

# Striders of Croydon

2008 New Year Magazine



The Addington 18

# The Thoughts of Chairman Gannon – Winter 2008

Welcome to the first club letter of 2008, I hope 2007 was a kind year to you all and that 2008 will be even better!

## Winter Blues

Like a lot of people I always find January a bit of a miserable month, the excitement of Christmas and New Year has passed, I've usually eaten and drunk too much over the holiday and definitely spent too much money and it always seems such a long way until payday this month plus the weather is usually foul!

## It's Marathon Time!

However the one item that does offer some cheer in the middle of a bleak mid-winter is the excitement of a London Marathon to look forward to! Even if I'm not actually running it myself and I haven't done so for over 6 years I still can't not seem to get caught up in the build up to the event, which is sad I know! There is more of a buzz around the club at this time as most people by now would know if they are in the marathon either through the marathon ballot, one of the six places that are available through the club and for which we had the draw for at the clubhouse just before Christmas or finally they've entered through one of the many charities that offer Gold Bond Places. Good luck in raising the required funds for the last option!

## Coaching and Training

In fact good luck to everyone that is running London this year, or if you didn't get into London, one of the other Spring Marathons. If it's your first marathon or even if you're an old hand at this game but are looking for a different approach then you might be in luck as the club is presently looking at what coaching advice it can offer its members and of course this would include running marathons, so watch this space or should I say Web Space as the plans included having a coaching page on the club web site. However, if you have got a marathon place and you are wanting advice on any part of training for the marathon please don't feel you have to wait for the web site to be updated as we do have not only qualified coaches within the club these days but some of them have even run the odd marathon or two! Feel free to contact me or any of the committee and I'm sure we could direct you to where you can get the correct advice that you require. Personally I would suggest that you look up and join some of the long training runs that have been planned and announced as they are a great way to get those long runs that are required for a successful marathon with the company of other like minded sufferers, they tend to become of a bit of a marathon self help group in my experience!

## You Help Us, We Help You

Of course for those of you not running London this year I shall be as ever looking to press gang you into assisting at the club's FLM marshalling spot on the Embankment on the day itself so please keep April 13th free. If you are thinking that you would like to run the FLM in 2009 then I would suggest that it would be more than a good idea you come along and help as 3 of the club's FLM places go to those that have helped out in the previous year for this event. And as for this year there were only 4 that helped out in 2007 that came forward for a place in the ballot for these places you stand a fair chance of getting one I would say!

## And Now it's Time to Say Goodbye

Well only to the fact that I will be no longer Chairman come October! (Sorry Phil M but I'm not leaving the club) I feel it's time for someone else to take the helm so someone is going to have to gag me at future AGM's! Mind you there are some that would say that would have been a good idea at all the AGM's we've ever had! However, as I step down from the committee there will be a need to replace me, if not as Chairman but in some committee role. So if you feel the need to serve your club please have a quiet word with Chris Morton or myself either on a club run, in the bar afterwards or by dropping us an email on the subject.

## Switchback

Okay I told a little fib, there is one more thing I'm saying goodbye to and that is as race organiser for our club race we hold every September, the Switchback 5. So you any of you fancy helping out our race secretary, Susan Haynes, then please come forward and let either of us know. It does have to be just one person to do this role, in fact it might make more sense if a group of people carried out the task and after all it would take a lot to replace me! Nah just kidding but please come forward other wise this race might disappear from the race calendar after over 12 years and I think that would be a crying shame!

**Happy New Year to all Striders and their love ones!!**



# SCAG!

## David Batten

It may sound like a nasty disease, or a strike breaker from the nineteen eighties, but actually it's the acronym for the Striders coaching initiative.

SCAG stands for the Striders Coaching Advisory Group, which we hope will "do what it says on the tin". Although I believe Striders currently organise a brilliant range of training and club runs for our members, there seemed to be a gap in the back-up information that the club supplied.

Our hope is that now SCAG has been formed, a flow of helpful running and fitness information will be provided. The group is chaired by a member of the club committee and report to it. All members of SCAG must have a coaching qualification, although a UKA athletic qualification would be the "gold" standard, either a fitness, or sports qualification is also acceptable. In some ways, it is now thought advantageous to also have some coaches from varied backgrounds, who either have actual personal experience in athletics, or proceed to take an athletic qualification.

SCAG's aim is to help Striders membership to improve/prolong/enjoy their running. Although the first meeting of the group was just before Christmas, we have already started to identify projects and proceed with them. Six running related areas have been identified and two for the delivery of the information. The first subjects to be addressed are the Marathon and both fast and slow speed sessions. Communication within the group has also been addressed and also information delivery. Other subjects that will be addressed are warm-ups and cool downs, running technique, strength training and the further development of Striders coaches.

The main way that the coaching information will be accessed, will probably be via the Striders web site, using the speed sessions page. Once you go to the speed sessions page, there will be other "links" to specific topics. Having seen the draft document from the marathon group, I am sure that the forming of SCAG and the helpful information that the group will provide, will offer a unique opportunity for the development of all Striders members.

## Marathon Training 2008

*The Marathon group within SCAG will be producing more guidelines and some training schedules for different target times, runs very shortly. They will be loosely based on this overall plan*

### Overall marathon plan

**Monday** - rest or short steady run  
**Tuesday** - speed training/Fartlek either on the track or round Sandilands  
**Wednesday** - 7:30 Club run 40 mins or 60mins and as fast as you reasonably can in either the fast or slow group  
**Thursday** - do your own thing or have a break and swim for an hour with the club - 8:30 at Trinity (or both)  
**Friday** - 7:00 40 mins at a good pace or do your own thing  
**Saturday** - cross country or do your own thing.  
**Sundays** -

Either - Enter a race - see some examples below.

Or - Extended club run at a steady pace.

To provide some flexibility over the next three months. Starting **January 6th** the club house will usually be open at 7:30 for a run returning to the club house for 8:30. During January this will follow the Croydon 10K route or you can do your own thing. The route will change when it gets lighter.

at 8:30 run 1 hour, 90 minutes or an extended run of about 2 hours. Mixed terrain with a bias towards running on good surfaces and avoiding the rough stuff.

Or - a Striders special

**January 13<sup>th</sup>** The Greenwich 13+ is confirmed for January 13th - Flat on road

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>** Merstham back to the club house - 13m+- Hilly,

**February 24<sup>th</sup>** The Wandle Way from Clapham to the club House 15m - flat mixed

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>** Clapham to Kingston 18m - flat mixed

And subject to demand probably some longer runs from the club house starting at 7:30. Keep an eye on the main Striders webpage or Striderslist for news of extra Striders Specials.

