

Road & Country

AAA Men's 6-Stage Road Relay,
Sutton Park, 22 October 2005

Road Relay Glory

A fifth consecutive title – could it be done? Our team was not as strong as it might have been and Morpeth Harriers, our conquerors at the recent AAA 10k and last autumn's cross country relay, looked very threatening having convincingly won the Northern 6-Stage title. From the Midlands, Notts AC have been steadily rising through the ranks and Birchfield Harriers can never be discounted. Our own Southern rivals Newham & Essex Beagles, Aldershot and Wells City might have been behind us at Rushmoor Arena but could so easily surprise us if we had any problems.

Having settled on a team that was minus some of the stalwarts of the past few seasons but included the in-form Kassa Tadesse, we then lost Jonathan Blackledge to a cold – and it was time to dip into the reserves at the expense of the B team. And then at the morning's team meeting it was announced that the team manager had left the 6-Stage Cup at home – we just had to win now to save his embarrassment!

Stage 1

Welcome back Paul! Twelve months without Freary in the squad has been a long time. He pulled a muscle a week before this event in 2004 and we brought in a reserve – this time it was Paul's turn to be received back into the 'six' on the Friday afternoon before the race.

In mild and still conditions the field swept down the dip and around the early loop with Paul handily placed in the main bunch. Returning past the Jamboree Stone the top ten were announced, with Belgrave occupying ninth spot. Paul was holding up well – and when the appearance of the lead motorbike heralded the end of the first stage, Paul was right in the bunch with 12th spot. Leicester had grabbed a clear lead but then it was Leeds, Wells City, Notts and Birchfield in quick succession with our expected main rivals Morpeth in 23rd, 19 seconds behind, and Newham & Essex Beagles back in 33rd and over half a minute in arrears.

1 Leicester Coritanian 17:17; 2 Leeds City 17:30; 3 Wells City 17:32; 4 Notts AC 17:39; 5 Birchfield H 17:43; 6 Altrincham & D 17:43; 12 Belgrave H A 17:52; 41 Belgrave H B 18:34; 82 teams started.

Fastest: 1 M Geele (Leicester Coritanian) 17:17; 2 D Webb (Leeds City) 17:30; 3 A Hennessy (Wells City) 17:32; 4 C Warburton (Notts) 17:39; ... 12 P Freary (Belgrave H A) 17:52; 41 W Cockerell (Belgrave H B) 18:34.

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The Belgravian is the official newsletter of Belgrave Harriers and may be downloaded from the Club's website at www.belgraveharriers.com. Contributors in this issue: William Cockerell, Catherine Eastham, Alan Mead, Peter Mulholland, Mark Shearman.



Above: Spencer Barden takes the tape for Belgrave's fifth consecutive National 6-Stage Road Relay win. Photo by Mark Shearman.

Stage 2

Recently selected as an England representative for the Commonwealth Games marathon, Kassa has been in great form and we looked for good things from him with men neatly lined up ahead to be chased. We were not disappointed.

Expecting, at some stage, Morpeth's Nick McCormick to throw in a lap some 40 seconds faster than anything we could offer, each of our team had been asked to try to contribute something 10 or 12 seconds faster than the rest of our North Eastern rivals with the aim of building up a lead of approaching one minute. All that went out of the window now as Morpeth's second runner dropped back 11 places and Kassa swept through the field, overtaking ten men. We already had a gap of two minutes. It was looking good for us and our most likely rivals now appeared to be Birchfield although the Beagles had risen 21 places thanks to Steve Hepples. Leicester's time at the front had been short lived as their man dropped like a stone through 60 places.

1 Harrow AC (+6) 34:56; 2 Belgrave H (+10) 35:12; 3 Derby AC (+14) 35:13; 4 Birchfield (+1) 35:14; 5 Altrincham & D (+1) 35:17; 6 Wells City (-3) 35:22; ... 23 Belgrave H B (+18) 36:36.

Fastest: 1 A Bowden (Harrow) 17:13; 2 A MacLean (Team Southampton) 17:15; 3 L Gunn (Derby) 17:16; 4 K Tadesse (Belgrave) 17:20; ... 20 K Nash (Belgrave B) 18:02.

Stage 3

Hopefully Alaster Stewart would now take us into the lead. In fact Al gained nine seconds on stage two leaders Harrow as the fancied Notts AC team came up four places behind him, Birchfield sagged to 16th and the Beagles advanced to 8th. A superb run in the Southern race had us expecting something even more spectacular on Al's favourite course – but solid though he was, it didn't happen and, in spite of what appeared

to be good conditions, a trend of slower than normal times was being set.

Oh! And the yellow-vested Altrincham runner Jason Ward forged through to gain a 38 second lead. 'Alty' had been lurking at the back end of the first half dozen and pre-race predictions had boasted that they would hit the front at some stage – but this was looking like a determined attack.

1 Altrincham &D (+4) 52:25; 2 Harrow AC (-1) 53:03; 3 Belgrave H (-1) 53:10; 4 Notts AC (+4) 53:12; 5 Owls AC (+2) 53:28; 6 Wells City (0) 53:39; ... 29 Belgrave H B (-6) 55:35.

