

BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT INVITATION CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE
(1926 - 1996)

Minutes of the 71st. A.G.M. held at the M.C.A.A. Offices, Edgbaston House, 3 Duchess Place,
Hagley Road, Birmingham on Wednesday the 11th. September 1996 at 7:30pm.

Obituary

The President asked the meeting to stand for a few moments in memory of Taff Hier (Halesowen) who had passed away during the last year. Taff had been one of the great characters of the League and had been President in the 1970 - 71 season.

Happy Birthday

The President welcomed Arthur Wright to the meeting. He explained to the delegates that Arthur had celebrated his ninetieth Birthday the previous Monday and that he was the only member in the room who had been at the very first A.G.M. of the League in 1926. The meeting, with great gusto, sang Happy Birthday to Arthur.

Apologies

These were received from Bill Adcocks, John Andrews, Basil Heatley, Graham Heeley, Ted Hutchings, Tom Talbot, Roy Tilling, Ken Walklate, (all past Presidents) Dave McNamee (Hon. Auditor) Joan Bodsworth, Mary & Dave Conn, Betty Downes, Alan King, Phil & Janet Ramsden, Ted Schuck (Officials) Bob Carey (Sphinx), John Harrington, Mark Ingram, Mike Storey (Gloucester A.C., John Love (Northampton), Rex Tomlinson (Oak Park R.C.)

Present

C.B.Franks (President), Arthur Birt (President Elect), K.Dare, B.Ewington, D.Johnson, P.Lisseman, J.Mills, T.O'Reilly, E.J.Skidmore, S.A.Wright, (all past Presidents) S.Harris, J.Heminsley, A.Hemsley, Mrs. M.Johnson, Chris & Pat Lockley, M.Northall, K.Oldfield, T.Taylor, P.Walker, G.Williams, (Officials) A.I.Phillips (M.C.C.A); B.Allcock, S.Flanagan (Northbrook); B.Wills, N.Wilson (Nuneaton); T.Akiens, M.Akiens (Rugby & District); P.Fahey (Sandwell Valley); R.Miles, P.Pollock, C.Ward (Royal Sutton); G.Millar, I.Spedding, (Michelin); S.Loundes (Chase Harriers); I.Clarke, J.Clarke (Stourbridge R.C.); D.Jones (West Brom); N & S Wonfor, D.Freer (Droitwich); M.Hill (Worcester); P.Banks, C.Kirkham (Coventry); J.Abbis, P.Beckett, G.Harper, (Wolves & Bil.); E.Hubbleday, D.Winter (Sparkhill); P.Cavanagh, C.Rowberry (Hereford Couriers); G.Wheeler, E.Lanscroft (Centurion); J.Heaton, M.Cotton, A.Simpson (Potteries Marathon); H.Cullis, R.Arnold (Sphinx); R.Payne, R.Chrzan (Kidderminster R.C.); M.Sprason (Telford Harriers); R.Bunn (Halesowen); J.Lloyd, C.Much (Cobra); T.Egan, G.Wark (Northampton Phoenix); V.Harry, J.Robinson, S.Radcliffe (Bromsgrove & Redditch); R.Froggatt (Solihull & Smallheath); R.Ashwood (Stourport); R.Sanwald (Dudley Kingswinford); H.Fowler, J.Ward (B'ham Rowheath); R.Hughes (Cannock & Stafford); B.Clifton (Tipton Harriers); G.Clifton (Sandwell Valley); D.Smith (Aldridge); J.Brown (Massey Ferguson); N.Hurst (Tamworth); R.Barrington (City of Stoke); G.Allen (Stafford H.). Attendance 81 delegates from 40 different member Clubs.

Minutes of the 70th. AGM.

P.Lisseman proposed and D.Johnson seconded that the minutes of the 70th. AGM be accepted, this proposal was unanimously accepted by the delegates present. The Executive minutes were also approved by those members of the Executive present.

Matters Arrising

There were no matters Arrising from the AGM minutes.

From the Executive minutes the secretary reported that he had been in touch with Maurice Millington re-support for the League (Numbers) and had received a letter stating that Maurice was no longer able to support the League with numbers. The meeting thanked Maurice for his

support over the past two years.

Statement of Accounts

The Treasurer went through the balance sheet, announcing once again that he was pleased to inform the meeting of another surplus on the year of £937-02p. Although this was very healthy he warned the meeting that the greater part of this surplus was due to the support of Maurice Millington and Viga in supplying the League with numbers. Next year this support would not be available.