# And a completely different approach from the Ref

And a star appeared in the east and Postman Pat materialised at the front door one Monday morning and plopped a plastic bag through the letter box - the inside of which stated "You silly bugger, you've got a place in The Marathon for 2008" .....

The Club places have now been allocated and now the hard work is about to begin - one or twenty of you know that I work shifts and so is anyone fancies running at odd hours during the week during the day then Big Nose is up for it, refereeing commitments permitting.

My Sunday schedule is in place as follows - it works for me, the difference will be how many midweeks I can get in

Jan - Tadworth 10, Tanners 30 walk, Dartford 10, Canterbury 10

Feb - Watford half, Wokingham half, Bramley 20, Tunbridge Wells half

Mar - Thanet 20, poss Leith Hill half, Hastings half, Easter Sunday, Kingston 16

Apr - Thames Towpath 10, London and the Builders Arms (more than a few halves), rest, Bracknell half

and then five weeks to Edinburgh!!

For what it's worth, I will be running as per usual for St John Ambulance injuries permitting and success or otherwise will be measured by the number of visits to the House of Pain.

# How to break the Club 10m record

## Alan Dolton

The last seven years have seen a substantial growth in Striders' membership. And there has also been a very welcome increase in the number of Striders who are keen to improve their knowledge of training and coaching. When I joined the club, back in the last century, I was the only active member with a UKA coaching qualification. We now have at least six members with such a qualification. However, I have the impression that as the club has grown, some of our newer members may not be aware of the opportunities of help with training that the club can offer, or may simply be too diffident to ask for personal advice.

Looking at our club road running records, both for men and women, it is noticeable that most of them were set in the 1980s. The men's 10 mile record of 54.51 (set by Simon Morris) has stood since 1985. My personal opinion is that we have had runners with enough physical ability to break Simon's record with the right training, but that they have not done enough quality training to do so.

My first ten-mile road race was the 1980 Epsom '10', where I ran just over 65 minutes off relatively light training (about 20 miles per week). I significantly increased my training after this, and in the 1985 Woking '10' I ran a lifetime best of 51 minutes 32. (Unfortunately I can't claim this as a Striders record, because I wasn't a Strider at the time.) I hope that some of our runners might be interested to see how I trained in the four weeks leading up to that race:

28 Jan AM 4 miles easy PM 5 miles easy  
29 Jan AM 4 miles easy PM 8 x 800m on track (reps averaged 2.34; 400m jog between reps)  
30 Jan AM 4 miles easy PM circuit training in gym  
31 Jan AM 4 miles easy PM 6 miles fairly hard  
1 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 7 miles slow  
2 Feb 13 miles in 96 minutes (a slow run for me then: it would be my race pace now !!)  
3 Feb 50 x 200m on track, starting a rep every minute (ie 25 laps of the track; reps averaged 36-37 seconds)  
4 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 5 miles easy  
5 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 8 x 800m on track (reps averaged 2.29; 400m jog between reps)  
6 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM circuit training in gym  
7 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 6 x 600m on track (reps averaged 1.45; 400m jog between reps)  
8 Feb (holiday from work; travelled to South Wales for training weekend with a group of 400m/800m runners)  
Hill session: 6 reps of 300-350m uphill on sand  
9 Feb AM 6 x c.200m uphill on sand PM 5 miles easy then 10 x c.120m on beach  
10 Feb 4 miles 'fartlek' including 12 x 100-150m uphill sprints on sand  
11 Feb 4 miles slow (roads icy)  
12 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 16 x 250m on track (light snow on track: reps averaged 44 secs: 150m jog between reps)  
13 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM circuit training in gym  
14 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 12 x 250m on track (light snow on track: reps averaged 46 secs: 150m jog between reps)  
15 Feb 4 miles easy  
16 Feb 5 mile cross-country race (Surrey League)  
17 Feb 5 miles 'fartlek' including 10 x c.250m



18 Feb AM 5 miles easy PM 5 miles easy  
 19 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 5 miles easy  
 20 Feb 2000m time-trial on track (5 minutes 36 seconds, ie average 67 seconds per lap)  
 21 Feb AM 4 miles easy PM 7 miles slow  
 22 Feb 4 miles easy  
 23 Feb 4 miles easy  
 24 Feb Woking '10': 51 minutes 32 seconds.

Obviously I recognise that there are many runners who will not want to do this volume of training. With the benefit of hindsight, I think that I would still have run some respectable times without doing so many miles of training. But I think that the most important feature is that I was doing quite a lot of fast running: in the four weeks I did seven track sessions and three hill sessions, and some of these sessions involved running fairly fast over relatively short distances. And most of these fast sessions were done with a training partner to push me: I think I would have run slower if I had been training alone. Some of our current athletes seem to think that one speed session a week is enough. That may be the case if your main aim is to finish a marathon. But I would encourage those who are training for shorter distances to do more than one speed session a week, and personally I would be very happy to help coach anyone who is really committed to try to improve their performance.

## SPORTS MASSAGE THERAPY

HELPS REDUCE MUSCULAR  
 SORENESS AFTER TRAINING OR  
 COMPETITION

HELPS RECOVERY FROM SOFT TISSUE INJURY

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## Zorg en Zekerheid!

### Tim Bett

No, this is not some sort of infectious disease nor a Dutch expletive but the name of a circuit of 7 events in the area just south of Amsterdam. It is a sort of Owen Trophy but is both age and distance graded as well as open to all. Each of the 7 events consists 3 races: "short" is 5km, "middle" is 10km and "long" can either be 15km, 10 Engelse Mijlen or 1/2 marathon. For both men and women, there are 4 age categories: under 34, 35-44, 45-54 and over 55. Are you still with me? So, for example, I have signed up to do all 7 "long" races and yesterday in the "Ter Specke Loop," I came 34th overall in the 15km which made me 32nd male but 5th in my age group (you guess). This 5th place earned me 5 points. The top 3 (with the lowest points from minimum 4 races) in each age group will get big prizes at the end of the series! There is also a team competition for the local clubs and even one for local businesses.

This is a really excellent concept as quite apart from each race, a great many people are competing for their clubs/teams and the 36 series-end prizes for individuals. The on-line administration and results service is excellent [www.zorgenzekerheid-circuit.nl](http://www.zorgenzekerheid-circuit.nl) and league tables are produced for every category. Between 1000-2000 people take part in each event and everyone gets a take-home souvenir. No medals but yesterday, I got €10 worth of bulbs and previous participant gifts have included pot plants, bunches of sun flowers etc - well this is Holland! The atmosphere is friendly and fun, whilst the ability level ranges from excellent (thankfully relatively few) to strictly recreational (the majority). My Striders vest always draws comments which I hope are friendly but then again, I don't always understand.....