Fastest: 1 C Davies (Telford) 17:06; 2 J Ward (Altrincham) 17:08; 3 K Cullen (Highgate) 17:22; 4 N Pollock (Kent) 17:23; ... 7 A Stewart (Belgrave A) 17:58; 36 P Willis (Belgrave B) 18:59.

Stage 4

Ok. So Al couldn't get to the front. Maybe Phil Wicks could do some damage. Surely 17:30 was on the cards and so impressed are we by his attitude that we felt comfortable that he could handle some of the big guns on this stage who were, admittedly, some way behind him. But all was not well. At the top of the first hill Phil was struck by a stitch that wouldn't leave him for the rest of his race. It's a testament to his courage that he held himself together as well as he did. Regular rival Jermain Mays of Kent AC ran 17:29 but Phil was restricted to something 50 seconds outside his target.

Harrow fell away but Wells City made a big play through Ben Tickner. Mo Farah took the Beagles ahead of us, Birchfield's colours were promoted through Wilf Taragon while Notts AC were now placed just behind. And while all this was going on, Andy Norman, for Altrincham, was charging away at the front. Morpeth played their 'ace' Nick McCormick who ran to the day's fastest by a long way – but it was all too late for them as they were still 46 seconds adrift of the Bels and surely could look for no more than a podium place.

1 Altrincham (0) 1:09:59; 2 Wells City (+4) 1:11:03; 3 Newham &EB (+5) 1:11:06; 4 Birchfield H (+12) 1:11:23; 5 Belgrave H (-2) 1:11:29; 6 Notts AC (-2) 1:11:48; ... 34 Belgrave H B (-5) 1:15:26.

Fastest: 1 N McCormick (Morpeth) 16:41; 2 W Taragon (Birchfield) 17:01; 3 M Farah (Newham) 17:11; 4 B Tickner (Wells City) 17:24; ... 14 P Wicks (Belgrave A) 18:19; 51 L Greatorex (Belgrave B) 19:51.

Stage 5

With two stages to go the leaders had over a minute on anyone else and a further half-minute to Belgrave. Heads were shaking now. "It doesn't look as if you're going to do this one boy," it was suggested to our team manager. But the TM was keeping faith with his men. "Stephen, you'll be taking the lead on this lap," he predicted with outward confidence. Admittedly it seemed crazy, even though we all knew that 'Alty' were front loaded, but he did at least have the additional comfort of having just taken a call from Altrincham/Belgravian Simon Marwood – due to run 5th stage for them but currently languishing at home with a cold! They were out of front-runners and Birchfield and Newham & Essex now seemed the biggest threat – if they had enough firepower left.

Stephen took up the challenge and in no time we heard over the tannoy that Altrincham's lead had been halved. By the far end of the lap Beagler Stuart Major had taken the lead with a fine run but Stephen was closing him down and on the journey back sat in behind for a while before unleashing his final effort.

A quarter of a mile from the finish an excited Gordon Biscoe was shouting over his two-way radio to those at the finish that the leader had just passed him and it was Stephen Sharp just ahead of another runner. "Yes, but Stephen Sharp from whom?" he was quizzed. "Stephen Sharp from Belgrave of course!" came the reply.

1 Belgrave H (+4) 1:29:05; 2 Newham & EB 1:29:09; 3 Altrincham &D (-2) 1:29:58; 4 Morpeth H&AC (+6) 1:30:08; 5 Wells City (-3) 1:30:09; 6 Birchfield H (-2) 1:30:23; ... 37 Belgrave H B (-3) 1:35:38.

Fastest: 1 S Sharp (Belgrave) 17:36; 2 N Wilkinson (Morpeth) 17:53; 3 B Moreau (Aldershot) 17:55; 4 S Major (Newham) 18:03; ... =52 M Humphrey 20:12.

Stage 6

All was calm at the take-over. Possibly the most experienced man in the race was ready to set out with just a few seconds gap over Bob Smith's Newham boys. "I'm not going for a time," said Spencer Barden. "This is going to be a run for the team. I'm going to make sure that we can't lose it." And make sure he did. Spen may have run faster around this course, being one of the five in the squad who had won our very first National Road Relay title of this era on this very course, but his 17:25 was still equal fastest on the stage as the Belgrave lead shot up to well over a minute, totally belying the drama we had witnessed.

And as predicted, it was indeed Morpeth, Notts, Newham & Essex and Birchfield who were our nearest rivals; and apart from the last stage they were a lot closer than they have been of late. Every one of them can point to missing men (as indeed can we) so there are exciting times ahead.

Unfortunately, pinching Paul Freary for the 'A's meant that in spite of our best endeavours the 'B's were incomplete and ran out of men at the end of stage five. Very many thanks to those that did run. There's no doubt that at our best, if we really went for it, we could field a 'B' squad to place in the top dozen but convincing people to do that is easier said than done.

So it's a record five consecutive victories. We set out some ten years ago to attempt to emulate the great road running teams – Tipton, Bingley, Birchfield, Gateshead. This race was a beauty and although not wishing to show any signs of resting on our laurels, we can surely now say: "We are now up there with the best of them."

Now for the cross-country season!

1 Belgrave H (0) 1:46:30; 2 Morpeth H&AC (+2) 1:47:48; 3 Notts AC (+4) 1:47:54; 4 Newham &EB (-2) 1:48:33; 5 Birchfield H (+1) 1:48:48; 6 Altrincham &D (-3) 1:48:58; 76 teams finished.

