

# Blackheath & Bromley Courier

January 2021.

President 2020-21. Nic Corry.

Editor. Pat Calnan ([p.calnan@btinternet.com](mailto:p.calnan@btinternet.com))

Every year there are some athletes who miss or hardly have a season because of injury or illness. In 2020 everybody has been in the same boat. If it is just one year that is missed it is hugely disappointing, but, won't be a disaster in the big scheme of things.

There are athletes who have had to endure more. Take, for example, Debbie Marti. She won a bronze medal in the high jump at the European Junior Championships in 1983 at the age of 15. In 1984 she cleared 1.89, an Olympic qualifying performance by four centimetres. She was not selected for the Olympics as she was considered too young. The following year she fell ill, felt constantly tired with ME eventually diagnosed. She continued to compete and joined Bromley Ladies, but it would be another six years before she was able to get back to her 1984 best after finding a diet, which cut out yeast and sugar, to help manage her condition. In 1991 she cleared 1.94 indoors to equal the UK record.

Further back there was Sydney Wooderson. European 1500 metre champion in 1938, the Second World War deprived him of competing at two Olympics, but he won the European 5000 metre title in 1947.

Despite the disruption of 2020, we've still had a National record, National champions, National medals, Area and County successes, Club records, personal bests.... Hopefully in 2021 we will have far more.

## Forthcoming Fixtures.

**EA Virtual Road Relay competition.** "Clubs compete as mixed teams of 8 - 4 men & 4 women. Clubs can have as many 1st claim runners as they wish - top 4 men & women scoring once competition closes. Clubs' finishing position based on the 4 fastest men & 4 fastest women with top 50 clubs progressing to round 2. Qualifying Round will take place during the window of Saturday 26/12/21 @ 00:01 – 10/01/21 @ 23:59. <https://data.opentrack.run/en-gb/x/>

## Socials

Hard to believe the last social at the Clubhouse was a year ago.



## Results

6/12/20

**Running Grand Prix Goodwood 10km.** 24. Dan Kennedy 34.36, 27. Jon Vintner 35.12, 28. Fintan Parkinson 35.14.

13/12/20

**Ardingly Showground 10km.** 18. Alex Bruce Littlewood 14.59.

21/12/20

**Virtual Club 5 Results.** 1. Luca Ercolani 32.33, 2. Gareth Evans 33.17, 3. Fintan Parkinson 34.22, 4. Ian Firla 34.42, 5. Steve Evenden 36.51, 6. Jennie Butler 38.23, 7. Damian Hayes 39.20, 8. Ashley Pearson 40.16, 9. Micah Evans 40.19, 10. Tim Ayres 40.30, 11. Jane Bradshaw 41.58, 12. Bernard Wilson 44.34, 13. Josh Dowling 45.28, 14. Mark Ellison 45.31, 15. David Leal 45.49, 16. George Collins 46.12, 17. Nic Corry 46.45, 18. Nick Swatton 49.37, 19. Clem Leon 51.04, 20. Zoe Kingsmell 53.37, 21. Andy Kingsmell 54.30, 22. Karen Desborough 58.11, 23. Tom Desborough 58.42. **Virtual Handicap.** 1. Clem Leon 31.04, 2. Andy Kingsmell 32.20, 3. Luca Ercolani 32.33.

## Review of 2020

### January

Sarah Abrams is Welsh Senior long jump champion.

At the Southern Indoor Championships for under 17, under 15 and under 13s there are golds for Sam Reardon (U17M 800), Barnaby Corry (U17M Pole vault) and Oscar Witcombe (U15M Pole vault). Faith Akinbileje wins two silvers in the under 15 girls 60 and 200; and Jacob Byfield claims a bronze in the U17M triple jump.

Oliver Bright is Kent under 17 mens cross country champion. Team golds go to the under 17 women and the under 15 girls.

### February

Representing England in the Czech Republic, Kelechi Aguocha breaks the Club Senior, Under 23 and Under 20 high jump records with a clearance of 2.22.



Anastasia Davies represents England in an indoor International in Vienna.

Niamh Bridson Hubbard finishes 10<sup>th</sup> in the BUCS Cross Country Championships.

