, later known as Covid-19 would spread rapidly word-wide, and by the middle of March 2020 it had escalated into a major pandemic, affecting millions and effectively closing down much activities of work and leisure. Athletic activities have particularly been hard hit and by the summer of this year were virtually non-existent, as competition did indeed become virtual. The following are accounts of those who experienced these times and would in time see active participation open up again*

### Agata Cienciala Joined BBHAC September 2020

I felt more connected to the club during lockdown than I have previously. Throughout this time I've been researching and writing my dissertation on the history of the club. This meant reading club gazettes, interviewing members, and running the old cross country routes. It's been an amazing time to think about why I love running as an individual, and how that is something shared by club members past and present. We share a wish to see participation in our club increase, as well as athletics. And we share an enjoyment of competition and wanting to improve. I loved seeing more runners than cars on the roads at the height of lockdown, just as I've loved seeing competition returning. The joy that athletics and running can bring - both in participating and observing, has been reinforced by not being able to meet with others, and by competition stopping. Now that we can compete and participate again, I hope that some of what we've gone through will remain - if only in reminding us that enjoying sport and club life is a privilege which ought to be shared.



### Greg Firth Joined BBHAC September 2019

The 2020/2021 running season during COVID was a time of change and ongoing goal setting. Our family coped pretty well with home schooling and just getting things done together. On the running front my daughter and I ran in different ways and had new challenges. Although the cross country season was cancelled, the girls through BnB, were able to stay motivated through coach Andy's (and help from many parents) training programmes and regular virtual challenges. Even the parents got involved in these challenges which was great to see. Towards the end of lockdown Ian Firla got myself and Micah Evans to enter a virtual marathon so training during lockdown gave us a goal to work towards. This was completed with excellent support from friends and family and in the end I managed to reach my PB of a sub three hour marathon! Wow I could hardly believe it as this was something I had been working towards for my whole life and now I just achieved it with a 2:59:59! Thanks to the community within the club for being there during lockdown when we needed it most.



### PP Steve Hollingdale Joined BBHAC October 1990

Blessed being retired and strictly a recreational runner meant relatively less Covid impact in the last 15 months for me. I recall what turned out to be mild flu dispatching me to a squaddie run testing centre in Bexleyheath for the first of several man-sized cotton swabs up the nose and tickling the tonsils. - always thought the term 'Lateral Flow' should belong in athletics. Then the boredom of 100 laps of our small garden and driveway before I could venture out. Summer track and field became a brief autumn season timekeeping with only mild XC never made an appearance - Bennett Cup nil points! Trolley service only for Wednesday nighters at the club in late 2020 but no meals. More frostbite as we braved the garden for the first pint of draught beer in early April - headtorches recommended. Normality slowly returning with plenty of summer athletics but with alcoholic wipes and sprays.



### Yasmin Austridge Joined BBHAC August 2011

I have just finished my third and final year at the University of Birmingham, and my sister, Zoe, has finished her first year there. Athletics has been a large part of both of our uni experiences and the community spirit in the Birmingham University Athletics Club (BUAC) is immense. There are a lot of BBHAC athletes in BUAC, keeping us connected to our home clubs and maintaining playful rivalries with our uni team-mates from other clubs - I can name multiple occasions where Charlie Davies, Jess Keene and I got a lot of abuse for screaming Blackheath chants at BUAC parties! We were able to stay connected to BBHAC whilst at uni and through lockdowns via the social media posts on Instagram and Facebook. I've had the best time at university, with the support of BBHAC.

Although Lockdown and Covid changed our way of life and restricted many things, we were very lucky to have athletics in our lives. Our coaches helped motivate us and encouraged us to keep up with our training. We had

to adapt to not training in a group but we always felt part of a team through our running groups and social media. Both BBHAC and Birmingham University set us challenges and games to keep us motivated and fit. We did regular sessions of core and yoga via zoom, which was fun and helped keep us in shape and connected. The staff at Norman Park allowed us to have hurdles from the track so we could train in the garden and in the local park. We were also lucky as we had each other to train with so we never felt isolated or alone.

Without the competitions lockdown also gave me a chance to build on my endurance in time for some 3km chases this season. The longer miles paid off as I was selected to represent England Seniors for the first time.

# Track and field Performances by BBHAC athletes at home and abroad Summer 2020

## August 2020

**After the forced inactivity caused by the lockdown in the earlier months of the track and field season 2020, August saw a return to action for many athletes via open races and invitations, and already many great efforts have been achieved.**

First up has been Adam Gemili who ran 10.28 over 100m in Szekesfehervar on the 19th August in Hungary, having run 20.68 for 200m and 5th place at the Monaco leg of the Diamond League on August 14th. On the following weekend (August 22-23<sup>rd</sup>) Adam ran 20.61 over 200m to win the Stockholm Diamond League.

News from other venues include a massive new club record and UK rankings lead for James Whiteaker with 77.81m in the javelin at Nuneaton on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, while Joe Rogers clocked a new pb in the 800m with 1.51.56 at the same venue on August 11th.

Last Friday night (August 21<sup>st</sup>) at Bromley's Norman Park the Bromley Twilight Meeting took place which was an invitational meeting for middle distance runners. The club had several athletes in action with pride of place going to Phil Sesemann who clocked 7.52.42 over 3,000m

for a massive new pb. The four in front of him are now the fastest four in the world this year over this distance. In other races Will Fuller clocked 8.14.63 and Ross Braden 8.28.35, with Hannah Clark posting 10.36.05 in a ladies race. Phil's run is not far behind Scott Overall's club record of 7.48.92. In the mens' 800m races there were massive new pbs for Ben Gardiner in 1.50.94, Sam Reardon 1.52.82 who now tops the UK under 17 rankings, and Henry Fisher with 1.53.18.

On the following Saturday afternoon 22<sup>nd</sup> August Blackheath hosted its first Open Meeting of the season with almost 300 athletes taking part. Key performances saw Dina Asher Smith back on the track contesting the rarely run 150m clocking 17.20, leaving fellow international Desiree Henry way behind. Over 300m Bailey Stickings clocked an impressive 34.95 with Megan Walsh posting 39.68 in the ladies event, while in the 400m there were massive new pbs for Sam Reardon again, with 48.87, and Alex O'Callaghan Brown with 49.10.

Finally on August 26th at the Dartford Invitational Pole Vault Open Barnaby Corry just missed his pb with a vault of 4.22m.

## September 2020

**So to September and now very late in the track and field season with many athletes already ending their season early or in some cases not even allowing it to start, there are opportunities for those athletes who have chosen to continue competing, to shine.**

At the British Championships held at Sportscity in Manchester over the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September, James Whiteaker threw the javelin 75.99m to win by over 5 metres from second place, truly back in form after an injury enforced absence. James was not our only medallist as Jonathan Ilori took bronze in the triple jump with 15.17m, a little below par for him but nevertheless a great achievement.

Other notable performances were Sarah Abrams who jumped 6.07m for fifth in the ladies long jump while Bekah Walton took 5th in the ladies javelin with 47.65m and Lauren Farley 11th in 41.96m. Second claim athlete Phil Sesemann ran well for 5<sup>th</sup> in the mens' 5,000m with 13.56.53, and teenager Alex O'Callaghan Brown ran a brilliant 53.86 in qualifying for the mens' 400m hurdles final, but could not repeat it in the final where he took 8th spot and gained valuable experience, as did Benjamin

Gardiner who ran in the heats of the mens' 800m but not quick enough to progress. Another one of our talented youngsters Mallory Cluley ran well to the make the final of the ladies 100m hurdles where she took 7<sup>th</sup> place and clocked 13.99 for a season's best.

Further down the age groups some of our athletes were in action at an Inter Club Challenge at Lea Valley where Daisy Snell (11.75), Emily Algeo (12.48) and Amber Cockburn (13.99) all clocked pbs in the under 15 girls hurdles. Not to be outdone in the under 15 boys 80m hurdles, Rayhan Mourtada ((12.35) and Jonathan Ellerton (14.13) both also clocked new pbs.

Elsewhere at a pole vault competition in Southampton Holly Platt equalled her pb with 2.90m and Barnaby Corry leapt 4.10m. It was also good to see Alex Bruce-Littlewood getting back into form as he clocked a useful 8.24.9 over 3,000m at an event in Wimbledon.

