



"Perfer et Obdura"

Blackheath Harriers' Gazette



THE PRESIDENT

A Londoner born and bred he was originally interested in the gentler pursuits of walking and climbing but was annually persuaded to run in the Inter-Building Societies' Cross Country Race; and in 1933 found himself in the winning team. Encouraged by this he became attracted to the Club in the early days of the war by the need for simple exercise and rationed beer.

After years of enjoying pack-running and mob matches he achieved a personal ambition by becoming Hon. Secretary of the Wine Committee and thus discovering the secret formula of the Punch. A further success followed in winning the 'Closing Five' in 1952 since when he became a stalwart of the Trail Layers, and expects to be back on course after this racing year. Is Hon. Sec. of Blackheath Geriatrics (QV) and looks forward to welcoming new members with the passing of the years.

114th/115th SEASON, 1983-84

President:

M. A. WALKER
161 Turnpike Link, Park Hill, Croydon, Surrey.
Tel. 01-681 3637

Secretary:

W. F. LAKE
4 Sutherland Avenue, Orpington, Kent.
Tel. Orpington 27484

Treasurer:

I. K. YOUNG
72, Copers Cope Road, Beckenham, Kent.
Tel. 01-650 6300

Editor:

L. ROBERTS
117 Croydon Road, Keston, Kent.
Tel. Farnborough 57438

Asst. Editor (Courier):

P. E. SHEPHEARD
9 Mapleton Close, Hayesford Park, Bromley, Kent.
Tel. 01-464 9445

Asst. Editor (Track):

T. LLEWELYN
35 Chapel View, South Croydon, Surrey.

Asst. Editor (General):

D. W. DUNN
24 Rochelle Court, Foxgrove Road, Beckenham, Kent.
Tel. 01-658 2783

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Although the Club is on the crest of an athletic wave the administrative backing which is vital to the smooth running is lacking, due to the prolonged span of active running life. It is vital for members to spare some of their time to helping the Club – more hands will lighten the load of the present hard-pressed officials.

I would stress three points for all members:—

Commitment – to run hard and work hard in everything you do for the Club.

Contact – to ensure that you know about the projects and programmes and help the organisers in their tasks.

Cash – to respond generously to the appeals which are made. You know of the 'cash flow' problems from the Hon. Treasurer – bridge that gap.

Help in every way to make this a successful year for the Club, enjoy your running, and don't forget the 'unforgiving minute'.

EDITORIAL

Hello everybody. My name is Les Roberts and I am your new Editor. I hope this news does not mean that you are already preparing to fold up the Gazette to steady the kitchen table or defoliate it to line drawers with, because without doubt this has been a most remarkable year for the Club and accordingly there has been much to report on. If the Gazette does not inform and entertain you then it can only be because my team (meet them opposite) and I have failed to pick up the Club atmosphere and present its exploits to you adequately. Your criticisms in this direction will therefore be welcomed.

My first objective is to get the news up to date as at the time of going to print and my second is to keep it there. In pursuit of the second I have as my henchmen two big lads both highly trained in the art of obtaining copy. But as has been stressed so often before, the onus is to a large extent on you – please don't wait to be assaulted by us.

There seems to have been an increasing tendency towards humorous writing for the Gazette and it may be that many would-be contributors are put off because they feel they don't have the flair to do this. Rest assured the Gazette is not heading towards Rag Mag status and that factual accounts laced with points of interest should still be our stock-in-trade.

Photographs also feature significantly in our plans and so I would welcome contributions in this department too. We can cope with colour provided they offer good contrast. Please don't think, however, that we are only interested in classical action masterpieces of Mark Shearman quality. We shall be seeking normal, everyday "snaps" of Club life and personalities as well as competition shots. If in doubt, let us see what you've got.

A Gazette report of the 1953 AGM stated – "Gazette management in these days is no easy task owing to the conflict between increasing activities within the Club and economic sanctions imposed on the Editor. It is a considerable problem to produce a Gazette which is at the same time a Club record and entertaining to read."

Little has changed in 30 years except that we have now embarked on a venture to ease the financial burden. In this and subsequent issues we shall include in the centre a self contained section where members may advertise their skills and services in return for a small consideration. Anyone wishing to take advantage of this scheme should contact Assistant Editor Dunn.

Despite our efforts to keep up-to-date, I feel sure every issue will, for some reason or other, be missing at least one significant item of news. On this occasion the 25 x 1 Relay and this season's Southern League programme remain reportless. However, the results should be covered by the Courier and we shall endeavour to pick up the highlights next time.

Turning from the domesticity of the magazine itself, there is an increasing pressure being put on the relatively few officers who keep this Club in the position to which its members have become accustomed – among the very best. Consequently, unhealthy cracks are starting to appear in its superstructure which could well in the long run lead to a degradation of the standards that you currently take for granted. For instance, it has taken a long time to find anyone to take on the prime role of Cross Country Captain which has led to a high degree of confusion and disorganisation. In the end Gary Spencer agreed to do it for the time being, because he is a sensitive obliging guy, but he was probably subjected to more moral blackmail than any of his persuaders would like to admit. The track teams are always in need of help and so too the young athletes. It will be a shame if we lose the incredible talent we've built up this year simply because John Powell is having difficulty growing enough pairs of hands with which to write letters and make phone calls. He makes a special plea on page 27 as does the President on behalf of the trail layers on page 6. These jobs are not onerous especially when they are spread around. If any of you have got a little time to spare please approach a club official.

John F. Kennedy's speech writer put his finger on the spirit we need now.

"Don't ask what can the Club do for me but ask what can I do for the Club".



DAVE DUNN



TREVOR LLEWELYN

A Date for your diary

Johnson Bowl 7¹/₄ mile Race Walk – 31st March 1984; 3.00 p.m. from the Club House. Remember, there's a handsome trophy for the first novice.

JIM DAY'S RETIREMENT – TAKE ONE (BH GAZETTE No. 600 1980)

"Jim finished 3rd in the pole vault in the European Veterans' Championship in Helsinki with a height of 3m 10. After 27 years he has decided to retire from competition.

He has been Kent Champion 5 times, National Veterans' champion twice and Southern Veterans' champion 5 times".

Take Two 1983.....
Take Three 19?.....
Take Four 20?.....

15th October, 1983

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the 114th Annual Report of the Blackheath Harriers for the year ending 30th September, 1983. It has been another year of great activity and much success for the Club, and I continue to feel privileged to be closely involved in its affairs at such a time.

At the end of September membership of the Club stood at 789, including 143 Life Members, and it has since climbed to just above 800. During the year 3 deaths were reported and there were 73 deletions and 29 resignations, making a total of 105 losses, compared with 184 elections. Since we are up to date with our deletion procedures this net increase of 79 can be taken as a pretty firm figure – and quite a remarkable one, amounting as it does to an 11% rise in what was already a large membership. Since success in our manifold activities so often depends on strength in depth, this increase in numbers is very welcome; but it means that we shall constantly be seeing new faces here in the Clubroom, or wearing Club uniform at our various fixtures, and if our Club life is to be maintained and enriched we must all – old and new members alike – make a conscious effort to attach names to those faces and to enlarge our circle of friends within the Club.

Our three deceased members were all Life Members of long standing. W. A. Hodgkinson, whose death I reported as a "stop press" item at last AGM, had a brief but successful period in active athletics as a Junior in the 1930s and afterwards a distinguished career in the City. Roger Barclay joined the Club as long ago as 1920, and had latterly been living in Cornwall. E. D. Castello joined us the following year and had also been living at a distance from the Club, in rural Berkshire; when Mrs. Castello told us the news I sent her, as customary, a letter of condolence, and shortly afterwards received from her a generous donation to Club funds "in grateful memory", as she put it, "of the many happy hours my husband spent with the Club".

There are still a few Life Members who, we trust, are still living but for whom we have no address: P/P Laurie Hammill has been assiduous in his pursuit of some of these, and we should be grateful if any of the other older members could help us in this way. So often the problem for us comparative sprogs (as also when it comes to providing obituaries for the *Gazette*) is to discover who knows – or knew – whom.

One Life Member with whom Laurie has been in touch in the course of his researches is our Ambassador in Stockholm, H. E. Sir Donald Murray, whom we congratulate on being appointed a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order earlier this year. He ran for the Club both before and after going up to Oxford, and was made a Life Member in 1945 after losing a leg during service in the Royal Marine Commando. Like many of our geographically distant members he has continued to take a keen interest in the Club, and sent us a very nice letter a couple of years ago about the achievements of the track team and the appearance of the *Gazette*.

We have also been in touch recently with our former member, Ian R. Smith, who ran the final leg for the winning BH team in the AAA Junior sprint relay in 1956, but whose athletic career was cut short by injury. He is now Senior Medical Officer at R.A.F. Cosford, and our President and V/P Gordon Hickey met him and his wife when competing there in the National Veterans Indoor Championships in March, and handed over the copy of the Centenary History for which he had asked.

This year's intake of new members has again been well balanced in terms of age, including a good number both of very young and talented track and field athletes and of more seasoned road runners. Quite a number of prospective members make the first contact with me by telephone, saying that they have been given my name by the AAA, and it is remarkable in the circumstances how many of them prove to be young ladies! However it is always a pleasure to be able to put business in the way of Bromley Ladies AC, and indeed on one recent occasion we were able to invite four pupils from a

mixed ILEA boarding school to a training session at Norman Park and recruit two members to each club. The young athletes are, of course, generally keen to get into action straight away, and often during the past season they have been scoring valuable points for the Club in League fixtures only a matter of days after their election. As to the older recruits, the Committee are always interested to hear what their occupation is: be they lawyers, accountants, plumbers or electricians there are likely to be opportunities for them to offer their professional talents in the service of the Club, and it is good to report that some have been ready to do so quite early in their membership.

Early this year I had an enquiry from a third-year student at the University of Kent who was compiling a report on athletics as part of his B.A. degree in sports studies, and who had the customary thirst for statistical information. One of the answers I gave him may be of general interest: I analysed our numbers by length of membership, and found that very nearly half (373 of the 753 on the books at 1st January 1983) had been members for less than 5 years, though most of the other 380 had been members for much longer than that – indeed 54 had over 50 years' and a further 18 over 60 years' membership. Inevitably there is a fairly rapid turnover of a section of the membership, since many of our young athletes in particular move to other areas on completing their studies or decide to pursue some sport other than athletics: but we are glad, so long as they are with us, to give them the opportunity of discovering and developing whatever potential they have.

I turn now to the athletic achievements of the past year, beginning with the cross-country season. In the main mob matches we went one better than last year, winning two out of three. We again lost to SLH, but over their own course the adverse balance (6,633-7,353) was only slightly greater than at last year's home fixture and the field was even larger, 83 a side scoring. Against a very depleted Orion team at Hayes the Club filled the first six places and, scoring nine a side, won by 49 points to 296. Against Ranelagh, also at Hayes the leading places were much more evenly distributed and, scoring 42 a side, the Club won by 1,649 points to 1,986.

In the senior individual championships our new Winter Captain, Richard Coles, twice led the field home. Injury prevented him from defending his title in the Club 'S', which was won by Bill Foster, with Chris Lord 2nd and Ian Wilson 3rd. In the Club 7½-mile Championship, run as usual in conjunction with the SLH mob match, Richard was the first Blackheath man home, with Bob Richardson 2nd and Chris Lord 3rd. In the Rowland '10', back this year to its normal course, Richard was again 1st, with Chris Lord 2nd and Bill Wade 3rd. Bill, by the way, moved to North Yorkshire later in the season and is now tackling really rugged country with Holmfirth Harriers but continuing with us as a second-claim member.

The weather for this year's Kent County Championships at Mote Park, Maidstone, was mild and sunny, much pleasanter than last year; but the Club was less successful. In the Senior race we were placed 3rd, in the Youths 5th and in the Juniors 4th; but we certainly had strength of numbers, providing 39 of the 179 finishers in the Senior race. Our leading finishers were Richard Coles, 16th in the Senior race; James Adams, 9th in the Youths; and Steve Thompson 16th and Dave Searby 17th in the Juniors.

In the South of Thames Junior Championship at Windsor the Club was placed 10th, the same position as last year. In the Senior event we were the hosts at Sparrows Den – our member Martin Athawes being this year's President of the SOTCCA – and we were placed 3rd scoring 6 a side and 1st scoring 12 a side. Richard Coles was our first man home in 7th position. In the Southern Counties Championships at Trent Park both Richard and the Senior team, scoring 6 a side, were placed 10th as they were last year; but scoring 12 a side the Club was placed 1st, and also retained the Camden Cup – strength in depth again! James Adams, having moved up an age group, did well to finish 27th in the Youths race. In the National Championships at Luton, contrary to normal



"I assure you, Madam, I have seen neither you nor the child before in my life."

Blackheath practice, the distances run were markedly less than those advertised; Richard Coles finished 79th in the Senior Race, the Club being placed 39th; and we also this year had full teams in both the Junior and Youths races, Steve Thompson being our first Junior home in 145th place and James Adams our first Youth in 39th.

We did not make much of a showing this year in the Kent Colts, Boys and Youths Cross-Country League or the Herne Hill Harriers Young Athletes League, largely because of the lack of sufficient helpers to mobilise and manage the teams. John Powell, who does so much in this respect during the track season, has to give priority to his official duties during the winter: and help from other quarters was fitful. The problem is with us again this season, and is likely to be discussed more fully when we come to the election of this year's officers.

The Veterans, on the other hand, led by our evergreen John Baldwin, had a very successful season. They won the Kent Veterans team event, with John 1st, Chris Woodcock 2nd, Peter Shephard 7th. In the Southern Counties event at Wimbledon the Club was placed 1st in the over-40 race both when scoring 3 a side and 6 a side, John finishing 2nd (1st over 45); in the over-50 race Jack Braughton was the first of the over 60s to finish. In the National Veterans Championships at Cambridge John again finished 2nd in the over-40 race (1st over 45), and the Club team was placed 4th; in the over-50 race Jack was the third over-60 home and the team was placed 6th.

Returning for a moment to the Seniors, the Club was strongly represented in the GLC Championships at Parliament Hill; Richard Coles, our first man home was 6th, the A team were placed 5th, and our B, C and D teams were each 1st of their respective categories.

The Club teams again made the crossing to Roeselare, where the Senior team found themselves engaged in the first fixture of what amounted to a Belgian National League; naturally the competition was fierce, but they acquitted themselves well, with Richard Coles at 44th our first man home. Presumably Veterans racing is not yet quite so highly developed in Belgium, as in that race we were able to provide 4 of the first 10 home; indeed John Baldwin and Chris Woodcock were invited back to another Veterans race the following Sunday, when they finished 1st and 9th respectively.

Those of you who read the road running results in the *Courier* will realise how difficult it is to summarise the season's activities in a few sentences; indeed the word "season" no longer has much meaning in this context, it being rather a question of continuous performance! Because so many fixtures are on offer and each athlete has its own training plan, it is not often that the Club musters anything like its full strength in a particular race; when it does the impact can be considerable. For instance in the Tonbridge '10' in March the Club fielded 11 teams of three runners each, Richard Coles being the first of them home in 7th place and the A team being placed 4th; and that still left a completely different set of 20 Blackheath Harriers to run in the Worthing '20' the next day. Among the other highlights one should

mention the Kent '20' at Hayes the day after the last AGM, when Les Roberts finished 2nd, Steve Rutherford 4th and John Baldwin 6th in the Open race; the Boulogne Semi-Marathon in March in which 44 Blackheath Harriers ran and Chris Woodcock was the 5th man (1st Veteran) home; the Kent '10' at Sidcup later that month, in which our A team was placed 4th and our B team 6th (first B team); the Inter-Counties and Belgrave '20' at Wimbledon in July, in which Les Roberts finished 13th overall and helped Kent to 4th position; the Horsham '10' the next day, in which the Club was placed 6th of 32 teams; the London to Brighton last month, in which Richard Pitcairn-Knowles, time, at age 50, of 7 hours 06 compares well with other recent Blackheath performances over that course; and finally this year's Kent '20' a fortnight ago, in which Les Roberts finished 4th (2nd in the Kent race) and the BH team (Les, Peter Shephard and Tony Bounds) were placed 2nd in both the Kent and Open races.

The scale of the London Marathon is such that it deserves a paragraph to itself. Club members were again heavily engaged in the administrative preparations for this event, though with the benefit of experience the work went much more smoothly than before and a number of our volunteers had to be stood down at short notice. Our thanks are again due to P/P Tony Oldfield for masterminding our part of this operation. In the race itself we had an even larger Blackheath contingent than before, about 120 in a field of close on 17,000. We particularly congratulate Mervyn Brameld, our second-claim member running again in Invicta colours, who finished 18th; Richard Coles, making his debut at this distance, who finished 105th and won our Club Marathon Trophy; and Graham Martin, Steve Rutherford, Chris Woodcock and Peter Shephard, who all finished inside 2.30. It is some indication of the high standard of competition in this race that Richard's excellent time of 2.20.28 did not quite get him into the first 100. Incidentally there seems to have been some improvement of standards also at what may be termed "the blunt end": with very much the same number of finishers as last year, your Secretary was a shade disappointed to find himself nearly 450 places further back despite cutting 8 minutes off his time! Of course this may have been attributable to the cooler, showery weather, which fortunately seemed in no way to lessen the enthusiasm of the vast crowd of supporters.

Our own Ted Pepper Memorial Race was again a great success, with 235 finishers – substantially more than last year, including 47 Blackheath Harriers. John Baldwin, our first man home, was 5th, our A team was placed 2nd and we also had the first B team. Again the smoothness of the organisation owes much to the hard work and foresight of V/P Mike Peel, and no doubt he will be rewarded in the customary way!

Of course it is when one comes to report the track and field season – and I mention both words deliberately from the start – that one really finds oneself beginning to run out of superlatives. For our first team to finish champions of Division 2 of the British League after the series of disasters that befell them at their opening fixture speaks as much, I suggest, for their guts and determination as it does for their undoubted talent. In a very tight finish between Newham and Essex Beagles, Thames Valley Harriers and ourselves every point counted, and such actions as Buster Watson's travelling to run for the Club in the Meadowbank fixture the day after setting a new Club 100 metres record in Birmingham were especially praiseworthy (I believe, too, that he wasn't the only one to make that journey). Perhaps this would be a good point at which to congratulate Buster on winning the 100 and 200 metres, and Peter Yates the Javelin, in the UK Closed Championships, and Buster on being selected to represent Great Britain in the 100 metres, 200 metres and 4 x 100 metres Relay in the World Championships at Helsinki.

The Club did not manage to reach the GRE Cup Final this year, as on the day of the semi-final at Brighton we were short of eight of our A-string athletes and could only finish 4th of 8 teams. However we did win another distinguished trophy the previous month, the Sward (for field events) and were placed 3rd in the competition for the Kinnaid Trophy (for track

events) at the same meeting. The B and C teams have also had a good season, often despite difficulties, in their Southern League competitions: the B team finished 12th in Division 2, just above the half-way mark, whilst the C team finished 5th in Division 5 and thus secured promotion to Division 4.