At the Southern Senior and Under 20 Indoor Championships golds are won by Sarah Abrams (Senior long jump), Marcia Sey (u20 60 and 60 hurdles) and Nana Gyedu (u20 shot). Silvers go to Ben Sutton (U20 long jump), Mallory Cluley (U20 60H), Holly Mpassy (U20 400), Amarisa Sibley (U20 800) and Ben Gardiner (U20M 800) while bronze goes to Darcy Kuypers (Sen 60), Josh Watson (U20 60H) and Theo Adesina (u20 long jump).

At the National Indoor Championships in Glasgow, Phil Sesemann is second in the 3000 and there are third places for Krystal Galley (400), Marcia Sey (60H in a new Club Under 20 record of 8.34) and Sarah Abrams (LJ).

The National Championships for under 20s, 17s and 15s takes place in Sheffield with wins for Kelechi Aguocha (U20 HJ), Ben Sutton (U20 LJ) and Sam Reardon (U17 800). There are silvers for Holly Mpassy (U20 400), Nana Gyedu (U20 SP), Barnaby Corry (U17 PV) and Faith Akinbilije (U15G 200). Bronze medals go to Juriel Quainoo (U20 60), Zac Nwogwugwu (U17M 60) and Oscar Witcombe (U15 PV).

At the National Cross Country Championships in Nottingham, Oliver Bright is 6<sup>th</sup> in the under 17 mens race. Alex Middleton is 10<sup>th</sup> in the under 13 boys. The under 17 womens team of Naomi Toft, Ailhbe Barnes, Ava White, and Anwen Thomas is second and the under 15 girls quartet of Lara Mannes, Lily Meers, Carys Firth and Hannah Clark are third. On the downside the senior women fail to finish a team for the eighth successive year.



*Charlie Davis and Jo Hickman Dunne, first home for the Senior Men and Senior Women in the National.*

At the BUCS Indoor Championships Kelechi Aguocha wins the high jump and new second claimer Ethan Akanni the 60 metre hurdles. Annie Davies is third in the womens 60 metre hurdles.

At the Southern Counties Veterans Championships, Peter Hamilton wins silver in both the 800 and 3000. At the South Of England Indoor veterans championships he wins bronze in the 800 and gold in the 3000. He is also selected to represent England M70s in a Home Countries International road race in Bristol in May.

Scott Overall times 64.23 in the Barcelona Marathon.

Zac Nwogwugwu equals the Club U17 mens 60 metre record of 6.98 at the Sutcliffe Indoor 60 metre races.

Joe Clare, former winner of the London to Brighton, and stalwart of the Club's senior road and cross country teams of the 1960 and 1970s dies.

### **March**

At the British Masters Indoor Championships at Lee Valley, Clem Leon wins the M60 triple jump and is second in the high jump. Helen Godsell wins the W65 200 and Roger Michell is third in the M70 3000 walk.



The 100<sup>th</sup> running of the Mob Match against Ranelagh Harriers takes place at Richmond. Ranelagh prove victorious which means B&B have lost the last 17 Mob Matches against Ranelagh, SLH and Orion and have only won one of the last 23. Club members win 20 gold medals at the Kent Indoor Championships at Lee Valley.

Louisa Vallins breaks the W40 200 metre Club record.

Nic Corry is the new Club President succeeding Julian Golding. There is no AGM or Club photo because of the Coronavirus so the announcement is made online. Julian appoints three new Vice Presidents, Pete Rogers, Dave King and Nigel Stickings. This announcement is held over until September at a virtual AGM.

The Club received news of the deaths of Derek Hogg and Ed Malone.

## **April**

Athletics in England is postponed until at least the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. The London Marathon is moved to October.

The President's news is now on Facebook each Wednesday evening at 8pm. A series of live interviews begins on Instagram each Sunday at 6pm

May and June

## **July**

The clubhouse opens on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July so Ken Daniel can buy everyone a drink on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Payments are card only, the first time in Club History.

New member Zara Obamakinwa breaks Shaunagh Brown's Club under 17 discus record with a distance of 47.14

## **August**

James Whiteaker breaks the Club under 23 record for the javelin.

Track Meetings return to Norman Park with Tonbridge AC's Twilight Meeting. This is followed the next day by the first B&B open meeting including a special invitation 150 metres featuring Dina Asher Smith. Further open meetings and DASH events take place over the following weeks.