Fastest: =1 S Barden (Belgrave) & N Talbot (Notts) 17:25; 3 I Hudspith (Morpeth) 17:40; 4 M Janes (Bedford &C) 18:10.

Fastest overall:

1 N McCormick (Morpeth) 16:41; 2 W Taragon (Birchfield) 17:01; 3 C Davies (Telford) 17:06; 4 J Ward (Altrincham) 17:08; 5 M Farah (Newham &EB) 17:11; 6 A Bowden (Harrow) 17:13; 10 K Tadesse (Belgrave) 17:20.

AAA Women's 4-Stage Road Relay,
Sutton Park, 22 October 2005

Belles record their second fastest run at Sutton Park

Catherine Eastham writes:- There was a bit of nervous tension before the women's race as despite this being one of the Belles strongest teams for years, and Heidi Cayzer being ready and available to race as travelling reserve (with the prospect of having to dash down to Dorking straight after for a wedding), there was a call from the proposed first leg runner, Sarah Murphy, to say she was stuck in road works on the M6 and might be a bit late. Team captain, Juliette Clark, as calm and composed as ever accepted the challenge of moving from fourth to first leg in a straight swap with Sarah, and in near perfect racing conditions the race was soon underway.

Stage 1

A women's race this might be – but it isn't a dainty affair for the ladies. First leg runners need to be aggressive, confident and most importantly have sharp elbows! One hundred and two runners set off at the stroke of midday with Juliette Clark tucked in amongst the middle of the pack. Preston's Helen Clitheroe led the front runners home in 14:07 while Jules was expected 2 minutes later in the late 30's. Ever reliable and in

great form at present, Juliette did indeed bring the Belles home in 35th place – a perfect start.

1 H Clitheroe (Preston H) 14:07; 2 K Ramsey (Charnwood) 14:15; 3 H Dean (Hallam) 14:17; 35 J Clark (Belgrave H) 15:52.

Stage 2

Tilly Heaton has been a regular at the Nationals over the years and knows the course well. Tasked with pulling the Belles up a few places Tilly worked hard throughout the 4kms.

Unfortunately, suffering from a stomach cramp during the run, it was harder for Tilly than anticipated. Still, she moved the Belles up to 32nd and recorded a time only 11 seconds slower than her course best. At the front Shaftesbury had a 44 second lead whilst Faye Fullerton (Havering M) and Lucy Elliott (Winchester) had pulled their clubs into top three contention.

1 J Wright (Shaftesbury) 14:32 28:58 (+3); 2 F Fullerton (Havering M) 14:32 29:42 (+17); 3 L Elliott (Winchester) 14:37 29:48 (+17); 32 M Heaton (Belgrave H) 16:14 32:06 (+3).

Stage 3

Despite being keen to do a fast first leg Birhan proved herself an outstanding team player by setting off on 3rd stage with the mission of catching as many ahead as possible. Birhan's goal was to bring the Belles close to 20th position whilst also earning a fast enough time to get selected for the Ekiden Relays. The former she achieved and more, gaining 20 places for the Belles and pulling them into 12th spot. The latter she also achieved in style as, 7th fastest runner overall on the day, Birhan finally got the recognition from selectors she has been striving for all year. Shaftesbury maintained their lead up front whilst Dorchie Lee pulled Bristol up 3 places to feature in a medals position.

1 R Felton (Shaftesbury) 15:30 44:28 (0); 2 E Patel (Winchester) 15:31 45:19 (+1); 3 D Lee (Bristol & W) 15:21 45:20 (+3); 12 B Dagne (Belgrave H) 14:24 46:30 (+20).

Stage 4

With the Belles less than 2 minutes off the leaders and tough as nails Sarah Murphy fully warmed up and ready for the glory leg, the team manager could finally relax, confident that the team would feature in the top 15. Sarah's grit and determination saw her dig deep into reserves, ignoring Hayley Yelling flying past in a last ditch challenge. With her family cheering on in support Sarah held off the challenge from Salford's Bev Jenkins and maintained the team's 12th position and helped to record the Belles 2nd fastest National's time to date. A great finish and a great result for the Belles with the team finishing ahead of some big and local rivals. Well done girls and thanks to the many supporters along the course who helped cheer the team to such a good position.

Bristol's Kate Reed had to clock the fastest leg of the day to bring Bristol into the lead and retain their gold medals. Despite missing Paula Radcliffe due to a late withdrawal because of a cold, Bedford had a strong run to still claim bronze, with Shaftesbury just holding on for silver.

1 K Reed (Bristol & W) 13:56 59:16 (+2); 2 G Turtle (Shaftesbury) 14:57 59:25 (-1); 3 L Yelling (Bedford & Co) 14:09 59:29 (+1); 12 S Murphy (Belgrave H) 16:06 62:36 (0).