Our young athletes have had what must rank as their most successful track and field season ever. Consider the bare facts: in the Boys and Colts League of Kent they won all three League titles (Boys, Colts and overall), finishing the season with 23 match points out of a maximum possible 24 in all three sections, and BH members won 36 of the 58 medals awarded to the best individuals in each event during the season. In the National Young Athletes League (Eastern Region, Division 1) they finished 2nd of the 16 teams in the Division and thus qualified, for the first time, to appear in the League final at Birmingham. Although on that occasion they finished 8th of the 8 teams competing, their score of 262 points was not all that far behind the winning figure of 391, and many of them reached new heights of achievement in the process. Indeed during the season 14 Club Records have been equalled or broken by Youths, Boys and Colts. All this, of course, has not happened without a great deal of dedicated effort by V/P Andy Frankish and John Powell, especially when teams have to be reorganised at short notice because of sickness and holidays; the encouragement in coaching given by older members of the Club; and much enthusiasm and a fine team spirit on the part of the youngsters themselves. If I forbear to mention individuals it is because I find it difficult to choose from among such a wealth of excellence: but I should like to name one who has impressed for a reason other than pure athletic ability. At the recent Club Dinner Julian Abengowe was deputed to speak on behalf of the group of young athletes present as our guests: and his modest but assured bearing, together with the simple way in which he expressed the ideals we all share as a Club, quite won the hearts of his audience.

There is so much else that deserves mention, and time is getting short. We are again indebted to John Facer for setting up a successful 25 x 1 Mile Relay – later in the season than usual because of the work on the Crystal Palace track – and to David Dunn for stepping into the breach when John found his official duties were taking up too much of his time! On the very same day, 25th September, ten of us Blackheath Geriatrics were taking part again in the *Sunday Times* Fun Run in Hyde Park – not that "fun" seems quite the right term for the grizzled warriors in the over-60 race who have been running for most of their lives! Jack Braughton finished 2nd this time, and the team was placed 9th, the best yet, out of the 1800 or so teams in the various age groups. Back in March, the Johnson Bowl Walking race was won again by Peter Selby, with Peter Hannell 2nd and Dickie Green 3rd. And, to come right up to date, the Maryon Wilson Swimming Race last night was won yet again by Robert Farish, by a comfortable margin.

We have again had only two issues of the *Gazette* in the past year, but they have been bumper numbers of 28 and 20 pages. It may have escaped general notice, because of the absence of the usual "credit" at the foot of the last page, that the latest issue has been produced by a new printer. The substantial economies to be had by getting the job done in the provinces have obliged us to make this change: but I should not like to let the occasion pass without paying tribute to our Club member, Terry Jarrold, for doing this job for us for ten years, I understand at no profit to himself.

You will be hearing much about the Wine Committee soon: but it is perhaps for me to report that our Club licence was renewed earlier this year for a further ten years. On this occasion there was no official opposition to our application, but the Fire Officer did advise us to get the ceiling of the changing room lined with plasterboard.

The ladies of the BH Social Club continue to work wonders: not only do they minister to our creature comforts at Norman Park, but the profits they make from this and their fund-raising efforts get translated into handsome gifts to the Club. It was a revelation to me to learn that their AGM can generally be fitted into Brenda Brent's front room, though she tells me they have a number of willing helpers on call who are

not technically members. The big achievement this year has been the erection of the long-awaited building at Norman Park, both the base and the building itself having been paid for by the Social Club. The number of discussions that P/P Alan has had with the Council and the contractor in the last stages of this job make quite a saga, and I will leave him to tell his own story.

The trail layers gently reminded us recently that their situation is much as it was last year, except that they are all a year older! Careful trail-laying and pointing is crucial to the very existence of our home fixtures as we know them, and once again we would urge those of our active athletes who are temporarily out of action to offer their services in one of these capacities.

Believing that one should sit down while *some* of one's audience is still awake, I will end my report there, despite inevitable omissions: but I must first again express my deep gratitude to the President and all my fellow Committee members for their unflinching help and co-operation during a crowded and exciting year.



Norman Page welcomes Andy Frankish back into the first division.

LIMITED OFFER – APPLY NOW

A recent reappraisal of the present situation revealed that a few vacancies exist for keen club members whose chances of winning anything from the Winter Handicapper are now non-existent.

Applicants should possess a weaterproof physique and good sight. A sense of humour is essential. Map-reading and first aid techniques would be advantageous. A crash course on flag laying (devised from the ancient Indian art of pig-sticking) will be available on request.

The twin virtues of stamina and stoicism will be required, also cheerfulness in adverse conditions. If you feel you can meet these challenging demands, contact the Chief Trail Layer, Journeys End, 56, Bourne Way, Hayes, Kent.

JOHNSON'S REDCOATS

Due to the popularity of this exclusive sect the supply of distinctive jackets is insufficient to meet the demand. Will any member who has one of these jackets (issued at the Start of the 1982 London Marathon) please drop it in at the Clubhouse. These will be fully utilized by the vigilant custodians of the cross-country course.

SPAGHETTI BOULONNAIS

6th March 1983

This was Dunkirk in reverse, getting ninety Englishmen across the Channel to race in France. There were runners from Dartford Harriers and from Heather Road Harriers in Blackheath (where else!) but we outnumbered the rest. The event was the Semi-Marathon du Boulonnais, raced over 20K from Boulogne up to La Capelle.

The coach left the Clubhouse on the Saturday morning at 10am. So did the coach taking the Blackheath teams to the Nationals, so it was necessary to check that no person complete with passport and francs ended up in Luton! As we drove down the A2 in perfect sunshine, I could reflect that of all those who paid in January, only one had had to drop out.

We had a calm sea crossing and on arriving at the hotels I announced who was sharing with whom – rooms not beds! Nevertheless a friendly weekend was in store and I suspect there could be some funny Valentines in 1984. Dave Nash, Dartford Harrier, Kent selector and second-claim member of Blackheath, had organised the whole trip beautifully and the evening was to be no exception: a sit-down meal for 100, including our French hosts, in a restaurant in La Capelle for a fixed price which included wine, service and coaches to and from Boulogne. The restaurant was a converted barn with a roaring fire and the welcoming sight of five long tables supporting innumerable carafes of red wine. Everybody piled in and attacked the pate and wine while birthday girl Rosemary Champion of Dartford, notable for appearing in the Daily Mirror the day after the Sittingbourne '10' for showering in the men's showers, produced an indescribable executive toy from a well-stocked jumper and proceeded to delight everyone with it. Monsieur Cock du Bois, known to the Courier as Chris Woodcock, was easily persuaded to lull us to sleep with his clarinet and the hosts were presented with a Blackheath sweater, a pennant, a centenary plate and numerous Dartford T shirts. Meanwhile, the wine had reduced George Butlin to being a willing subject for a group of budding head-artists. Two coaches brought us, but only one took us back, so more close friendships were struck, and it was back to the hotel for a brandy or three.

The next day we had to get up and face coffee and croissants at 8.30. The race started at 10 in the centre of the town – a confrontation between England and France? a mob match between Blackheath Harriers and the Rest of Europe. The day was excellent for racing, calm and warm. For those capable of taking in the scenery there was the estuary, then the village and hamlets, the fields and hills, the 4th class roads with the occasional car or cyclist, the Zone de Quietude (a forest, not a cemetery!) and the finish in the sleepy dormitory of La Capelle. A beautiful route – shame about the hills. There we were, running on the right, shouting "Bonjour" to the pheasants, who promptly flew off to roost somewhere quieter.

During the first few miles, the eventual winner played with the opposition, running on the grass verges. Two years ago, he beat Les Roberts into 2nd place. (*Wow, he must be good.* Ed.) This year, that spot was filled by Mike Boyle of Invicta. Monsieur Cock du Bois was fifth and Barry Nash, the tour organiser's brother, sixth. It seemed as though Blackheath supporters were all along the route, but it was really Dave Thompson, Brian Saxton, George 'Painted-Head' Butlin and Gordon Gibbens in lots of different places, each having difficulty with "Allez les 'arriers" and "Noir, manque, noir, manque, noir . . .".

At last the finish, and a little French boy hanging a medal around your neck, orange juice, beer(!) and warm sunshine in which to stand around and compare digital watches. (Which came first – the running boom or the digital watch?). "1 hour 20-is that English or Continental time?" Then the pleasure of changing in the new village hall. It was almost finished when we were first there two years ago, and today it is still almost finished. You still get all your clothes covered in a fine white dust. And there we waited for an hour for the computer-produced results which Alan Brent could have

done on his own in ten minutes. The results were in French but there was plenty of – “I will translate you for my English friends!” “Soizante-onze,” what’s that in Fahrenheit? Then it was prizes for all the women and a couple of men and the group photographs of the winners behind the same little boy (who handed out medals) who is now holding up a CASSIS billboard. There were prizes from Blackheath and Dartford for the first ten Frenchmen, but Jim Pearce didn’t seem too interested in all this; he was busy getting drunk on Cassis and Pernod before anyone else was even allowed near the drinks table – what is it the Frenchmen like about Jim?

By 8pm on the Sunday evening we were back in Hayes, boring everybody about our trip to France and making arrangements for the next one. The spaghetti? Oh, there wasn’t any, but for future reference I will mention that the whole round trip, hotel accommodation and the Saturday evening reception cost about £25, so that when you read the magazine in twenty years’ time, you can calculate how many Mars bars that now buys you!

M.W.



CLUB MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIP RESULT

9th May 1983

1. R. Coles 2.20.28, 2. G. Martin 2.23.28, 3. S. Rutherford 2.27.29, 4. P. Shephard 2.28.16, 5. C. Woodcock 2.28.50, D. Wade 2.30.28, 6. S. Russell 2.35.00, 7. B. Swift 2.35.31, 8. M. Williams 2.35.54, 9. K. Whicheloe 2.37.27, 10. R. Coe 2.38.03, 11. P. Varcoe 2.38.49, 12. D. Cocker 2.39.48, L. Tempan 2.42.07, 13. R. Savery 2.42.48, 14. P. Greenwood 2.42.52, 15. M. Field 2.43.04, 16. S. Robinson 2.43.43, 17. R. Minting 2.43.54, 18. C. Haines 2.44.26, 19. M. Athawes 2.45.43, 20. B. O’Gorman 2.47.40, 21. M. Cronin 2.49.43, 22. M. Wilkinson 2.49.52, 23. G. Williams 2.50.13, 24. I. Young 2.51.42, 25. M. Harley 2.53.29, 26. P. Barrington-King 2.53.43, 27. P. Catley 2.54.04, 28. F. Johnson 2.54.05, 29. R. Beale 2.54.21, 30. M. Peel 2.54.40.



TED PEPPER MEMORIAL ‘7’

May 2nd, 1983

May Bank Holiday Monday has over the past 5 years become synonymous in the South East with the Blackheath Harriers’ Ted Pepper Memorial ‘7’.

Each year the flat but interesting 3 lap course and the excellent facilities, organization and prize list have attracted a quality field, although this year it lacked a full Aldershot contingent and Nick Brawn, Invicta. Peter Standing, W. S. & E. and Peter Gaden, Cambridge Harriers, didn’t make it to the line. This must have left prolific winner Keith Penny, Cambridge Harriers, feeling more than a little confident about notching up yet another victory and his second in the event. And he did just that, although it proved to be far from a formality. Virtually from the gun he was shadowed by team mates Paul Williams and Peter Jones, and Epsom’s Herne Hill ‘10’ winner, Roger Hillier. It was only in the last half mile that he was able to create enough space to allow him to watch Hillier outsprint Williams for second. Peter Jones’ fourth place was further confirmation of his arrival into the upper echelons. Now 35, he only exchanged his football boots for running shoes some 3 years ago.

Fifty seconds adrift in fifth place, but seemingly running more smoothly and more relaxed than ever was super vet (V/45) John Baldwin, while 49th spot and the ladies’ award by a mile (almost literally) went to Glynis Penny. So yet another Penny double act had been performed.

With John Oliver (V/45) in 26th place Cambridge easily took the team race from Blackheath with Don Faircloth’s Croydon quartet, third. The nagging wind ensured that Bernie Ford’s course record of 33.10 remained firmly intact.

L. R.

1. K. Penny (Cambridge) 34m 01, 2. R. Hillier (Epsom & E.) 34m 07, 3. P. Williams (Cambridge) 34m 10, 5. J. Baldwin. V.45 (Blackheath) 35m 17, 14. C. Woodcock. V.40 36m 24, 18. L. Roberts 37m 04, 23. B. Swift 37m 30, 24. P. Hamilton 37m 30, 25. P. Betts 37m 55, 31. M. Williams 38m 05, 40. G. Spencer 39m 02, 54. C. Haines 39m 37, 58. R. Farish V.40. 40m 05, 66. D. Dunn 40m 31, 72. A. Bounds 40m 42, 77. D. White V40 41m 00, 79. J. Bailey 41m 05, 82. R. Savery V45 41m 09, 85. J. Robinson 41m 26, 86. A. Calton V40 41m 28, 89. S. Ridgewell 41m 43, 94. M. Gasson 41m 51, 102. R. Pitcairn-Knowles V.50 42m 28, 110. R. Ebbutt 42m 46, 112. P. Rissen 42m 49, 115. D. Cordell V40 43m 04, 119. B. Saxton V45 43m 22, 126. P. Lester 44m 00, 128. D. Popely 44m 05, 130. P. Hannell V40 44m 11, 131. S. Fagg 44m 15, 141. D. Crowdsdon 44m 55, 142. B. Stone V45 45m 00, 146. R. Thornton V40 45m 16, 147. K. Price 45m 17, 148. J. Broughton V60 45m 29, 151. G. Gibbens V50 45m 35, 157. R. Day V40 46m 06, 178. D. Thomson V40 47m 19, 179. R. Sanford V40 47m 21, 182. J. Hill V40 47m 51, 185. D. Sommerset 48m 35, 187. J. Partington V45 48m 59, 199. F. Dudman V45 50m 10, 204. L. Percival 50m 32, 210. B. Hartley V40 51m 21, 219. A. Tompkins 53m 32, 320. C. Brand V45 53m 39.

Teams: 1st Cambridge 34, 2nd Blackheath 60, 3rd Croydon 94.

First B Team. Blackheath 108. First Veteran over 40. C. Woodcock 14th, 36m 24, First Veteran over 45. J. Baldwin 5th 35m 17, First Veteran Over 50 J. Haywood 64th 40m 31.



Unlucky for some – 25 x 1 mile relay.

THE GREAT NORTH RUN

19 June, 1983

Being a new and somewhat slow veteran member of the Club, I do not get many opportunities of appearing in your columns. However, it is just possible that I may have achieved a first by running in the Great North Run this year. Certainly I could not see any other Blackheath singlets in view, although of course they may well have been several miles ahead.

I travelled north on the Saturday by car in good time and booked in very reasonably at a hotel in Jesmond near the start of the race.

The run itself very much resembled the London Marathon in atmosphere and crowd involvement. However, the weather could not have been more different. In contrast to the rain of April 17th, Newcastle produced glorious sunshine with a race temperature of 75°F. In fact, the organisers implored us beforehand to look after ourselves and not to try for P.B.s. This seemed an excellent excuse just to enjoy the race, which I did on what proved an interesting route.

For the record I was placed 3735 in a corrected time of 1:45:46 (a half marathon unfortunately).

South Shields proved to be a most pleasant spot and several hours were spent recovering on the beach. Indeed the most exhausting part of the day was trying to obtain beer at the local hotel in competition with what seemed like the other 21,000 runners. Having fought my way to the front of the bar in a temperature that must have exceeded 100°F, I was told that I could only be served if I had an empty glass! Eventually, I staggered out with three cans of ale which I think must have saved my life.

D.W.

(Ed. David Wilcox's wanderings continued as he subsequently went up to Grimsby to run the Humber Marathon, which he covered in 3hrs. 46mins; not bad considering only 2 weeks before he also ran the North Kent 26.2 in 3 hrs. 29 mins.).

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

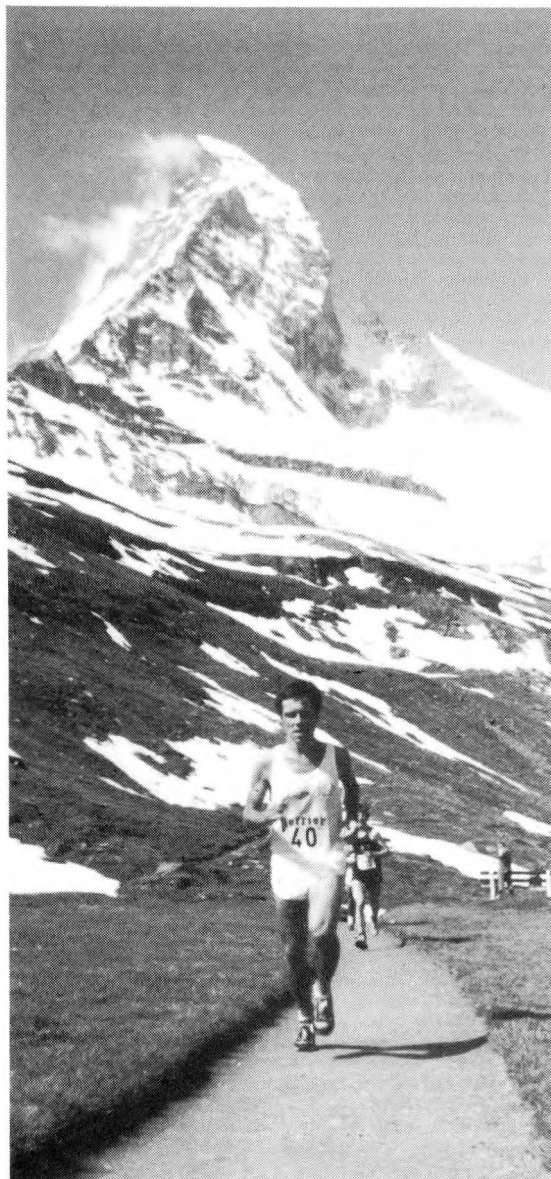
26 June 1983

After performing like a rheumatic snail in the London Marathon, I allowed myself to be talked into an assault on the Alps by Tony Nana. With only a short time to prepare I set about training with new-found zest and my native Biggin Hill provided all the inclines needed to become a "grimpeur". A successful trip to Offa's Dyke a week before departure confirmed that I was getting into good shape, and it was here that Les Roberts generously passed on to me his secret pre-race meal consisting of hot congealed vermicelli which had the texture and taste of boiled underpants. I was ready.

A week passed by and I found myself being propelled through France by Tony. I averaged sixty motions per hour as my white knuckles gave evidence of what it must be like to be Frank Spencer's driving instructor. But some really intense praying got us safely to Chamonix and the start of our first race.