News from Dave Cordell "garden is great and enlarged vegetable plot is blooming well. Have just refitted irrigation system so watering is no problem. Also have pop-up sprinklers in the lawn".

## **September**

James Whiteaker wins the javelin at the Muller British Championships in Manchester. Jonathan Ilori is third in the triple jump.

Zara Obamakinwa breaks the Club Under 17s discus record again with a throw of 51.69. More significantly it is a new National record surpassing the previous best which had stood for 30 years.

Peter Hamilton breaks the M70 Mile Club record.

Past President Colin Brand dies, youngster, senior, veteran and Club officer. Former member Chelsea O Rawe Hobbs is killed in a motorbike accident.

## October

Ian Firla is first Club member home in in the virtual London Marathon followed by Luca Ercolani and Alex Gibbins.  
Charlie Platt sets a Club Record of 2.58 in the under 13 boys pole vault.

## November

The Club are made Club Of The Year at the London Regional Awards. Claire Austridge is Volunteer Of The Year. There are runner up spots for Holly Platt (Young Volunteer Of The Year), Dave Liston (Coach Of The Year) and John Baldwin (Services to Athletics).

## December

Mark Purser is selected for the European Starter Panel after passing his European Starter course.

Rob Brown finishes 1<sup>st</sup> in the 2020 end of year European Masters virtual 5km challenge M70 category. He is also part of the GBR Team who win M70 gold.

Past President Ian Wilson dies, another who competed as a Junior, Senior and Master for the Club and put so much back in.

## 100 years ago in December 1920

Membership stands at 482, made up of 269 Life Members and 213 ordinary members.

In the annual single v married 5 miles race, the single men prevailed.

## 75 years ago in December 1945.

The Gazette shows membership at 31<sup>st</sup> December 1945 at 737, consisting of 289 Life Members and 448 Ordinary Members. There were 39 who had been members for over 50 years.

The first social takes place since the start of the war in 1939.

*Saturday, December 22, 1945.*

### CHRISTMAS PARTY.

The Spirit of Christmas was early abroad at Haye<sup>s</sup> on Saturday, December 22, on the occasion of our<sup>f</sup> Christmas Party, the first social event since the war.

No less than 60 members and friends assembled in the Club Room which was gaily decorated with holly and mistletoe provided via our zealous Hon. Treasurer.

Everybody obviously intended to make merry, and good spirits, although perhaps a little scarce in Nobby's emporium, were in abundant evidence in the "Ball Room," where the fun and frolic grew with the evening until the rafters rattled—so much so that the gramophone which Dale so kindly lent us for dance music had to be abandoned, and dear old Eric Reed, stepping into the breach, fair clouted the inside out of the piano, to the delight of all present.

—Under the direction of our unflagging M.C., Frank Pearce, we had games—and what games! Musical chairs with a difference, who would have missed seeing Pat bathed in perspiration, battling his way through to a near finalist. And what of the ball and chin game? This is the first occasion on which the Club has staged twenty mixed all-in wrestling matches at once. To see Dick Cockburn literally tying himself in knots was a sight never to be forgotten, and here I must heartily congratulate the ladies on their truly gallant efforts. Incidentally, nobody knows who were the victors, but that is a mere detail.

We were delightfully entertained by Albert and Mrs. Dale, who gave an exhibition Tango, followed by a quick-step; this was indeed dancing at its best. To add to our enjoyment, later in the evening Mrs. Taylor sang to us in her own inimitable way.

Refreshments were served at 9 o'clock, and I am sure we are most grateful to Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Pattison for their tremendous efforts in providing us with such excellent delicacies, and, of course, to Nobby Clarke, whose efficient organising we are at times apt to overlook.

During this interval, George Wilkinson was seen to walk sedately round the room, obviously with something on his mind. Nevertheless, it was good to see his front, as most of the evening we had seen only his back.

Spirits rose higher and higher, and the faster Eric Reed's fingers dashed up and down the keyboard, the merrier became the tinkling from his rows of empties on top.

As well as Fox-Trots, Quick Steps and Waltzes, we danced the Paul Jones, the Valeta, the Polka, had a spot Waltz, and finished with the Mistletoe Waltz, during which one has to kiss one's partner. Never have I seen mistletoe passed round with such rapidity.