The accounts were accepted, with a vote of thanks to the Treasurer and Auditor for their work. Proposed D.Johnson seconded by J.Skidmore.

Presidents Address

The President, Cliff Franks, told the AGM that he had first become involved with the League in 1958 running in the Young Athletes races, with his best competitive years coming in the mid sixties. With retirement from competition, he was highly honoured just over seventeen years ago to receive a call from Ken Dare asking if he would take on the job of Secretary and Treasurer of the League. This he agreed to do, although with much trepidation taking over from the outgoing secretary Jim Skidmore, who was leaving to take on the job of Midland Cross Country Secretary. Jim had made the job of League secretary his own (thirteen years) and would be a very difficult act to follow. (Interesting fact, that there have only been seven secretaries of the League since its inception 70 years ago.)

He was delighted and very proud, when he was asked to become the President of the League. To cap this honour was the delightful year he had in visiting four of the Leagues fixtures and the welcome that the host Clubs gave to him.

Cliff went to Gloucester for the first race where he saw the host, Club Severn score an easy victory. On a beautiful autumn day the President was joined by the Sheriff of Gloucester and the Mayor of Gloucester in full regalia in watching the race.

On a day more designed for Cross Country, the President watched the Third Division race at Nuneaton. He was even allowed by the Referee to start the Race with a gun!! The race was very competitive between Dudley & Stourbridge and Centurion RR., with the Black Country club just coming out on top.

The President stated how refreshing it was to go to a League race and find an old fashioned Cross Country Course at Princethorpe College for the Division Two match promoted by Rugby. He would like to see a return to courses like this one, where the traditional Cross Country runner can compete on at least equal terms with the track man. Despite the two top Clubs in this division getting away from the pack, the middle order was extremely competitive.

The final race saw the President at the First Division match at Alexander Stadium. With the host Club, Birchfield, only four points down on their rivals Tipton, a splendid clash was anticipated between these two West Midland Clubs. However this was not to be, as the Green and Whites put on a splendid display of power running, finishing their scoring six in the first thirteen home. Cliff thanked all the promoting Clubs for their hard work in putting on fixtures and all the Officials who do such sterling work on behalf of the League. Finally he thanked all his friends in the League for having given him the honour of being President of such a prestigious League

Secretary's Report

First Division

Tipton Harriers began the season, where they left off the season before, with a comfortable Team win. Beating Coventry Godiva by some 19pts. who were a further 17pts ahead of Birchfield in third position. The scorers in the green and white hoops of Tipton all finished in the top eighteen athletes home.

The race held at Aston University playing fields was an exciting event won by Glynn Tromans

(Coventry) who finished some eight seconds up on Darrius Burrows (Birchfield). Carl Udall of Omega finished a close up third.

Sutton Park was the scene of the second fixture and was held over a firm but very undulating course. Birchfield had a cracking race beating Tipton by some 26pts. and moving up to second just a meagre 9pts behind the Blackcountry team. Coventry had to wait for their final scorer, which dropped them to third on the day and third position in the League.

Darrius Burrows won the race from Allan Jackson of Stourport. Darrius was giving pointers to the superb season he was to have.

In the relegation zone it looked as if Birmingham University and Royal Sutton were the favourites for the drop to the Second Division at the half way point of the League season.

January's fixture was held on the fast but undulating parkland course at Coventry. Despite Tipton closing their scoring team before Birchfield, the Black vests won the team race for the second time running, however, not by enough points to make them League leaders; Tipton were to go into the final race with a very small advantage of four points. The big surprise of the day was the demise of the Coventry team on their own course, finishing down in sixth place, although still holding on to third place in the League. Loughborough Students had a good run on the day to finish third.

Royal Sutton gave themselves some hope of avoiding relegation with a fighting eighth place. Rob Birchall of Omega won the individual race from Rob Scanlon (Coventry) with the ever consistent Allan Jackson in third place.

The final race held from the Alexander Stadium promised to be an exciting affair with the home Club just requiring a win over Tipton by four points to take the League Championship. This was not to be, for the Green and whites were in scintillating form, finishing five of their team in the first nine men home, with a further two in thirteenth and fourteenth places. This was the form that was to give Tipton second place in the National a couple of weeks later. Alas, this was the sort of form that no other team in the league could match. Birchfield and Coventry settling for second and third respectively. Tipton went on to win the 'B' Team competition as well, just showing how strong they are in depth. Their 'B' team would have finished sixth in the 'A' team result.