Finally, Zorg en Zekerheid means something like "Safety and Certainly" and is the Health Insurance Company which is the overall sponsor of the circuit, whilst there are also sponsors for each individual event.

Have a look around the web site. There some nice touches and you never know, some of the ideas could work well in the UK too.

Cheers and regards to all

Tim - Striders of Croydon (Dutch branch)



# THE OWEN TROPHY

## Mike George



As you can see, the trophy takes its place of pride on our mantelpiece. Thanks to the Striders' who took part in the competition without you it wouldn't have been possible for me to have won it. Hopefully even more will participate this year and try and win it back from me, that's if you can. The core spirit of the Owen Trophy races is to produce a high profile of the club—more of the Striders' in their club colours the better, even though I prefer the stick of rock colours: red, white and blue. Also, it is to give the lesser ability runners of the club a chance of winning a trophy by creating a level playing field—providing an opportunity for the many and not just the few. My philosophy to the core, so I was very pleased to be on the committee when the Owen Trophy was initiated. At this point I must confess I couldn't understand the formulation of the scoring points system and played a miniscule role in the development of the Owen Trophy, but I fully supported its principle. Here I must say the credit must go to: Neil, Chris and Alan. Thanks to you guys for producing such an enjoyable and motivating competition. And a special thanks to Chris for continuing on with all of his hard work in working out the results and reminding everyone of forthcoming races. Perhaps he might consider becoming our next chair,

he'd certainly get my vote.

To win it again will be harder for me of course, as I haven't got a clue on the scoring system, but I'm going to try and improve my 10k time from 47mins. down to around 43mins. Last year I went from 53mins to 47mins for the 10k and won the trophy. So hopefully if my predictions come true my name will be once again on the cup.

So come on and try and beat me, you only have to get your best times for 6 out of 10 races between April and October. More the merrier.

**Happy New Year- Mick George**



# The London XC Champs

## Simon Ambrosi



Parliament Hill was the setting for the London cross country championships on Saturday and with a weeks worth of constant rain on what is a notoriously muddy course it promised to be messy. As I was pulling in to Kentish Town tube station I checked the map I printed off to see I had perfect instructions for how to get to the pub after the race but none for getting to Parliament Hill. I quickly scanned the area for someone who looked like they might be going to the same destination and spotted a young lady in tight running trousers and decided to go that way. She was called Sarah and runs for Serpentine, who seemed to make up about half the field. Once we arrived it was time for business so I headed off to the changing rooms which was rammed with intimidating runners from various university and county teams but I could see the fear in their eyes as I took my gleaming Striders of Croydon running vest from my bag.

The senior ladies race was just finishing when I got back outside and the first lady had a mightily impressive lead. I started warming up next to the course while the rain still fell and the wind was biting. I managed to find my fellow Striders and all 7 of us cowered near the back of the group until the gun went off. After 200 metres any idea of not getting too muddy was out the window as we ran through about a foot of liquid mud which would grip

your shoes just enough for them to pull away from your feet for litres of water to spill in. I started off fairly steadily in the middle of the Striders pack and was happy to stay like that for a while. The course was 10k (although someone measured it closer to 6 miles) and was supposed to be 2 small laps followed by 2 big laps, I couldn't tell the difference. The support was really good especially as we hadn't brought any supporters from our club but they were happy to shout out our name, well something that sounded like it anyway. We must have been good to watch as our inter team positions were changing regularly and all of us were working hard. Ian C (by far the quickest of us when fit) showed it was a tricky course if you're recovering from injury with all the ups and downs and twists and turns. Chris (Striders El Capitano) tried to pass me about half way round but then thought better of it and instead sprinted past me after the third lap on a very slippery downhill section where I saw at least 2 people fall. Overall Striders positions and very approximate times were, Chris (41:59), Darren P (42:10), Me (42:30), Ian C, Alex A, Mick T, Paul W.

# Amsterdam Marathon 21.10.2007

## Steve Tyler

Whilst numerous Striders were strutting their stuff in the Croydon 10k and gaining extra points for their Owen Trophy campaign, Oktober in the Netherlands is the time of the Amsterdam Marathon (or the half for we lesser mortals) and the club was quite well represented at these two events.

The group travelled in dribs and drabs, the advance party comprising Justin and Karen Macenhill, Karen Connor, Karen Peake and Michele Meech going out on the Friday with the express orders from Pete Shew to find a bar in which to watch the Rugby World Cup Final the following evening. However, I wouldn't be at all surprised if they hadn't found and sampled the delights of more than one in their quest. For research purposes, of course.!

Saturday morning saw me, The Ref, travel out catching an unearthly 0700 hrs flight after enduring the club run on the night before – up at 0330 hrs to park in a central Croydon car park to catch the train to Gatwick. Perversely, as much as I don't like heights, I prefer a window seat when flying to see where I am going. And at 23000', I feel that looking down on the clouds is akin to the view of a farmer waking up early morning after a heavy fall of snow – virgin white and fluffy as far as the eye can see, unsullied by pollution and the local fauna.

Gatwick to Schipol is just a forty-five minute flight – just time for a cup of tea and a roll on board before preparing for landing. It was at that point - having retrieved my baggage - that I saw Susan Haynes and hubby Roy who, for those that don't know, as well as being a Charlton Athletic season ticket holder, is an aviation anorak (and a published author on the subject no less!).

Roy went plane spotting whilst Floosie Sue and I travelled to the Hem Hotel together. The first part of the journey on the express train went like a dream and from that point, it just became more exciting. I read the (poorly photocopied but that's no excuse) map but put us in the slightly the wrong place (rather like the USAF!!) and as a result we had a nice walk around a housing estate and saw some canals and blocks of flats that most tourists probably don't have on their itineraries!

A couple of one-stop trips on a tram (one leg to the wrong station and in the wrong direction, the second back to from whence we had come) and eventually the right tram to the right station. We then headed in the right direction from the tram stop towards the hotel which was shown in slightly the wrong position on the map and confused me even further as we ended up in a factory estate.

But, having asked a number of locals, we eventually found the Hem Hotel tucked in behind a housing estate and not, I hasten to add, where shown on the map (that's my excuse and I'm sticking with it!).

The advanced guard had obviously got fed up waiting for our non-arrival and was already at The Expo, having collected their numbers whilst Floosie Sue had made numerous calls to Karen M. saying "We're on our way" "Another ten minutes!" "Almost there, I think" etc.