The evening came to an end all too soon, so we sang "Auld Lang Syne," and with everyone wishing everybody else a happy Christmas, wended our merry way homewards (all except the Taylors, who, I am given to understand, entertained about forty odd souls until about . . .), but there, Christmas is Christmas.

It is obviously impossible to mention in detail all the "notorieties" present, sufficient to say that we were jolly pleased to see them, and HERE'S TO THE NEXT TIME.

Tommy Hammond, who competed in the 1908 Olympics, passes away.

### T. E. Hammond

WE much regret to report the death on December 18 of one of our most famous members, in the person of "Tommy" Hammond, a man who was a sportsman in every letter of that so often misused word. He passed away after a long illness, patiently borne, and his affection for the Club was such that he visited us in 1945 with his friend, E. M. Mote, and expressed his approval of all that we had been doing during the war.

His first appearance in the Walking World was when he finished third in the first Stock Exchange walk to Brighton in 1903, when his ease and grace caught the eye of the experts. This was followed up by a series of long distance walks which earned him the reputation of being one of the greatest walkers the world has ever seen.

His record for the Brighton walk of 8 hrs. 18 mins. 18 secs. stood for many years, and his time for the journey and return, a distance of about 104 miles, was 18 hrs. 13 mins. 37 secs., and this, too, was a record which lasted for a long time. Three records still stand in his name, the London to Oxford walk, the Bradford walk, and the 24 hours walk, the distance he accomplished on the last occasion being 131 miles 580 yds. These feats must stamp him as a superman physically, and his end at the age of 67 is to be deplored. Many Members will remember his kindly advice to them on Brighton "strolls," his encouragement to youngsters and novices, but perhaps above all, his own perfect style and ease in walking, which all could discern.

A Memorial Service was held on January 3 at St. Michael's Church, Cornhill, and was conducted by The Rev. D. H. A. Christie-Murray of the Surrey Walking Club, assisted by Prebendary Sarel of the London Athletic Club. A very large gathering of past and present athletes including many 'Heathens, led by our President, attended, together with many friends on the Stock Exchange. We also observed some of his friends from the L.R.B., which took our minds back to the Boer War in which he served as a member of the C.I.V. He also saw service in the first Great War as a Major in the Royal Ordnance Corps.

And so has passed away one of the finest athletes we have ever had in our ranks, and who brought fame to himself and the Club which was his first choice. Our sincerest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Hammond and her daughters.

FAIR heel and toe, from start to end, he walked  
the path of life,  
His fighting spirit ne'er gave in, once entered in  
the strife,  
To yield the last ounce of his strength, he never  
was afraid,  
Straight up the steepest hill he'd go, dead beat,  
yet undismayed,  
When in the City, on the track, or strollin'  
through a lane,  
He worked and strove and played as men who  
honour do attain.  
He loved the simple things of life, for much he  
did not care,  
Achieving for achievement's sake; he shunned  
the limelight's glare.  
Firm friend, great walker, sportsman true, his  
cheerful, smiling face,  
Will be remembered by the friends he passed in  
life's great race. NORMAN BEYFUS.

#### 50 years ago in December 1970

Blackheath win the mob match against Orion with 16 runners in the top 20.  
Earlier in the month BH had won the rowing match against South London and Ranelagh.