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September Zara Obamakinwa broke the UK U17 discuss record with 51.69m at Moulton College which was a record dating back to 1990 held by Emma Merry of Rugby with 51.60m. This is a fantastic achievement and world under 18 leading mark.

At the DASH series of

meetings at Bromley's Norman Park on September 10th, Dina Asher Smith recorded one of the fastest times over 150m ever run by a British female athlete and it will be only a matter of time before Dina sets the best UK mark. Dina's time was 17.12 with Kaliyah Young our next fastest with 18.62, Mallory Cluley 18.79 and Tianna Haynes 19.19, while in the men's event Dan Putnam clocked 16.06 with Chizute Ogbedeh clocking 16.61 and Adam Islam-Medeaux 17.30. Dan also ran 33.99 in the 300m.

The following day at an open meeting in Dagenham Dan Putnam was back on the track and ran 21.87 over 200m with Abdul-Rahamann Jolaoso running 10.82 over 100m, and Morgan Squibb ran 2.19.64 over 800m.

Late in the previous week at Aldershot Alex Bruce-Littlewood ran 3.54.8 over 1500m which is his fastest time for 6 years and puts him top of the club rankings.

Blackheath held their first Open Meeting of September on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month with one more to come the following Monday, and the results showed a lot of great performances. Overall club athletes achieved 71 new personal bests and 11 seasons bests across the 75m, 200m, 600m and 1500m races held, and in the discus and pole

vault. Highlights included massive new pbs in the 1500m for Henry Fisher (3.59.00) and Tom Brash (4.00.94), while in the field Holly Platt vaulted over 2.93m for a new pb with Dillon Claydon recording 49.74m in the under 17 mens discus and Hannah MacAulay recording a new pb of 44.8m3 in the under 20 ladies discus.

*Nick Brooks*

# The Indoor Track Season 2021

*Despite the lockdown causing nearly all sporting events to be cancelled, Blackheath & Bromley athletes have managed to find places to compete albeit abroad in a wide variety of competitions and venues in Britain, Europe and the US.*

## Early indoor season performances by Blackheath & Bromley athletes at Karlsruhe, Dusseldorf, Texas, Michigan and Arkansas 23<sup>rd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

Dina Asher-Smith having not raced indoors in recent times ran a 7.08 in the 60m sprint to equal her pb in winning the World Athletic Tour Gold event on Friday in Karlsruhe in Germany, and two days later in Dusseldorf clocked a useful 7.12 to win the ISTAF indoor event.

In the US the club has many athletes studying at numerous Universities across the country. At College Station in Texas on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, Immanuela Aliu clocked 7.38 over 60m, and Lewis Mills ran 8.45.04 over 3000m, and on the same day in Ann Arbor in Michigan Marcia Sey clocked 24.57 over 200m and 8.39 over the 60m hurdles.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January at University Park in Pennsylvania, Marcia ran 7.68 over 60m while Divine Oladipo putt the shot

16.05m, while on the 29<sup>th</sup> January in Lubbock Texas, Ethan Brown ran 46.69 for 400m and ran 21.90 over 200m with Immanuela clocking 23.78 also over 200m.

Adam Gemili was also in the US and he clocked 6.81 over 60m in Fayetteville, Arkansas on 24<sup>th</sup> January. On 31<sup>st</sup> January, Zara Asante leapt to 11.93m in the triple jump at an event in Lyons in France.

## Blackheath & Bromley athletes in more competitive action in the US and Bloomington Indiana, and Lubbock 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021

This past weekend saw three club athletes in action across the US with Immanuela Aliu clocking 7.44 and 7.45 over 60m and also a useful 23.89 over 200m at a meeting in College Station, Texas. Meanwhile in Bloomington, Indiana, Marcia Sey ran 8.62 over 60m hurdles and Divine Oladipo putt the shot out to 15.97m, both athletes a little down on last week. Immanuela now ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the UK over 200m with Marcia 3<sup>rd</sup> over the hurdles, while Divine is 2<sup>nd</sup> in the UK shot putt rankings.

From the previous week it is also noted that Ethan Brown ran 46.69 over 400m in Lubbock, Texas for an indoor pb and his 4<sup>th</sup> fastest time ever. This also tops the UK men's rankings.

## Blackheath & Bromley athletes in action in the UK and abroad at Lee Valley, Sportcity Manchester, and in Michigan, Missouri, and Altenburg. 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021

This past weekend saw three BBHAC athletes in action in the UK and three in action in the US on the college circuit.

The British Athletics European Indoor selection events occurred at three different venues with Jahisha Thomas winning the ladies triple jump with a leap of 12.93m, but had to settle for 4<sup>th</sup> in the long jump with a jump of 6.12m at Lee Valley while Phil Sesemann (2<sup>nd</sup> claim) running at Sportcity in Manchester took third in the mens 3,000m in 7.57.22, having clocked 7.51.27 at the Bryggen Sports Invitational the previous week at the same venue for a pb. Kelechi Aguocha took 5<sup>th</sup> in the high jump with 2.12m having cleared 2.12m the previous week.

In Ann Arbor in Michigan in the US Marcia Sey ran the 200m in 25.14 and the 60m hurdles in 8.41 while in Maryville in Missouri, Elizabeth Ibidunni clocked 7.82 over 60m.

Away from the sport it is noted that Tremayne Gilling who was one of our top sprinters a decade or so ago, teamed up with Joel Fearon, Ben Simons and Lamin Deen the previous weekend in the 4 man bobsleigh representing

GB, taking 12<sup>th</sup> in the world championships at Altenburg in Germany.

## Five Blackheath & Bromley athletes in track and field action and Sesemann called up for European Indoors 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021

British Athletics can confirm Philip Sesemann has been added to the British team for the 2021 European Athletics Indoor Championships following the withdrawal of Marc Scott from the men's 3000m.

Sesemann who is a BBHAC higher claim athlete set a personal best of 7:51.27 over 3000m in Manchester earlier in the month. He was part of the mixed relay team at the 2018 European Cross Country Championships and this is his first call-up to a senior British team on the track.

Elsewhere, Ethan Brown improved on his recent indoor pb from a month ago to clock 46.62 over 400m for another club 400m indoor record at the Big 12 event in Lubbock, Texas, while Marcia Sey was busy clocking 7.59 over 60m, 24.44 over 200m and 8.27 over the 60m hurdles in Geneva Ohio, while Divine Oladipo at the same Big Ten Conference meeting hurled the shot out to 16.20m.

In Fayetteville Arkansas, Immanuela Aliu continued her busy indoor season clocking 7.38 over 60m and

23.45 over 200m at the South Eastern Conference Champs, while closer to home in a meeting in Loughborough, Zara Obamakinwa threw the discus out to 46.55m, presumably an outdoor performance.

A small correction in that the previous week Kelechi Aguocha high jumped 2.04m and not 2.12m as reported in the British Indoor trials.

## Phil Sesemann at Euro Indoors in Poland 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Saturday morning saw our higher claim member Phil Sesemann running for the GB team in Torun in Poland in the European Indoor Champs. Phil ran in heat 3 and ran superbly just missing his pb with a 7.51.70 clocking for 5<sup>th</sup> place which was not quite good enough to make the final. Perhaps if two athletes had not escaped from the pack so early on there might have had a different outcome but nevertheless Phil did himself and the club proud and got to compete against the 1500/3000m double winner and rising star Jacob Ingebrigtsen.

Also on duty at the Euro Champs was Mark Purser one of our executive management team, who was one of the official starters. Well done to Mark for rising to the top of the ranks in an official capacity, a very deserving reward for many years of hard work put into the sport.

## More US Performances for Blackheath & Bromley athletes in North Carolina, Maryland and Texas, Rhode Island 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021

On the US Collegiate circuit the club had 6 athletes in action. On Friday in a meeting in Mount Olive, North Carolina, Tom Parker threw the hammer out to a new pb of 67.68m, and on Saturday Divine Oladipo threw two seasons best in the shot and discus with 16.96m and 52.94m respectively, at a meeting in College Park in Maryland.