Kevin Lamb who did not score for Tipton in the final fixture took the individual award, finishing 6th.; 4th.; 4th. and 14th. a total of 28pts. he was followed by Mike Shevyn (Birchfield) 29pts. and M.Hager (Tipton) 97pts.

An unfortunate error on the scoring envelope of City of Stoke, that was not picked up until some time later, gave the appearance that Royal Sutton had just avoided the drop with another fighting performance in the final fixture. However it was brought to my notice that a Stoke athlete had been put down as 90th. on his teams envelope instead of 60th. When the result was corrected this had the affect of keeping Stoke up and sending Royal Sutton down.

M.Vaux-Harvey (Stourport) won the award for best Junior athlete.

Division Two.

Thanks in part to the recruiting of the Kenyan athlete H.Chepkwony, Bromsgrove made a storming start to the season, at Northampton, beating Potteries Marathon by some 46pts. with the rejuvenated Leamington in third place just a further 7pts back.

Chepkwony had a comfortable win in the individual race by some 30 seconds from S.Kinson (Leamington) and S.Robinson (Cheltenham)

Massey Ferguson promoted the second fixture at Coventry and the race was won by Potteries Marathon with the low score of 67 points, this was 89 points better than second place Solihull & Smallheath. Bromsgrove dropping to third on the day, dropped to second in the division. Oadby and Wigston failed to turn up and therefore guaranteed their demotion to Division three. The fancied Cannock & Stafford despite having the first man home, C. Warren; ran disastrously finishing bottom on the day.

At the half way stage S.Kinson and S.Robinson were the leading athletes on 6pts. E.Bowen (Leamington) was the leading Junior.

The third race held on the demanding Princethorpe College course, near Rugby, saw Potteries Marathon take a grip on the Second Division title, building up an 83pt. lead over their nearest opposition Bromsgrove and Redditch who in turn were 94pts. ahead of Leamington.

With Cannock and Stafford having a slightly better race, and the expectation of who they could get out if they really wanted to stay up, made the remaining relegation spot look very open.

As expected Potteries Marathon and Bromsgrove and Redditch confirmed their superiority over their rivals in this Division. Finishing well clear over the undulating Cheltenham parkland course and increasing their points lead at the top of the table.

Cannock and Stafford did not get their stars out and finished bottom, to take the remaining relegation spot.

S.Kinson (Leamington) continued his consistent running to take the award for the best individual, closely followed by S.Robinson of Cheltenham.

E.Bowen made it a double for the Leamington Club when he won the Junior Individual award. Northampton Phoenix won the 'B' Team competition.

Division Three

The first race at West Bromwich saw Dudley and Stourbridge take very firm control of the Division, scoring 79pts. some 42 pts ahead of their nearest rivals Centurion. Kidderminster were a further 7pts. behind.

Dudley won the second fixture at Hinkley, although they were hard pressed by Centurion in this fixture. However at the half way stage they had a 55pt lead over Centurion with Kidderminster losing some ground, but remaining third.

I.Furness (Dudley) looked good for the individual title have won the first two races.

After the third race at Coventry, it looked barring disasters, that Dudley & Stourbridge and Centurion would go up and that Bridgnorth and Gloucester would be relegated.

In the final race held at Malvern, Centurion sprung a surprise by defeating the strong Dudley and Stourbridge Club. However, Dudley had the satisfaction of taking the Division Title.

As expected Gloucester and Bridgnorth were relegated to Division Four.

I.Furness (Dudley) ran superbly well to win all four races and take the individual title. K.Hayes of Nuneaton also ran very consistently to take the second individual award with the low score of 9pts.

L.Salt (Newcastle) won the Junior award.

The 'B' team competition was won by Northbrook A.C.

Division Four

With three different teams winning a race the Team contest was quite exciting. Despite Borough of Sandwell winning two races, the ultra consistent Aldridge R.C. took the Fourth Division title from their Sandwell rivals. Hereford Couriers finishing in Third place.

With Chase Triathlon Club failing to complete a team they were automatically relegated, together with Stratford A.C. who finish in eleventh position.