With bags dumped at the hotel, the pair of us made our way to the Olympic Stadium (built for the 1928 Games and modernised since that time) without me doing any of the directions. For the anoraks amongst you, it was the first Olympiad where the Olympic flame burnt throughout but the tower itself from whence the flame lit up the night sky is not one of the world's most inspiring pieces of architecture.

The Expo is next door in a sports hall and having changed down from full to half marathon and collected the tee shirt as well as buying a mug and a pair of Union Flag shorts (the Springbok who was selling them

### More collected Running Quotes

We are different, in essence, from other men. If you want to win something, run 100 meters. If you want to experience something, run a marathon.

*Emil Zatopek*

Marathoning is like cutting yourself unexpectedly. You dip into the pain so gradually that the damage is done before you are aware of it. Unfortunately, when awareness comes, it is excruciating.

*John Farrington, Australian marathoner*

To describe the agony of a marathon to someone who's never run it is like trying to explain colour to someone who was born blind.

*Jerome Drayton*

-Life is short... running makes it seem longer.

*Baron Hansen*

-Anyone can run 20 miles. It's the next six that count.

*Barry Magee*

-Long distance running is particularly good training in perseverance.

*Chairman Mao*

-The difference between the mile and the marathon is the difference between burning your fingers with a match and being slowly roasted over hot coals.

*Hal Higdon*

didn't have any with the St George's flag thereon), I went back to the hotel to catch up with my beauty sleep.

During this period (but maybe the previous day), the advance guard had an enthralling day visiting the bulb market. "Look, there's some bulbs!" "Ooh, that's nice, here's some more!" You can just imagine it! Apparently they all bought some but couldn't work out how the vendors knew which bulb would produce which coloured tulip. (It's because they're in different boxes with the colour marked thereon – simple really!). And there was I, an agricultural ignoramus, thinking that you got tulips from Hamster Jam.

Come the evening the rest of the team arrived – the Mazurs and Shews plus Tina Macenhill and Tom Littlewood who had to get their numbers on arrival. Most of us had a team meal before the rugby in an Italian style restaurant a comparatively short walk from the hotel with a Saddam Hussein lookalike waiter. Young Roy had to wait for his grub until after most of us had finished as did KC whose dinner was inedible due to the chef having sprinkled too much pepper on it for her delicate taste buds.

This culinary emporium was sixty seconds from the marathon route itself and we found a pub with small and large screen televisions – one had the Ajax home fixture showing (they wouldn't sell me any match tickets as a foreigner) and the bossman agreed to put the rugby on the small screen and then on the big one after the football had ended.

A token Springbok (they were everywhere) was present as was some dork from Essex who was sitting underneath the telly in the main bar chatting up a septuagenarian wrinkled prune. We could hear his one-way conversation above the sound of the commentary – "I know Sebastian Coe" "I can run a 2:10 marathon but because I have been injured, I'm now only running 2.40" "I cycled up to Harwich to get the ferry over here". The old girl had obviously been around and like most women, when the male came up for air, nodded sagely during these pauses whilst puffing on her fag.

When we eventually gained access to the big screen, he followed, trying to engage us in conversation and unsuccessfully attempting to scrounge a room for the night. I managed to palm him off onto Justin and Tina and then Major Phil when he arrived from The Expo. In the meantime, Jacqui Mazur showed her true professionalism and total devotion to the running cause by having a beer the night before the event.

It was also revealed that Pete Shew has a fetish about ironing and was orgasmic upon learning that there was both an iron and ironing board on the landing at the hotel for customers to use! That's why Julie married him, he's an old flatterer!

And so to Sunday. Up early for breakfast with those doing the full monty departing first for the 1030 start, their course including a initial 7k loop which took them back close to the stadium before heading away. It also included an apparently picturesque run along the Amstel River, over a bridge and back again the other side before rejoining the route for the half.

Some of the team waited in Vondelpark (slightly bigger than the one in Croydon) whilst I was lazy and ambled to where the route crossed the tram tracks close to the restaurant. I have never watched a marathon before and so it was a new experience for me to watch the marshalling, which whilst present, was different from what I have observed in London. People were sometimes let across the road in front of runners and there were probably those who said "I must be allowed through the cordon because..." albeit in Dutch.

When the leading runners came through, there were around thirty Africans and one European and I've seen more fat on a chip than on the lead group combined. They made running look so effortless as they glided through and out of sight and I did get a pang of jealousy thinking that I should be doing the full distance. But maybe not at that speed.

I did manage to see the seven Striders - Ian Campbell was the first through followed by Tim Bett a few minutes later, neither of whom were appeared to be expecting support at that point. Then there was a comparative long wait before the gang of five came through together – namely Mazur the Elder (who had had his ears lowered for the event), Tom L (no need for streamlining there), Tina M plus Suzy and Ian Yates who were staying at a different hotel from the rabble. The huffing and puffing hoards came and went and I made my way towards the stadium with its railings and stewards in place to guide the competitors in hopefully the right direction.

## **More collected Running Quotes**

-The race is not always to the swift, but to those who keep on running.

*Nike Running Poster*

-I don't drink. I don't kiss girls. These things do an athlete in.

*Suleiman Nyambui*

"Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must outrun the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the slowest gazelle, or it will starve. It doesn't matter whether you're a lion or gazelle - when the sun comes up, you'd better be running."

*- Unknown*

## **Striders' of Croydon Charity Xmas Card**

### ***£426 raised this Festive Season***

*A combination of a charity clothing sale at the pre-Xmas drinks do and 31 kind Striders' donations has led to us raising over £400 for the Stroke Association, beating last year's total. The Stroke Association is a registered national charity solely concerned with stroke. They aim to reduce strokes through research and health education and also help and support people and their families who have been affected by stroke through our Community Services.*

*Just think what we could have raised with over a hundred members if everyone had donated a tenner! Lets go for it next Christmas.*



Whilst awaiting the arrival of the marathon leaders, there was ostensibly a kids race which included a number of parents accompanying their offspring before the helicopters came into view, clattered overhead and heralded the immediate arrival of the winner. The leading runner came through with the runner-up in close pursuit and as the front runners passed in front, the half-marathoners started to gather ready for their event.

I saw Ian go through in a tad over three hours but none of the other Striders as dropping off my kit and paying a quick visit became more important. Greasing up my legs with Transvasin ointment is okay but heed my advice, concentrate whilst doing so and don't put it too high up the leg because it burns more sensitive areas!!



For the marathon, the Striders results were as follows: Ian C - 3.08.50, Tim B - 3.25.17, Phil M - 3.50.04, Ian Y - 3.51.53, Suzy Y - 3.52.06, Tom L 4.06.11 and Tina M - 4.19.59.