On the track Katy Ann McDonald a second year student at Louisiana State University clocked 2.06.84 narrowly winning an 800m event in Austin, Texas, while at the same meeting Immanuela Aliu has a busy weekend clocking 11.43 and later a 11.41 for new pb over 100m, and also clocked a windy 23.30 over 200m followed up with a legal 23.44 performance. Just up the road in Houston Lewis Mills ran 9.33.45 in the 3,000m steeplechase and Lois Warden recorded a seasons best in the pole vault with 3.50m at an event in Smithfield, Rhode Island.

*Nick Brooks*



# Norman Park Development Update

November 2019-March 2020

*Despite Following on from the update printed in the most previous issue of the Gazette we were about to arrive at the crucial point where the long standing development project could finally proceed .After a further 18 months of effort following the planning application in the first half of 2018 permission to build the Sports and Community Centre at Norman Park was given in November 2019. The queries from the GLA/ London Mayor have also been addressed. This is the culmination of 5 year's work and follows on from other, unsuccessful, attempts to use the springboard of the existing BBHAC buildings and facilities to address the future needs of the Club and the community it serves.*

Following on from the update printed in the most previous issue of the Gazette we were about to arrive at the crucial point where the long standing development project could finally proceed .After a further 18 months of effort following the planning application in the first half of 2018 permission to build the Sports and Community Centre at Norman Park was given in November 2019. The queries from the GLA/London Mayor have also been addressed. This is the culmination of 5 year's work and follows on from other, unsuccessful, attempts to use the springboard of the existing BBHAC buildings and facilities to address the future needs of the Club and the community it serves.

The following extracts follow the sequence of events for this year in which after various setbacks it looked as if a genuine breakthrough and potential green light to commence the construction of the proposed new club house had been reached.

## At a Trustees' meeting, in November 2019 concerning Norman Park Developments it was recorded that

- (i) *"The planning application is to be heard by the Bromley Development Control Committee at its meeting on 26 November and there is a recommendation from the Council for approval.*
- (ii) The application was unanimously approved at the 26 November meeting at which Chris Hilditch

made a short presentation.]

- (iii) *"There is a revised lease document which is an improvement on the initial version but still needs further work.*
- (iv) *"A Community Use Agreement is to be discussed.*
- (v) *"The Budget will need to be reviewed as some time has now passed since it was drawn up. The latest costings do not appear to be too bad.*
- (vi) *"We will now look again into potential funding and make contact with Sport England, English Athletics and London Marathon. Other possibilities are sponsorship of a revised website and an approach to Charity Bank which had earlier been prepared to make a loan of £250k.*
- (vii) *"The original builder has been dispensed with."*

## At the next Trustees' meeting, Jan 2020

The planning application was considered and approved by the Bromley Development Control Committee at its meeting on 26 November. Chris Hilditch made a short presentation to the Committee.

It was proposed that Alan Pickering would obtain a letter on behalf of the Jack Sims Fund to the effect that its investments would *"be made available towards the P Development capital costs. This will be needed to demonstrate to outside providers how much has been collected by the Club towards the future costs. If a start is to be made on building various preparatory works need to*

*be instigated now, i.e. the beginning of February, including work by structural and electrical engineers and the Quantity Surveyor (QS)."*

The "build" itself would likely to last 10 months with a further 2 months for the fit out. But there were three critical issues to be resolved before the build could begin:

- Planning permission for Bourne Way and a contract to pay BBHAC the estimated £2m for the site;
- Lease with Bromley re NP;
- Contract with developer of NP.

It was agreed that the "full development" should be aimed for but the situation reviewed in the summer, or the time when the detailed contracts are being sent out to see what is feasible. Some elements of the build could be deferred.

Jamie Stocks is now the builder we are working with re Bourne Way. Bob McQuillan, ex Chief Planner at Bromley, is going to be advising the builder. There has been an initial meeting with Jessica Lai in the Bromley Planning Department. Chris Hilditch noted that if there was a delay on the planning because the builder decided to go for more dwellings on the site, e.g. 30 rather than 20, then there might need to be a larger payment for the site.

We are being required to spend an additional £150k on solar panels, plus extra construction costs to reinforce the roof for their installation, which will create a shortfall.

## At the Joint Trustees/ Management Committee meeting, Feb 2020.

For Project "Norman Park" Chris Hilditch and Tim Soutar will continue to lead this work and no specific Action Points are designated as this is "continuing work". The VAT position is a critical issue for cash flow during the build phase so this has been specifically set out as an Action Point.

It was noted that the refurbishment of the Norman Park track last summer by Bromley Council, at a cost of some £300K, would not have gone ahead without BBHAC's commitment to develop the site with a new building for sporting and community use.

The next phases would include:

- Detailed specifications from the Quantity Surveyor and Design Team so that the Norman Park build project can be put out to tender, with a view to the build beginning in September at the end of the 2020 summer season;
- The lease arrangements between Bromley Council and BBHAC need to be finalised;
- Money raising and sponsorship need to be put in place;
- VAT position needs to be clarified and agreed with HMRC;
- Planning permission needs to be obtained for the development of the Bourne Way site;

Chris Hilditch noted that we now have a separate developer of the Bourne Way site who has retained the services of Bob McQuillan, ex Chief Planner at Bromley Council, to advise on the planning aspects. If, and when, the Bourne Way clubhouse was no longer available, and pending the completion of the NP facility, Wednesday nighters will be accommodated at the Old Beccehamians facilities at Spring Park and Cross-country events can be organised from the Met Police facilities at The Warren.

## At the Trustees' meeting March, 2020

The key issues identified at the January meeting were:

Planning permission for Bourne Way and a contract to pay BBHAC the estimated £2m for the site? *The developer is being advised by Bob McQuillan, ex Director of Planning at Bromley Council and Bob is confident that permission will be granted. If the developer seeks permission for 30 units that may be more problematic and that may be cut back, by Bromley Council, to 26 or even 20/22. Bob McQuillan will meet with Tim Horsman who is the current Assistant Director, Planning.*

Lease with Bromley re NP? *Tim is working with Muckle on the lease.*

Contract with developer of Norman Park? *There is a need to get a current valuation and various potential providers were discussed.*

*To be continued*

## Extract from Alan Pickering's Easter Message 2020



“Commenting upon the altruistic public response to the current crisis, the Prime Minister said that this proves that Society really does exist. Within BBHAC, this is no surprise. Our Club is famous for the community spirit within it and for the positive way in which our members interact with the wider community. It is this reputation which finds expression in our desire to move our spiritual heart and home from Bourne Way to Norman Park, uniting it with the track that has come to represent the Club's achievements in competitive track and field athletics and in promoting sport in the community.

A successful relocation will also offer the once in a lifetime opportunity to build dramatically improved facilities, which would serve as a busy hub of Club and community activity, providing athletes with valuable indoor space, and

allowing members of the public to mingle with, and be inspired by our athletes, coaches and officials. Observing stay at home and keep your distance principles, the Trustee Board held a ‘virtual’ meeting on 7 April. An important item on the agenda was the impact of the current crisis upon the planned relocation and the development at Norman Park.

Having carefully considered the matter and acknowledged the seriousness of the crisis, the Board came to the conclusion that the move to Norman Park remains a prudent, valuable and achievable objective. In advancing the project, we will, however, have to take account of the changing economic climate and the restrictions on movement that might be with us yet awhile.

Accordingly, the Board will, during the coming weeks, engage with its various contractors, Bromley Council and other authorities to take stock. Our team of consultants will also continue to progress the detailed design, update the cost estimate and identify how and where cost reductions may be achieved. At the very least, this may have an impact on the timing of the project.

A successful relocation will also offer the once in

a lifetime opportunity to build dramatically improved facilities, which would serve as a busy hub of Club and community activity,

The Board will meet again in late May to review the outcome of this external engagement and of the consultants' work. We will also consider the impact on fundraising that the financial challenges facing corporate management and others might have. Even the most generous providers of financial support may themselves be reviewing their priorities.”

*Alan Pickering*

## Norman Park Development Update

April - September 2020

### Trustees' meeting May 2020

The design team are now about 6 to 8 weeks behind their schedule which is very frustrating, particularly as they did not keep Tim Soutar and Chris Hilditch aware of this “slippage”. It was agreed that if we have the design brief completed before the construction industry gets fully underway in the easing of the lockdown then we may be able to achieve a more competitive price. Hence the delay by the design team is particularly galling.

There has been a response from Bromley Council re the draft lease which is now being reviewed by Muckle. Tim Soutar and Chris Hilditch have not yet had a chance to look at this current draft.