Fastest overall: 1 K Reed (Bristol & West AC, stage 4); 13:56; 2 H Clitheroe (Preston Harriers, stage 1) 14:07; 3 L Yelling (Bedford & County, stage 4) 14:09; 7 B Dagne (Belgrave H, stage 3) 14:24

Priory CC Relays, Reigate Priory Park, 5 November 2005

Double silver at 50th Priory Relay

It was double silver for the Belgrave teams as men's and women's events were (as usual at the Priory Relays) held at the same time. So often our races are held at different venues - and even when they come together are often started a couple of hours apart - so it was good to have both teams in action together.

Sarah Murphy and Heidi Cayzer lined up for our 'B' and 'A' women's teams. Heidi had travelled to Sutton Park as reserve for the National Road Relay and didn't get a run so was given the nod here to go into the 'A' squad - but it was Sarah that was first home for the Belles, in third and running eighth fastest of the day - albeit a minute and a half behind South London's outstanding Eleanor Baker. Juliette Clark, suffering from a cold, pulled the 'A's' closer to the Bs on the second stage but Tilly Heaton kept the Bs ahead and we had Belgrave lying third and fourth with one lap to go. Up ahead South London were now being challenged by Crawley.

Catherine Berry would soon restore the Belgrave equilibrium. As AAA 5,000m winner from 2004 and on a visit back home from the USA, she tore into the clubs ahead - and by the finish had just failed to catch Crawley who had had now moved into the lead. She was second fastest of the day.

Tim Weeks, celebrating his first day as a full blown Belgravian, led off for the men and his time stood up well as the race wore on. A half fit Skipper took us into third, a position held by Andrew Swearman, and then came a terrific run from Lee Greatorex to move us into the silver medal spot. Lee is training with coach John Bicourt's group and is making great improvements these days.

Herne Hill were away and gone but a non-scoring Medway outfit came back at Tom Ellacott, another a long way short of his best, leaving anchor man Jonathan Blackledge with at least a little company as he blew away the last remnants of a cold with the day's fastest time, staking a strong claim to an 'A' team place for the following week's National Cross Country Relay.

Women - 3 x 2.5 miles. 1 Crawley AC 47:41; 2 Belgrave H 'A' 47:56 - H Cayzer 16:37 (5), J Clark W40 16:26 (4), C Berry 14:53 (2); 3 South London H 48:44; 6 Belgrave H 'B' 50:13 - S Murphy 15:59 (3), M Heaton 16:42 (3), A Sahely 17:32 (6); 15 Belgrave H 'C' 55:18 - C Eastham 18:49 (23), C Bertram 17:00 (11), L Cooper 19:29 (15); 38 teams started, 37 finished.

Fastest: 1 E Baker (South London H) 14:30; 2 C Berry (Belgrave H) 14:53; n/s E Baker (South London H) 15:05; 3 H Brooks (Crawley) 15:35; ... 8 S Murphy (Belgrave H 'B') 15:59.

Men - 6 x 2.5 miles. 1 Herne Hill H 1:21:52; 2 Belgrave H 'A' 1:24:23 - T Weeks 14:09 (8), W Cockerell 14:09 (3), A Swearman 14:12 (3), L Greatorex 14:18 (2), T Ellacott (14:31 (3), J Blackledge 13:04 (2); n/s Medway & Maidstone 1:25:49; 3 Blackheath & Bromley 1:27:24; dnf Belgrave H 'B' - J Webb 14:50 (13), W Lynch 14:59 (15), Don Anderson M50 17:24 (16), F Ward M45 15:27; 41 teams started, 35 finished.

Fastest: 1 J Blackledge (Belgrave H) 13:04; 2 D Taylor (Blackheath & Bromley) 13:12; 3 K Quinn (Herne Hill) 13:21.



Catherine Berry ran second fastest of the day at Reigate Priory but was not quite able to take the Belles into the lead.

Out of the medals at National CC Relay but young runners shine

Ever since the six stage road race, where the Bels had only come through the field as their strength in depth had come into play, this four stage cross country event at Mansfield was known to be "wide open". Some seven clubs had been tipped as possible winners but for the first time in years we headed up the M1 knowing that it was unlikely to be us.

We are in a period of transition with several of our stalwarts either injured or taking a step back from competition while there are also a number of younger runners beginning to make their mark; Berry Hill saw three of them in action. Selection for the race was, as usual, based on the six stage but with a now fit Jonathan Blackledge not taking part in that event while any difference between most of those that did was impossible to define, it was eventually decided to keep the status quo and leave JB out of the A squad, even though he was expected to outrun at least one of those who were in.

Stage 1

Second fastest of today's runners who'd competed at Sutton Park, Paul Freary made a quick start but was followed closely by Shugri Omar for the Bs. Shoulder to shoulder throughout the two laps, both drifted back to the 20s with Paul still retaining the edge as the finish neared. But it was 20 year-old Shugri who had the strongest finish up the final climb with Paul right behind him but legs a-buckling as he crossed the line. We were further back than hoped for and over such a short distance it was unlikely that we could get back in contention. Sale's Stuart Stokes had grabbed a big lead while we were in 22nd (Bs) and 23rd (As).

Stage 2

Jonathan Blackledge tore away for the Bs but Phil Wicks had problems to contend with. Paul had stopped dead on the line and needed to get going again to cover the 15 metres to where Phil was waiting to "touch hands" and by the time they'd connected, the As had lost four places and the watch about to record Phil's effort had relentlessly "ticked" on. How much time was lost we can't be sure but for the records we'll allow an ungenerous four seconds*.