Whilst the above were finishing, KC made friends with a Dutch soldier when handing over her kit. I will explain so you can all keep abreast of what happened. The system is different to London whereby instead of you handing over a numbered carrier, the organisers put a sticker on your bag with a corresponding tag on your race number. Karen's number was over her chest and he went down the line oblivious to over where he had placed it and what he had pressed!

The start of the half was just down the road from the stadium and sorted into pens with the usual mix of nervous chatter, runners doing their final stretches and the traditional combination of Deep Heat and unwashed, sweaty armpits. I didn't hear the gun sound but you just knew that the race had started by the excited, unintelligible gabble of the commentator. Ambling to the start line with everyone else, I pressed the button on my stopwatch and pushed off. Crowded? Yes but mostly due to narrower streets than, for example, London being used.

I felt that the first half of the course was distinctly unmemorable, it began in residential streets and the largely flat route meandered through to and over the Amstel river and then into light industrial estates towards the half-way mark. Not the most inspiring scenery but perhaps the same can be said of London until you hit Tower Bridge.

From there, we started heading back towards the city proper and along the canal bank with more spectators present than on the earlier stretches save for the start. It was only along here that I spotted my first Strider and that was when Karen Peake wafted past me as though rocket propelled and disappeared into the throng ahead.

The mainly flat course took a short turn for the worse with an underpass thrown in for good measure, tired muscles arguing against having to traverse the exit up slope. But up and into Vondel Park, for those of us who have done New York it is a tad like Central Park but without the steep uphill climb at the entrance and undulations.

Winding through the park and out the other side, 19k done and 2k to go. Along the main road and tram tracks that I had seen earlier, past the previous night's bar packed with those imbibing outside either having run or enduring a hard day's spectating. Either way, the landlord had a smile on his boat as the euros rolled into his coffers.

I had seen the 20.1k marker previously and knew that the stadium was just round the bend like most of the runners and certainly the aforementioned chap from Essex - I wonder which village was missing its idiot that day?

Citius, altius, fortius. More than an exaggeration for those down the field but into the stadium opposite the half-way line and a 250m loop of the tartan track with the stands towering above as a backdrop. Anticlockwise round the track to the finish in a time of 2.06.32 (watch and chip in agreement to the second!) a monumental three seconds slower than the winner of the marathon. KP said she had felt a tinge of disappointment with her 2.00.39 due to being just outside her target. Whilst I had seen Simon Ambrosi at Gatwick the previous morning, I don't think that any of us saw him before the Wednesday run - he turned in a lungbursting 1.27.39!

Next through (on the chip) was Lyn Simmons in 2.06.53, Susan H in 2.10.52 and Michele (who looked and probably felt knackered) in 2.13.05. And then there followed the final three - Julie Shew 2.14.31 (pb), Jackie Mazur 2.24.25 and Karen Connor 2.27.34 (pb) who said the first time she knew a Strider was around her was way after the end when she got kicked up the bum.

Baggage collected and a gentle amble back to the hotel with KP, MM and KC - the goodie bag at the end being a tad disappointing with spicy peanuts and biscuits being present but no chocolate bar. There followed a lukewarm shower before a team meeting in reception - the hot water having long been used by those who did the full distance. The marathon runners

and spectators were already parked down there guzzling, including those Striders returning home that evening and hence not going out on the lash.

Our original decision to go into the city centre was aborted in favour of something more local and we eventually found a steakhouse that would take a party of thirteen. So, in typically English fashion, we sat along the bar making the place look untidy whilst waiting for our tables and lined up the drinks, my first which hardly touched the side.

And now the meal.

Someone had mentioned about how the continentals cooked their steaks i.e. that their meaning of medium and well done was different to ours. So muggins asked the obvious question "What do you call medium and what do you call well done?" The classic reply "Well, medium is medium and well done is well done!" Touche!

A club stagger to the hotel where further alcohol was imbibed by some whilst others went up the hill to Bedfordshire. Another early start to catch a plane – Macenhills, Connor and Tyler in a taxi to Schipol before daybreak, their flight being an hour before mine.

I caught Justin reading the daily papers (apparently he doesn't buy them - can't remember who told me that!) before the four of us had a cup of cha – and caught our separate flights. An aesthetic observation on how the Dutch fields are laid out so differently to ours – theirs appear much more symmetrical, probably due to much of the land being reclaimed as opposite to a hotch-potch of different shapes and sizes due to the effect of undulations and flora etc over the centuries.

Whilst waiting, I got some culture in – surprising, I know. There is an exhibition of paintings at the airport and the picture which caught my eye was one in oils of a bowl of flowers. The artist, whose name escapes me, made fabulous use of colours and his attention to detail made it appear almost real. And that is praise indeed coming from me! Brian Sewell eat your heart out.

An uneventful flight and back to Selsdon followed by a quick wallow before going to work and a midnight finish ..... KM advised that she was welcomed back to her office by being told she looked like crap!!

What now for 2008??????????



# The Amsterdam Half Marathon

## Simon Ambrosi

I've just returned from Amsterdam having taken part in my first half marathon yesterday!

The format of the race was that the full started at 10:30 going around the city and along by a canal before joining with the half (which started 3 and a half hours later) after about 25k. This worked nicely for me as I got an extra couple of hours in bed and watched the start on TV. I then had a long soak in the bath and took a stroll to the 14k point which was near the hotel. It was a great sight to see about half a dozen Striders running together, all looking comfortable. I'm pretty sure they included Tom, Phil, Susie and Ian but it's difficult to be sure when they go past so speedily! I carried on watching for a while but I couldn't wait any longer as I was starting to see people running past that I would be overtaking in a few hours time.