The Community Use Agreement has been more or less agreed by Sports England and it has proved rather more straightforward than was anticipated. The Council need to confirm it.

### The sale of Bourne Way and compliance with the Charities Act

The Trustees discussed the proposal to grant an option to Bromley South Limited to purchase the clubhouse site for an amount of £2m. In order to satisfy the obligations of the Trustees under sections 117 to 119 of the Charities Act 2011 (relating

to a disposal of property in reliance on the statutory power under s117(2)(b) and without the need to obtain prior consent of the Charity Commission) it was noted that an appropriately qualified surveyor, Adrian Tutchings, had been instructed on behalf of the Trustees to prepare the requisite written report. This report had been received and considered by the Trustees and appropriate advice received from the Charity's solicitors on its adequacy.

The advice confirms that it is clear from the report that the proposed sale would not be at an undervalue and that the relevant Charities Act requirements are satisfied by the determination, which had been made by the Trustees, that, having considered the report, they are satisfied that:

(A) the terms on which the disposition is proposed to be made are the best that can reasonably be obtained; and  
(B) in all the circumstances, including the variety of previous offers and estimates received, the current difficulties affecting the property market and the timing requirements of the Charity's planned development at Norman Park, it would not be appropriate to further advertise the sale.

It was accordingly resolved that any two Trustees should be authorised to sign the

option agreement in the form submitted to the meeting with such amendments as the relevant Trustees consider appropriate

### Finance and Norman Park Development

Paul Patten noted that *the Sponsorship document was ready to circulate but he may wait to circulate it until he judges that the market is “ready” to receive it. We are still waiting to hear back from the London Marathon Trust re our Stage 1 application. They are no longer accepting new applications. We have approached a couple of other funds but have been turned down by them.*

### Trustees' Meeting July, 2020 to consider The sale of Bourne Way

There has been a pre application planning meeting with Bromley Council which went extremely well. The Council requires a viability survey to test that no social housing is required which will cost the developer £17k. This demonstrates his commitment to the project: he continues to be prepared to invest significant sums in ensuring that it can go ahead.

The formal application is likely to be submitted in about three weeks.

### Norman Park Developments

The design team will shortly have all the details for a detailed spec and the QS

Continued

should have the costs of the major items towards the end of August. The Trustee/Directors would like to meet next on 25 August so Chris Hilditch will try to ensure that these costings are available by the time of that meeting.

If there is a likelihood that full funds are not available at the time of the initial construction works the current thinking is that some of the fit out costs for the internal track will be deferred.

The lease has been examined by Bromley Council which has come back with a number of comments. The main one relates to the car park and we will maintain the position we have always upheld which is that the car park must operate on a without charge first come first served basis.

### Finance and Norman Park Development

At the moment there is unlikely to be any funding from London Marathon: a formal letter is awaited confirming that, as a result of the financial impact of Covid 19, they have suspended funding for all new projects. (We have put in two applications to London Marathon and, in normal circumstances, it would not be possible to make a third application but we have been told that in our case it will be possible.) They have told us that they will inform us

when such a third application is possible. Paul Patten was asked not to wait to be told but to keep in contact so that we do not suffer if they forget to inform us about the timing of such a third application. It is possible that if Sport England provide us with funding, LMCT will change their approach, but the problem remains that the uncertainty of their position means we cannot currently rely on their support.

A recent meeting took place with Sport England who have now told us that they are willing to reconsider our application: our contact is Nick Boulter. We need to fill in a detailed questionnaire and submit it asap. Technically the relevant fund is closed but they will process our application. Their potential funding is £200k. Nick Boulter has sent a number of questions relating to design and funding to Tim Soutar who has shared the email with David, Chris and Paul.

Ian Young met with Derek Gregory the previous week to carry out the audit of the Jack Sims fund. There is currently between £350 and 400k to invest and the preference is to put the money into an athletics related part of the Norman Park project rather than the more community focused aspects. It is hoped that this stipulation will not cause problems in releasing

funds from the Jack Sims Fund and it was suggested that the substantial ground works would be a suitable use of the funds.

Chris Hilditch has prepared a sponsorship proposal which is going to be supplemented by a video being prepared by Dan Smith, a contact of Tim Soutar's, who worked for Nike in the UK and now has his own sports marketing organisation. He is putting together this video support with appearances from Dina Asher-Smith, Adam Gemili and Shaunagh Brown.

*To be continued*

## Norman Park Development Update

### September - December 2020

#### AGM Report, September 2020

It is now more than 7½ years since we started to explore with Bromley Council the possibility of consolidating our base at Norman Park. As a club, we first met to discuss this move early in 2015 and it's been a bumpy ride since then. But we persevere because, quite simply, a successful future for the Club is inextricably intertwined with securing the long-term future of the track. Better facilities, additional revenue generation and having all our members 'under one roof' are, of course, added benefits.

We are therefore pleased to be able to report significant progress (at last!) over the past year. First and foremost, having demonstrated to the Council that our plans for a new community sports and recreation facility are both tangible and sustainable, they have invested £300,000 in a full refurbishment of the track. An upgrade of the hammer cage to meet new safety requirements was a step too far for them but, together with NPTM, we have ensured that our cage is now fully compliant. Thus we now have a brand new track – sadly, hardly used this summer – which was re-opened in the presence of many Club members by Dina Asher-Smith last autumn.

After a somewhat lengthy and tortuous process, which also involved substantial, detailed applications to the GLA

to approve redevelopment in the Green Belt, at the end of last year we finally obtained planning permission for the new Centre. Since then, despite the added complications of Covid, we have assembled a professional design and engineering team, which has now produced the detailed design specification necessary for us to embark on the process of identifying a contractor to carry out the works. We intend to start this tendering process shortly.

At the same time, we have, together with our lawyers, been negotiating the terms of the 125 year lease to be provided by the Council. This process is also close to conclusion. As is finalisation of the community use agreement that is required by our planning conditions. (Achieving substantial community use of the new facility will be a key factor in ensuring its sustainability.)

That leaves concluding the sale of the Clubhouse site and filling the remaining funding gap as the major remaining pieces of the jigsaw.

#### The contribution of the Stocks family

The sale of our site at Bourne Way in such a way as to maximise its potential has not been straightforward, primarily because of problems with access. A number of developers have looked to buy the site and all have come back with the same concerns, but no solutions

and with offers that have been underwhelming. After several attempts to fashion a deal, we came upon the Stocks family who are property developers in London and Surrey. They have formed Bromley South Ltd to develop the site and we agreed an option to sell them the site for £2 million (a sum significantly greater than any other offers we have received). We have never realistically been in a position to develop the site ourselves, but the Stocks have been prepared, on the basis of the option and having found a solution to the access problem, to invest considerable sums in meeting all the costs necessary to obtain the necessary planning consent that will allow the deal to go ahead. The planning application and viability studies alone amount to £32,000 and architects', planning and traffic consultants' and related costs increase this figure to well over £100,000 (as we discovered with our Norman Park application). This substantial risk is being borne by the Stocks.

Through the pandemic, Jamie Stocks has been fantastic. He has stood by the agreed price, enabling us to continue with some confidence the detailed work on Norman Park. Had Jamie indicated he might not continue, we would have had to stand down the design team for NP until the outcome became clearer, causing further delay and, no doubt, cost increases.



The Stocks have employed a planning consultant and conducted a 'pre app' process with the Council. They are currently working through the additional surveys required and have changed the architects' drawings in accordance with the Council's suggestions. They also appear to have agreed an acceptable access system, which has arguably been the biggest hurdle.

Once planning is approved, our agreement is that we shall move quickly to completing the sale for £2 million. We believe this to be a fair value for the site with planning approval in circumstances where we have borne neither the cost nor risk of attaining it. In the worst case scenario, where planning is refused, our NP project will need to be put on hold, but we won't have incurred the substantial cost of the application. We cannot control the planning process, but we believe the Stocks' team are progressing this in a professional manner and they are very much incentivised to make this work.

The Stocks anticipate having all necessary surveys ready for submission of a full application by the end of September. As this will go to planning committee, it will take three weeks longer than the usual 9 week process: all being well, approval should be granted at the turn of the year. With a fair wind, this would allow us to start work

on the new facility in Norman Park around the beginning of March.

