

**BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT INVITATION CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE**  
**(1926 - 1997)**

Minutes of the 72nd. A.G.M. held at the M.C.A.A. Offices, Edgbaston House, 3 Duchess Place,  
Hagley Road, Birmingham on Wednesday the 10th. September 1997 at 7:30pm.

**Apologies**

These were received from Basil Heatley, Graham Heeley, Frank Wood (all past Presidents) Dave McNamee (Hon. Auditor) Joan Bodsworth, Mary & Dave Conn, Phil & Janet Ramsden, Cliff Grant, George Williams, Chris & Pat Lockley (Officials) N.Hoyle (Cheltenham), K.Westley (West Bromwich), M.Kelcher, P.Sanderson (Telford A.C.), J.Strange Telford Harriers), C.

Rowberry (Hereford Couriers), T.Haines (Severn), B.Shepherd (Dudley & Stour), D.Winter (Sparkhill), P.Banks (Coventry), B.Froggatt (Solihull & S.H.), J.Lloyd (Cobra)

**Present**

Arthur Birt (President), Muriel Johnson (President Elect), W.Adcocks, 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, K.Oldfield, T.Taylor, A.King, E.Schuck (Officials) B.Allcock, B.Adams (Northbrook); T.Akiens, P.Henderson ( Rugby & District); G.Clifton (Sandwell Valley); R.Pollock, P.Pollock, C.Ward (Royal Sutton); T.Wood, M.Ashcroft (Chase Harriers); I.Clarke, J.Clarke ( Stourbridge R.C.); D.Jones (West Brom); N & S Wonfor, D.Freer (Droitwich); M.Hill (Worcester); C.Kirkham (Coventry ); E.Hubbeday (Sparkhill); M.Petch, B.Carey (Sphinx); R.Payne, (Kidderminster R.C.); R.Bunn (Halesowen); S.Fletcher, P.Westwood (Cobra); V.Harry, J.Robinson, S.Radcliffe (Bromsgrove & Redditch); R.Ashwood (Stourport); R.Sanwald (Dudley Kingswinford); A.Greenaway, M.Trevor (B'ham Rowheath); B.Clifton (Tipton Harriers); J.Aylmer, B.Gaffney (Massey Ferguson); J.Peet, P.Owen (Tamworth); R.Barrington (City of Stoke); G.Allen (Stafford H.); R.Freeman, M.Ingram (Gloucester); R.Tomlinson (Oak Park); D.Woodward, C.Reading (Leamington); G.Wheeler (Centurion); S.Pyke, M.Baggeley, I.Bridgett (Trentham); M.Millington (Birchfield); P.Beard, J.Brown (Dudley & Stourbridge); L.Heap (Beaumont Leys); C.B.Franks (Hon. Secretary/Treasurer Attendance 71 delegates from 36 different member Clubs.

**Minutes of the 71st. AGM.**

D.Johnson proposed and K.Dare seconded that the minutes of the 71st. 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 Arising**

There were no matters Arising from the AGM minutes.

**Statement of Accounts**

The Treasurer went through the balance sheet, announcing that he was pleased to inform the meeting of a surplus on the year of £725-60p. Although this was very healthy the surplus was down by about £200 on last year, this coupled with the fact that several promoting Clubs failed to put in their claim for promoting fixtures (a saving of between four and five hundred pounds to the League); the surplus could have been far less.

Due to the very small amount of interest from the Building Society Account, it was agreed that £500 should be transferred to the bank, where the interest was better. This would leave just over £100 in the Building Society.

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

## **Presidents Address**

The President, Arthur Birt told the AGM that he had enjoyed his year as President of the League and felt that it was a great honour to be elected to the position. He went on to say that he had been made most welcome by all the Clubs on his tour around the Divisional races.

Arthur thanked all the promoting Clubs for putting on fixtures and all the Officials who do such hard work to ensure that the League runs smoothly and without problems. Finally he thanked all the delegates for having elected him the President of such a prestigious League.

## **Secretary's Report**

### **First Division**

The first race held at Stoke saw Stephan White of Coventry having a comfortable win over the Bromsgrove and Redditch, Kenyan H.Chepkwony, who was in turn a further 10 seconds up on Witchalls of Loughborough Students.

With White leading the Coventry Club home and three other athletes in the top twelve it looked good for Godiva, however the past masters of packing their team up front, Tipton out did their West Midland rivals by packing their scoring squad inside the first 25 runners home; winning with a score of 72pts. Coventry finished a further 27pts. back on 99pts. and Loughborough were third on 113pts.