I decided to walk the 2 miles to the start as a bit of a warm up and started to soak up the atmosphere as I got closer. Luckily I managed to get a position just a few metres from the start and chatted with some of the other runners. The race started and my strategy was not to go too fast and then check my pace at the first k marker. My aim was 1:30 which meant 4:17 per k. First look at my watch and it was gone 6 minutes so obviously the k markers are easily missed! I saw the 2nd one at 8:50 which meant I'd already lost 16 seconds and was on for about 1:33. The next 2k went about the same and I was starting to think what should I do when as if by magic the Dunstable Kid appeared. Some random bloke (in a Dunstable Harriers top) started talking to me and asked what time I was going for, I said 1:30 but that I was already behind so we decided to try and work together. He seemed quicker than me having started a bit behind in the pack but by 7k we were just under 30 min and back on track. It felt like we were speeding up all the time and were catching a lot of people and went through 10k in 42:40. People kept asking us what time we were aiming for and then disappearing behind us and it wasn't 'til about 13k when I

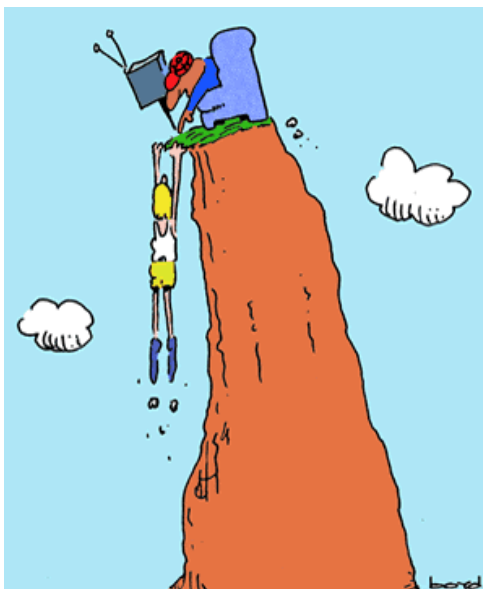


glanced round and realised we were unofficial pacers for about 50 runners. The pace kept speeding up, 14k in 59 min, 16k in 67 min (beating 10 mile PB by 12 minutes) we'd now lost most of our 'pacing' group but me and Dunstable were still working together and running relaxed and as we overtook more and more of the full marathon runners and did the second 10k in about 41 minutes I knew we were on for a decent time.

The finish was 200m on the track of the Olympic Stadium which was a great atmosphere and kept me going to the line. My chip time was 1:27.39 and I came 257th out of 8,439!! Full details of everyone's time, along with some splits, can be found from the link below including photos and video footage.

<http://evenementen.uitslagen.nl/2007/amsterdammrathon/index-en.html>

Better start training for London now!!



"Good. Now release and repeat."

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# The Addington 4

18 Club members met at Shirley on New Years Day for the second year of the modern Addington 4. Some looked slightly the worst for wear after the previous nights celebrations which probably explained the rather pessimistic times most submitted for this race in which the winner is the one who makes their best prediction of their time over the four miles.



The start was in the opposite direction to last year, just to vary the hills to be run up/down. Justin finished first in 23:38. 2:28 ahead of his estimate. In 1910 the race was won by Williams the footman in 23 and half minutes. Which suggests footman were pretty fit in those days and they didn't have a very good watch. However I guess to claim the all time record someone still needs to beat 23:30.



Simon Ambrosi came in second at 27:03 only 3 seconds over his estimate. Estimates were generally better than last year but one else managed to get as close so Simon claimed the trophy of the traditional Biscuit Tin.



## Addington 4 January 1st 2008

Name	Target	Actual	Position	Difference	Result
Simon Ambrosi	27:00	27:03	2	0:03	1
Dave Batten	30:00	29:53	9	0:07	2
Neil Furze	27:20	27:07	3	0:13	3
Elliot	29:00	28:47	7	0:13	4
Chris Morton	28:00	28:46	6	0:46	5
Pat Edwards	37:37	36:50	16	0:47	6
Alan Dolton	28:55	28:06	4	0:49	7
Paul Weir	36:00	34:33	12	1:27	8
Susan Haynes	44:04	42:21	18	1:43	9
Natalie	36:15	34:25	11	1:50	10
Justin MacEnhill	26:00	23:38	1	2:22	11
Mike George	42:20	39:41	17	2:39	12
Michelle Meach	39:00	36:15	15	2:45	13
Karen Peake	38:10	35:11	14	2:59	14
Serena Stracey	32:10	28:48	8	3:22	15
Karen MacEnhill	38:20	34:55	13	3:25	16
Susy Yates	34:15	30:16	10	3:59	17
Ian Yates	33:20	28:22	5	4:58	18

As he was there we also took the opportunity to award Mike George the Owen Trophy. Which is why he is the one in the group photo holding two cup.

Lots more action photos on the club website.



# The Bangkok Challenge

*Something different for for someone to organize in the wilder corners of Shirley Hills! An item from last weeks Bangkok Post found by Susan Haynes.*



From the word "Go" the 120 competitors in this year's Yara Bangkok Challenge Adventure Race gave it their all over 62km of rough terrain just a 45 minute drive from central Bangkok at Minsiri Resort in Nong Chok district.

The challenge, and part of the fun, of an adventure race is not knowing exactly what you will be asked to do or for how long. The disciplines of mountain biking, running, swimming and kayaking are known but the order and distances are not, testing the physical and mental fitness of the two-man teams.

The first leg of the race was a fast and furious splashing through mud puddles on mountain bikes, jockeying for position to be the splasher and not the recipient of the red spray. The push-on continued for 14 fast km before it was time to drop the bike and switch to running mode.

Following orange ribbons strategically placed to mark the course proved another challenge to the competitors, some of whom managed to miss a turn or two, losing time and adding distance to the next 5km run on dirt tracks along canals and rice paddies.

It was then back on the bikes for a long 18km of negotiating over wood bridges in various states of repair and single-track paths. The next short run was to a pile of kayaks, needing a push and a shove to get them into the canal.

An added twist to this year's 2.5km kayak segment was a climb over a bridge via a cargo net by one team member while the other negotiated the kayak through some tight turns. And just when the arms were beginning their dull ache, it deceivingly looked to be near the end as other competitors were taking their kayaks out of the water, only to have to carry them across a road and put them back into another canal.

Though the race had other organic obstacles to avoid — fishing lines in the canal, chickens and cows suddenly and randomly crossing the road, and a tractor blocking the path — it also offered a look into local life with a call to prayer, a just-harvested field full of white herons and families cheering on the crazy people running in the heat of the day.

After a quick run back to the bikes, a 13km ride back to the starting point, there was still another challenge in store, a 700m swim across a lake, with a large inner tube. Many methods were witnessed — pushing, pulling, sitting on and paddling — to get the tube across what seemed like an endless expanse of water.

Hoping to dump the encumbering tube, competitors were told to hang onto the tube for the 1.7km back to the start. Again, ingenuity was needed, and some teams chose to share carrying the tube on a shoulder

while others decided rolling was the best way.

The top finishers took 3 hours and 46 minutes to reach the finish line while the last persevering team proudly finished their first race just under 4 hours later, but for all competitors it was a chance to challenge themselves through many adventures Thailand has to offer.