Sunday morning saw Mont Blanc proudly before us. Six thousand feet and nearly fifteen miles made up the Super CIME, the top class European Championship race. Great carnival atmosphere preceded the maroon that sent 1000 of us on our way up and through the snowline and onto the finish at the last ski station. Altitude (9000ft) affected me badly over the last 5 miles and I finished 300th in 2½ hours. Tony finished very strongly only 4 minutes behind. My opinion of my own run matched the chamois droppings around me and I vowed to do better in the Matterhorn Run one week later.

A glorious week touring around Provence and the Italian Lakes provided a happy interlude. Tony used his Italian ancestry to advantage by convincingly saying "Si" to every question put to us. One deliriously happy cafe owner proudly ushered his three daughters towards us. The smallest of them made Mike Winch look like Ronnie Corbett, so before Tony



Paul Barrington-King taking on the Matterhorn (Paul's the one in the foreground).

could utter another "Si, Signore", I pulled him at Buster Watson speed back to the car.

Zermatt was the base for the ascent of the Matterhorn, and 250 runners lined up on a bright sunny morning ready for the starter's gun. This race climbs very steeply almost from the start and soon we were all sweating and winding our way towards the "shark's tooth" in front of us. I felt particularly good in this race having fuelled myself the previous night with countless steins of beer and pretzels. I finished the 8 miles and 4000 ft of climbing in 1 hr. 14 mins. and 58/250 position. Tony finished well in 1 hr. 20 and the two of us both concluded that the scenery at the 9000ft finishing point was absolutely breathtaking. A cable car took us back down to Zermatt and the following three days saw us wind our way back through France and across to dear old Blighty and the familiar hills of home.

Anybody wishing to compete in this type of race would do well to remember 1) that they are dangerous. One man fell thousands of feet to his death last year and as there is no downhill prize it pays to have good studded shoes. 2) the snow at the climax of these events can be very deep and although the temperature at the bottom of the mountain can be in the 80s it can be like stepping into a fridge at the top. 3) altitude is a problem. Acclimatization takes months not days, so proper pacing is essential. The obvious signs are shallow breathing and the feeling of running on one lung. Recovery is usually fairly quick, though. 4) joining the Spiridon Club is of great help in European events. A fixture list and contacts at all venues can be provided. The club provides a multi-national fraternity and the friendliness has to be experienced to be believed.

P.B.-K.

OFFA'S DYKE 1983 STYLE

19th June 1983

As the sun rose ever higher and the start of the 1983 Offa's Dyke fell race drew nigh, hankies were knotted onto heads and round necks and runners cowered behind any suggestion of shade they could find. It was hot, very hot. Before them lay 15 miles of rutted fields, rough tracks and just occasionally smooth pasture land. And 3000 feet of climbing.

The confined town centre at Hay-On-Wye seemed to concentrate the heat even more so that the time spent getting assembled on the line under the full glare of the sun was the nearest most of us had been to hell – so far. This microwave treatment continued until the lady runners had been greeted by the civic dignitaries and waved on their way. Thankfully, it was soon the men's turn and 700 pairs of feet, many already very weary, pattered off down the narrow road and jiggled round the tight left hander that led out of the town and off towards the beginning of the rough stuff. Previous accounts of this event have spoken of oozing mounds of cow dung and vast tracts of clinging bog. Not this time. The weeks of hot sun had transformed all but the soft grasslands of the ridge tops into corrugated concrete, custom built for anyone hell bent on breaking an ankle.

As the major climbing began, about a dozen runners broke away including Nick Brawn, Invicta, Mark Cawood, Leicester Coritians, last year's winner, together with two other members of Leicester's crack fell running team, and Les Roberts. At the top of the first ridge, Cawood had gone clear and only Nick Brawn and Les Robert kept in contention. Brawn slowly inched his way up to Cawood towing Les on a 250 yard invisible rope and then pulled away to win by a minute in 1:30:48. Les caught Cawood within the last mile but the Leicester man had obviously started cruising and had enough left to pull away again for second. Les was third just 15 seconds behind in 1:32:07.

As the watch ticked round to 1:47:56 Paul Barrington-King came sprinting across the Kington Recreational Ground with Brian Swift right on his tail; a 1500 metres finale after 15 gruelling miles. Both had handled the conditions sensibly as their composure after the line demonstrated. Littered all around them were dehydrated corpses and the picture grew ever more grim as time went on.

Chris Lord, who had been ahead of Paul and Brian, had done a "Jim Peters" with barely a mile to go, and had to be taken into custody by the St. John's Ambulance people. Pete Hannell meanwhile was pressing on and came home in just under 2½ hours. He was none too distressed until he got his hands on the free drink supplied by Messrs. Bulmer. This transformed him into a puking zombie for the best part of an hour and a very sleeping individual thereafter. The sleepiness might however have had something to do with his walking at least 6 miles the night before. He was adamant about walking to the pub from the camp site. "It's only a couple of miles down the road". None of the rest of us could remember how far it really was – honest.

The event was not one of our better team performances but given the weather and the magnificence of the scenery it once again proved to be a first rate weekend even though the much vaunted pub we've become accustomed to patronising on the Saturday evening seems to have lost its charm. So, time for a change next year in this department, although the rest of the weekend formula is still very sound.

1st. N. Brawn, Invicta 1:30:48; 2nd. M. Cawood, Leicester Coritians, 1:31:52; 3rd. Les Roberts, 1:32:07; 76th. Paul Barrington-King 1:47:56; 77th. Brian Swift 1:47:57; 395th. Pete Hannell 2:28:59. As his official certificate shows, Chris Lord 'nearly' finished.

LEX MEAD DARTFORD HALF MARATHON

30th July, 1983

Year after Year, the Dartford Half Marathon is run in hot conditions, but the 1983 event must have been the hottest. Temperatures in the 80s caused many competitors to drop out but still 759 finished this most popular local event. The Club was well represented with 25 individuals and 8 teams finishing. First Clubman home in 16th spot was Barry O'Gorman who picked up the prize for first vet over 45.

Results: 1) K. Penny, Cambridge H. 68.12, 2) M. McCarthy, Oxford City 68.40, 3) P. Jones, Cambridge H. 69.49, **Blackheath Harriers:** 16) F. O'Gorman, 76.21, 1st V45, 32) S. Russell, 78.12, 51) P. W. Catley, 81.04, 6th V40, 56) P. Greenwood 81.32, 7th V40, 67) C. Haines, 82.40, 139) M. Peel, 88.32, 20th V40, 145) J. Bailey 88.56, 167) B. Saxton, 91.10, 10th V45, 199) R. Chambers, 92.39 13th V45, 209) J. Routledge, 92.59, 251) S. Ridgewell, 95.20, 283) G. Plank, 96.36, 20th V45, 286) B. Todd, 96.41, 11th V50, 331) M. Cowley, 98.48, 358) P. Davies 100.12, 378) M. Slack, 101.12, 385) W. Slack, 101.41, 386) M. Gasson, 101.42, 390) D. Hopgood, 101.59, 19th V50, 413) S. Fitz-Costa 103.12, 453) K. Price, 105.29, 507) A. Good, 108.45, 2nd V60, 528) H. J. Martin, 110.14, 23rd V50, 536) P. Khan-Pannil, 110.57, 65th V40, 553) L. Dalmon, 111.44, 44th V45. 759 finished.

Team result: 1. Cambridge Harriers A 8 pts., 2. Invicta A.C. A 28 pts., 3. Cambridge Harriers B 43 pts., 8. Blackheath Harriers A 99 pts., 17. Blackheath Harriers B 261 pts., 37. Blackheath Harriers C 511 pts., 52. Blackheath Harriers D 743 pts., 64. Blackheath Harriers E 974 pts., 75. Blackheath Harriers F 1149 pts., 80. Blackheath Harriers G 1256 pts., 93. Blackheath Harriers H 1571 pts., 110 teams closed in.

P. C.



TABLE TENNIS

During the past year only one team has competed in the Beckenham League. The players have no illusions of grandeur but enjoy making life as difficult as possible for their opponents.

At the end of last winter season, in spite of many close fought games, the team propped up the combined 3rd/4th Division of the league.

In his annual report the League Secretary wrote "A special mention must be made about the Blackheath Harriers' team, who never failed to field a full team, were always on time and played in the spirit of true sportsmanship".

In the Bromley Summer League the team was fifth from eight teams; this was a great encouragement.

Currently, in the Beckenham League, the team is repeating the previous winter's performance – many close and enjoyable matches without outstanding success.

The Club is represented by Social Club members, Ann Parker, Joy Hitchcock and Jean Torr who supply the grace, by Ron Porter who provides weight and Alan Brent who adds dignity.

PETE CATLEY

Certainly since the writer became a Harrier in the late '70s, Pete has been the man who always appears in results and of whom tales are told of unswerving dedication to consistent training. Having now looked closer into this irrepressible 42 year old, I can confirm that he is wedded to his daily routine every bit as much as folklore suggests, and report that the reason he appears to be such a prolific racer is that while he probably races no more than many others **HE ALWAYS SUBMITS THE RESULTS PROMPTLY**, usually accompanied by a few descriptive sentences.

Having squeezed in that little bit of propaganda, let us regress. It was during Pete's last couple of years at school that running introduced itself to him. He had spent most of his games periods in the lower school behind the gymnasium doing whatever boys do but all in the name of dodging cross country. Eventually, however, it caught up with him in the form of a compulsory run and he discovered hidden talent. Soon a regular member of St. Olave's school team he competed against the Harriers in a mile race at Ladywell. On leaving school in 1960 the impression left on him by that occasion led him to Hayes and the beginning of 4 years of successful athletics in the black and light blue. He made the Kent team for the Junior Inter Counties and as a senior ran third in the Kent 6 mile Championship. He was at the time always up the front in mob matches, sometimes being our highest finisher, and gave some famous names of the day a fair run for their money on the track. Then in 1964 disaster struck in the form of a stress fracture which totally deprived him of his beloved running. So distressed was he by this that he could not face being associated with athletics at all while not being able to compete. He left the Club and the sport for 13 years.



1977 saw a 13½ stone roly poly take to the road to keep his son company on a jog around the block. Suddenly all the old atmospheres and images came flooding back and soon a daily regime was set in train – destination 10½ stone.

Since then he has become something of a legend. Every day, with so few exceptions that he can name and explain them, he has risen at 6.00am, walked Ossie his cross-breed (alsatian/candlewick bedspread) and been out running the roads before 7.30 for about 10 miles. Currently he is on about his 350th consecutive day of substantial running (unlike some famous mega-trainers he doesn't count one legged hops to the corner and back) and but for 2 days injury unconnected with running this figure would be far greater spreading back a couple of years. In 1980/81 while on consecutive day 561, he was persuaded by John Baldwin to take the day off before the London Marathon. He is convinced this took the edge of his performance as he had to spend the first 5 miles re-educating himself on how to place one foot in front of the other at speed.

To accompany his intensive programme is a training diary that would not look out of place on the shelves of the Government Statistical Office Library. Every permutation of distance and time has been meticulously recorded. Without too much persuasion Pete will admit that the whole business of regular training and recording it in detail is an end in itself. The racing, while still rewarding, is not essential. Nevertheless, it doesn't seem to have stopped him improving. In the last 12 months Pete has done P.B.s at all the common road race distances: - 56.40 in the Kent '10', 75.28 in the Welwyn ½ marathon, 2.5.11 in the Kent '20' and 2.54.04 in the London Marathon. He intends carrying on until he feels his pace is no longer respectable. In Pete's eyes this means being able to run 10 miles in the hour.

All those who have met Pete will know what an affable chap he is. However, he doesn't get involved with the social side of the Club to any extent. His family, sundry pets, and his job as a district manager for the Pru in East London keep him fully occupied. But being a 'Heathen' is important to him. He feels that the black vest is a very effective calling card. "It is instantly recognisable everywhere you go and it seems to act as a social stimulant – there is always someone coming up to you and asking you to remember them to old so and so".

Don't be surprised if you get asked to pass on regards to Peter Catley.

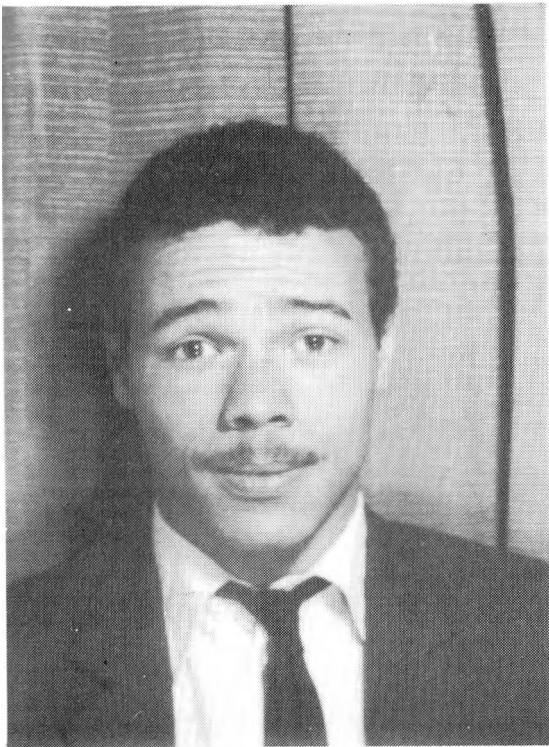
PHIL DAVIES

There were many notable performances for the Club in the British League this past season resulting either from pure athletic ability or just plain guts, but if one person typifies the spirit of Blackheath as they step back into Division 1, it must surely be Phil Davies. Although a Harrier for over 9 years he has drifted along in the shadows until recently when he exploded onto the scene as a sprinter/jumper capable of holding his own with all but the very best yet still, it would seem, with a lot more to come.

Now 22, and an employee of the National Westminster Bank, Phil joined the Club in 1974 while a pupil under Alan Brent at Springpark School. At that time he sprinted a bit, hurdled a bit and high jumped; in fact he would dabble at anything provided each burst of effort ceased fairly promptly. As a Junior he even started pole vaulting.

Stepping up to Senior saw him sprinting and jumping fairly regularly in the Southern League, and as he improved, the British League. In 1982 he added the triple jump to his repertoire and regular competition and training resulted in his improving gradually at all his chosen events.

It was the winter of 82/3 and his coaching under Richard Liston, however, which led to his meteoric rise. He was at the time concentrating on the triple having achieved 14.29 in 82, but Richard pointed out that for a start he was simply too slow on the run up. Apart from technique training, therefore, he concentrated on speed which in turn lifted his pure sprinting pace. With the improved pace came the results, with the results increased confidence and enthusiasm, and with the confidence and enthusiasm an added zest for training.



The circle was therefore complete. And these results are quite something. His progress from 1982 to 83 has been:- 100m, 11.4 to 10.7; 200m, 23+ to 21.5; long jump, 6.73m to 7.11m, and triple jump 14.29m to 14.70m. Times alone, however, do not paint the full picture for some of his best performances didn't result in PBs. His personal top 2 in 83 were his breaking the 7.00m barrier and his 10.9s 100m B string victory, both at West London stadium during the last British League meeting. The 100m saw him come right through the pack to take it in the last stride which really had the grandstand on its feet. Then there is the contribution he has made to the relay squad which won the Kent 4 x 100 title and regularly took the honours in the British League.

Phil cannot emphasise enough the part played by Richard Liston in all this and also the benefit he has derived from the camaraderie shown him by his regular training partners Jerry Phillips, Michael Bond and Bromley Ladies' Clare Blackburn.

Where to now? This winter he is proposing to tail off the triple jump to concentrate on long jump technique and sprinting. The two complement each other perfectly as a Mr. C. Lewis keeps demonstrating.

In the longer term Phil, quite rightly, has real ambition. There is a quiver of embarrassment when he refers to the Olympics as if such a notion belonged strictly to the absurdly arrogant or the totally naive. But this only serves to make the composure with which he refers to the Commonwealth Games more significant. Which event? "I think my greatest potential is in the long jump".

Since becoming a regular British Leaguer he has got to know many more members and been drawn in towards the heart of the Club, from where, he says, he senses an increasing vibrance throughout the Club as a whole. Phil is a fairly regular Wednesday nighter now and also appears from time to time at our dinners and suppers. Speaking to him you quickly get the impression that here is someone who enjoys life to the full. All I can say to promoters everywhere is "Lock up your trophies". I would perhaps add to that "...and your daughters as well".

It may not be appreciated just how much time and effort it takes to keep a big ship like Blackheath Harriers afloat and on course, and of those toiling away on the bridge the secretary's role is particularly vital. We are therefore very fortunate in having someone of especially high calibre filling this post who, moreover, seems content to continue to do so for some time to come.

Yet despite his worth to us, I wouldn't mind betting that the majority of Harriers wouldn't know Bill Lake if they fell over him. But that, I contend, is their loss.

Bill joined the Club immediately after the war in 1946 but his story starts well before that. He started running at the age of 10 at school principally over the country for about 2½ miles and he regularly toiled in about half way down the field. On turning senior at 14 the race distances doubled and this seemed to suit the young Lake as he began to overhaul regular members of his school team (he was then at Colfe's) and consequently was soon established in the team himself. By 1939, his final year, he was captain. His association with Blackheath started in 1938 when he ran in a three cornered match between the Harriers, London Scottish and Colfe's. The school was not expected to do well against the experience of the other two and indeed didn't, but Bill himself ran into prominence finishing well to the fore. In July 1939 he won a novices' mile promoted by the Harriers (the last meeting before war broke out) and the record suggests he did this in plimsolls because after the race a small, lightly built man in wire spectacles asked him if he'd ever tried running in spikes. Bill had no idea at the time who his inquisitor was.

Come the war, Bill joined the Navy as a signalman on a minesweeper. Then, after his officer training he again returned to minesweepers but more in an escort/patrol capacity off Iceland and Northern Russia. His vessel also featured prominently in the D-Day landings and all without mishap. However, what the Hun had failed to do the RAF achieved with tragic ease some three months later in the Channel – they sank his ship and a sister vessel with the loss of over 100 lives – all due to a communications breakdown. It was one of his senior officers who relayed the fateful message "We are being attacked by friendly aircraft". Bill survived with little more than an hour's cold bath and strangely enough serving on the ship that picked him up was a young man called Warner – the current Orion captain's father.

Come 1946 and his joining the Harriers, Bill quickly got into his stride and the cross-country first team. He ran all the mob matches and major schools fixtures (Charterhouse, Ardingly, etc) which were popular in those days. As an aside he also, literally, walked away with the Johnson Bowl in 1947 – the darkest ever of dark horses.



The summer time usually saw an eclipse of Bill's athletic activities. An active family and demanding garden kept him busy until the dark evenings heralded the beginning of another cross country season.

All this time Bill was developing a career as a Civil Servant in what we now know as the D.H.S.S. He started work the day after the outbreak of war and by 1972 had successfully climbed the tree to Assistant Secretary level which he held until his retirement in 1981.