Tipton consolidated their lead in the second fixture, held at Telford. Outdoing their packing of the first fixture by placing all six scorers in the top 23 athletes home; although their score was 78pts. Godiva were once again placed second (131pts). The black vests of Birchfield had a better second race to finish third, only four points down on their near neighbours Coventry.

At the half way point of the season Tipton headed the League table, with a useful lead of 80pts over second placed Coventry Godiva. Birchfield were in third place a further 141pts. back. Bromsgrove's H.Chepkwony continued his good running by narrowly beating S.Hope of Tipton.

Coventry hosted the penultimate fixture in which spectators were treated to a cracker of a race with Tipton and Birchfield locked in a titanic struggle for supremacy. On close scrutiny of the results it was found that the green and white hoops had kept their unbeaten record scoring a narrow victory over the ever improving Birchfield, by a mere 4pts. Coventry held on to second place in the division table, despite finishing third, a further 43pts. behind Birchfield.

Survival in Division One was beginning to look very perilous for Staffordshire University and Wolverhampton & Bilston, who both occupied the relegation positions in the League table.

Stephan White chalked up his second win of the season, sprinting to victory ahead of promising Junior Matt O'Dowd of Loughborough Students. Carl Udall led the push for his new Club Birchfield Harriers to take third place. H.Chepkwony had a poor run by his standards finishing in ninth place, this however was still good enough to keep him in the pole position as the seasons top individual.

On the fast course at Alexander Stadium Tipton completed an unbeaten season in the League; taking the League title by 270pts. This was despite a fine run by Rob Birchall of Birchfield in the individual race who saw off the challenges of both Darrius Burrows and Adrian Passey.

Birchfield again finished second to their Black Country foes, although they never looked like challenging them. Coventry who had a good start to the season managed to hang on to second place in the Division, despite being beaten by Birchfield in the last two fixtures.

Bromsgrove's Chepkwony held on to take the Individual title from M.Vaux-Harvey. Leading Junior award was claimed by C.Davies of Telford.

As anticipated Wolverhampton & Bilston and Staffordshire University were relegated to

Division Two.

### Division Two.

Interestingly, the first six individuals home, in the first race at Northampton, were all from different Clubs. Ian Furnis (Dudley & Stourbridge) outsprinted Mark Burnhope (Sutton Coldfield) to win the race.

Leamington (126pts.) took a grip on the team competition from the start, having a 43pt. buffer over second team Royal Sutton Coldfield (169pts.). In third place was Rugby a further 13pts. behind. Rugby were in fact the first to close a team with all their scorers in the top forty.

The real cross country course at Halesowen was the scene of the second fixture where Leamington (152pts) once again came out on top, ahead of Cheltenham (160pts.) who had the most narrow of victories over Northampton who were third just 3pts. behind Cheltenham. Both Royal Sutton and Rugby dropped down the table a little, after they had such a good opening fixture.

Kidderminster & Solihull and Small Heath were losing ground on the other teams and at the half way point of the season looked likely candidates for the drop to Division three.

Ian Furnis once again got the better of Mark Burnhope, with home runner Bill Nock finishing a close up third in the individual race.

Junior, Mark Miles (Solihull) scored an excellent victory in the third race over Mark Burnhope who finished second for the third time running. On this course at Princethorpe College, Solihull & Smallheath started a determined fight back placing three men in the first five home, unfortunately for them their other three scorers were further back down the field.

Cheltenham (120pts.) had improved with each fixture, took another very keenly fought fixture with Northampton who were just 13pts. behind. Leamington who were hit with illness to one or two key members finished third on 190pts. However they held on to their Divisional leadership. Cheltenham who had started the season in sixth place had now moved up the Division to take over second spot just 28pts down on their fellow spa rivals. In turn they themselves were only 10pts. up on Northampton Phoenix. An interesting final fixture was in prospect.

Mark Burnhope at last got his well deserved win over a testing parkland course at Cheltenham. He was followed home by local athlete Steve Robinson. Mark's win also gave him the leading individual award with Steve Robinson taking the runners up award.

With both Leamington and Cheltenham on song for the final fixture, they insured themselves of promotion to Division One for next season. Leamington coming out Division Champions and race winners.

Solihull & Small Heath improved showing continued, so much so that their battling performance after Christmas was enough for them to avoid relegation. The two unfortunate Clubs to drop to the Third Division were Kidderminster and Halesowen.

A. Thake of Sutton Coldfield won the leading Junior Individual award.

### Division Three

Northbrook (102pts.) had the pleasure of starting the season with a comfortable win on their own course at Coventry. Sparkhill Harriers (164pts.) were second with West Bromwich Harriers (183pts.) third.