Which brings us on to funding. Our initial request to members met with a very generous response, albeit from a very small number of members. Our application to the London Marathon Trust has been thwarted as they are closed for further business for the foreseeable future. Fortunately, a further approach to Sport England with the support of England Athletics has this time been received positively and we are waiting to hear whether we have been successful in obtaining a substantial grant. The Charity Bank has confirmed that it is still willing to lend us a significant sum at favourable interest rates (but still at a cost).

#### **Alternative sources of funding**

As things stand and making certain assumptions relating to VAT, we believe we are still around £250,000 - £300,000 short of the funds we need. If we are unable to raise this sum, there is always the option of shortening the indoor sports hall, but we doubt that is anyone's preference given that it would restrict its utility for indoor training. One option we are exploring is to find a sponsor who would receive naming rights for our new facility. Another is to try to identify other external organisations who might contribute. To that end we

have prepared a presentation for submission to potential sponsors in the coming months. We can, and will if necessary, also ask the Council for a further contribution in some form. But, ultimately, it has now come to the time where we have to ask our members to stand up and be counted. Between us, we probably need to raise in the region of £150,000. In the context of a £3.5m project, that ought to be achievable, especially as our forebears have effectively contributed far, far more than that. Our focus as a Club for the rest of the year must therefore be on how we raise that money.

#### **Summary**

We are now within touching distance of setting in motion a project the GLA told Bromley Council would never happen. They believed, wrongly, that Blackheath & Bromley Harriers would not have the ability to take on such a task or the foresight to look beyond our Club for the greater good and sell our clubhouse to build a community facility. With one final push, we will not only prove them wrong, we will also build a facility that will benefit us all and herald in a new era for our fantastic Club. Last year was a big year for the Club, but this year there's far more to play for and everyone now has a role to play.

*Tim Sontar and Chris Hilditch*

## **Trustees' Meeting December 2020**

### **The sale of Bourne Way**

The plans are almost on the point of being submitted to Bromley Council with just a fire report that has been asked for prior to the application.

The position of the Hayes Village Association was discussed but it is hoped that the considerable distance of the proposed new build from existing houses plus the use of the proceeds to provide community facilities should ensure that any local opposition can be countered.

The message should be that we are not "banking" any profit from the planning permission and development but are reinvesting all the proceeds in a local community facility to which the Club is adding a considerable amount from other resources.

The option with the developers has been extended three months to the end of March 2021.

### **Norman Park Developments**

We will not be subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy as we have demonstrated that we are exempt as being a charity.

There were some unexpected additions to the design specifications with tunnelled

vents on the roof which would cause maintenance issues and are not favoured by the architect as they would detract from the visual impact. The QS has been asked to speak about this to the mechanical engineer.

The VAT position needs to be firmed up.

We also need to have one main contractor to whom the VAT exemption certificate can be issued.

### **Financing Our Norman Park Development Project**

More than six years ago we began formal discussions with the London Borough of Bromley concerning the future of 'our' track at Norman Park. The Council was concerned that it might not be able to guarantee a secure future for the track and it was exploring various options relating to its future. It quickly became apparent that, unless we found a way of taking over the responsibility for, and expense of, operating and maintaining the track, our continued use in the medium to long term could not be taken for granted.

Further discussion and deliberation led us to the conclusion that the only acceptable solution would be for us to agree to accept an 'asset transfer' of the track on a long term lease and that, given that income from

the use of the track itself was never likely to meet its running costs, we would need to provide complementary facilities that would generate adequate income. We had also, for some time, been keen to find a home for all members of the Club under one roof and had only rejected moving our clubhouse to Norman Park over concerns as to security of tenure and possible planning difficulties. However, the Council believed these matters could be satisfactorily addressed if we were prepared to shoulder the majority of the financial burden.

Initial budget calculations demonstrated that merely building a replacement clubhouse at the track was very unlikely to prove financially viable and that to ensure sufficient income we would need to create a building which contained a range of facilities that could also be used by the local community. In turn, this would result in a higher building cost, requiring a substantial fund-raising exercise, over and above the proceeds we should be able to generate from the sale of the Sydney Wooderson Centre and the sizeable reserves we have accrued over the years, largely from bequests.

Several years later, having overcome numerous challenges, we have now

## Continued

reached the stage where we are ready to tender for the construction works. Although progress may be thought to have been slow, it may be helpful to explain what we have achieved to date:

- (i) planning permission for a Community Sports and Recreation Facility has been obtained;
- (ii) the detailed engineering design has been undertaken;
- (iii) a 125 year lease has been negotiated with the Council;
- (iv) a sizeable grant from Sport England has been awarded (though not, unfortunately, from London Marathon Charitable Trust, as a result of the impact of Covid);
- (v) the Club has been converted into a limited company and been granted charitable status;
- (vi) the Charity Bank has agreed the terms of a significant loan facility;
- (vii) we have held fruitful discussions with HMRC to confirm entitlement to preferential VAT treatment;
- (viii) an exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy has

been applied for and received;

- (ix) we have worked alongside a local developer to address various problems and create a maximum return from the sale of our Bourne Way site (for which a planning application has now been made); and
- (x) last but not least, we have succeeded in persuading the Council of the viability of our project such that they have invested £300,000 in a major refurbishment of the track.

Although we shall only know what the actual build cost will be when we select the successful tenderer, on the basis of the detailed engineering design work, our professional advisers believe that our budget figures are as realistic as they can be. The total project cost (including professional fees, fit-out costs, a contingency allowance, the limited VAT payable and the cost of hiring temporary facilities during the construction period) is estimated at approximately £3,500,000.

All things being equal, therefore, we believe that to be in a position to proceed to award the contract for the works and effectively

launch the project, we need to raise £200,000 from the membership and a similar amount from external sources (sponsorship, naming rights, etc.).

With £85,000 already raised from a small number of members, we are confident that our membership will rise to the challenge and ensure we are able to take advantage of this opportunity to secure the future of the track and the Club for the next 125 years.

## Club AGM March 2021

*The Second AGM to be held remotely by Zoom link due to the Covid pandemic took place on March 20th 2021. It would be of considerable interest to many persons present as it would contain discussion of the latest Norman Park Development Update which was now entering its most crucial phase, especially as it concerned not only the progress of the building project itself but also of the proposed sale of the Club's property at 56 Bourne Way*

### Norman Park update

Despite the continuing impact of Covid 19, the work on the Club's project at Norman Park continues and the end is now in sight, or at least the end of the beginning of construction.

The two major, final hurdles remain appointment of a contractor to carry out the works and the sale of the Clubhouse site.

The preparation for construction has not gone as smoothly as we'd hoped: having taken advantage of the planning process delay to develop a detailed engineering design and having short-listed 4 potential bidders, we went out to formal tender in late January and received the bids back in mid-March. These came in substantially higher than our advisers had anticipated and, therefore, our budget. We could discuss the

reasons - general uncertainty resulting from Brexit, Covid, HS2, problems in the steel industry, etc. - but it would take us no further forward: we are where we are and have no option other than to reduce the size of the building to something we can afford.

With the help of our professional team, we have come up with Plan B and identified the contractor who we'll be working with over the next few weeks to finalise the revised scope. Basically, we'll now need to phase the works, with the first phase being the development of a squared off building meaning that approximately half of the sports hall housing the indoor track will be left to be developed as phase two at a currently undetermined future date. This is a huge disappointment to us all, but there does not appear to be any other feasible option. We are potentially a victim of our own ambition of trying to provide the best possible facilities, but we need to remember that this solution will still meet the main objectives which we identified when we set out on this journey some years ago now. These were to:

1. Secure the sustainability of the track for the long term and with it...
2. Securing the future of the Club as we know it
3. Re-unite the whole of the Club 'under one roof'
4. Provide improved facilities

for all members

5. Provide a centre that will enable us to grow the Club and attract more members and volunteers
6. Improve the financial position of the Club by opening up new income streams; and
7. Improve our relationship and engagement with the local community.

All these will still be met.

We therefore continue to aim to start work by mid-summer, subject primarily to the sale of Bourne Way proceeding.

### Questions and Answers

There were a number of questions on both Norman Park and Bourne Way and the ones covering Norman Park are dealt with here:

John Hubbard asked what was the funding gap and Tim Soutar replied £1m, in round figures

David King asked whether the change in the specification would require a new planning application. The main change is to the Sports Hall and the indoor track but it is hoped to do the development in two phases so that the overall project is largely unchanged, avoiding the requirement for a revised planning permission.