M.Aldridge (Sandwell) ran exceptionally well to win all four races and take the individual title.

C.Watters (Oak Park) with 9pts. took the second individual award.

T.Piper (Oak Park) took the award for best Junior athlete.

The 'B' competition was won by Sphinx A.C.

Division Five

With newcomers Severn A.C. winning all four races, they easily won the 5th. Division title. The interest came in who would be second to them. However after Tamworth finished second in the first race, Chase Harriers came through to take second place in the remaining three fixtures to gain the second promotion spot.

C.Davis (Severn) narrowly beat his team mate K.O'Neill by one point to take the individual title.

S.Bradley (Cobra) was the leading Junior athlete.

Chase Harriers showed strength in numbers by winning the 'B' competition.

Finally the secretary ended by thanking :-

All the Race secretaries and Officials for their splendid contribution in helping the League to run smoothly.

All the promoting Clubs for all their hard work in providing the League with good courses.

Amendments to Rule 9.

The following amendments to Rule 9 proposed by the Executive were agreed by a large majority :

i) In the result of a tie in team or individual competitions, the team/individual who places higher in the 4th. race shall be declared the overall winner.

ii) Scoring the Junior Individual race will be scored as a separate race. i.e. the first Junior home shall score one point the second two points etc. If two Juniors are equal on points at the end of the final race, then two placques shall be awarded.

Make -up of the League for the 1996 - 1997 Season

Royal Sutton Coldfield requested that they be allowed to stay in Division One, was rejected by the meeting, although sympathy was expressed for their predicament. The secretary explained to the meeting the chain of errors that led to Royal Sutton believing that they had not been relegated. It was some time later when the mistake was realised and City of Stoke were reinstated to Division One and Royal Sutton relegated.

The secretary explained that he had just received a letter from Omega wishing to resign from the League. This would leave the first Division one team light. The delegates decided that the first four divisions should be made back up to twelve. Chase Triathlon had also resigned membership of the League. Coleshill R.C. had not re-applied for membership and were therefore no longer members of the League.

Beamont Leys, Trentham R.C. and Black Country Triathletes had applied for membership of the League. Beamont Leys and Trentham R.C. were accepted as members of the League as were Black Country Triathletes on condition that they are accepted into membership of the M.C.A.A.

The constitution of the Divisions are as follows :

1st. Division

Birchfield Harriers
B'ham Rowheath
Broms. & Redditch
City of Stoke A.C.
Coventry Godiva
Loughborough Stud.
Potteries Marathon
Staffs. University
Stourport A.C.
Telford A.C.
Tipton Harriers
Wolves & Bilston

2nd.Division

Birmingham University
Cheltenham & Cty H.
Centurion R.R.
Dudley & Stourbridge
Halesowen A.C.
Kidderminster R.C.
Leamington A.C.
Massey Ferguson R.C.
Northampton Phoenix
Royal Sutton Coldfield
Rugby & District A.C.
Solihull & Smallheath

3rd. Division

Aldridge R.C.
Cannock & Stafford
Hereford Couriers
Newcastle A.C.
Northbrook A.C.
Nuneaton Harriers
Oadby & Wigston
Sandwell Valley
Sparkhill Harriers
Sphinx A.C.
West Bromwich
Worcester A.C.

4th. Division

Bridgnorth A.C.
Chase Harriers
Dudley Kingswinford
Gloucester A.C.
Kenilworth R.C.
Oak Park R.C.
Severn A.C.
Shrewsbury & Dist.
Stafford Harriers
Stourbridge H.
Tamworth A.C.
Warwick University

5th. Division

Alvis R.C.	Beaumont Leys	Black Country Tri.	Cobra R.C.
Droitwich A.C.	Goodyear R.C.	Michelin A.C.	Peel R.C.
Rugeley & Dist.	Sneyd R.C.	Stratford A.C.	Telford Harriers
Trentham R.C.			

Dates, Fixtures and Venues

	1st. Div.	2nd. Div.	3rd. Div.	4th. Div.	5th. Div.
2nd. November 96	Stoke	Northampton	Northbrook	Severn	Severn
23rd. November 96	Telford	Halesowen	Nuneaton	Kenilworth	Rugeley
18th. January 97	Coventry	Rugby	Aldridge	Chase H.	Droitwich
22nd. February 97	Birchfield	Cheltenham	Worcester	Stafford	Michelin

Please Note :- The Fifth Division, first race is to be held in conjunction with the Fourth Division race, promoted by Severn A.C. at Gloucester.