With a point to prove, Jonathan tore through the field ahead but Phil was also on a mission to erase any memories of his Sutton Park run and by the end of the first 2.5k lap had overtaken his colleague. Yet again, though, that trademark Blackledge finish put the Bs back ahead with Jonathan's time proving not only to be faster than someone in the A - but faster than all of them! Great runs from both the 21 year-old Belgravians had taken the Bels to 10th and 13th with Salford and Tipton between them and only seven seconds covering the four.

For Newham & Essex Beagles, Mo Farah had run like a gazelle, picking up no fewer than 29 places to go into fourth, but it was still Sale ahead with pre-race favourites Morpeth back in 17th.

Stage 3

Pete Willis ran like a man possessed as he tried to keep the Bs ahead of the As. For almost the whole of the first lap Al Stewart did not get onto terms with him but the inevitable did eventually occur and the remainder of Pete's race was spent trying to recover from that early burst. There was much changing of the order on stage three: Holmfirth, Gateshead, Harrow, Telford - their challenges all subsided as Al steadily made ground. But there were others also on the rise - Morpeth, Tipton, Notts - and the net effect was that Al's effort gained us four places and we were into 9th.

Altrincham now held the lead with several previously unfancied teams well into the top ten - most notably Aldershot in 3rd.

Stage 4

Morpeth's Nick McCormick had breakfasted with us. His easy going ways cover a steely determination and ability - who will forget his sterling effort to catch our own Mark Miles just before the line last year - but surely with his club lying in 6th place, 48 seconds behind leaders Altrincham, he was going to be unable to save Jim Alder's Morpeth Harriers this time. Not so!

For the Bels Stephen Sharp flew round his first lap but with so much talent ahead he was unable to make much impression. Bedford & County fell to his stride but he was unable to hold the pace for his second circuit and we had to accept a place well out of the medals.

And while this was going on, McCormick was on a charge. Altrincham sagged and Aldershot moved ahead of them but the Morpeth man was going faster than anyone in the race's history, bar a 2003 version of AFD's Chris Thompson, and once again it was the North Easterners who carried the day.

Disappointing for the Bels, then, especially as we knew we'd have problems with 'B' vs 'A'. But the signs for the future look good, and who's to say we won't have an under 23 four-some soon that can go sub-1 hour for the Berry Hill course.

1 Morpeth H 1:00:34; 2 Aldershot Farnham & District 1:00:59; 3 Altrincham & District 1:01:07; 4 Tipton H 1:01:09; 5 Newham & Essex Beagles 1:01:19; 6 Sale H Manchester 1:01:31; 7 Notts AC 1:01:38; 8 Belgrave H 'A' 1:01:47 - P Freary (23) 15:41, P Wicks (13) 15:12/15:08*, A Stewart (9) 15:38, S Sharp (8) 15:16; dnf Belgrave H 'B' - S Omar (22) 15:40, J Blackledge (10) 15:06, P Willis (17) 16:18; 156 teams started, 126 finished.

Fastest: 1 N McCormick (Morpeth H) 14:21; 2 M Farah (Newham & EB) 14:29; =3 C Davies (Telford) and M Skinner (Blackheath & B) 14:36; 5 A Bowden (Harrow) 14:46.

Results Roundup

Road & Country

October 2005

- 9 **LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon, USA.** 1 F Limo 2:07:02; 262 D Patel 14th M45 2:48:00.
- 16 **Croydon 10 km.** 1 P Fallenius M40 32:52; 2 R Ward 33:17; 151 J Pritchard 44:31; 747 finished.
- 16 **Cabbage Patch 10 miles, Twickenham.** 1 M Farah (Newham & EB) 48:59; 2 K Tadesse 49:03.
- 16 **Green Drive 5 miles, Lytham St Annes.** 1 P Freary 25:23.
- 16 **Humboldt Redwoods Half Marathon, Weott CA USA.** 3 B Poore 1:07:06.
- 16 **Jog Shop Jog 20 miles multi-terrain, Brighton.** 1 D Biddick (unatt) 2:17:30; 3 E Lyne 2:24:43.
- 16 **Beckley 10 km, nr Rye.** 1 N Brown (Hastings) 36:34; 18 P Cross 1st M50 41:44; 188 finished.
- 19 **London Colleges League, Parliament Hill.** 1 M Ashton (St. Mary's) 26:11; 11 J Charles 27:43.
- 22 **East Surrey League 5 miles CC, Lloyd Park, Croydon.** 1 R Karn (Herne H) 28:50; 6 T Weeks 30:07.
- 23 **Scottish 4 x 4 km Relay Champs, Culburnauld.** 1 Central AC 53:33; 2 City of Edinburgh (inc D Gauson, K Gauson) 54:37. Fastest: 1 R Russell (Central) 12:52; 3 D Gauson 13:13; =6 K Gauson U20 13:28; ... R Montgomery 13:50.
- 23 **Stroud Half Marathon.** 1 N Molema (RSA) 65:59; 2 K Tadesse 66:06.
- 23 **Maidstone Half Marathon.** 1 J Rendall (Tonbridge) 1:13:21; 59 P Cross M50 1:32:37; 463 finished.
- 28 **Serpentine Last Friday 5 km, Hyde Park.** 1 S Farah (Newham & EB) 16:02; 4 P Fallenius 1st M40 16:14; 7 M Humphrey 16:34; 12 T Hadfield 16:59; 32 D Patel M45 18:32. Women. 1 E Calderbank 17:52; 3 H Smethurst 1st W40 18:34.
- 30 **Ron Hill Surrey Classic 10 km, Nonsuch Park.** 1 B Broe (Epsom & E) 35:09; 5 M Webb 36:41; 188 D Davies M65 52:39; 276 finished.
- 30 **Accrington 10 km.** Yes, the race was exotic as it sounds, spiced up with steep hills, wind and torrential rain - but it was another advance from the man from Foot Traffic, winner by over half a minute. 1 P Freary 33:01; 384 finished.
- 30 **Ricky 9 miles, Rickmansworth.** Al Stewart is in the form of his life. He set off aggressively, hoping to crack the course record, and after a mile was out on his own. Risking life and limb at the 8