Derek Gregory asked about the practical impact of the revised construction project. Tim Soutar said that most users would not notice the change as the main difference

Continued

was the smaller Sports Hall and the reduced length of the indoor track. The indoor track was never going to be used for competitions as there is no capacity for spectators. The space will now have limited use for indoor sprinting and hurdling but will still be usable as a warm up facility.

### Bourne Way update

The pandemic slowed the planning process at Bromley Council quite considerably and the planning application was only finally able to be made in August 2020 and it was accepted/validated by Bromley Council in December 2020.

The proposal was for a block of 36 flats and we agreed with the developer that the Club would receive an additional £10k for each flat in excess of 26 approved by the Council.

A considerable amount of local opposition has been orchestrated and the developer decided to make the proposal more acceptable by reducing the number of units by 4, to 32 units.

The initial application was to have been considered by the Bromley Development Control Committee at its meeting on 25 March 2021 but the revised proposal is now likely to be heard by that Committee at its meeting on 25 May 2021.

The developer has spent nearly £200k on various surveys and other works required by Bromley

Council before validating the planning application. Chris Hilditch said that he remained confident that the planning application would be approved by the Development Control Committee and he had met with two members of the Committee, on site, to make sure they understood the nature of the proposal and how the amended proposal addressed the concerns of local residents.

The block of flats will be more than 30m from any existing overlooking properties compared with the planning requirement of at least 20m. The traffic system is unlikely to create more traffic movements than when the existing clubhouse is in use. There has been criticism about the lack of parking spaces but there are 80 spaces for bicycles some of which could be reallocated.

The site is also very close to Hayes station and on a number of bus routes so there is considerable public transport. The site is 2m lower than Bourne Way so the four storey proposed building is equivalent to a three storey building on Bourne Way.

Derek Gregory asked whether there was a Plan B in case the planning application is rejected. He mentioned in particular an earlier scheme to build 12-15 town houses on the site. Chris Hilditch said that the Council was keen for the development to be 1 or 2 bedroom flats as that is

what is required in Bromley and for which permission is most likely to be given. In the current situation the choice is rather binary, the permission is granted and the sale goes through and releases funds for the Norman Park development, or a completely new approach will be required.

Derek Gregory had submitted a written question in advance of the AGM which is reproduced below:

“The Club Annual Report contains a section headed “Norman Park Update” written by Tim Soutar. The penultimate sentence reads: “We are also awaiting the Council planning meeting which, despite the volume of objections posted on the planning portal, we hope will pass the revised plans now submitted and allow us to complete the key step of completing the sale of Bourne Way”

Since there appears to be no date indicated by the Council when their planning committee will meet and given the acknowledged volume of objections to the current planning application, it appears just possible that the optimism expressed by the Trustees could be misplaced, unless they have information not available to members. If the current planning application were to be turned down at some time April - June 2021, what is the Trustees’ Plan B?

*To be continued*

# The Tokyo Olympiad 1964

Recollections of a seasoned rugby amateur and frustrated athlete

*This summer would have seen another Olympiad, with the games returning to the City of Tokyo where they had been held back in the autumn of 1964. British athletics was organised on a different footing from what it is organised now and by the 1960s Britain's athletic performances had become relatively modest even though the pool of talent was strong enough for expectations to be rated high. However compared with the more recent Olympiads we experienced greater success and for the first time gold medals for women athletes on the track and field. Such feats were witnessed by Reading based rugby prop Scott Mansfield, with whom I went on several walking and cycling holidays. This is his perspective of those games*

### The best of years

Arguably, 1964 was one of the best years of my life and an Olympic Year too. I passed my driving test, had bought a Ford Anglia 105E, and drove down to Zadar and back with two School friends, camping in a pitiful apology for a tent. The Rhine, Oberammergau, Innsbruck, Venice on the way, and Switzerland, Paris on the way back. And also at 18, I passed parts 1 and 2 of an Intermediate Professional Qualification with a subject prize, the youngest person ever to do so. I loved my Sport, and played football badly for the Council team, Life was very good. I was also very much into Athletics but well I couldn't avoid being so with a father who was in his own way a pretty distinguished athlete with whom trips to the White City to see Inter Counties, AAAs, Internationals had been the norm throughout my formative years!. One example was a trip to see Derek Ibbotson break the World Mile Record in 1957.

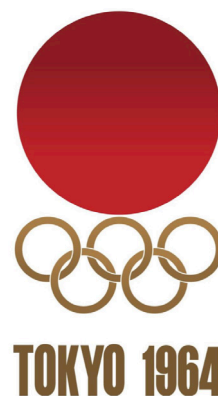
My first real recollection of the Olympics was of a relative's medal proudly displayed on the mantelpiece in our front room. Admittedly it was just a

a commemorative medal but Uncle Jo was in the team of 3 selected in 1948 and got close in 1952 but not close enough.. In other

Olympics such as 1956 I have a memory of hearing the commentary at breakfast time of Chris Brasher winning the Steeplechase. We didn't have a TV in 1960, but my Aunt in Oxford did and I stayed with her for two weeks and watched lots of the action, in particular the performances of British sprinter Peter Radford who won medals in the Olympics, Commonwealth Games and European Championships. I remember the 100 metres and Radford winning the bronze. There were two false starts, one each by the winner and runner up but it was third time lucky with the start! With today's rules Peter would have won Gold!

### Memories of Tokyo 1964

Then it was the 1964 Olympiad in Tokyo. One thing at the outset that should be noted is that of the 5151 competitors in the '64 Games only 678 were female. A slightly higher percentage than in 1948 where less than 10% were ladies. In the 1964 Athletics, 24 events for Men, just 12 for Women (9 in 1948). Women could run no further than 800m (200m in 1948, it was considered bad for them!). Just 93 Nations and 19 Sports in 1964. 2016, it was 207 Nations, 28 Sports and 11238 competitors, 47 Athletics events, as no 50k Walk for women. In 2012 it was 55/45 for Men/Women.





## Continued

Can't find the figures for 2016 though!

So what were my memories of Tokyo 1964? There were great expectations for Anne Packer in the 400 metres but, in the event, she experienced disappointment. And of course the same reaction in the Men's 400 for her fiancé, Robbie Brightwell. But there would be redemption in the 800s for Ann. However, strangely it didn't feel to me as good as a win in the 400 would have done! Felt a bit of an anti-climax. I can't explain why!

Emperor Hirohito had opened the Games which were held between 10th and 24th October 1964. This was scheduled to avoid the summer heat and begs the question as to why the Games in 2020 will take place at the end of July early August. Maybe today's athletes are more likely to endure in such conditions, and have been groomed to perform in more challenging circumstances.

### Success in the field

Mary Rand was exceptional. In relative terms she experienced disappointment in the Pentathlon, winning only silver, even though she was best performer in 3 of the 5 events. Landing 6 metres behind Irina Press in the Shot Putt was the big problem! But she experienced joy winning the Gold in the Long Jump

where she was outstanding with a 6.77 world record. The medal in the 4x100 completed her set of gold, silver and bronze. Sensibly, she didn't compete in the sprint hurdles for which she was also selected and was a likely medallist. Mary Peters was 4th in the Pentathlon, a foretaste of later Olympic glory.

Lynn Davies in the Long Jump exceeded expectations in what has always been one of my favourite events., and in a very tight competition where he defeated favourites Boston and Ter-Ovanesyan. But it was walking that naturally excited our household. Paul Nihil from Surrey WC, missing Gold by being just 19 seconds behind Abdon Pamich. 1960 winner, Don Thompson, was 9th even though he walked the distance 3 minutes faster than in Rome. In 16th place, and in his fifth Olympics, was John Llunggren who won the event in 1948. In 1964 he walked the distance 12 minutes faster than he did in 1948! John had been just 17 seconds behind Don when winning silver in 1960. Ken Matthews won the 1964 20k Walk in an Olympic Record. I'd seen Ken walk many times at the White City but neither my Dad nor I favoured his walking style, far preferring the poetry in and motion movement of one of his contemporaries, Stan

Vickers. Stan had previous form from earlier Olympiads having been bronze medallist in the 1960 Games at 20k and was also in Melbourne in 1956.