Anyone thinking of a holiday in Thailand See [www.active-asia.com](http://www.active-asia.com)

the next events are the -River Kwai Trophy on March 1<sup>st</sup> and the Chiang Mai Challenge on May 18<sup>th</sup>

# 40 YEARS AGO: ATHLETICS IN 1967/68

## Alan Dolton

The AAA held its annual ten-mile track championship at Hurlingham in April 1967. (This event has subsequently been discontinued.) For the third successive year, the winner was Ron Hill of Bolton. Running in bare feet on a cinder track, he recorded an impressive personal best of 47 minutes 38.6 seconds, less than half a minute outside the world record held by the Australian Ron Clarke. A month later, Hill won the Inter-Counties 20 miles championship, held at Battersea Park. He ran 1 hour 40 minutes 49, with Graham Taylor of Kent second (1 hour 42 minutes 41) and John Newsome of Yorkshire third (1 hour 42 minutes 51). Taylor is now a member of Dorking & Mole Valley, and won several veterans' races in the 1990s, although he has not competed much recently.

1967 was the fourth season of the Rosenheim League, which still comprised just the original five clubs. The strongest clubs in the league were Herne Hill, who had won the league in 1964 and 1965, and Croydon Harriers, who had won it in 1966. Herne Hill regained the title with Croydon second, Mitcham third, Hercules AC fourth and Wimbledon fifth. This was the last season in which Hercules and Wimbledon competed as separate clubs: they merged in September 1967.

The most prestigious inter-club competition in the South London area was the Brockman Trophy, which was held at Wimbledon Park on 8 July. Twelve clubs competed: the winners were Belgrave, with Blackheath second and Surrey AC third. (Surrey AC were based at Motspur Park, and subsequently merged with Belgrave in 1982.) Of our local clubs, South London Harriers were seventh with Croydon Harriers tenth. Some of the winning times compare very favourably with those recorded in league matches 40 years later. John Thresher (Belgrave) won the 1500 metres in 3 minutes 49.7, while Barry Collins of Surrey AC won the six miles in 29 minutes 19.8.

At this time the East Surrey League also included a track and field match as well as its annual cross-country and road races. Sutton & Cheam won the league championship for the second successive year. (They merged with Mitcham in early 1986, and are now known as Sutton & District AC).

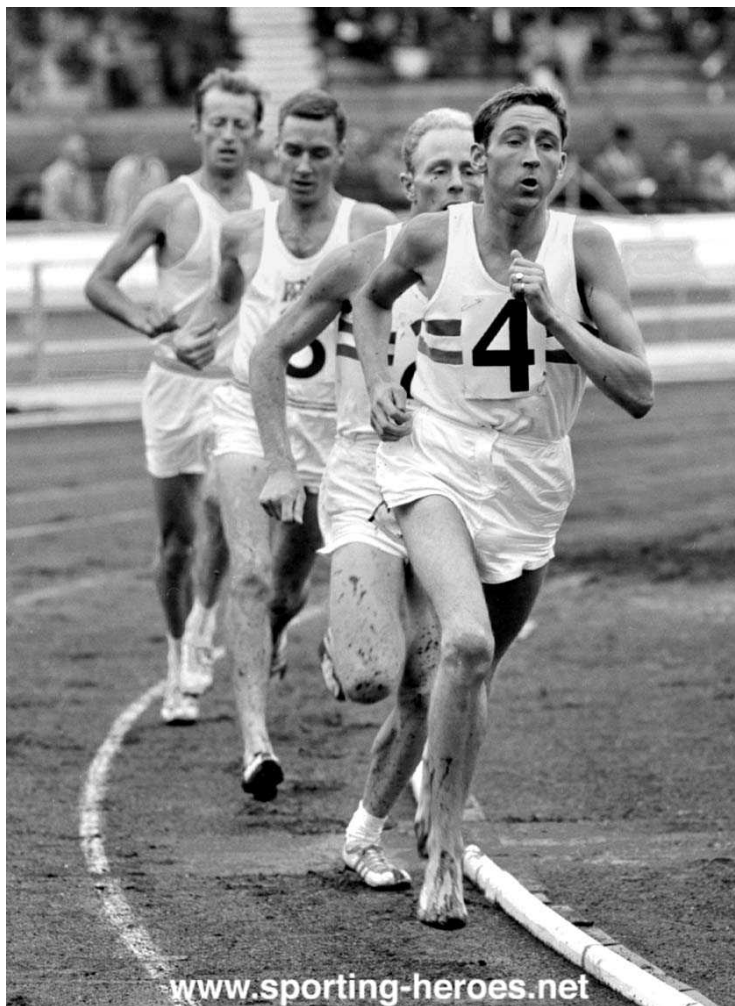
The Surrey Road Relay was held at Woking on 9 September, and was won by Hercules AC. The Southern Road Relay was held at Wimbledon on 14 October, and was won by Belgrave Harriers. (The race was held at Wimbledon from 1965 to 1992, when it had to be moved out of London because of increasing traffic. It is now held at Milton Keynes.)

1967/68 was the sixth season of the Surrey Cross-Country League, which comprised 12 clubs, split in two divisions. Belgrave won Division One for the third successive year. Herne Hill, who had become the first club to be relegated when they finished bottom of Division One in 1966/67, finished top of Division Two to regain their Division One status.

The Surrey Cross-Country Championship was held at Coulsdon on 6 January. The winner was Gerry North of Belgrave, while Mitcham won the team event.

Mitcham AC held their annual 15-mile road race on 13 January. (This race has subsequently been discontinued because of increasing traffic.) Bill Adcocks of Coventry won in a course record of 1 hour 18 minutes 11, with Bob Richardson of Blackheath second.

The National Cross-Country Championship was held at Sutton Coldfield on 2 March. The winner was Ron Hill of Bolton (43.55), with his team-mate Mike Freary second (44.22) and Roy Fowler of Staffordshire third (44.36). However Coventry won the team event, led by Bill Adcocks who was sixth (44.52). Further down the field, Herne Hill were led home by Stan Allen who placed 335th. 40 years later, Stan still coaches at Tooting Bec and his daughter Sarah competes regularly. The under-20 race was won by Ian Stewart of Birchfield, while Mitcham won the team event. The under-18 race was won by future international Dave Bedford, running for Shaftesbury Harriers (who took their name from the Shaftesbury Tavern in Hornsey).