Bill has competed for us more or less without a break ever since he joined and still enjoys the mob matches and the relays but is a little put out that he seems to be getting slower. This has not prevented him, however, at the age of 62 from entering the last two London Marathons which he ran in 4hrs. 59 and 4hrs. 52 – so here's one example of speeding up. In preparation for these events he did about 30 miles a week including one long run of up to 18 miles. I detected a hint that we may find him winging his way between Greenwich and Westminster again in 1984 and that anything other than a substantial improvement would be totally unacceptable. Then, of course, there is the honour of the BGs to uphold in the Sunday Times Fun Run (see page 24).

Apart from the work he now does for us, Bill is also very involved in the Church of England where he holds a number of active posts and has long service on his local Scout Group executive. He is also a Guide and Brownie badge tester. A further love of his is choral singing. He had been a member of the Orpington Chorale since its formation in 1961.

A rich life indeed, and we should be thankful that we are so much a part of it.

JOHN WAKEMAN

We have numerous examples in the Club of lads who have embarked on an athletic career on the mature side of 30, some having done relatively little before, other transferring from successful involvement in another sport. However, in John Wakeman we have an example of someone who is now climbing the ladder of success in his third major sport.

John was brought up in Bermondsey and like so many school kids in that area he soon found himself involved in boxing. By the time he was 19 he had started taking the sport seriously and during the next few years he reached the standard where he regularly fought internationals and had many good wins. In one season he twice beat the fighter who later that year reached the A.B.A. final losing only to John Conteh, no less.

By the time he reached 24 John had decided he'd had enough of the ring and turned his attention to golf, and before long had made his mark both as a player and administrator. He progressed swiftly through Vice Captain, Captain and onto Vice President of the High Elms Club but his only disappointment was that his game, having reached a handicap of 10, seemed to level off as the pressures of office increased. By 1978 he decided he had had enough of all the hassles and through a chance meeting with a Bromley councillor at the Golf Club got to hear about the Harriers and how nearby they were. He had always kept up a certain amount of running since his boxing days so he felt confident that he could hold his own in the Club. His first couple of Wednesday runs seemed to confirm this belief but he got an almighty shock when he entered his first cross country race. Convinced at the start that he was in with a chance he got well and truly hammered by at least two thirds of the field. Nevertheless, he enjoyed it and continued to compete on road and country for a couple of years albeit a little humbler.

It was during 1980 that he got the idea of having a go at pole vaulting and so he made his way to the Palace and to Alan Neuff who gave him some basic coaching. In only weeks he had his first competition – the Kent Championship.

He did 3.00m and took 3rd place. Not bad for a kick off. He then found himself in the Southern League team, won the Club Champs, and competed in the GRE Cup semis where he did 3.20m for 5th in top class company. What a year for a newcomer to such a technically demanding event.



In 1981 he did 3 British League Div. 4 meetings winning one and coming second in the other two B strings. He was then 3rd in the Kent Champs with 3.40m and second to Colin Brand in the Ponsford Trophy which is awarded each year for the best all-round field eventer.

In 1982 a hamstring niggle limited his vaulting but this served to bring forward his interest in discus, shot and javelin. He was beginning to harbour a desire to do a decathlon. It was on the cards that he could be a respectable thrower from the time back in 1979 when, picking up a hammer for the very first time, he flung it into the distance to take second in the Club Championship. By the end of '82 he had recovered enough to vault his way to yet another Club title.

But 1983 was to be the year. After a knee operation in January he didn't start training until March. However, in a very short time he was moving well enough to be drafted into the third team where he scored second place points in the vault and hammer and third in the discus. In May he equalled his P.B. and won the Kent Pole Vault Championships with 3.40m, which also slotted him back into the British League team (now Div. 2) where he won the B string vault with 3.40m on his first outing. Although doing a 3.50m PB in the Club championship he had to be content this year with second to 18 year old James Cunningham. If there had been points for age though, he would of course have won it by a mile yet again! Just to round off the season he walked away with the Ponsford Trophy.

Looking to the future, he wants to clear 4.00m and do a respectable decathlon by which he means achieve competent results at all ten disciplines, with a total of over 5000. When he joined the Club his prime target was to run a marathon. He doesn't seem too keen on that one now. His wife, Grace, has got an ambition too – to see him finish decorating their new house.

John runs his own industrial roofing firm which he finds very engrossing. He is also a great lover of disco music as he frequently demonstrates on 200 Club nights. Usually one of the first to his feet he is a very nimble mover indeed (although a bit short on stamina when faced with real opposition. Ed.)

He keeps his hand in at golf from time to time and will willingly take on any Heathen for a bottle of Campari. He also keeps up to date with what is happening in the ring and occasionally goes to bouts with Heath's other ex pugilist, Dave White.

He says that joining the Club has given him the opportunity to do many of the things he missed at school. He thoroughly enjoys all aspects of Heathen life, the competition, the social and organisational sides. His prowess at the latter was clearly demonstrated when he team managed Bromley Borough to second place in the London Boroughs Final at Crystal Palace in September.

However, he stresses that that side of him is very much for later. At present his priorities still lie in the direction of competition.

With his credentials who's going to argue with him?

LETTERS

Sir,

I was intrigued to read the erudite article on "Mob Match Results" on Page 4 of the Gazette No. 607 which dazzled me with the statistics and analyses of the "Orion" match of 1981.

As this was immediately followed by the result of the "Orion" match of 1982 which merely gave the times and placings of Blackheathens, I wonder whether this was a subtle challenge to the grey matter. Without knowledge of the Orion numbers it is beyond me. Can you recommend a short computer course?

Yours 'heathenly,
Johnnie Walker

I suggest you speak to Pete Hannell. Alternatively you could have a few pints of Ian Wilson's home brew and read the article again. You'll then either understand it perfectly or won't give a monkey's. Ed.

Dear Steve,

I have read in the Sevenoaks News that Col. G. O. Mullins has been made a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Gerald is a life member of the Club but has had very little connection with the Club as he has made his career in the Army. Gerald is the youngest son of the late Past-President George Mullins. Older Club members would remember him. I think this is the first time we have had a Club member in this high office.

Gerald's present address is: LION HOUSE, HIGH HALDEN, ASHFORD, KENT. Would you please pass on the above information to our President as he may be interested.

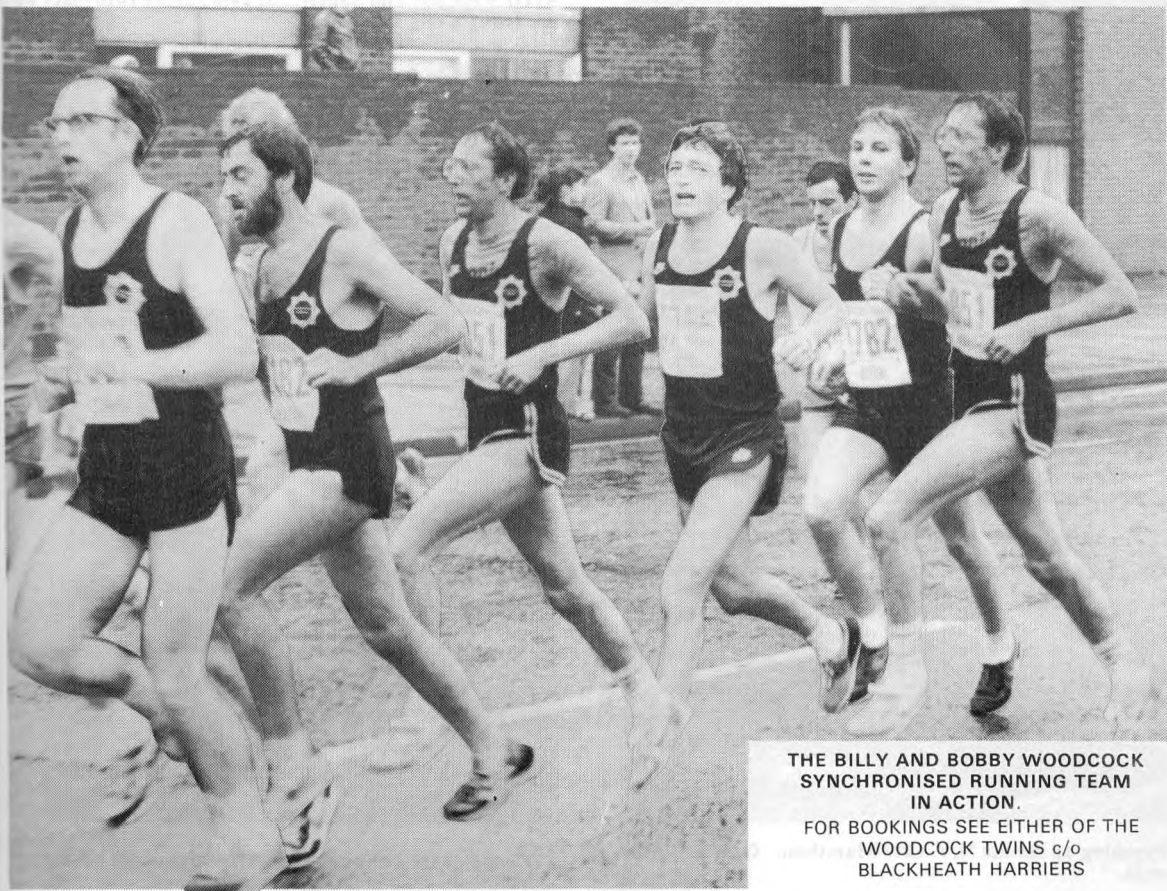
Yours heathenly,
Ken Johnson

Dear Steve,

Congratulations on the last issue of the Gazette, which was an interesting and informative read with some excellent photographs. Keep it up!

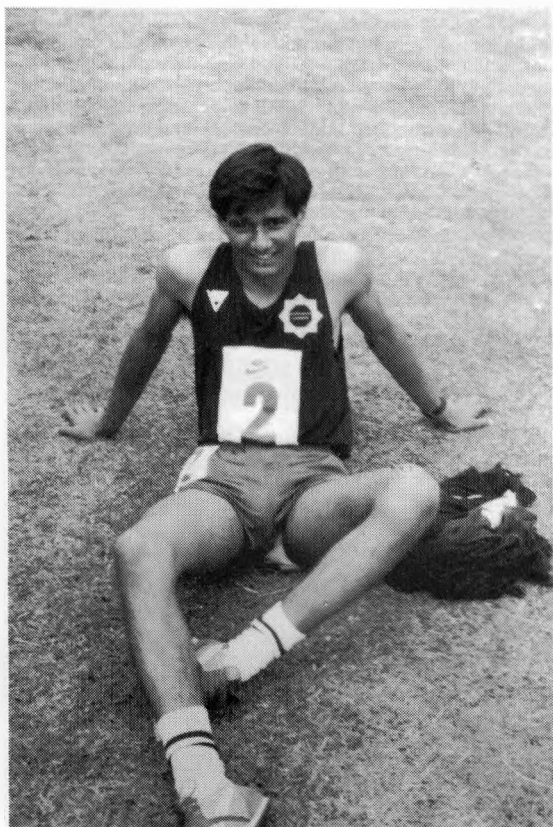
My only regret was that some of the major cross-country events were not reported. Now I know that somebody was asked to write a report on all the major events because I did the asking, a different person each time to spread the load. Come on lads, help the editor out, put pen to paper, it only takes a few minutes to write a report. Even if you cannot beat your fellow 'Heathens in the race you can have the opportunity to say he runs like an arthritic crab in the race report.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Coles

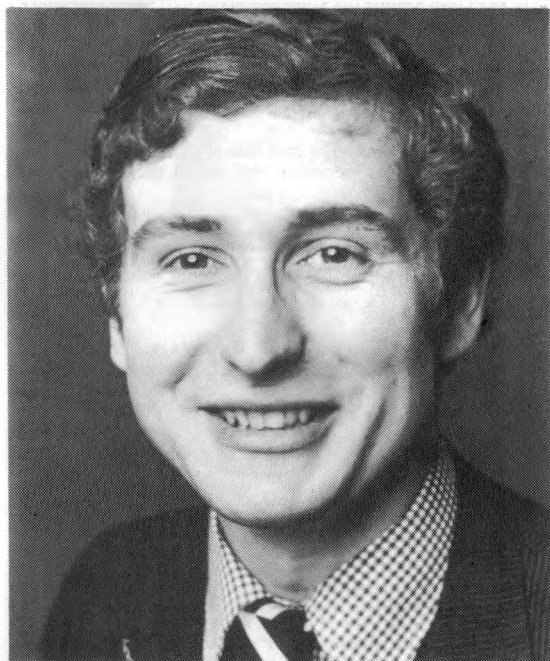


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Gavin Fernandez shows plenty of potential.



STOP PRESS! Tim Soutar, 2hr 24m 52s for 10th place in the Hong Kong Marathon.



Psyching up for the N.Y. City Marathon – George Butlin style.



Doug Cocker during the longest 400m of his career.



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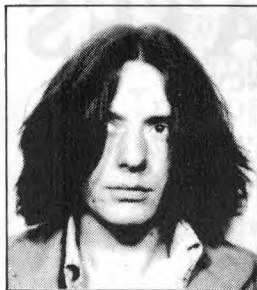


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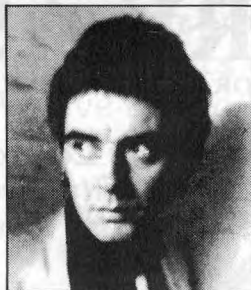
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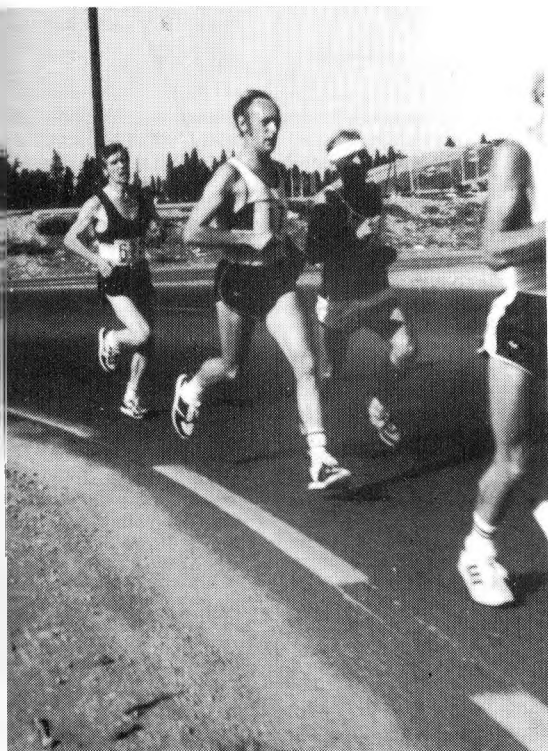
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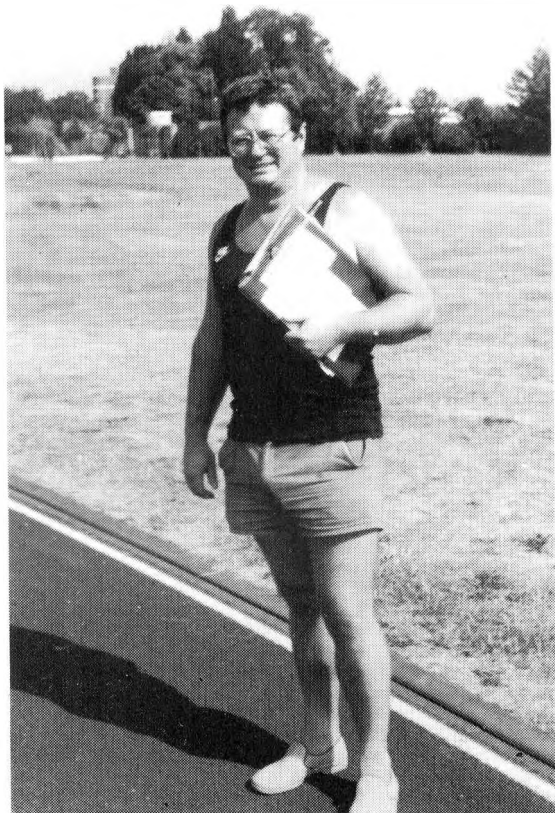
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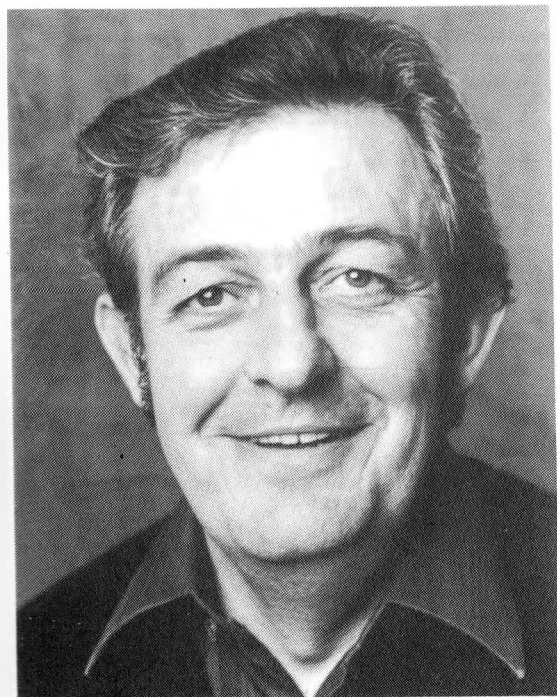
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Johnny Oliver (673) during the World Vets 10km championship.



**Robert Taylor '83.
The cutest thing you ever did see.**



A nice picture of Brian Stone, don't you think?



Gordon Hickey. A study taken earlier this century.

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9, Linton Lowns,
141, Golf Links Rd.,
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Dorset BH22 8RX
Tele: Ferndown 892029

Dear Bill.

As you know I am now Senior Medical Officer here at Cosford. The reason for the posting is my interest in Sports Medicine and being Medical Adviser to the RAF AAC. I am also in the throes of training for the Veterans Indoor Championships 60m. and possibly the 200m. Unfortunately, I am still in the 40-45 group on the day of the Ch'ships (13 March '83) but then move into the 45-50 group 2 days later. I still have a few fast-twitch fibres, but not many slow-twitch fibres so the 200m. is now a question of stamina!

If I continue to run as a veteran, this is an innovation for me, I would like to run in black again. If you are kind enough to send vest, shorts and badge I will send you a cheque. I weigh 14 stone now (chest 46" but 44" would do; waist 42"). I won an honours badge circa 1954/55. Would it be possible to send me an honours badge for the blazer that I wear when meeting doctors here at Cosford for Ch'ships and Internationals?