### Ron Clark.. what might have been?

Ron Clarke excited everyone! World Record holder at 10000, how could he not win in Tokyo! However to our disappointment! he only won bronze behind winner Billy Mills. He never won an Olympic Gold but was presented with one by his great admirer Emil Zátopek. In 1964, Ron didn't just run the 10000, but he also entered heats and final of the 5000, running 13.48 and 13.58. respectively, finishing 9th in the 5000 final and 9th in the Marathon in 2.20. I met Ron Clarke on a couple occasions and asked him about the Tokyo 10000. He was of course conscious of what might have been..

And of course Mexico was far from a level playing field and he probably destroyed his health in the effort. 6th place and over 2 minutes slower than his world record such were the effects of Altitude. I saw him in 1965 being the first person to break 13 minutes for 3 miles with his 12.52. Absolutely awesome! That event mattered far more in those days and 13 minutes was another barrier a bit like

the 4 minute mile and 2 hour Marathon. It was also just 4 days before his 27.39 world record for 10000m.

### Marathon efforts

In the Marathon there was a memorable performance by Abebe Bikila from Ethiopia who famously ran in bare feet in 1960, to retain his Olympic title, this time however running in shoes. It was stated that he had his appendix removed 6 weeks before the Tokyo Marathon. Tragically his life was cut short early at age 41 by a cerebral haemorrhage related to being paralysed in a car accident. Behind him by 4 minutes to take silver, was Britain's Basil Heatley and Brian Kilby finished 4th just 40 seconds behind the Japanese, Tsuburaya who took bronze

I met Basil at a 1991 gathering of living Olympians in Manchester with Princess Anne present, together with British Olympians from as far back as 192. Each, was presented with a gold pin with the 5 rings and the year of the Olympiad they competed at.

There was another Ron Clark! He won the Poly Marathon in 1956 and was selected for the 1956 Games in Melbourne. Sadly he recorded DNF. He ran in plimsols bought for ten shillings (50p) in Woolworths. What would all of these great runners from yesteryear make of the new Shoe technology!

And so to Tokyo 2020! It will write its own History. Hopefully this will be very positive for our Olympic stars. from Backheath such as Dina, Adam and KJT. There will be surprises and new names will appear. In the lead up there will be much said and shown about 1964 and many living medallists from those Games will be interviewed and will of course be there.

### The Olympics rises again

At one stage it looked as if the Olympics might die. The Olympiads of 1976, 1980 and 1984 all had their problems and the World Athletics Champs commenced in 1983 so Athletics would not have a void. But the crisis subsided and the Worlds Championships then became slightly devalued when they changed to being held every two years. So the Olympics never really slipped from its pedestal and is the number one crown for any Athlete. Tokyo 2020 will certainly be an unforgettable celebration. The recent Rugby World Cup has given just a glimpse of what a great Olympics we can expect.

*Scott Mansfield (ed. Norris Newman aka Newman Nogs)*



*p.s due to Covid the games will now take place in the summer of 2021.*

## England Athletics awards December 2020

*It was a successful evening for Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC at the England Athletics London Region awards ceremony last night. The Club were winners in two categories, and also achieved several runners up places.*

BBHAC were awarded "Club of the Year", testament to the collective hard work and achievements of so many in the Club. In addition, Claire Austridge was named Volunteer of the Year, recognising the time and effort she freely gives to fundraising, our young athletes and the wider community.

Holly Platt, who produced an excellent video to accompany the Club's nomination for Club of the Year award, was runner up in the "Young Volunteer of the Year" category for her outstanding contribution to the Club's social media presence.

David Liston, who has spent many years coaching the Club's middle distance athletes, achieved runner up in the Coach of the Year category. David spoke genuinely of the fulfilment coaching has given him over the years.

Finally, John Baldwin, who in over 65 years of membership has undertaken many vital

roles within the club, was named runner up in the Services to Athletics category.

President Nic Corry had this to say in response to a great evening for the club:

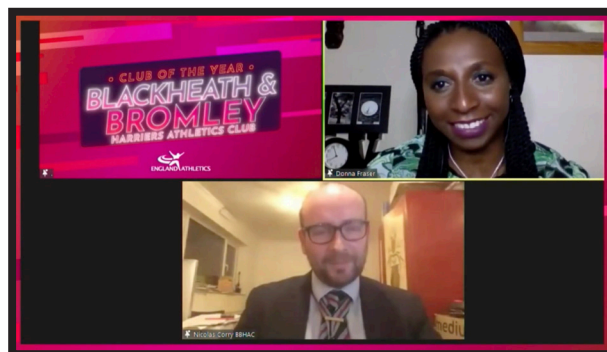
"These awards recognise the collective efforts of the entire Blackheath & Bromley Harrier Community. BBHAC achieved success in a wide range of categories demonstrating that, even in a challenging year for the Sport of Athletics, BBHAC continues to excel as a Club. The volunteers, who freely

*Top photo: President Nic Corry delivering praise to the Blackheath Harriers Community.*

*Lower photo: Claire Austridge was named volunteer of the year.*

give their time, allow us to have the platform to enable

so many to succeed. We should all celebrate in this night of achievement for the Club and its volunteers!"



## The Awards and the Athletics Weekly 2020 rankings

Even though 2020 with the COVID-19 lockdowns caused many competitions to be called off and training to be limited or cancelled, many athletes took the chance to either rest up or train more lightly this year, or even try new events. However, many of the club's athletes went on to produce some fantastic performances as you will see below.

Kelechi Aguocha picked up third place in the British Junior Male Athlete of the year award behind Max Burgin and Lewis Byng for his 2.22m high jump which was a new club record. This is a fantastic achievement for a young athlete who showed so much improvement this season.

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Katie Ann McDonald	16th	800m	2.04.59
Mallory Cluley	10th	100m Hurdles	13.99
Alex Hill	15th	400m Hurdles	62.18
Sarah Abrams	5th	Long Jump	6.31
Jahisha Thomas	6th	Long Jump	6.26m
Funmini Olajide	12th	Long Jump	6.14m
Zara Asante	15th	Triple Jump	12.42m
Nana Gyedu	7th	Shot	14.47m
Zara Obamakinwa	5th	Discus	51.69m
Rebekah Walton	7th	Javelin	47.65m
Lauren Farley	8th	Javelin	46.56m

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Adam Gemili	4th	100m	10.28
Adam Gemili	1st	200m	20.56
Alex Botterill (HCA)	10th	800m	1.46.82
Phil Sesemann	5th	3000m	7.52.42
Phil Sesemann	8th	5000m	13.56.83
Kelechi Aguocha	5th	High Jump	2.22m
Jonathan Ilori	5th	Triple Jump	15.83
Jay Whiteaker	1st	Javelin	77.81m

*In the AW 2020 Merit Rankings UK Men we had 8 athletes feature with James Whiteaker and Adam Gemili taking pride of place both with first places.*

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Sarah Abrahams	5th	Long Jump	6.31m
Jahisha Thomas	7th	Long Jump	6.26m
Funmini Olajide	12th	Long Jump	6.14m
Nana Gyedu	7th	Shot	14.47m
Zara Obamakinwa	5th	Discus	51.69m
Rebekah Walton	7th	Javelin	47.65m
Lauren Farley	10th	Javelin	46.56m

*In the AW 2020 Merit Rankings UK Women we had 7 athletes feature including Sarah Abrams, Jahisha Thomas and Funmini Olajide (HCA) in the long jump.*

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Adam Gemili	3rd	100m	10.28
Adam Gemili	3rd	200m	20.56
Alex Botterill (HCA)	10th	800m	1.46.82
Phil Sesemann	7th	3000m	7.52.42
Phil Sesemann	11th	5000m	13.56.83
Alex O'Callaghan Brown	9th	400m Hurdles	53.86
Kelechi Aguocha	4th	High Jump	2.22m
Jonathan Ilori	4th	Triple Jump	15.83m
James Whiteaker	1st	Javelin	77.81m

*In the Mens AW 2020 Performance Rankings the club registered 8 top 10 rankings with James taking 1st in the javelin by almost 5 metres.*

*In the Ladies Performance Rankings they were slightly down on the men with 6 top ten rankings*

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Ethan Brown	1st	400m	47.4
Alex O'Callaghan Brown	1st	400m Hurdles	53.86
Kelechi Aguocha	1st	Long Jump	2.22m
Pedro Gleadow	5th	Pole Vault	4.64m