The Fifth Division Race for this fixture only, will start at 2:00p.m. and will be followed by the Fourth Division Race at 2:40p.m.

Election of Officers/Officials

Cliff Franks the outgoing President proposed that Arthur Birt be elected the new President; this was passed unanimously.

Arthur Birt has been a long time member of Gloucester A.C. and has served them and the Midlands for a long time as a timekeeper. Arthur has been an Official of the League for a great number of years. Always reliable and an excellent Timekeeper of all Cross Country events. Arthur fully deserves the honour of Presidency of the League.

Arthur's first job as President was to present the outgoing President with the Presidents award.

President Elect : Muriel Johnson. proposed Cliff Franks, seconded Ken Dare

Hon.Secretary/Treasurer : C.B.Franks. Proposed D.Johnson, seconded Pete Lisseman.

Hon Auditor : Dave McNamee. Proposed Ken Dare , seconded Jim Skidmore.

All the other nomination were elected 'en bloc' they are :

	1st. Div.	2nd. Div.	3rd. Div.	4th. Div.	5th. Div.
Race Secretary	W.Adcocks	A.Hemsley	B.Ewington	T.O'Reilly	J.Heminsley
Referee	P.Lisseman	D.Johnson	G.Heeley	M.Conn	E.Hutchings
Judges	K.Walklate	M.Johnson	J.Mills.	D.Conn.	J.Freeman
	B.Downes	K.Dare	E.Schuck	M.Northall	J.Bodsworth
	P.Ramsden	S.Harris	T.Taylor	R.Williams	A.King
	J.Ramsden				

Timekeepers	C.Lockley	C.Grant	M.Ewington	J.Andrews	J.Skidmore
	P.Lockley	P.Walker	K.Oldfield	B.Gladwin	D.Bennett
	T.Talbot	G.Williams		B.Hussey	
				P.Hussey	

Delegate to MCAA : Tom O'Reilly

Delegate to BAF & AAA of England AGM's : C.B.Franks.

Affiliation Fees

The Treasurer recommended that these remained the same as last year. The meeting agreed unanimously.

Finishing Funnels

At the Executive meeting the Race Secretaries stated that although courses of all fixtures were well marked, often the finishing funnel left a lot to be desired. The recommendation therefore is :

Width of funnel to be2' (60cm)

length of funnel to be30 metres

The funnel should be strongly constructed to avoid it being dragged to the ground, when athletes grab hold of it in an attempt to hold themselves up when in a state of exhaustion.

Clubs are asked to abide by the above recommendation.

Any Other Business

a) Terry Taylor made an appeal for arm bands for Officials in order that they could be distinguishable to Clubs. This was agreed. The secretary is to purchase.

b) Terry also mention that Clubs should print names on the declaration sheets - too often they are scribbled and are not readable. Therefore names are guessed at and are sometimes put down wrongly in the results.

c) Officials Refreshments was mentioned by Ken Dare. He stated at the end of races Officials were busy getting the race result out, in order that it could be announced; this did not leave them free to get refreshments. Can host Clubs please ensure that a minimum of a cup of tea/coffee is taken to Officials at the end of the race.

d) A vote of thanks was made to Maurice Millington in his absence, thanking him and Viga for their support of the League over the past two seasons, with numbers.

e) Chris Lockley asked that the Executive look at the structure of the League to see if Five Divisions were necessary. The secretary said that he would put it on the agenda for next years executive.

f) Tony Phillips the secretary of MCCA gave delegates the dates of Midland Cross country fixtures for the coming season. The secretary said that he would put in a full fixture list for the winter season with the minutes.

Date & Venue of the 72nd. A.G.M.

It was agreed that this meeting should be held on Wednesday the 10th. September 1997 in the Calthorpe Room, Edgbaston House, Hagley Road, Birmingham.

There being no further business the President thanked delegates for their attendance and the meeting closed at 9:30pm with a vote of thanks to the President.

Clubs please note that your Affiliation is now due.

All affiliations MUST be paid before the first race. No Club will be allowed to compete unless their affiliation has been paid prior to the event.

The Affiliation fee for this coming season is £45 and should be forwarded to the Treasurer Cliff Franks, 23 Salisbury Avenue, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 5BT.

Cliff Franks
10/9/97