- mile mark, where he got blocked in by the lead vehicle, Al eventually approached the finish line with the crowd counting him in to the record - ten, nine, eight, seven, six - and yes, he got home with five seconds to spare, breaking South African Piet Jacobs 2003 best for the race. 1 A Stewart 45:27 (course record).
- 30 **Barns Green Half Marathon, Sussex.** 1 D Taylor (Blackheath & B) M40 1:09:30; 18 B Barton M40 1:20:00; 231 P Cross M50 1:37:40; 388 J Pritchard 1:44:50; 837 D McMillan M55 2:02:43; 854 A Lane M70 2:03:22; 1256 finished.
- 30 **Dublin Marathon.** After carrying a shin problem for most of October which severely curtailed his training, and having a couple of cortisone injections (the last only two days before the race), John Clarke ran to a personal best. Celebrating her selection for the GBR Ekiden (marathon) relay team which will compete in Chiba, Japan, Birhan Dagne celebrated by running the full distance. 1 D Osadchy (UKR) 2:13:14; 27 J Clarke 2:35:06. Women. 1 V Klimina (RUS) 2:38:04; 3 B Dagne 2:41:54.
- 30 **Snowdonia Marathon.** Another race run in gale force winds and torrential rain - and this one with a couple of special challenges in the form of a 1100 ft climb and then at 21 miles, another of 1200ft! Wearing her Belgrave kit, Louise got plenty of support, even in the Welsh mountains, and a light-hearted comment from one watcher: "bet you've never seen hills like this where you've come from!" Louise smiled, and agreed. Women. 4 L Cooper 3:27:14.

November 2005

- 5 **UK Cross Challenge, Senneleys Park, Birmingham.** 1 C Rimmer (Telford) 35:16; 5 K Gauson 36:45.
- 5 **Hampshire League, Goodwood, West Sussex.** 1 A McLean (Team Southampton) 26:31; 13 K Nash 28:34.
- 6 **Through the Villages, nr Chorley, Lancs., 8m 781y.** 1 P Freary 46:18; 263 finished.
- 6 **Ron Hill Surrey Classic 10 km, Oxshott.** 1 T Doran (Elmbridge) 34:28; 5 M Webb 36:17; 237 D Davies M65 52:03; 333 finished.
- 6 **Marlow Half Marathon.** 1 O Jones (Team Southampton) 1:13:00; 108 P Cross 1:36:29; 415 D McMillan M50 1:50:37; 922 finished.
- 6 **Lotto Crosscup, Wachtebeke, Belgium.** 1 T Van Hooste (Belgium) 28:05; 21 P Wicks 29:34.
- 6 **Lasswade Open CC.** 1 D Gauson 31:51; 2 K Gauson U20 32:04.
- 12 **South of Thames 5 miles Team Race, Lloyd Park.**
Men. 1 J Mays (Kent) 28:25; 32 W Lynch 31:29; 33 MWhiting 31:32; 46 F Ward M45 32:13; 144 L Rehn M40 40:12; 168 finished. Teams: 1 Kent 22; 2 Thames H&H 63; 3 Herne Hill 118; 14 Belgrave 255; 32 teams closed in.
Women. 1 M Synott-Wells (Ranelagh) 33:10; 2 M Heaton 33:53; 20 C Eastham 39:12; 51 finished. Teams: 1 Ranelagh 44; 7 teams closed in.

Race Walking

October 2005

- 22 **Cambridge Harriers League 5 km, Bexley.** 1 N Silvester (Aldershot F&D) 24:19; 2 A Goudie 25:23; 6 C Lawton M55 26:47; 10 P King M50 28:58.
- 29 **Steyning 10 km, Bexley.** 1 N Ball (Steyning) 45:54; 4 T Watt (Steyning/Belgrave) 54:19; 5 C Lawton M55 56:46.
- 30 **Essex League 5 miles, Earles Colne.** 1 D.King (Colchester) ??; 6 C Lawton M55 45:10.

From The Belgravian

75 Years Ago – 1930

A Belgravian editorial congratulated Tommy Green upon his wonderful record-breaking effort in the London-Brighton Walk. "If Tommy never donned another shoe ... we could justly claim him as the greatest walker ever seen."