R. Sinclair of Cannock & Stafford had the narrowest of victories in the individual race, just one second ahead of Nuneaton's K. Hayes.

Hayes gained revenge in the next race at Nuneaton, beating the Junior Sinclair by 19seconds.

Northbrook extended their team lead over Sparkhill who were once again second. Nuneaton on their own course came through to take third spot in the Division.

International, Spencer Duval showed his class to win the third race by some 30 seconds, from K.Hayes.Cannock also provided the third placer P.Lester.

Nuneaton (86pts.) won the team race, closing the gap to just 16pts. behind second place Sparkhill Harriers. Barring disasters Northbrook looked certainties for promotion. Hereford Couriers and Sandwell Valley were the two relegation placed teams at this stage of the season.

On a testing course at Malvern K.Hayes took his second victory of the season and with it the Leading Individual award. C.Young of Sparkhill won the Junior award.

Nuneaton (74pts.) having a scintillating second half of the season won the final race to snatch the second promotion spot from long time promotion prospect Sparkhill. As expected Northbrook won the Divisional title and with it the top promotion spot.

Hereford Couriers and Sandwell Valley were relegated to Division Four for next season.

#### **Division Four**

Host Club Severn A.C.(104pts.) gained a narrow victory over Tamworth A.C. (108pts.) in the first race of Division Four. Warwick University were third a further 30pts. down.

C.Watters (Oak Park) had a splendid run to beat K.Cross of Tamworth in the individual race.

Once again Watters beat off the challenge of Cross to take the second race by just 5 seconds. Tamworth had a convincing win to gain revenge over Severn in the second race at Kenilworth; taking 35point lead over the Gloucester Club.

It was Severn's who turned the tables on Tamworth in the third race at Cannock Chase. This they did reducing theStaffordshire Clubs lead at the top of the table to just 14pts. With one race to go these two Clubs looked certainties for promotion. But who would take the Divisional Title? At the other end of the table Kenilworth looked set for relegation, but who would join them? just two points separated Shrewsbury and Gloucester in 10th. and 11th. places respectively.

C.Watters completed a fine season in winning all four League races at the final fixture promoted by Stafford. Obviously he took the Individual title with Cross of Tamworth taking the runners up position. S.Loundes of Chase won the leading Junior Individuals award.

Severn won the final fixture, thereby beating Tamworth three out of the four times, however the Tamworth Club took the Divisional title hanging on by just four points from the hard pressing Severn A.C.

Kenilworth and Shrewsbury were the two Clubs to take the drop to Division Five.

#### **Division Five.**

The first race held in conjunction with the Division Four match at Gloucester, due to not enough Clubs in Division Five willing to promote a fixture, saw a comfortable individual win by R.Washington (Trentham) over M.Scotney (Beaumont Leys)

To add to the Individual win Trentham took the team race, beating Droitwich by 41pts.

Beaumont Leys with the low score of 33pts. took the second race at Rugely, from Trentham (55pts.)

R.Washington once again had an easy win over the first of four Beaumont Leys athletes A.Long.

Droitwich was the venue of the third race. Trentham were yet again beaten by Beaumont Leys,

although the Staffordshire Club still held on, to a narrow 22pt. lead at the top of the Division Five table.

Washington made it three out of three individual victories.

Despite only finishing in fifth place at the final fixture held at Michelin R. Washington took the leading Individual award. The runners up plaque went to M.Scotney of Beaumont Leys. E.Beamon (Black Country Triathletes) won the award for the leading Junior Individual. Beaumont Leys winning their third fixture on the trot finally overtook Trentham to take the Team title for the Fifth Division. Consolation for Trentham was that they finished second and were also awarded promotion to Division Four. Both Clubs gaining promotion in their first year of competing in the League.

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.

#### **First Aid at Races.**

The Secretary informed the meeting that at the recent Executive Meeting there had been a great deal of concern that at a couple of League fixtures last season there had been no first aid cover. He urged delegates to ensure that their Clubs provide First Aid cover at all League promotions. It was important to book St.Johns/Red Cross as soon as Clubs know that they have been awarded a fixture. (in writing). Send a reminder to them about a fortnight before the event.

There was some discussion by delegates that on occasions cover had been booked and not turned up. There was no answer to this problem, other than perhaps keeping all correspondence with regard to a Clubs request for First Aid Cover.

#### **Droitwich Letter.**

Much sympathy was expressed with the sentiments of the Droitwich letter suggesting that the League be reduced to Four Divisions or that there be more chance of promotion/relegation between Divisions Four and Five.

However the suggestion that the League be reduced to four Divisions was rejected very strongly. A proposal was then put to the delegates by the Executive stating :

The top three teams shall be promoted annually from Division Five to Division Four and that the bottom three teams be relegated from Division Four to Division Five each season.