*In the mens under 20 performance rankings there were three top rankings for Ethan Brown, Alex O'Callaghan Brown and Kelechi Aguocha.*

Name	Rank	Event	Performance
Holly Mpassy	5th	400m	55.71
Mallory Cluley	5th	100m Hurdles	13.99
Funmini Olajide	3rd	Long Jump	6.14m
Nana Gyedu	2nd	Shot	14.47m
Zara Obamakinwa	1st	Discus	51.69m
Hannah MacAulay	5th	Discus	44.83m
Lauren Farley	3rd	Javelin	46.56m

*While in the ladies events there seven top 10 rankings with Zara taking top spot in the discus and Nana second in the shot.*

Name	Rank	Age Group	Event	Performance
Sam Reardon	1st	U17M	400m	48.87
Sam Reardon	1st	U17M	800m	1.52.82
Barnaby Corry	2nd	U17M	Pole Vault	4.30m
Amarisa Sibley	4th	U17W	800m	2.09.47
Kelsey Pullin	3rd	U17W	300m H	45.92
Zara Obamakinwa	1st	U17W	Discus	51.69m
Oscar Whitcombe	4th	U15B	Pole Vault	3.18m
Faith Akinbileje	4th	U15G	100m	12.48
Faith Akinbileje	2nd	U15G	200m	25.02
Daisy Snell	3rd	U15G	Long Jump	5.34m

*Not to be outdone the juniors in the U17 and U15 categories had ten top 10s in the rankings with Sam Reardon top of the under 17 mens 400m and 800m, and Zara top in the ladies discus,*

# Ian Christopher Wilson

17 June 1944 - 5 December 2020

*It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Past President Ian Wilson on the 5th of December last year. He had been ill with cancer for about 18 months but it came as a surprise since he had been very upbeat and positive about the treatment he was receiving. He was very much a "glass half full" man and known for a smile which was never far from his face.*



*Ian running as a Master at Sutton Coldfield*

He joined the Club in June 1959 as a fifteen year old and soon settled in, progressing through the age groups to be one of our most enthusiastic and reliable members representing the Club in British League, cross country and road racing. The following illustrates his versatility and ability:-

His track and road PBs were:

14:47.4 (5000m); 30:26.6 (10,000m); 1 Hour track run covering 11 miles 1071 yds (18683m) at Ladywell to record 3rd best club distance; 10 miles road - 50:49 and marathon - 2:28.16. His time of 2:38.41 in the first London Marathon is also the fastest by an incumbent President.

On the country he ran bests of 7<sup>th</sup> in the Southern Junior and 16<sup>th</sup> in the National. As a Senior he ran Southern Championships from 1967 - 84 finishing in the scoring 6 in 15 out of 17 with a best position of 11<sup>th</sup>. He ran in Nationals from 1966 - 82 finishing in the scoring 6 in all he ran with a best position of 70<sup>th</sup>. In addition to being part of the organising team for the two 24 Hour 10 man x 1 mile relays at Crystal Palace in 1973 and 1974 he was a member of the teams. The distance covered in the 1973 event of 291 miles 306 yards was within a couple of miles of the record set by a bona fide club team, with Ian running the final 306 yards. The 1974 race was blighted by a wind for the first half of the race resulting in slowing from a record pace to only covering 286 miles 963 yds. All of this was achieved despite his left leg being around one inch longer than the right, only found out when he was being measured for his wedding suit!

Moving to live in Market Harborough he became the coach for the Harborough AC veteran women's endurance squad. Notable amongst those he coached was Angela

Copson, only starting in a charity run when she was aged 59, and went on to hold record fastest times over six distances in both the W60 and W65 age groups.

Outside of running he played an active part in the administration of the Club and also with outside organisations at Regional and National levels. He served as Cross Country Captain for the Club from 1972 to 1979, became a Vice President in 1976 and President for 1981 to 1982. This made him the second ever youngest President after Sydney Wooderson. Anyone who has enjoyed a shower at the Clubhouse in the last forty odd years can thank Ian and his business partner, Colin Wallis, who designed and installed the boiler and hot water system.

External representation included the committee of the South of the Thames and Southern Counties Cross Country, for whom he served as representative to the ECCA, and became the President of both. He also acted as the Team Manager for the Southern Counties CC, then for the



*Ian with Pauline after his epic run in the 1973 24 hour relay*

Junior England team, rising to manage the Senior squad and finally acting as manager for the Great Britain team from 1989-95 including seven World Cross Country Championships. Also well known as Team Leader for the start area and the infamous maroon in a dustbin start signal at Parliament Hill Fields National and Southern CCs.

His heart was always with the Club and continued close interest in what was going on. He was a most notable Harrier and will be greatly missed. He is survived by Pauline his wife of over fifty years, herself a Kent Javelin champion and Kent netball player, but sadly now living in care, and his sons Mark and Ben.

It will be remembered that in July 2014 he along with two fellow past presidents Chris Haines and Gary Botley held a joint 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at the club house. Reflecting on that occasion the Gazette observed that although now an elder statesman in the club he was in younger years dynamic, spirited and ..restless for change in an institution steeped in archaic tradition.

In later years, he strove to break down any perceived exclusivity and, encouraged the club to move on to set the forces of change in motion. Ian remained forever young at heart, and whatever the season was a true evergreen.

*PP John Baldwin/PP Pat Calnan/  
PP Chris Haines/Chris Woodcock/  
ed. By Wilf Orton VP*

## Letters to the editor

Hi Wilf,

Thanks for your email and I'm flattered that my reflections will appear in the Gazette. They had originally been sent to my only surviving contemporaries : John Baldwin & Ian Wilson for comments, but then mysteriously found its way on to the website!

During our lockdown I've taken the opportunity to pen memoir chapters, gleaned mostly from the 120+ letters I wrote home to my parents during my stay in the UK 1959-62. As my Dad was a champion harrier, captain of NZ team in 1935 and a long time administrator, club, province & nationally, I covered very extensively everything about our sport and especially Blackheath.

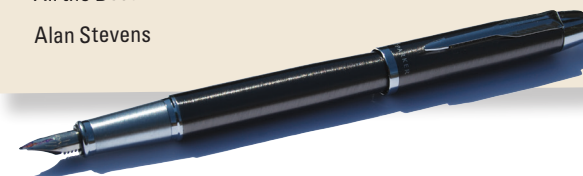
Our sport in New Zealand was patterned on the UK club system - altho' both genders were included. So I detailed the AGM (posted the report & accounts) even on Saturdays the cost of the tea items & beer!! My first funnel finish race I sent diagrams & detail home and he instituted the system for our Wellington Colleges combined XC champs that my Scottish Club organised - the first time in New Zealand. Incidentally, in my time on the IAAF XC Cttee I was put in charge of the funnel finish at the World XC Champs - until replaced by chip timing! Wilf, feel free to use anything you like. The memoir was written mainly for the benefit of our 3 kids who said they didn't want a dry, dreary account but some of my stories!

There is much more I could have included about Blackheath, especially the personalities and those who were so good to me and tolerated my colonial idiosyncrasies!!! The Gazette was always special, especially when I still knew many featured and whilst I still had a Bank of New Zealand London account I sent a regular donation, to compensate for the postage. However that ceased when it was arbitrarily closed " as the funds remaining did not justify them operating my account"! Miserable sods - at that stage still Govt owned!

Keep up the great job you do with the Gazette - it's much appreciated by those remote from Hayes.

All the Best

Alan Stevens





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Editor:  
Wilf Orton – 020 8771 1128  
wilfred.orton@justice.gov.uk

Assistant Editor:  
Vacant

Layout and Production:  
Ozzie Adams – 07788 728708  
ozzie@flamingocreative.co.uk

Club Headquarters  
Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC  
The Sydney Wooderson Centre  
56 Bourne Way, Hayes  
Bromley, Kent BR2 7EY

**Past Presidents**

Existing Past Presidents of Blackheath Harriers AC:  
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Vice Presidents of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC:  
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**Photographs**

Front cover: Dick Griffin.

The editing team wish to express their thanks for all those who contributed articles and photographs for this issue. We have made every effort to correctly identify all the photographers but sometimes 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.

Thanks for photographs to all who took them.