#### 25 years ago in December 1995.

Dave Taylor is fourth scorer for the Great Britain who win bronze medals at the Weetabix European Cross Country Championships at Alnwick, Northumberland. He finishes in 42nd place.  
Sydney Wooderson receives an Honorary Fellowship from Roehampton Institute London.  
Blackheath win the senior mens team title for the fifth successive year at the Kent Cross Country Championships at Mote Park, Maidstone led home by 21 year old Mark Steinle in third place. Sian Brice is third in the Senior Womens race. Steve Holmes retains his under 15 boys title and leads the team victory. Matt Hill wins gets individual and team gold in the under 13 boys and Gemma Viney wins the under 13 girls race by 52 seconds. Tim Dickinson wins the Lancashire title at Blackburn. Wayne Gray representing England wins the TSB International Schools Under 16s Pentathlon at Glasgow.  
A large number of Club members run at the IAAF World Cross Challenge races in Brussels. In the senior mens race won by Kenya's Paul Tergat, Spencer Newport is 24th, Tim Dickinson 26th, Mark Steinle 28th and Simon Baines 52nd.  
The next World Cross Challenge race is at Durham where Tim is 17th, Spencer 24th and Mark 30th.  
Gemma Viney wins the Under 13s race at the South Of England Inter Counties at Frimley.  
The January 1996 Courier reports an index of Active Athletes has been compiled and the Editor writes "Using broad classifications this shows that almost 500 of us can lay some claim to be Active Athletes – That's the good news. A look at the Membership List, however, is less reassuring as to our present health. We are now down to a total of approximately 850 members. Barely 600 are Seniors and some 100 or so of those are Life Members. We have just over 100 female members of whom 72 appear in the index of Active Athletes – understandably mostly youngsters. I think it is fair to say that very few female members have been added to the Wednesday Nighters training from HQ....The nationwide fall-off of interest in

Marathon/Road Running may well be an important factor in the overall equation, but the figures above must give any member food for thought”

### **20 years ago in December 2000.**

“The Club is pleased to announce that it is to continue with its scholarship scheme for Under 15 Athletes. Any child aged 14 and under joining the Club between now and the end of 2001 will not be required to start paying a subscription until the 1st of January 2002. The aim behind the scheme is to give youngsters the opportunity to come and try the sport and to see if they enjoy it before making a further commitment. By joining now a budding athlete will receive nearly a years free membership of one of the top athletic clubs in the country. So the earlier you join the more you save”.

Dave Taylor is 37th for Great Britain at the European Cross Country Championships at Malmo, Sweden. He helps the team to 6th place.

Sydney Wooderson receives the MBE from the Queen at the age of 86. He set World records for the 800 metres, 880 yards and Mile in the 1930s.

Blackheath Senior mens team of Michael Skinner, Roy Smith, Dan Ayrton and Joe Mills win the Kent Road Relay Championships at Rochester. Joe and Michael run the second and third fastest legs of the day

### **15 years ago in December 2005**

Michael Skinner is the second Great Britain athlete to finish at the European Cross Country Championships at Tilburg in the Netherlands. He is 35th and helps the team to 7th place.

At the Kent Veterans Championships at Canterbury the womens over 35 team of Miranda Porritt, Angela Cook and Diane Osbourne win gold.

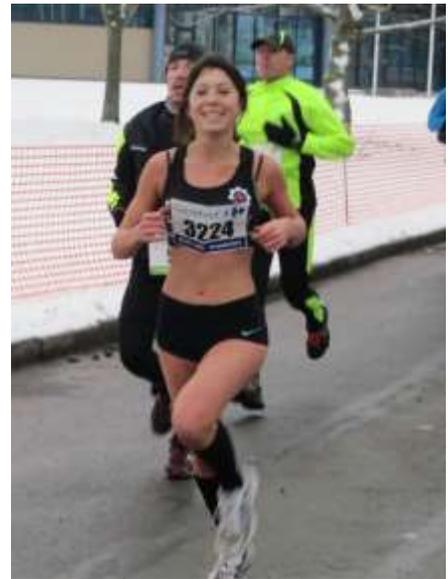
A large party travel to Brussels for the Belgian Cross Cup. Among those in action are Phil Sesemann, 46<sup>th</sup> in the race for those born in 1991 and 1992.

Peter Tucker wins the Swanley Christmas Caper.

### **10 years ago in December 2010**

Michael Skinner represents England in the Iris Lotto Cross Cup meeting in Brussels. He finishes 17th with Alex Bruce Littlewood 46th and Andy Rayner 51st. Phil Sesemann is 21st in the under 20 mens race. Jack Swallow (below) wins the accompanying Gaston Roelants 10km road race. A large group of Club members take part, the heavy snow causing big travel delays out and back.





Three months after the event B&B are promoted to 3rd place in the European Champion Clubs Cup for Juniors. Originally 4th they are elevated due to rule infringements by the Serbian representatives.  
Jennie Butler W35, Nick Kinsey M50 and Paul Ross Davies M60 are individual winners at the Kent Veterans Championships at Tunbridge Wells.