Before this proposal could be taken several amendments were put forward; each and every amendment was defeated.

Finally the Executive proposal was put to the meeting and was passed with a very large majority just one person against.

#### **Make-up of the League for the 1997 - 1998 Season**

Only Telford Harriers had applied to be re-instated to the League, of those Clubs who had failed to finish all four races in Division Five. Unfortunately they had broken down on their way to the first race. They had competed in the other three races. The meeting unanimously re-elected them to the Fifth Division.

The secretary had received an application from Staffordshire Moorlands to join the League. They were duly elected to the League by the meeting.

The constitution of the League for the 1997/98 season is as follows :

<u>1st. Division</u>	<u>2nd. Division</u>	<u>3rd. Division</u>	<u>4th. Division</u>
Birchfield Harriers	B'ham University	Aldridge R.C.	Beaumont Leys R.C.
B'ham Rowheath H.	Centurion R.R.	Cannock & Stafford	Bridgnorth A.C.
Broms. & Redditch	Dudley & Stour.	Halesowen A.C.	Chase Harriers
Cheltenham & Cty.	Massey Ferguson	Kidderminster R.C.	Dudley Kingswinford
City of Stoke A.C.	Northampton Phoen.	Newcastle A.C.	Gloucester A.C.
Coventry Godiva	Northbrook A.C.	Oadby & Wigston	Hereford Couriers
Leamington A.C.	Nuneaton Harriers	Severn A.C.	Oak Park Pacers
Loughborough St.	Royal Sutton Cold.	Sparkhill Harriers	Sandwell Valley
Potteries Marathon	Rugby & District	Sphinx A.C.	Stafford Harriers
Stourport A.C.	Solihull & S.Heath	Tamworth A.C.	Stourbridge R.C.
Telford A.C.	Staffordshire Uni.	West Bromwich H.	Trentham R.C.
Tipton Harriers	Wolves & Bilston	Worcester A.C.	Warwick University
<u>5th. Division</u>			
Alvis R.C.	Black Country Tri.	Cobra R.C.	Droitwich A.C.
Kenilworth R.C.	Peel R.C.	Rugeley & District	Shrewsbury & Dist.
Sneyd R.C.	Staffs. Moorlands	Stratford A.C.	Telford Harriers

#### Dates, Fixtures & Venues.

	<u>1st. Div.</u>	<u>2nd. Div.</u>	<u>3rd. Div.</u>	<u>4th. Div.</u>	<u>5th. Div.</u>
1st. November 97	Birchfield	Rugby	Sphinx	Gloucester	Staffs. Moor.
22nd. November 97	Telford	Nuneaton	Severn	Chase H.	Kenilworth
17th. January 98	Coventry	Northbrook	Sparkhill	Trentham	Rugeley
14th. February 98	Cheltenham	Massey Fer.	Halesowen	Stafford	Droitwich

#### Election of Officers/Officials

Cliff Franks on behalf of the Executive proposed that Muriel Johnson be elected the new President; this was passed unanimously.

Muriel has been a great servant of the League for many years acting as both a judge and Divisional Referee. She has always carried out her duties in a most unassuming manner and what is more, most effectively. No matter which Division Muriel has been asked to Officiate at she has done so, earning the respect of many Clubs in the process, with her firm but fair decisions. As the first woman to be elected President of the League, Muriel creates a piece of League history. Certainly she has earned her year as President of the League.

Muriel's first job as President was to present the outgoing President with the Presidents plaque.

*President Elect* : David McNamee proposed Tom )'Reilly, seconded Ken Dare

*Hon. Secretary/Treasurer* : C.B.Franks. Proposed Ken Dare, seconded Pete Lisseman.

*Hon Auditor* : Dave McNamee. Proposed Dave Johnson, seconded Jim Skidmore.

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

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

Timekeepers	G.Williams	M.Ewington	C.Grant	J.Andrews	J.Skidmore
	P.Walker	K.Oldfield	C.Lockley	B.Gladwin	D.Bennett
	B.Hussey		P.Lockley	A.Birt	B.Shepherd
	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 (£45). The meeting agreed unanimously. However the meeting did agree that the affiliation should go up next season to £50.

### **Any Other Business**

The meeting agreed that although there would be three teams going up from Division five each year there would be no League award for the third placed team in Division Five at the end of each season.

### **Date & Venue of the 73rd. A.G.M.**

It was agreed that this meeting should be held on Wednesday the 9th. September 1998 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 10:10pm 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, e.g. latest 31st October 97.

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.

*M. Johnson*  
*16/9/98*