## 25 YEARS AGO: ATHLETICS IN WINTER 1982/83

In 1982/83 the Surrey Cross-Country League was celebrating its 21st season, and had been split into three divisions for the first time. Aldershot won the Division One title for the eleventh successive year, more than 400 points clear of South London Harriers and Herne Hill, who tied for second place. Epsom (4th) and Belgrave (5th) retained their Division One status, while Croydon Harriers (6th) and Ranelagh (7th) were relegated to Division Two. Hercules-Wimbledon won the Division Two title, with Metropolitan Police also gaining promotion in second place, and Thames Hare & Hounds just missing out by placing third. The newly-formed Division 3 was won by a new and short-lived club named Omega, who were based in the Weybridge area and had been formed by a group of 'elite' runners who had left Walton after disagreements within that club. Woking placed second and were also promoted. Walton, who had been one of the founder-members of the league, and one of the strongest Surrey clubs in the 1960s and 1970s, were badly hit by the formation of Omega and finished bottom of Division Two. **Striders**, who had only just been formed (see Colin Golding's article in our Summer 2007 newsletter), had not yet joined the league.

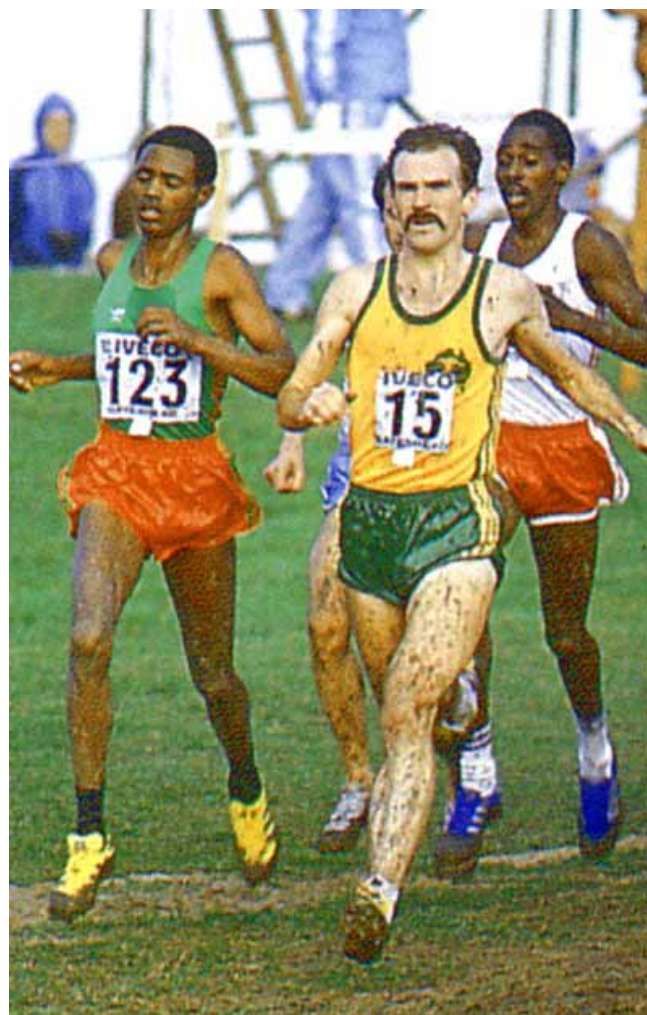
The East Surrey League held its annual cross-country race in Lloyd Park on 23 October. Bob Treadwell, who lived in Warlingham and ran for Surrey Beagles, gained a runaway win in 27.26. Croydon won the team event with Alan Dolton 2nd (29.00), Ian Wright 3rd (29.02) and Gary Bishop 4th (29.05). Surrey Beagles were second in the team event and Hercules-Wimbledon, who had only just joined this league, placed third. The Under-17 race was won by Croydon's Colin McCauley, who lived in Addiscombe. Sadly, Colin was tragically killed just a month later, at the age of 16. On a very stormy November evening he was running along the alleyway between Canning Road and Clyde Road when a section of the wall gave way and collapsed on top of him.

The Surrey Women's League was in its fourth season, and still comprised just one division, with 15 clubs. Croydon Harriers won the league for the second time, finishing two points clear of Epsom, with Surrey Beagles third. South London Harriers had entered a team for the first time, and finished 9th. It is interesting to note that 25 years later, Croydon Harriers failed to field a single competitor in any of the age-groups in the first race of the 2007/08 season.

The Surrey Championships were held on 8 January, on a hilly course at Frimley. Bob Treadwell was the individual champion, while Aldershot won the team event. Treadwell also won the Southern Championships over a muddy course at Cockfosters on 12 February, while Aldershot again won the team event.

The highlight of Aldershot's highly successful season came on 5 March, when they won the team event in the National Cross-Country Championships, held on an unusually flat and dry course at Luton. Aldershot had five of the first 23 runners to finish, including internationals Roger Hackney and Bernie Ford. The individual winner was 24-year-old Tim Hutchings of Crawley, who now works as a commentator for Eurosport. Defending champion Dave Clarke of Hercules-Wimbledon was second, while the best-placed local runner was Bob Treadwell in ninth place. European 1500 metre champion Steve Cram placed 28th. Of our local clubs, SLH placed 33rd, with their leading runners being Andy Evans (158th), Dave Lockley (204th) and Francis Upcott (230th). Croydon Harriers placed 121st, their first man home being Alan Dolton (374th). Surrey Beagles did not manage to complete a team, while Striders did not enter.

The World Cross-Country Championships took place two weeks later at Gateshead. Debele of Ethiopia won in a sprint finish from Carlos Lopes of Portugal. Dave Clarke ran well to place seventh, the first British runner to finish. Tim Hutchings did not compete because of a shin injury. Bob Treadwell placed 101st of the 210 finishers. Ethiopia won the team event, with Spain second and England third. Only 17 countries fielded complete teams: Kenya did not enter. The four UK countries competed separately: Wales placed 14th, while the Scots were 15th, ahead of Northern Ireland and Kuwait. The women's race was won by the outstanding Norwegian, Grete Waitz; it was her fifth victory in the event. The USA won the team event with the USSR second, Canada third, and England fourth.



*Gateshead, England: Ethiopia's Bekele Debele becomes the youngest winner in the IAAF era. Only eight days after his 20th birthday, he prevails in the closest finish ever. Portugal's Carlos Lopes and Kenya's Some Muge, the silver and bronze medallist, are both given the same time as Debele.*

*Some interesting links found by Mr Mazur while supposedly out training*

**Motivational videos:**

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2007/nike-not-a-runner-p1.php>

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2007/nike-y2k-p1.php>

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2005/vios-bait-p1.php>

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2007/rfbr-game-p1.php>

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2006/clarence-running-p1.php>

<http://www.boreme.com/boreme/funny-2007/hollywood-pk-bikini-race-p1.php>

And links to to more serious articles on improving your pace.

<http://faster-running.com/technique/increase-your-stride-rate/>

<http://runningtimes.com/rt/articles/print.asp?id=8732>

Some more pictures from the Anniversary do.  
Compliments of Mike George