Not only did he win by a large margin, covering the last 32 miles at an average of 8 seconds per mile faster than the first 20 – in spite of the hills, but his time of 8hrs. 2mins. 55secs. beat a 21 year-old record by over 8 minutes and he may well have finished in a time of less than 8 hours had it not been for the violent rain-storm, heavy head wind and flooded roads during the closing stages. There was conjecture that Tommy must have been 15½ minutes inside the World Record for 50 miles.

Of course Tommy did don his racing shoes on many other subsequent occasions – and two years later went on to become Olympic Champion in 1932.

The cross-country runners were also beginning to make their mark. Bert Footer, into his seventh season as Belgrave's running captain, was winner of the South of Thames

Championship – the club's first ever title in this race. Bert had already won the Surrey cross-country title and after his South of Thames triumph led the team to their first ever medals in the Southern cross-country – bronze – and then the club's highest ever placing in the "National" – 6th.

A Social evening at Wimbledon saw 140 people turning up for "tea" followed by dancing, a performance by two vocalists and then more dancing.

The "Outfitting Department" offered club vests at 3s 3d, vest badges at 1s 6d, blazer badges at 2s 6d and club ties at 3s 0d.

As winter 1930-31 drew on, members were encouraged to attend St. John's Hall at Wimbledon (today known as Belgrave Hall) the centre of the Club's winter activities. "To see a pack of 30 to 40 setting out ... on a Saturday afternoon is always a stimulating sight ... Let's follow them down the road and on to the Common, across the Golf Links, up hill and down dale, through the wood and across the stream and into Richmond Park and autumn glory." Mid-week training was from "The Rising Sun," Ebury Bridge Road.

Skipper's Corner

October 23, 2005 - National 6 Stage Road Relay.

Welcome back the boys of 2001! You thrilled us then, and you still thrill us now. Sharpy duly nailed his five consecutive runs in this event, while Spen has seven in a row. We want eight! We want eight! Gnasher shall hopefully display how eight runs in a row is possible at a big event at Milton Keynes, five months hence, and I myself aim for eight National Cross-country's in a row in Feb. Will one of us get ten in a row?! That'll be worth a bottle of champagne. Sadly the Baby B's seem to have come into this world minus one of their limbs, but such a setback reminds us that we need to keep an eye out for our engine room boys just as much as our stars. No engine room, no running club, simple as that.

You get out of it precisely what you put into it

The focus now switches back to our local boys, who must step up to the plate over the coming months as there's plenty to do: Surrey League, two South of the Thames races, and the 'counties'. All of these races may be won if we can only get bodies to the start line in great numbers. Deep, dark winter looms, and if we are to believe our meteorological experts, it's going to be the coldest since 1962/3. Ouch.

When I think of winter training at its worst, a three-mile stretch of road springs to mind: From Kingston track to the Cottenham Park Hill loop on a Tuesday night. You set out in the freezing cold and dark, knowing that what's in store are 12 ascents of mind-numbing, exhausting monomania. You feel awful and home seems so long away. The route is bleak and dreary, and finally you arrive at the hills. The session begins. After three or four reps, fatigue has set in and there's such a long way to go. But something else is kicking in too. Real determination. "I shall finish this session – and I shall finish it strong!"

After eight reps, real exhaustion smothers you. "This is that part of the session where the bowels start to give way," Ben Whitby once grimly remarked. And then finally: the twelfth rep is over – and the long grind back to the track begins. But oddly enough you're no longer tired, or fluey, or unmotivated... instead your physiology sings down the streets. The satisfaction is great, and you remember that, yes, you do love running after all. And you remember *why* you love it: because you get out of it precisely what you put into it. Welcome to Winter 2005-6! Wrap up warm, stay healthy and get in shape to race, and race hard, for the mighty Bels, the finest club in the land.

Skip

Grapevine

The Legend that is Bannister

Jonathan Blackledge is immersed in his studies at St. Catherine's, Oxford, but enjoys soaking up all the traditions associated with sport at this famous seat of learning.

Recently he was invited to a function at a "Gentleman's Club" where he was introduced to Sir Roger Bannister, the first man to break four minutes for 1 mile. Jonathan was surprised to find that the world of medicine holds much more of interest for Sir Roger than athletics, and when another, currently injured, sportsman became the topic of conversation, he was mostly interested in who was treating the injury.

We are reminded of the occasion when our own 1 mile club record holder John Gladwin met Sir Roger Bannister at a function.

John introduced himself and they got talking. Bannister asked John if he ran much and John replied that back in the '80s he was a miler.

Bannister asked him what his best time was and John replied, "3:52".

His questioner didn't hear him properly and said, "4:52, eh! Not bad."

Johnny G replied with a slightly smug grin, "No, no, 3:52."

After a momentary pause the great man replied, "Yes, but did you do it on a mud track, like I did?"

With a very wicked smile John Gladwin donned his cap to Bannister and headed back to the bar.

All our yesterdays

With the senior men's National Cross Country Relay still a couple of hours away and our runners not yet on the Berry Hill Park course, Mike Freary made himself known to those putting up the Belgrave flag. In no time at all we had been transported back to the 'sixties as this three time competitor in the International CC Champs (11th, 8th and 5th), 6th placer in the European Championships 10,000m of 1969 and one-time British Record holder for the same distance, regaled us with stories of the exploits of Ron Hill, Gerry North, Roy Fowler and others. Mike is still involved in the sport and coaches a group of young lads from Bolton.