I well remember Brian Stone. I was in his brother's class at Dulwich College. I also remember John Baldwin, Bob (crew-cut) Taylor, Terry Sullivan, Colin Brand, Johnny Whall, "Kipper" Herring, Ian Ross (also at Dulwich). Others I remember are Tony Gedge, Doug. Hahn, Dave Fournel who made up the 4 x 100m. relay team. The local rag mentioned the drama of the cut thumb which I managed to sustain at school the day before the relay when I failed miserably in the heat of the Senior 220. Having been refused permission to run on the Fri. evening by the Headmaster, the heats took place on the Fri. and appeared on T.V. I literally stood out like a sore thumb. What's happened to Norman Page? We were called Page's Panthers. Others I remember are Ted Sampson (a very powerful ¼ miler - he won a GB vest) and Ian Ross (another GB one lapper).

My career was ruined by a torn hamstring in the 100 final of the LAC School Ch'ships when I had beaten Peter Radford in the Heat and Semi. I never overcame the injury and quickly faded and this is one of the reasons that I later became interested in the treatment and management of soft tissue injuries in sport. I had a reasonably good, but short career in First Class Rugby, but this was curtailed by a nasty elbow fracture in the Hospital Cup a quarter of a century ago.

I qualified from Barts Hospital in 1963 marrying a Barts nurse a few weeks later. I did 3 internships at Barts and Whipps Cross Hospital, joined the RAF spending 2½ years in Singapore, 2½ years in Lincolnshire and then 12 years at the RAF Medical Rehabilitation Units at Chessington and Headley Court near Epsom. From there I went to Princess Mary's Hospital RAF Halton near Wendover, Bucks. and 6 months ago I was posted in to RAF Cosford as Senior Medical Officer. So I have turned a complete circle and act as Physician to the G.B. athletes living in the E. Midlands. My junior doctor is Roger Hackney the steeplechaser and I train Joanne Baptiste.

All three kids were victor ludorum and victrices ludorum at Freemans School, but the youngest Claire (aged 15) is the only one currently involved in athletics. She belongs to Wolverhampton and Bilston and trains with their relay squad. My eldest daughter, now 18 and working her way around Europe, was a natural speedster and was known in Singapore as the silver streak. My son, 17, is an accounts person in Dorking where we own a house.

Please pass on my best wishes to all my contemporaries. I would love to see them. Thank you so much for your letter.

Yours sincerely
Ian Smith

The last three Gazettes made good reading and brought back happy memories of those days, long ago, when as an active member I ran, sat on the Committee and for a year acted as Hon. Treasurer.

An abiding memory of those Committee days is of P. P. Alexander Anderson quoting or swapping Latin tags with old Mr. E. H. Neville which improved my education and caused general amusement in the midst of our sober deliberations - members did not adjourn to the bar until after the meeting was closed. These meetings were always at the Devereux - off the Strand. Happy days.

It's always sad to read obituaries, but they too bring back happy memories of good fellows and old companions, like D. J. Mobbs, A. G. V. Allen and L. G. Toms. For many years I served with L. G. Toms on the London Shipping Athletic Association and know something of the great amount of time he gave to help in the running of the Association.

Again my thanks to all who did something towards getting the Gazettes to me - I would miss them.

Yours 'heavenly,
Charles J. R. Woods



THE CESS PIT FUND

Jim Day says thanks.

"I should like to thank all the people listed below who contributed so generously to my appeal for the Main Drains Fund. At the present time the fund stands at £3110.

C.G. Allen, J. Allanson, M. Allen, Austridge household, T. Barrett, W. Blight, D. Blackwell, J. Braughton, C. A. Beer, B. Boulton, D. Crowdsen, C. Clowser, W. Clapham, J. Cole-Powrey, M. Cronin, J. Clare, E. Coles, D. Cocker, P. Critchley, K. Coombs, D. Cordell, J. Clear, J. Cunningham, J. Cockburn, R. Cliff, K. Daniels, I. Dixon, A. M. Davis, L. Dalmon, F. Dudman, R. Eatwell, R. Ebbutt, R. Ebbutt, Snr., R. Edmonds, R. Farish, S. Fagg, S. Fitz Costa, J. Facer, D. Green, S. Glynn, D. Gillate, C. Haines, D. Hopgood, P. Hannell, F. Horn, M. Heinemann, P. Hamilton, L. Hammill, J. Hills, C. Kidd, A.H. Kempton, P. Khan-Panni, R. Morley, Sir D. Murray, G. Monshall, W. Norton, M. Peel, K. Pike, J. Parrott, G. Richardson, L. Roberts, I. Smith, B. Stone, B. Shapcott, P. Saxon, R. Savery, P. Stenning, L. Towers, G. Turner, H. Thompson, L. Trafford, A. Trumble, Dr. R. J. Thompson, W. Vercoe, D. Wade, M. Williams, J. Wakeman, J. Walker, A. Weeks-Pearson, B. H. Social Club, Della Daniels.

And we say thanks too

The response to the Appeal has indeed been quite wonderful, so we must not forget that it was Jim's initiative and enthusiasm that got the thing off the ground and maintained its incredible momentum. Thanks Jim.

ODE TO JIM

Poor Old Jim,
He's a study of frustration,
Now the drains can cope,
He's developed constipation.

YOUNG ATHLETES – 1983

The results of all our young athletes matches have appeared in the local press this year, been printed in recent issues of the Courier, and posted on the clubhouse notice boards, but if – like the author of this report – you tend to skim through much of the small print of masses of results, points, times, etc the real meaning of some quite exceptional Athletics this summer may have escaped you.

1983 has been without doubt the most successful year for our young athletes in the club's history, and we have achieved this by raising our own standards and not facing lower class opposition – far from it!

Early season results are rarely illustrative of a young athletes side that traditionally matures in later May or June as the schools develop their teams, rather than in April and early May when the club season begins.

Therefore our opening match in the Boys and Colts League of Kent, where we placed second in Colts, Boys and Overall match scores, was no mean achievement.

Nor was our effort against Enfield, Herne Hill and Horsham in the first National League match, at Bromley, on May 1st. Enfield walloped us (as expected), but we kept the margin below 100 points, and beat local rivals Herne Hill for the first time ever into the bargain.

This was to see the start of our most successful campaign ever in the country's top athletics league for under-17s.

Before our league campaign continued our youngsters were to collect seven gold medals, five silver, and a bronze medal in the Kent Championships. Again, the results have already appeared in the media, but attention must be drawn to a fine double by Stephen Powell in winning both Colts 100m and 200m titles, and to Stuart Green, who placed first in both Boys Hammer and Shot competitions, and second in the Javelin and Discus, setting a championship best 31.88m in the Hammer.

On June 5th we visited Deangate for our next National League match, our previous journey to Hornchurch for match 2 having been aborted on arrival due to rain.

Here we won comfortably despite more rain making the conditions very trying indeed in some events.

A week later at the same venue were the Kent Schools Championships where Blackheath athletes again fared well. The most significant aspect here though – as in past years – was the valuable recruits gained to the club. The importance of schools liaison cannot be stressed too much. Anyone who has anything to do with schools – please make sure you have a strong link with the club, we depend on schools for 80 per cent of our talent.



Triumphant Boys sprint relay team. L-R: Richard Chitty, Jason Arnold, Michael Hennesy and John Knapp.

Included in our finds this year were eventual UK number seven javelin man, Mark Clark (14), our lethal multi-events giant, John Knapp (14), and long jump ace Richard Chitty (careful with the printing).

On June 19 we again went to Deangate, much to the disgust of the team, who had got sick to death with the place, and this time took first in all three matches of the Boys and Colts League, pulling us up to equal top in all three tables, with Dartford Harriers.

By now our new recruits from the various schools championships which our faithful roving Policeman had visited, were playing a vital part in our league battles.

Seven days later we travelled to Worthing where we had a tough match with Crawley in the National League, but still emerged first by a comparatively slender margin of 23½ points, with yesteryear giants Brighton in a lowly third.

Yet another visit to Deangate on July 3rd sent us to the top of the three Boys and Colts League tables in our own right, with the bonus on Dartford to beat us well in the final match some weeks later.

Much to our delight, they failed, and we lifted three league titles for the first time in our club history – an achievement that has only once before been reached in the history of the league!

The final match at Erith on July 24th provided some thrilling battles in track and field, but nobody could match what was now a quite exceptional bunch of youngsters wearing black vests.

The opposition in the league had been tough throughout, and so the fact that Blackheath cashed in on 36 of the 58 available league best performance medals at the end of the year, speaks for itself.

The celebrations had barely started when phone line were buzzing again to select the team for our last National League match, at Southwark Park on July 31st, which had been billed in the press as the most vital match in the club's history.

The stark reality of appearing in the National Final started us straight in the face if we could win this match. But with the mighty Tonbridge club and Essex Beagles – hot tipped favourites this year – neither of whom we had ever beaten before, among the opposition, the clash always promised to be a classic.

We had to win to reach the National Final, or come second to go to the Runners-up Final. Third would leave us empty-handed.

The match started well! Nigel Hartley fell flat on his face after 100 yards of the Colts 1500 metres, Jason Arnold pulled a muscle in the 200m and was unable to run the 100m or relay, Paul Byfield crashed to the deck ten metres from the line when leading the Boys 400m, Darren Cussen was competing in the Youths Shot with an injured knee, and Sean McGowan dipped out in the Hammer contest because his Shot competition started late, clashed with the Hammer, and even Sean can't be in two places at once!

We still made a fight of it though, and mid-way through the afternoon, Essex, Blackheath and Tonbridge were separated by just three points! Meanwhile, the Blackheath team manager was making regular visits to the first-aid van where he was receiving half-hourly mega doses of tranquilisers, as the pressures of management at this level gradually overcame him.

Blackheath won the match though, and won it well. The winning margin in the end was 12 points. It was a match fought in the best possible spirit, and produced some brilliant performances, thrilling races, and exhibited exceptional sportsmanship on the part of all the athletes.

Anyone who had anything to do with Blackheath Harriers this day would have been proud indeed to wear our colours. Despite his fall, Paul Byfield got up again to finish the 400m; despite glandular fever Bruce Davies turned out, competed in, and won his Boys Javelin event; despite a far from minor knee injury, Darren Cussen competed in two taxing throwing events; Russell Powell willingly made his club debut in the Hammer, picked it up for the first time in his life, and finished

second in the A-string; Martin Fovargue willingly doubled up in the 3000m and 800m, and still had a fighting finish left in him at the end of the 3000m; Kevin Mulligan competed against his better judgement in the B-string 400m hurdles – and won by a street; and our fifth-string sprinter at that time, Michael Hennessy, willingly stepped in as a last-minute replacement in the 100m B-string and won it in one of the fastest times by a Blackheath Boy this year!

All this, two club records from Andrew Hodge in High and Triple Jumps (Boys), and a new Colts relay record through Robert Eatwell, Damien Hilborne, Darren Boyce and Stephen Powell combined with a terrific team effort to send us to the National Young Athletes League Final Tie, at Birmingham, for the first time ever.

Overall we had finished second to Enfield in the Eastern Region Division One table, and had established ourselves as one of the top eight ranked young athletes in the country.

On September 11th the trip to Birmingham was worth all the effort. Our eighth place of eight teams was irrelevant. We returned with 25 Finals Medals, 14 personal bests and six new club records, from a meeting, the standards of which, would not have disgraced a junior international meeting.

Never has the Olympic motto rung so true – how well we competed, despite gaining only two outright victories all day, and I would venture to say that our eighth place was one of the most outstanding victories we have ever achieved.

Two athletes must be mentioned after this final though. Mark Clark, his win in Boys Javelin with yet another club record (48.02m), left him ranked seventh in the United Kingdom; and John Knapp: a club record Shot Putt for the second time this year (12.55m), and four metres added to the nine-year-old Hammer record, making the Boys mark now 36.02m.

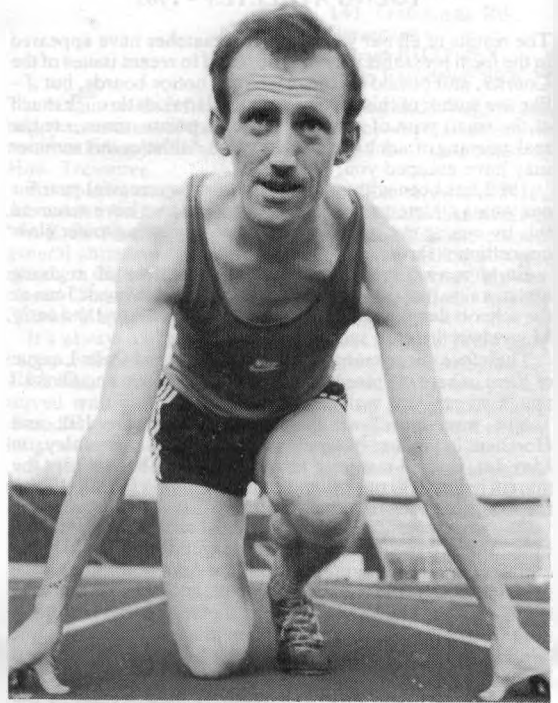
Finally, a mention must be made of our Boys sprint relay team who provided our other victory. Nobody can have seen a team more delighted than our quartet of Michael Hennessy, Jason Arnold, Richard Chitty and John Knapp.

The 95 per cent of club members who show no interest in our youngsters in the summer don't know what they are missing!

Yes, Birmingham was a terrific experience, and rounded off a marvellous season. Even the journey to and from Perry Barr had its highspots. If we weren't chasing high jumpers who had overslept in the morning and were late for the coach, or taking a scenic tour of Birmingham's ring roads in a vain attempt to find the M6, M1 or some other southbound carriageway, the team manager was getting a regular dousing with talcum powder from a team who obviously thought his B.O. had gone too far!

For an in-depth look at our results, records and statistics this year there are still some 'Reviews' at the club (50p each), containing all the information, and a copy of the team manager's speech on the young athletes open evening on September 16th, is on the club notice board.

JP.



John Powell rehearsing for his knighthood.
Photo courtesy of the Bromley Advertiser.



BLACKHEATH HARRIERS SOCIAL CLUB

Tradition decrees that we are a Men's club, but history has shown that considerable support to our activities has been given, with little publicity and often little credit, by our ladies. Recent events have drawn attention to the Social Club which was formed ten years ago on 16th November, 1973.

Technically the Social Club is open to anyone who could not be a member of Blackheath Harriers. It enables ladies to compete in the local Table Tennis League under the Club's name. But, more importantly, it has evolved into a major force for the provision of many extras which normally the Club could not afford. A listing of some of the items provided by the efforts of the ladies is well worth noting.

£700 spent in equipment and tiling in the jubilee Kitchen and the kitchen units in the caretaker's flat, table tennis table, shower curtain and paper towel cabinets, £500 for china plates, cups and saucers, vegetable dishes, cutlery, spoons, trays, various kitchen equipment and electric carving knife, tent, stove and cooking equipment for Norman Park refreshments, £2,500 for an administrative building for Norman Park, £1,000 Donation to the fund for new drainage at Hayes.

It will be obvious that many of the facilities which are used by members exist only because this dedicated band of ladies have provided them. When you eat, bathe and compete, spare a thought for their efforts.

How is it done? Jumble sales, raffles, teas, barn dances, children's parties, club scarves, club hats and a willingness to gather in pennies or pounds. The Blackheath Harriers are proud of the club's tradition – the ladies of The Social Club are making their contribution. Ladies may join – £1.00 subscription. Benefits? An opportunity to join a happy hard working band and a night out once a year.

INTER-SCHOOLS CROSS COUNTRY RACE WEDNESDAY 7th MARCH, 1984

SCHOOLS AND INDIVIDUALS ARE INVITED TO COMPETE FOR THE W J PARRISH CUP AWARDED TO WINNING TEAM.. AND THE 'RAGS' TROPHY AWARDED TO 1st TEAM OTHER THAN WINNING TEAM, SITUATED WITHIN 10 MILES OF B.H.H.Q. MEDALS TO BE AWARDED TO 1st 3 TEAMS & 1st TEAM & 1st 3 RUNNERS U.16 on 1.9.82

ALL ENQUIRIES FROM SCHOOLS WELCOME: TO
JIM PHELAN, 49 BELVOIR RD LONDON SE22
01-299-2342

1983 BRITISH LEAGUE SEASON

In 1969 the British Athletics League was established as the back-bone of athletics in Britain. Blackheath Harriers, by virtue of some very strong 'first string' performers were elected into the Premier division of that new league. However, our lack of depth in almost every event saw the club's extremely rapid slide down the existing four divisions; and in 1972 the 'Gazette' announced, none too proudly, that Blackheath Harriers had 'passed away' from National League competition. Only in the Southern League, the next year, did the club avoid relegation for the first time since league athletics had been established.

For four years the Club's performance was unspectacular, and we remained solidly entrenched in the Southern League Division One, albeit in the top half of the league. It was 1977 that saw the turning point in the club's fortunes, and the Gazette heralded the club's first ever league win at Yeovil. Flushed with success we repeated the performance a few weeks later at the home fixture, held in those days at Croydon.

Thus the seasons of 1977 and 1978 were of anticipation of things to come, with the team threatening but never quite able to do something special. It got its chance on September 8th, 1979 at Haringey when having finished 2nd in that year's Southern League, we made our appearance in the British League qualifying match, the prize, a place in the British League, from which we had fallen 7 years previously. Our subsequent victory was extremely satisfying after a decade full of defeats and promises of things to come.

A Shot/Discus double for Mike Winch (17.24m/50.34m), who is without doubt one of the club's most loyal members, was ably supported in both by Chris Ellis. In the javelin Pete Yates (78.50m) and Daryl Brand (59.74m - a new pb) gained maximum points as did Trevor Llewelyn and Malcolm Cannon in the High Jump.

Although Richard Coles chalked up his first ever British League win taking the A 3000m steeplechase with 9:18.3, the day was a frustrating one on the track. Paul Ashen, although pushing Daley Thompson into third place in the A 100m with a 10.9 secs clocking, found himself disqualified in the 200m, and Steve Munday fell while in the lead during the 400m Hurdles. The final mishap came in the sprint relay where Blackheath were disqualified after Phil Davies, our third runner, was spotted by a somewhat overzealous official wearing only one number. For the rest of the season Phil came in for his fair share of leg pulling and his number must have been checked by every member of the team in the second match - just to make sure.

What at the time seemed to be a string of disasters probably cost Blackheath some 26 points, which meant that at the end of the day we were in third place behind what seemed a very strong Newham & Essex Beagles and T.V.H.

1. Newham & Essex Beagles 263½ points, 2. T.V.H. 232½ points, 3. Blackheath Harriers 227 points, 4. Edinburgh AC 193 points, 5. Cardiff AC 179 points, 6. Epsom & Ewell Harriers 157 points.



It's party time - the 1983 British League Div. 2 Champions.

The catalogue of success which has marked our recent history has been well documented, with our unique rise through successive divisions in successive years.

With the first two divisions of the British League seen from outside as being something rather special, it was with some awe that the team travelled West to a rather damp and miserable Cwmbran on May 7th, 1983.

British League Division 2 1st Fixture: Cwmbran

The rather inclement weather conditions made any high quality performances out of the question and it was Blackheath's field eventers who did us proud on a day when the track men did not quite get off to the start they would have liked in Division 2.

Hendon: Saturday June 4th, 1983

In complete contrast to Cwmbran a month earlier the second league match held at the Police College, Hendon, was bathed in sunshine; yet despite the ideal conditions Blackheath's team management found itself with a number of problems even before the first race was run.

The British Board had conveniently arranged a British International match against Russia in Birmingham over the same weekend. This effectively robbed us of most of our top flight performers with the sprints especially being affected. With both Buster Watson and Paul Ashen in Birmingham and Steve Green injured it was left to Jerry Phillips, on his league debut, to run in both 100m and 200m. He responded

magnificently, coming home 2nd in the 100m B with a very respectable 11.1 secs and going one better to win the 200m A string in a new personal best of 21.9.

In the 400m Kermitt Bentham (TVH) (no frog jokes please!) gained revenge over John Shaw, although John's 48.2 was a personal best. In fact John was to have both a very successful and a very busy afternoon running the 400m, 200m, 4 x 100m and 4 x 400m in the space of 80 minutes; he looked more than a little wobbly on the legs at the end of the day.

As in Cwmbran points were hard to come by on the track especially in the middle distance events; a traditionally strong department in the past. We lacked both the quality and the depth of performance necessary for today's British League.

In the field it was different with Mike Winch gaining an invaluable Shot/Discus double and, even without Pete Yates, maximum points still came from the javelin area when A string Daryl Brand threw a massive new pb of 62.60m to win with Ian Kavanagh taking the B string event with 58.14m.



Peter Yates enjoying a game of darts with friends.

All in all a rather patchy performance by the club; we tended to excel in some events, while floundering in others. Yet at the end of the day we had done enough to ensure second place behind Newham & Essex Beagles and ahead of TVH who were seen as our main rivals, at the time, for promotion into the first division.

After two matches then we were still in third position albeit on the same league points as second place TVH and only ½ a match point behind them. Newham & Essex, with two wins to their credit held onto a fairly healthy lead with 12 points.

Match result:

1. Newham & Essex 250, 2. Blackheath 234, 3. T.V.H. 229.

Position after 2 matches:

1. Newham & Essex Beagles 12, 2. T.V.H. 9 (461½), 3. Blackheath Harriers 9 (461), 4. Edinburgh A C 6, 5. Cardiff 3, 6. Epsom & Ewell.

Edinburgh: Saturday, July 2nd.

Edinburgh was without doubt the most important meeting of the season as far as Blackheath was concerned. Indeed it was probably the most important fixture for all the clubs especially as the meeting came ¾ of the way through the League season and perhaps more importantly the fact that the fixture was held in Edinburgh. It was realised that because of the long journey for 5 out of the 6 clubs, our success or failure would be in direct proportion to the effort put into getting a good team to Scotland's premier city.

Without a doubt the team management pulled out all the stops to get that 'good team' – with Jon Wigley being flown up on the day and special arrangements being made to get Buster Watson from the England International in Birmingham. The rest of the team travelled up the night before by train.

Although some of the Southern clubs travelled up the same day as the match, none can have journeyed in the style of Blackheath as most of the journey was taken up in the restaurant car. Consequently the team arrived refreshed (if not bloated) after its 6 hour journey. A trip not without incident however, with John Wakeman justifiably peeved at the guard's suggestion that he was only going to get his poles to Edinburgh if he bent them in half!

The following day's triumph was just reward for the team management's foresight and subsequent hard work. Both TVH and Newham & Essex travelled badly and paid dearly with Blackheath running out worthy winners at the end of the day by some 30 points.

If the team management can be praised for its part, the team performance was itself inspiring in a stadium so large that it could easily have swamped proceedings. That it did not is a credit to the team and to all the supporters who travelled so far to cheer us on.

The match itself had many memorable moments. Buster Watson was impressive in the 200m, clocking an extremely swift 20.63 to beat Edinburgh and Scotland's Drew McMaster. John Shaw's excellent 47.58 in winning the 400m was a personal best in very windy conditions which augurs well for John who is off to the US on an athletics scholarship. Many will remember Derek Wilson's 14.49s in the 110m hurdles, not only for the run itself, impressive as it was, but also for Derek's celebrations after he had found out his time. Having set a UK age group best seven days previously over 3' 3" barriers Derek bettered his personal best by half a second.

The 5000m brought a clean sweep as Jon Wigley and Merv Brameld won both A and B strings in 14.13.4s and 14.18.8s respectively.

In the long jump Phil Davies recorded a lifetime best of 6.92m, while Bob Weaver won the B string with a leap of 6.78m.

As always we scored heavily in the throws with Mike Winch winning the A shot (17.58m), second in the A string Discus (53.50m) and Hammer 47.34m with Trevor Walhen taking the B Discus (42.30m) and B Shot. Pete Yates won the A Javelin with Daryl Brand now throwing consistently over 60m to come 2nd in the B Javelin (61.38).

Blackheath's victory meant that we were now second in the league, 1 league point behind Essex and 1 in front of T.V.H. Promotion was a real possibility with only the fixture at West London remaining.

Match Result: 1) Blackheath 265, 2) T.V.H. 228½, 3) Newham & EB 218½.

After 3 matches:

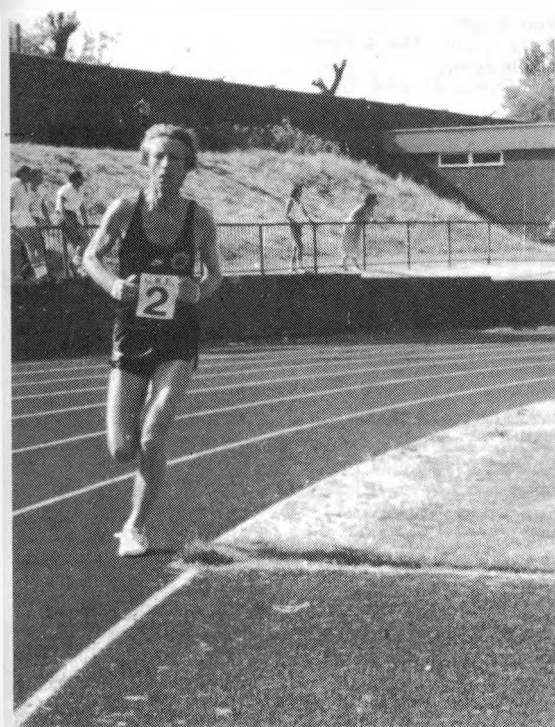
Newham & EB 16, Blackheath 15, T.V.H. 14, Edinburgh AC 9, Epsom 5, Cardiff 4.

G.R.E. Cup Semi Final, Brighton, August 7th.

Last year Blackheath failed to beat this year's League Champions Birchfield by ½ point in the G.R.E. Cup final in Birmingham. As a result of our reaching last year's final we were this year given a bye into the semi final held on a perfect, warm sunny afternoon at the Withean track in Brighton.

One of the features of Withean is that it has a pub situated along the home straight. Whether its presence affected

Blackheath's performance is hard to tell. What is certain though, is that on a day which saw by far the most spectator support for any of this season's first team fixtures, the team, far from rallying to such support and coasting through to the final as should have been the case, produced what was probably the worst team performance of the season.



Hon. Ed. keeping his weight down at West London Stadium.

Our only real opposition should have been Shaftesbury Harriers but we found ourselves struggling through an afternoon which produced only one Blackheath winner. There were just too many thirds and fourths and we even got no points at all from one event! It is true to say that we were without many of our "stars". Winch, Watson, Wigley, Wilson, Green and Ashen were all unavailable for one reason or another. But in the past even a weakened Blackheath team has triumphed against awesome odds; Sunday, August 7th was just not one of those occasions.

Yet there were, as always, some good individual performances. Pete Yates in the javelin threw 75.72m and although only average by his own high standards was, nevertheless, our only win. John Shaw ran a fast 48.0 in the 400m, Bill Foster 3.50.9 in the 1500 in his first outing for the club after a long lay-off due to injury, and Phil Davies 10.9 in the 100m. Les Roberts' 30m.15s, in the 10,000m was a pb by over 13 seconds, and ranked him about 60th nationally.

Blackheath finished 4th behind Shaftesbury, Epsom & Ewell, whom we beat regularly in the league, and Southampton & Eastleigh who are in Division 3! So after a disappointing afternoon for both spectators and competitors alike Blackheath were out of the GRE Cup.

It was then with some trepidation that the club looked towards the following week and the final league fixture which would decide whether or not we would, after over a decade, rejoin the 1st Division of the British League.

Result: Shaftesbury 145, Epsom & E. 112, Southampton 104, Blackheath 103, Woodford 76½, Hounslow 75½, Reading 61, Belgrave 58.

West London, Saturday, August 13th.

With only 3 points separating 3 clubs and everything hanging on the last match, the talk was of nothing but who had to beat who and by how many points.

On a hot, sunny day, the teams could not have got off to a better start with Paul Austridge lowering his lifetime best for the fourth time, shattering his week-old club junior 400m hurdles record but also beating one of the oldest club records in the book with a time of 54.1s. Phil Davies continued his rapid improvement with a fine 10.9s to win the B 100m and his first ever 7.00m leap in the long jump to place 2nd. In the high jump Trevor Llewelyn, recovered from his extremely embarrassing no height in the GRE Cup Semi, leapt 2.15m to equal the league record. Pete Yates was in a class of his own in the javelin winning with 72.50m and in the absence of Mike Winch showed his versatility by coming 4th in B String hammer and winning the B Discus with 42.52m. Mike's absence also inspired Chris Ellis to rise to the occasion, throwing a massive 48.06m to win the A string Discus.

Les Roberts once again donned his magic Nike Zooms and yet again ran a personal best, producing an outstanding run in the A 5000m, improving his pb by 8 seconds with 14.39.1.

18 year old James Cunningham marked his league debut by winning the B Pole vault with 3.80m, while on the track Paul Ashen, although pipped by a somewhat arrogant Linford Christie (T.V.H.) in the 100m, had his revenge in the 200 with a fine 21.65.

The day ended as it had begun in record breaking form with John Shaw, Don Emery, Nick Brooks and Julian Spooner combining to run 3.16.4 mins, a new club record with every man running under 50 secs. - the first time that any Blackheath team had done this.

Not surprisingly, on home territory, T.V.H. won the match, in a last ditch attempt to gain promotion. They came so close to their aim, ending the season on 20 points - the same as both Essex and Blackheath. But with only two clubs gaining promotion it was the superior match points of Blackheath & Essex that saw them through to Division One next year.

For the 4th year running we were promoted as League Champions; a feat never before achieved in the British League and one given prominence by "The Times", no less, on the Monday morning.

Final League positions:

11) Blackheath 20 (1984) 2) Newham & E.B. 20 (1968), 3) T.V.H. 20 (1952), 4) Edinburgh 10, 5) Epsom 8, 6) Cardiff 6.

The post-match celebrating left no one in any doubt as to how the team felt about its achievements. Bob Taylor, who never does anything by halves, had brought along ample supplies of bubbly in anticipation but saw most of its subtle qualities sprayed over the team and half West London Stadium to boot. For those that didn't have a shower there was always the ceremonial baptism in the steeplechase water. Paul Austridge seemed quite resigned to his soaking; few though will forget Phil Davies' face when he realised, on the point of no return, that he too was in for a dousing.

For the first time in 14 years Blackheath were back in the first division of the British League; the celebrations continued long into the night.

T. L.

1982 CLUB RANKING AND 1983 INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS

Published earlier this year in March the 1982 club ranking from the National Union of Track Statisticians (NUTS for short!) placed Blackheath sixth, above two British League Division One clubs. Such a position was shown to be fully justified as, by the end of the season we had won a place in the First Division of the British League, in so doing replacing Sale and Liverpool the two clubs who had been ranked below us last year.

Hot off the presses are this year's top 50 Men's performances with Blackheath figuring prominently in both track and field.

For the third year running Mike Winch heads the rankings in his speciality, the shot, with 18.99m indoors and 18.67m outdoors. Our World Championship sprinter Buster Watson ended up the year 4th in the 100m with 10.16s (W) although his best 'legal' performance was 10.32 an English Native record. In the 200m Buster went one better ranking 3rd with 20.62s.

In the Javelin Pete Yates was second with a throw of 85.28m while in the High Jump, Trevor Llewelyn with a Welsh Record of 2.20m was third.

Perhaps the most encouraging performance was that of youngster Derek Wilson, only just 17 and still a junior. Derek wound up the year in 12th place in the Senior Men's 110m hurdle rankings with 14.49s. Tim Foulger's 2.09m high jump could mean a return to serious jumping by Tim, who has been dormant for two years thanks to a botched knee operation which meant he could not take the stresses of jumping on his knee.

With some 24 rankings by Heathens in the UK Top 50 this year we certainly have the talent to take Division one by storm. However the true test of the club will be when one or more of the 'stars' are away on International duty; it is then that those who are ranked just outside the Top 50 will come into their own.

1983 UK Rankings:

100m: Buster Watson 4th 10.16w (10.32) English Native record. Paul Ashen 20th 10.62w (10.76), Steve Green 45th 10.82w.

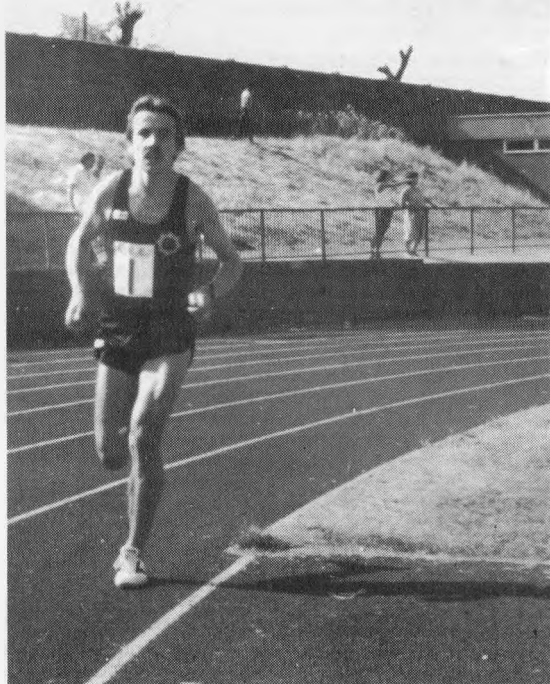
200m: Buster Watson 3rd 20.62, Paul Ashen 21st 21.40, John Shaw 41st 21.74.

400m: John Shaw 20th 47.57

800m: Julian Spooner 16th 1.48.23

Mile: Julian Spooner 33rd 4.02.93

10,000m: John Wigley 30th 29.14.2, Merv Brameld 43rd 29.38.87



Merv Brameld. Ranked at 10,000m nationally.

110m H:

Derek Wilson 12th 14.49s

400m H:

Paul Austridge 39th 54.1.

High Jump:

Trevor Llewelyn 3rd 2.20m Welsh record. Tim Foulger 18th 2.09m, Malcolm Cannon 36th 2.05m.

Pole Vault:

Perry Aubrey 33rd 4.20m

Triple Jump:

Phil Davies 42rd 14.70m

Shot:

Mike Winch 1st 18.99m (i) 18.67m, Pete Yates 34th 14.71m, Trevor Walhen 50th 14.11m

Discus:

Mike Winch 8th 53.50m, Chris Ellis 26th 48.08m

Javelin:

Pete Yates 2nd 85.28m.



CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS 1983

1st June

400 metres Senior: 1. R. Pinson 51.5, 2. P. Austridge (Junior) 52.0, 3. D. Cocker 52.4.

Boys: 1. G. Lineker 59.1, 2. T. Hubner 60.2, 3. D. Coleman 60.8.

Colts: 1. N. Findlay 74.6.

Long Jump Boys: 1. J. Arnold 4.95, 2. G. Lineker 4.85.

Colts: 1. D. Condon 3.67.

100 metres h'cap: 1. G. Niblock (+16) 11.2, 2. P. Davies (scr.) 3. R. Pinson (+3)

1600 m. h'cap: 1. N. Hartley 4.54.6, 2. A. Hartley 5.09.3, 3. J. Powell 5.25.1. Handicap marks not to hand.

Senior Discus and H'cap: 1. C. Ellis 47.55 (Scr. 47.55 2nd), 2. A. Fairbairn 33.26 (+ 12 45.26 4th), 3. J. Wakeman 27.55 (+20.5 48.05 1st), 4. D. Brand 26.80 (+18.5 45.30 3rd)

15th June

Senior Pole Vault Championship and H'cap:

1. J. Cunningham 3.58 (+0.60 4.18 3rd), 2. J. Wakeman 3.50 (+0.80 4.30 1st), 3. J. Day 3.00 (+1.00 4.00 4th), 4. R. Ebbutt 2.80 (+1.40 4.20 2nd).

Senior Javelin Championship and H'cap (framed on 60m.)
1. D. Brand 54.57, 2. M. Cannon 42.70 (+ 16 58.70 4th), 3. C. Brand 40.28 (+ 22 62.70 1st), 4. J. Wakeman 33.19 (+ 26 59.19 3rd), 5. S. Green 30.57 (+ 26 56.57 5th), 6. J. Day 23.59 (+ 36 59.59 2nd)

Youths Triple Jump: 1. N. Carpenter 12.57, 2. B. White 11.81, 3. A. Hartley 9.35

Colts: 1. M. Williams 9.08, 2. D. Condon 8.38.

Boys: 1. G. Kimmins 8.14.

Boys Shot: 1. S. Green 12.23

Youths: 1. P. Lester 6.27.

800 metres H'cap: 1. M. Cannon scr. 2.07.3, 2. C. Rudd (+ 165) 2.08, 3. G. Niblock (+ 65) 2.09.1.

200 metres Senior: 1. P. Ashen 21.2, 2. P. Davies 22.0, 3. R. Lyston 22.7.

Boys: 1. J. White 30.2, 2. G. Kimmins 31.4

Colts: 1. M. Williams 29.4, 2. S. Cope 31.6, 3. N. Findlay 32.4.

Youths: 1. G. Churchill 23.6, 2. N. Carpenter 24.1.

10,000 metres: 1. J. Wigley 29.16.4, 2. L. Roberts 30.28.4, 3. R. Cliff 33.42.0, 4. P. Hamilton 33.52.0.

29th June.

800 metres Senior: 1. J. McKeon (Guest) 1.52.7, 2. J. Spooner 1.52.7, 3. W. Foster 1.56.2, 4. N. Wise 1.58.7.

Juniors: 1. P. Austridge 1.56.9, 2. G. Fernandes 1.57.6, 3. S. Thompson 1.57.7.

Youths: 1. P. Lester 1.59.9, 2. N. Keogh 2.03.1, 3. I. Brooks 2.18.4

Boys: 1. S. Singh 2.24.2, 2. T. Partington 2.32.9, 3. D. McGrath 2.48.5.