Then ex-Belgravian Bill Dance happened to come by and when Morpeth's Jim Alder joined in the conversation you'd have thought the '70s, '80s and 90s – let alone the 21st century – had never dawned.

All sent their regards to our immediate Past President Gerry North.



**Don't miss the Belgrave Darts
Championship - Saturday 3 December
at Belgrave Hall.**

**Entries will be taken from 7:30pm -
first-claim members only.**

**Bring your own drink but food
available**

Peter Cross

243 races since 1982 and still going strong



Above: Peter finishes 18th in the Beckley 10k of October 16, 2005 – winner of the shield for first M50 home.

Many road races these days feature Belgravians near the sharp end of the field but go to any race in the South on a Sunday and there's a good chance that buried in the pack somewhere will be Peter Cross.

He's already run 41 races this year, easily on his way to beating his 2004 total of 33.

Peter started competing in 1982, joining Belgrave in 1983, and since then has run no fewer than 243 races:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Marathons..... | 35 |
| Half Marathons | 116 |
| Mini-marathon (14.2 miles)..... | 1 |
| Trail races of 21 kms | 2 |
| Hog's Back 11 miles..... | 1 |
| 10 miles | 16 |
| 10 kms | 67 |
| 5 kms | 1 |
| 1 mile..... | 4 |

Personal records stand at:

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|------|
| 1 mile..... | 4:57 | 1987 |
| 5 km | 20:01 | 2004 |
| 10 km | 36:39 | 1985 |
| 10 miles | 60:05 | 1987 |
| H-Marathon..... | 1:17:40 | 1987 |
| Marathon..... | 2:51:48 | 1986 |

Peter now admits to not training any more – just racing. All we can say is that it must cost him a fortune in race entry fees.

Peter's race record for 2005 – so far!

| | |
|-------|--|
| 02/01 | Tadworth 10m – 106 – 1:12:37. |
| 16/01 | Dartford 10m – 111 – 1:07:41. |
| 23/01 | Epsom Oddballs 10.05k – 65 – 42:49. |
| 30/01 | Canterbury 10m – 120 – 1:07:46. |
| 06/02 | Ashford & Dist. 10 km – 82 – 40:25. |
| 13/02 | 26.2 Valentines 10k, Chessington – 68 – 41:18. |
| 20/02 | Sussex Beacon Half Marathon – 132 – 1:28:55. |
| 27/02 | Guildford Half Marathon – 26 – 1:28:38. |
| 06/03 | Reading Half Marathon – 2422 – 1:47:06. |
| 13/03 | Hastings Half Marathon – 450 – 1:35:25. |
| 20/03 | Asics Fleet Half Marathon – 257 – 1:31:25. |
| 03/04 | Paddock Wood Half Marathon – 184 – 1:32:24. |
| 10/04 | Wimbledon Audi 10k – 79 – 40:05. |
| 17/04 | Flora London Marathon – 2455 – 3:19:35. |
| 01/05 | Sutton Runners 10k – 99 – 41:34. |
| 02/05 | Barry Jones 10k – 33 – 41:20. |
| 08/05 | Horsham Lions & Joggers 10k – 44 – 41:54. |
| 15/05 | Ranelagh Half Marathon, Richmond – 100 – 1:28:51. |
| 22/05 | Staines 10k – 29 – 40:43. |
| 05/06 | Dorking 10 miles – 116 – 68:10. |
| 12/06 | Southend Half Marathon – 78 – 1:29:54 |
| 19/06 | Selsey 10k – 34 – 40:35. |
| 26/06 | Orpington 10k – 35 – 41:55. |
| 03/07 | Cranleigh 10k – 15 – 40:21. |
| 17/07 | Surrey Slog Half Marathon, Holmbury Hill – 70 – 1:57:34. |
| 24/07 | Elmbridge 10k – 133 – 40:12. |
| 31/07 | London Chest Hospital 10k – 50 – 39:35. |
| 07/08 | The Milland Valley Trail Race (21k) – 68 – 1:41:26. |
| 14/08 | Red Lion 10k Hernhill, nr Faversham – 66 – 41:57. |
| 21/08 | Henfield Half Marathon – 26 – 1:32:40. |
| 28/08 | Arundel Castle 10k – 42 – 41:29. |
| 04/09 | Kent Coastal Half Marathon – 27 – 1:33:02. |
| 11/09 | Faversham 10k – 57 – 44:00. |
| 18/09 | BUPA Great North Half Marathon – 1009 – 1:35:18. |
| 25/09 | Bexhill Seafront 10k – 18 – 42:54. |
| 02/10 | Rainforest Foundation Taut 10k, Hackney – 35 – 39:58. |
| 09/10 | Henley Half Marathon – 57 – 1:28:11. |
| 16/10 | Beckley 10k, Nr. Rye – 18 – 41:44. |
| 23/10 | Maidstone Half Marathon – 59 – 1:32:37. |
| 30/10 | Barns Green Half Marathon – 231 – 1:37:40. |
| 06/11 | Marlow Half Marathon – 108 – 1:36:29. |