Colts: 1. S. Slater 2.39.1, 2. M. Williams 2.42.7, 3. N. McKay 2.44.0.

200 metres H'Cap: 1. P. Davis scratch 22.4, 2. L. Hickey (+60). 22.4, 3. N. Keogh (1 + 13).

1 hour run: 1. P. Shephard 17k.026m. 2. M. Williams 17.010, 3. C. Walker 16.810.

6th July

Junior Javelin: 1. M. Laws 22.12

Senior Long Jump and H'cap (Based on 6m.40.): 1. P. Davies 6.35 (scr. 6.35 2nd), 2. D. Brand 5.42 (0.85. 6.27. 5th), 3. J. Wakeman 5.13 (1.25. 6.38. 1st), 4. C. Logan 4.32, (+2.10. 6.33. 3rd).

3000m Walk: 1. A. Pickering 17.03.2, 2. G. Botley 17.58.0.

Hammer: Boys: 1. J. Knapp 30.96, 2. S. Green 29.76.

Youths: 1. N. Haffenden 37.08.

1 Mile Senior A Race: 1. J. Spooner 4.11.6, 2. J. Wigley 4.15.0, 3. R. Farish 4.19.1.

B Race: 1. M. Laws 4.38.4, 2. R. Cliff 4.38.4, 3. P. Lester 4.42.9.

Junior: 1. S. Thompson 4.22.1, 2. M. Laws 4.38.4, 3. M. Dalton 5.08.0.

Youths: 1. P. Lester 4.42.9, 2. S. Dick 5.22.0, 3. A. Dick 5.27.0.

Boys: 1. T. Partington 5.43.0, 2. S. Adams 5.48.7.

400m H'cap: 1. P. Davies (+3) 51.8, 2. P. Betts (+25) 53.7, 3. J. Phelan (+33) 54.0.

20th July

Hammer Senior and H'cap (based on 30m): 1. N. Haffenden 26.32 (+3.00 29.32 4th), 2. D. Brand 25.94 (+4.50. 30.44 1st), 3. J. Wakeman 21.08 (+9.00. 30.08 2nd), 4. R. Ebbutt 17.00 (+11.50. 28.50 5th), 5. J. Day 14.88 (+15.00. 29.88 3rd).

Senior High Jump and H'cap (based on 1.65): 1. P. Davies

1.65 (scr 1.65 1st), 2. G. Hickey 1.55 (+10. 1.65 2nd), 3. R. Ebbutt 1.50 (+15. 1.65 3rd).

2000 m. Steeplechase: 1. J. Spooner 6.10.3, 2. F. Ford 6.10.4, 3. T. Soutar 6.20.3.

5000 metres A race: 1. L. Roberts 14.54.1, 2. S. Thompson 15.24.4 (club junior record), 3. M. Jackson 15.34.4.

B Race: 1. P. Betts 16.20.0, 2. J. Phelan 16.34.6, 3. P. Barrington-King 16.54.9.

400 Hurdles Senior: 1. P. Austridge 54.7, 2. J. Spooner 58.1, 3. R. Ebbutt 65.3.

Junior: D. Farrelly 64.6.

Youth: N. Keogh 60.0.

1200m H'Cap: 1. C. Hext (Guest) 3.26.6, 2. J. Woodcock 3.35.5, 3. N. Hartley 3.43.4, 4. J. White 3.43.4.

100m Senior: 1. P. Ashen 10.7, 2. J. Shaw 11.1, 3. J. Phillips 11.1.

Boys: 1. J. Knapp 12.2, 2. R. Chitty 12.6, 3. C. Reeks 12.6.

Colts: 1. S. Powell 14.1, 2. R. Eatwell 14.3, 3. M. Austin 14.7.

Youths: 1. G. Churchill 11.8, 2. N. Carpenter 11.9, 3. Simpson 12.1.

High Jump: Colts: 1. M. Williams 1.25, 2. S. Slater 1.15, 3. D. Condon 1.10.

Boys: 1. A. Hodge 1.55, 2. C. Reeks 1.40, 3. T. Partington 1.25.

Youths: 1. K. Thompson 1.81, 2. S. Creedon 1.50, 3. P. Downey 1.35.

Discus: Colts: 1. M. Williams 17.60. **Boys:** 1. N. Martin

28.10, 2. C. Reeks 5.68, 3. P. Jones 14.40. **Youths:** 1. P. Downey 25.98.

Senior Triple Jump and H'cap (based on 14.00 metres)

1. P. Davies 14.24 (Scr 14.24 2nd), 2. D. Brand 11.16 (+3.10 14.26 1st), 3. G. Hickey 11.10 (+2.90 14.00 5th), 4. J. Wakeman 10.28 (+3.80 14.08 3rd), 5. R. Ebbutt 9.76 (+4.00 13.76 6th), 6. J. Day 9.62 (+4.40 14.02 4th)

Senior Shot and H'cap (based on 11.00 metres): 1. D. Brand 11.00 scr. 11.00 2nd), 2. G. Hickey 10.52 (+0.20 10.72 3rd), 3. J. Wakeman 9.36 (+1.70 11.06 1st), 4. R. Ebbutt 6.93 (+3.70 10.63 6th), 5. J. Day 6.76 (+3.90 10.66 5th), 6. K. Daniel 6.21 (+4.50 10.71 4th).

1200m H'cap: 1. R. Farish Scr (+115) 3.15.0, 2. M. Laws (+20) 3.15.9, 3. D. White (+35) 3.17.2.

SWARD and KINNAIRD TROPHY MEETING

It was hazy but hot, as a small group of Heathens gathered for a very special promotion by Polytechnic Harriers. This was their Centenary year, and as well as running the Kinnaird Trophy, based purely on track events, they had revived the Sward Trophy after several years which is based only on field events.

Eight clubs, with two in each track event, and three in each field event, came to do battle. With the number of athletes in each field event it meant a long day and a midday start for the hammer. With a team of only some twenty athletes a lot of doubling up was required as well as the calling up of some very young athletes to do a man's job. One of the earliest in action was Neal Haffenden in the Hammer who with Trevor Walhen had to wait three rounds before Chris Ellis arrived to make up the trio. He had time to get in but one throw before rushing off to his next event, the Shot. So the pattern was set, with Chris Ellis, Trevor Walhen, Daryl Brand and John Wakeman sharing the throws. John along with James Cunningham and young Steve Gascoigne all cleared three metres forty, in the pole vault, giving us a second place in the 'A' string, and first place in the 'B' and 'C' strings.

Bob Weaver, Phil Davies, Ian Holder and Andy Crawford, backed up by the old timer Gordon Hickey contested the jumps, and scored valuable points all afternoon. At the end of the day, President Jim Day stepped forward to receive the Sward Trophy which we had won by 15 points from Shaftesbury Harriers, with Brighton and Hove third some 10 points further behind.

Whilst the field events were in progress, a similarly small squad of runners were giving their best on the track. Paul Austridge was our only contestant in the 400H acquitting himself well, in a very strong field. A very powerful looking Julian Spooner caused a few fluttering hearts in the way that he ran both the 800m and the 400m, but strength prevailed and he gave us two convincing wins.

One feature of the programme was the fact that each event was sponsored by a company or individual. The short sprint was sponsored by Brian Shenton, former English Native Record holder over 100yds; and for this reason the sprint was run over this rarely used distance. Paul Ashen had a close run win in 9.8 sec in the 'A' race, while Jerry Phillips clocked 10.1 in a convincing win in the 'B'. Over 200m John Shaw was just shaded into second place in 21.8 secs, but Phil Davies improved his PB yet again to win the 'B' string with 21.5 secs. These four sprinters then gained a convincing victory in the short relay in 42 secs.

Merv Brameld ran steadily in the 3000m for a good second place, and valuable points were gained by Steve Thompson, Colin Hamlett, Ian Holder, Bob Farish, Neil Wise, Bob Pinson, and those evergreen steeplechasers Bob Cliff and Chris Haines.

Unfortunately, try as they might, the points were not sufficient and we finished on 167 points behind Brighton and Hove on 194, and TVH on 190. All in all a very satisfying result for such a small team in what was a high standard of competition.

T.L.

The fine summer weather finally broke on the Thursday, force 10 gales were recorded in the south on the Friday and what the Gods had in store for the decathletes, who included our own Malcolm Cannon, over the weekend, heaven alone knew. The reassuring news was that the event was to be relatively local at Deangate, but as we came over the brow of the hill hearts sank, as no one had remembered quite how atrocious the track was. Even some of the stalwarts of the Kents, Ian Mackett and Bernie Skivington had declined, leaving a host of new-comers with a few old-timers (over 30? Ed.) making up a field of fourteen.

The weather was straight out of Ice Station Zebra and the track... well, I've run on smoother horse racing tracks in Ostend! However the tide was with us in the 100m and John Giles (Dartford) clocked a respectable 11.5s with everyone returning a reasonable time. After the heats had been run the solitary figure of Charlie Ebun-Amu (SLH) was seen, sprinting against the clock, due to a traffic jam on the A2. The long jump saw no surprise and the shot, that old favourite for the back-sufferers turned into a shouting competition for the rather less able putters. Winchy would not have been too proud of his clubmate's effort, but then again, who was? The high jump, being slightly more technical than throwing a ball (at least in County level decathlons, Mike!) usually sees the emergence of the decathlete as opposed to the athlete. However this competition went on far too long and the wind decided to rid any potential Dwight Stoneses of their limelight. The end of the first day saw some times for the 400m which were equalled the following day by two Australians during a 10,000m walk!

Sunday started as it meant to go on, freezing cold, wet and windy, and the 110m hurdles is not the event to start with when overnight you have developed steel girders down the backs of your legs. The timekeepers must either have rusted up overnight too, or they weren't told that the finish is the line, not when you stop running, as the times for the hurdles were notably slow even taking into account time taken falling into and climbing out of pot-holes!

The discus, another orthopaedic no-no, saw an exhibition of some very unique styles including the off-break and the daisy-cutter. The pole vault stands (called uprights at most tracks, but that term is used warily at Deangate) resembled a Heath-Robinson invention in Pisa and the bar replacement would have caught Billy Smart's eye, it being funnier than his clowns.

After the javelin, which saw our Heathen's dream of 50m throw smashed as he received a red flag, scores for the medals were very close. Giles led by 142 points from Cannon who led bronze position Ebun-Amu by a mere 5 points. The metric mile saw a burst from Cannon, not unlike Ovett, which left the others standing and assured him of the silver medal only 100 points behind Giles.

A post-script to this meteorological nightmare was the discovery that there were no medals to present. All in all, the general opinion was that given a civilised venue, reliable timekeeping and a few medals just to recognise the better athletes' endeavours, this event could be a good one even if the weather chose to remain perverse.

M.C.

6 x 2¼m CROSS COUNTRY RELAY **- SPARROWS DEN**

17th September, 1983

1. Cambridge Harriers A 66.59, 2. Portsmouth A 67.31, 3. Invicta A 67.44, 15. Blackheath A 73.36, 24. Blackheath B 76.09, 25. Blackheath C 77.01, 33. Blackheath F 82.30, 35. Blackheath D 83.47, 39. Blackheath G 90.17, 40. Blackheath E 91.27.

Fastest lap G. Butcher, Portsmouth A and G McCall, Invicta A - 10m 45s.

Individual Blackheath times will be printed in the Courier.

It was Johnnie Walker who persuaded us all to go slumming. Standing at the bar with an elephantine jug of beer poised over our empty glasses he spoke idealistically of the Fun Run's relaxing informality. We smiled indulgently at his account of the Alcoholic Darts Teams that were entered. We heard of the Fancy Dress extroverts, of the teams of overweight office workers, of the 3-generation families and of the various groups entered 'for a giggle'. What finally glazed our eyes over however was his description of last year's feminine fashions. O.K. Put me down. I'll have a go. But I'll have to get some shorts from somewhere. Whoa! Steady on, I'm driving...Oh, thanks. Cheers.

Two-and-a-half miles was, after all, a contemptibly brief jog but was no doubt calculated to give the uninitiated masses a faint idea of what athletics was about without giving them permanently off-putting indigestion. But we, we in Blackheath Harriers, we knew about these things. Our appreciation and enjoyment of TV armchair athletics were already honed enough but if we added tone to the event so much the better. A touch of class never comes amiss.

The day was sunnily superb. Hyde Park could hardly have looked gayer on the opening day of the Great Exhibition itself. There was a touch of Frith's 'Derby Day' about it. Family phaetons gave place to technicolor tents, the Epsom crowds to our own no less packed and his crinolines to shorts, and heavily logoed tee-shirts. For Frith's tic-tac men we had the crackle of the tannoy and the endless interviewing of competitors both great (see Alcoholic Darts Teams above) and small (the Under Tens).

The Blackheath teams and supporters sunned themselves on a grassy bank nibbling a light and thoughtful lunch, steaming up their bifocals at the passing show of youth and beauty and occasionally joking with apprehensive bravado. The tumbrils would call for us at 1.55 but sufficient unto.... Meanwhile we tried not to be unduly disturbed by the all-too-frequent pale-faced and coughing wrecks who lurched across our vision on the way back from the races. Could all of them be Alcoholic Darts Players? If so, where was their sense of humour? This was Fun.... wasn't it? Why weren't they laughing? Clearly their appreciation of TV athletics from now on would be Very Honed Indeed.



The B.G.'s

L-R back: Alan Brent, Don Gillate, Phil Saxon, Jim Bennett, George Downs, Arthur Good, Bill Lake.
 Front: Gerry Rhodes, Reg Kirk, Jack Braughton, Jack Parrott, Johnnie Walker.

As a matter of fact the Club teams were not entirely grunted apart from this unwelcome spectacle. This reproduction of our programme note explains why.

"FIELD INCLUDES"

.....1982 winner Jack Braughton and nine other members of the 'Blackheath Geriatrics' - members of Blackheath A.C., (sic) over 100 years old, club motto Senilitatus Quesque Non Mortalis." Devised by classics don Norman Dudley this freely translates 'Take up thy bed and run.' For the rest it was less the 'Blackheath A.C.' solecism that bothered us than the way they threw their commas among the words that immediately followed.

Our event was started by Dr. David Player, Director General of the Health Education Council, a tactful choice and one clearly designed to soothe. Soothing, too, was the swanlike calm of the First Aid Stations whose surface mien gave little clue to the furious sub-surface paddling which our geriatricism had inspired, as 1355 hours approached.

The race itself remains a sun-drenched, perspirational blur enlivened by the roar of the tee-shirt and the smell of the crowd. Gone was any thought of a social event. Us old 'uns were not in that league and the mathematics of the entry lists should have been our gipsy's warning. When groups of more salad age number in the thousands and the 60/70's of both sexes a mere 182 all told we must be in two different plimsol games, so we must. With us life was real, life was earnest and each had something to prove even if, in the words of Stephen (Gamesmanship) Potter, it was only that we were Rather Wonderful For Our Age. The crowd certainly thought so. Quote: "Blimey. I don't believe it. I don't wanna look. I never seen a dead man."

There was, however, more to it than that. At that age you do not get dragooned from nowhere at a pub darts match. In this field lifelong experience was all. Not for us the 300 yard dash followed by nicotine collapse and a 2¼ mile walk but the keen, well-judged disposition of effort according to known capacity. So positions, once settled over the wide open spaces of the first straight, did not alter significantly though competition in many a private war was fierce. Two other elements ensured a relatively warm pace. One was that everyone was competing against the day that he declared the effort beyond him and the other was that it is standard drill among experienced runners to treat each race on its merits. The distance, presumably rated suitable for all attainment levels, was seen by these experienced geriatrics for what it was, a middle distance sprint. The fact of its being labelled Fun Run was not going to alter the habit of a lifetime.

Anyway, you have the message. It was a bit of a slog but we all finished, and to some effect too as was revealed the following Sunday in the 'Times'. Ninth out of 1946 teams; not a bad day's work, and just reward for the virtues of our teetotalism and quite the best result the B.G.'s have obtained since first entering in 1978. Among us was Jack Parrott, the geriatric's geriatric, the only 1978 Club entrant who has not missed the event since. After the race we ran across another runner from 1978, Gentleman Gus Tweedy, the Lion of West One, looking like the elegant Burlington Bertie himself and very fit to boot, whose golden trainers now hang in the cupboard under the stairs.

Meanwhile, in another part of the forest, Peter Long was skipping his family of daughter and grandson in the 3-Generation Game and made 8th position out of the 25 teams in the category. The only thing to be said about that apart from hearty congratulations is that for one so young to be a patriarch on that scale boggles the mind.

By a secret formula the Geriatrics were computed to have scored 56 points in winning their 9th Team place. Make what you will of these team placings but special congratulations at least to the first six which, under the rules remember, includes Jack Parrott and Johnnie Walker.

Cat. 31 Age 60-69

(16 + mins) 2. J. Braughton 4. A. Good 5. P. Saxon
(18 + mins) 22. J. Bennett 33. A. Brent
(19 + mins) 48. G. Downs
(21 + mins) 61. W. Lake
(22 + mins) 68. D. Gillate, 73. G. Rhodes
(25 + mins) 81. R. Kirk

Cat. 32 Age 70+

(28 + mins) 11. J. Parrott
(30 + mins) 12. M. Walker

Three-Generation Team.

8. (536 pts) P. Long, J. Long, J. Groves.

D. G.

WHERE THEY ARE NOW

We were pleased to hear from down under that V.P. Ian Ross has resumed running with Hash House Harriers in Tasmania since his visit to Hayes at Christmas. In May he ran in an 11 Km Fun Run in Hobart, coming 453rd in a field of around 1400 in 51.55. He commented that it was no fun at all with a long 2Km hill rising 500 feet in the middle, but he hopes to break 50 minutes next year! He sends his regards to all at the Club.

During a recent visit to the Bournemouth area, P.P. Peter Baigent met up with Derek Harker who now takes his exercise with the Wessex Hash House Harriers. They meet for a run every Sunday in various locations spread over a wide area around Bournemouth; with false trails abounding speed work is only for those requiring a double-length run. It is understood that although Derek claims he can still put in the quick burst when required, he normally waits for impetuous youth to discover the scent! As "Hash Cash" he remains true to his banking background of keeping his hands on the money. He sends his regards to all his friends in the Club and hopes to attend a function in the not too distant future.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the death of two of our most senior members, each with more than sixty years of membership. We extend our sympathy to their families.

S H CLAYDON

Sidney Claydon joined the Club shortly after the end of the first world war. He made a dramatic start, winning the mile handicap off 50 yards on the day of his election and the novices race a few months later at the opening of the cross country season (the last from the Green Man at Blackheath). Thereafter his progress was rapid and he was elected Cross Country Captain in 1922. After that season a move to Southend on Sea enforced some curtailment of his activities with the Club but did not prevent him turning out regularly in mob matches and other major fixtures for the next ten years or so and winning several Club championships. His active career ended in the mid 1930's but his affection for the Club remained and at the time of the Jubilee Celebrations at Hayes in 1977 he was a generous contributor to the fund set up for the extension of Club HQ.

E J CASTELLO

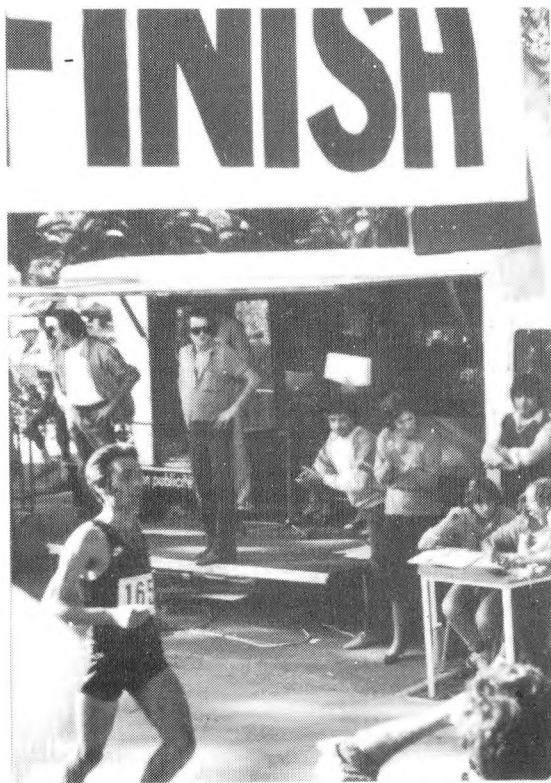
Ellis Castello joined the Club on 1 October 1921 the day the Club held its first run from its new Headquarters at the Railway Hotel at West Wickham and immediately established his position as one of the Club's best cross-country runners. He was second in the Club 5, 7½ and 10 that season and won the 5 the following year. This was his only championship win but he was regularly placed in the first two or three for the Club in mob matches and other major fixtures.

In later years his home was in Berkshire and contacts with the Club were few but he contributed reminiscences for the Club's Centenary History, of which he was an early purchaser, and he greatly enjoyed the opportunity of talking over Club affairs when one of the Club's Past Presidents called to present him with his 50 years membership tankard.

October 1983

I suppose it must have been at the beginning of the year that Johnny Baldwin had thoughts of going to Perpignan for the World Veterans Road Running Championships. His frustrating years as a Vet. fraught with injury and just occasional flashes of what he could be, seemed to be behind him. After his brilliant win in the over 45 National Cross Country, and other good runs, including a victory over Pierre Voets of Belgium on his own ground, the time seemed ripe for his entrance onto the World Vets scene.

We left for Portsmouth bright and early on Monday 10th October, with an ETA at Perpignan of mid-day Wednesday, following a leisurely drive and two overnight stops. We were greeted by gales in the channel but John and I managed to eat a hearty lunch on board and knock the first of many bottles of plonk. The first night's stop was in a sleepy little French town called Domfront, but the first signs of potential disaster appeared when I developed a sore throat and cold. John immediately sat as far away from me as possible and munched vitamin C tablets like smarties!



**JOHN BALDWIN.
CHAMPION OF THE WORLD.**

The second day we broke the back of the journey but by now my cold was of influenza proportions and John was distinctly worried. But he kept taking the tablets and drinking the plonk and seemed to be holding it at bay.

Thursday was registration day for the races, the 10K being held on Saturday at 3 o'clock followed by the 25K at midday Sunday. Armed with maps of the course we also did a walk of the start and finish, John carefully navigating. The next two days were spent trying to "stay loose" and not think too much of what lay ahead. We ate and drank sensibly, trained lightly and just tried to relax. My cold was eventually going and John had managed not to catch it. Come the morning of the 10K John and I decided to take a quiet, relaxing stroll to our local

shops. Suddenly a local lady appeared pushing her moped. "M'sieu, M'sieu, can you help. I can't start my machine". She wanted one of us kick it over! Now John in his younger days was a scooter man, so he started to kick start like mad with me warning him to "watch your legs". Apart from John cursing and sweating, nothing else seemed to happen. Luckily a local lad came along and offered to help, so John and I beat a hasty retreat with John hoping he had done no permanent damage to himself.

It was time to change and make for Town. The drive in was very quiet and John although outwardly calm, I sensed, was feeling very tense. Warming up seemed rather pointless as half hour before the start we were to assemble stripped off ready for racing and be marched to the start! Luckily it was pleasantly warm, so we went through the motions of jogging, striding and stretching.

It was youngest in front and the older age group behind. This was rather disconcerting for John because it meant if he stayed in the allotted position he would have about 150 or so slower runners in front of him. However years of experience of our National came in useful at a time like this and he managed to get himself into a reasonable position. So this was it, we were taken to the start far too soon and just had to stand and get more and more edgy. Across the front to ensure that there was no chance of one of the notorious continental shuffle forward starts, was a line of troops from the Foreign Legion. Suddenly, in answer to an unseen signal, the soldiers scampered away. There was an almighty bang and we were away. It was one great rush, far too fast for me, but John was well away with the leaders. I could see up in front for about 3K and John was still there. After this we were on a twisting country road section and they were too far away to see. All I remember is that it was b..... fast where I was, so goodness knows what it was like up front.

On finishing, my first thoughts were for John. I saw Leo Carroll from Wirral who had finished 4th, a great run, so I assumed that John must have been placed. Imagine my shock when Leo told me that John had stopped! I was shattered, all that way to drop out! However Leo quickly explained that John had got going again and finished 5th overall and 1st in his age group. On talking to John afterwards he explained that he was lying third when hit by stitch, he tried to keep going but eventually had to stop. Luckily Leo Carroll came by and called to him to get going again, and from then on John said he felt so easy and was pulling the leaders back. After all this drama Blackheath had the Over 45 World 10K Champion.

The next morning John and I once again returned to town but this time much more relaxed. Pressure was off for John having won gold so he decided to take this one nice and steady and see how things developed. Once again we paraded in age group, but this time there was no need or desire to gain a better starting position, after all there were 25K in which to sort yourself out. Off we went and once again I could see John near the front and looking very relaxed. This time the course went out into the countryside and through a small outlying town called Bompas. We returned to the outskirts of Perpignan at the 16K mark, where my wife told me that John was lying 5th. If this was relaxed running what could he have done if he tried! The rest of the race was on now familiar ground round the previous day's 10K course. On to the finish where I was greeted by a very fresh looking John who had held his overall 5th place and won the silver medal in the Over 45 group.

Now we could really relax. We had to return to town once more that evening for the award ceremony which was held in the H.Q. of the Foreign Legion. After what seemed hours of long rambling speeches by all the local dignitaries, John mounted the rostrum to be presented with his World Championship Trophy and medals.

A couple of days spent relaxing and sampling the delights of good French cuisine, then it was time for the long drive back to Cherbourg. Again we took a leisurely route through some of the most wonderful scenery, and finally arrived back eleven days after departing.

I am sure that John will put these two races high on his list of athletic achievements and I feel certain that he would join me in thanking Les Roberts, Paul Barrington-King and my wife, Olive, for their support before, during and after the races.

J. O.

TAKING A BITE AT THE BIG APPLE

October 1983

Rod Dixon and Grete Waitz may have collected the winners' medals in the 1983 New York Marathon but Blackheath Harriers also captured world attention, albeit briefly. The club banner was taken across the Atlantic for The Big Apple's 26-miler and hundreds of athletes from dozens of countries saw it being carried through the city by the Heathens' squad.

It happened during an international breakfast run the day before the race when foreign competitors jogged from the United Nations building to the finishing line in Central Park.

Blackheath's big moment was captured on video along with the marathon highlights and shown to the hobbling hundreds who braved the post-race disco (who but the Americans could think of such a torture?).

Some of the Heathens' party flew out of London hardly knowing each other and returned firm friends. The trip, well-organised by Graham Botley was not without its lighter moments. Like when one Heathen (George Butlin says he wishes to remain anonymous) rang room service for an extra blanket and was offered a service he did not expect. Answering a knock at his door he was confronted by a lady more than willing to tuck him up in bed as well. For the record, he took the blanket, said, "thank you" and sent her away somewhat nonplussed.

Fortunately, all the Heathens completed the course. Their stories were ones of mixed fortunes with some momentous personal achievements and the odd disappointment.

The start was spectacular. Seventeen thousand runners moved across the vast Verrazano suspension bridge after a small but noisy artillery gun was fired.

It seemed like the whole of New York had turned out to watch the race as the competitors moved through Brooklyn, Queens and First Avenue, Manhattan. Then there was a brief excursion into the Bronx via two of the course's five bridges before the thousands of blistered feet moved on to Harlem. The Blackheath vest and shorts went down well with some of the crowd. "Man, you black all over just like me", shouted one local as he belloyed encouragement.

After Harlem came Central Park, which provided the sting in the tail of the course. The small hills – just before the finish – proved as hostile as the area's infamous muggers.

Times. Les Roberts 2hr 30min 9sec; Gary Spencer 2.59.13; Brian Saxton 3.02.07; John Robinson 3.23.05; Nick Brooks 3.26.52; Paul Davies 3.34.41; Peter Rickell 3.36.13; Graham Botley 3.37.19; George Butlin 3.40.32; Len Dalmon 3.43.32; Philip Khan-Panni 3.59.56; Joan Austridge (Bromley Ladies) 4.14.22; Bill Wheeler 4.32.21.

B.W.

AN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE YOUNGSTERS

Elsewhere in this Gazette you will have read of our young athletes' victories and successes on a scale never before seen by Blackheath Harriers. During the summer, we enjoyed a turnover of more than 200 young athletes – youngsters just like Paul Ashen, Paul Austridge, Robert Farish used to be, who are now emerging to first team status and helping us in our British League quests.

At the time of writing our competing body of young athletes, now over the country, has dwindled to less than 20, and our recruitment has virtually stopped.

I cannot spare the time to team manage all the year round – my efforts can only be track and field orientated.

In the last Heme Hill League, we were almost unrepresented in the Youths match because nobody could be bothered to make any phone calls to rally a team together – except Ian Dibbens and me literally at the 11th hour.

It is not a difficult task. All it requires is an hour or so's work per match.

I now face the task of yet again trying to pick up the pieces from a disastrous winter season, and trying to convert us back into a winning formula which will reach a National Final again.

J.P.

Please help me to help the club.

LONDON TO BRIGHTON WALK

Starter – Big Ben. Time – 6 am. Well in fact the starter chose not to appear at such an outrageous hour on a dark wet Saturday morning – he happened to be taking a shower behind a polythene curtain at the time! His wise example was, however, not followed by some 30 odd competitors setting out on the 58th Open Walking Race to Brighton promoted by Surrey Walking Club. They huddled beneath the canopy of Westminster Underground Station together with an equal number of officials, supporters and spectators until it was time to take the first strides across the bridge – only about 99,999 more to go or just over two marathons put end to end.

Among the walkers were two 'Heathens and several more 'Heathens were among the crowd of officials and helpers. Both Philip King and the author had only tried their hands (?) at walking seriously during the previous year and thus were only accepting the well known challenge of this course in an innocent spirit of fun and in spite of advice that adequate training was essential. This became apparent later – much, much later.

Progress through Brixton and Streatham was steady and slightly slower than it might have been as the rain stopped and full daylight quickly uncovered us. The leader alone had long since disappeared never to be seen again by any of us before the finish. There was a blustering wind which grew in strength the whole way and which combined with weariness to completely halt forward motion at times.

I found the easy pace misleading as at about 17 miles (by which time several other 'Heathens supporters had appeared) I was in third position with Warhurst of Sheffield, an international who had won in 1982 and who was to finish second in this year's race. It may not come as a complete surprise to the reader to learn that this situation did not last, but with unflinching confidence the well-known 20 mile point outside of Redhill Football Club was reached in 3¼ hours. Meanwhile Philip was walking a better paced race some way behind.

As all who know the road are aware the hills start after Crawley with an appetiser aptly named Redhill. With this first hill came the first stroke of impending weariness for me but for seven or eight other competitors it was merely the end of their warm up. Of these I was glad to see three Surrey stalwarts well to the fore and, as it turned out, they were beginning an advance through the field which finally took them into an easy team victory in 3rd, 4th and 6th places.

The half-way point was reached just south of Horley by which point a new slower stability of pace and position was regained. The course had followed the 'old' Brighton road towards Cuckfield and at Three Bridges there was a right turn swinging south of Crawley back to the 'new' A23. At this turn disaster overtook two of the competitors – they didn't. There happened at the time to be no marshal at the vital roundabout and the orange arrow could easily be missed by your average sleep-walker. One of these two was our own man King who courageously and without support went over even more hills turning back to the proper route later on and finishing in a reasonable time despite covering the extra miles.

The route south over Handcross and on through Bolney passed all too gradually with a couple more competitors disappearing over the hills in front including Sandra Brown also of Surrey W.C. who had performed excellently in the Hastings to Brighton a few weeks earlier, but who was a novice to this race. At Bolney there were two incidents – the first was an uncomfortably close brush with a caravan turning into the Bolney Stage without seeing us (the information was most forcibly impressed upon him by a certain supporter in the car park!). The second was much welcomed refreshment at the same point.

The last obstacle was expected to be the steep hill up to Pyecombe – it's all downhill after that, they said. Well so it was but with the aforementioned wind and the seemingly endless outskirts of the town, the anticipated last stage felt more like twenty miles than five. At last however the sea was reached just inside the ten hours required for a second class standard. Never again – or maybe just one more try for a first class medal next year. Time soon heals the physical and mental effects of these events, I'm told.

The winner, Hodkinson of Cambridge Harriers, had arrived some 1½ hours earlier: his pace-making slackened to bring him home only 8 minutes ahead of his nearest rival and some ½ hour behind the best times for the course, although the wind will have accounted for some of this deficit. The third man home deserves special mention, Steve Till of Surrey, whose excellent place only formed part of his racing record this summer. He had finished the 100 mile walk in June, come 6th in the Quadrathon, was well up in the National 100 km walk and on top of this ran in the North Kent Marathon!

The organisation of such a long and spread out event was excellent and my particular thanks go, of course to Karen and also to VP Mike Peel without whose encouragement I would not have succeeded in saving my train fare to the seaside.

Results 1) P. Hodkinson (Camb.) 8.28.17 14) P. C. Hannell 9.54.46, 25) P. King 11.08.27. **Teams** 1) Surrey W.C. 13, 2) Highgate 41.

P.H.



Mike Peel "encouraging" Pete Hannell en route to Brighton.

ENGLISH CROSS-COUNTRY UNION

On the 18th August 1883 a meeting of delegates from the Midlands, the North and South met at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham to establish the English Cross-Country Union, the first National race being held on 1st March 1884.

To celebrate the inauguration of the Union, a Centenary Luncheon was held on the 18th August this year at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham.

During the reception a commemorative plaque was unveiled at the Hotel, by Jack Holden the Tipton Harrier, winner of the I.C.C.U. International in 1933, 1934, 1935.

An additional ceremony was the presentation, by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Birmingham, of plaques to the clubs who were in existence before the formation of the Union. As the second oldest club (Thames Hare & Hounds being the oldest), Blackheath Harriers duly received a handsome plaque carrying the English C.C.U. Badge and the Club Badge; this may be seen in the display cabinet at Hayes.

Club members have contributed to the Union's affairs over the 100 years of its existence; indeed the first Secretary/Treasurer was a Blackheath Harrier, namely D. T. Mayson and continuity is maintained in that Alan Brent is the current Championship Secretary. Perhaps it is right that, as one of the oldest and still most active clubs, our members should span the 100 years.

Postscript. The eleven clubs who received commemorative plaques have provided the E.C.C.U. with a Trophy to be awarded annually to the first of these clubs to finish in the National Cross-Country Championships. This will be awarded for the first time at Newark in 1984.

DONATIONS TO CLUB FUNDS 1982/83

I would like to thank the following members who made contributions to the various Club funds:-

Life Members L. J. Atterbury, T. M. Barrett, V. W. W. Bardon, W. A. Boulton, R. Edmonds, L. E. Hammill, A. Keepax, J. H. Kitton, E. J. Malone, G. E. Monshall, C. C. Noaks, J. C. Oxland, H. J. Pearce, H. L. Prestage, L. G. Towers, B. D. Wilson, C. J. R. Woods.

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**Non-Committee post.*

Past Presidents: S. C. Wooderson (1947 and Centenary Year), G. H. Wilkinson (1948), S. A. Field (1953), C. A. Wiard (1954), W. H. M. Vercoe (1957), V. W. W. Beardon (1959), J. R. D. Cockburn (1961), L. E. Hammill (1963), R. H. Thompson (1966), A. J. Brent (1967), D. G. Child (1968), G. Brooks (1971), P. J. G. Baigent (1972), R. A. Morley (1973), A. A. Oldfield (1974), A. E. Ball (1975), J. R. Baldwin (1976), R. E. D. Taylor (1977), T. T. Sullivan (1978), C. M. Brand (1979), B. G. Stone (1980), I. F. Smith (1981), I. C. Wilson (1982), J. E. Day (1983).

Vice-Presidents: J. H. Kitton (1927), C. L. Mobbs (1935), J. C. Stevens (1947), E. J. J. Reed (1949), R. H. Gollan (1949), C. E. Clowser (1950), N. W. Page (1954), D. J. Tingey (1956), G. Waller (1956), L. G. Towers (1957), P. E. Sims (1958), H. R. Howard (1959), B. G. Parrott (1959), A. A. Tweedy (1959), L. E. Piper (1960), G. H. Smith (1960), N. Dudley (1961), J. W. Orr (1961), J. H. Scott-Wilson (1961), J. E. Lindblom (1962), L. G. King (1962), P. H. Francis (1964), D. F. E. Hogg (1964), K. J. Johnson (1964), J. B. Herring (1965), G. E. Monshall (1966), A. J. Weeks-Pearson (1967), W. S. Norton (1967), A. V. Hayday (1968), T. W. F. Mountford (1968), R. J. Edmonds (1969), R. Richardson (1969), D. H. Hoggood (1970), I. M. Ross (1971), D. L. Gregory (1972), J. Lissaman (1972), B. M. Shapcott (1973), G. R. Last (1974), F. J. Dyer (1975), C. R. Haines (1975), G. Hickey (1975), G. Botley (1976), F. C. Rogers (1976), J. C. W. Friend (1977), F. G. W. Dudman (1978), S. F. H. Glynn (1978), M. L. Peel (1978), A. W. Frankish (1979), M. J. Mahoney (1979), P. E. Shephard (1979), J. A. Clear (1980), J. Braughton (1980), D. W. Amner (1980), P. C. Hannell (1980), T. C. Mallott (1980), M. A. Winch (1981), R. J. Coles (1981), J. V. F. Bennett (1981), T. Cavanagh (1981), S. H. Cluney (1982), R. E. Green (1982), W. F. Lake (1982), J. F. Parrott (1982), I. K. Young (1982), G. B. Crowder (1983).