

Northern Cross Country Special Edition



Jones defends title



Lockett celebrates handicap win



A delighted Andi Jones with Sale's Gareth Raven and Altrincham's Matt Barnes

Happy New Year to you all! Hopefully you're all well on your way to running off that christmas pud and are set for the serious business of meeting your running goals for the year. This month we look back on some excellent performances in 2006 and look forward with anticipation to a successful 2007. As we do so lets recall an old sporting adage that says 'A champion team will always beat a team of champions'. Lets all pull together this year and get back amongst the medals where we belong!! Thanks again to all this months contributors. Enjoy.

All Hail King Andi!

The inspirational Andi Jones romped to a second successive Northern Crown at Heaton Park last month, defending his title wonderfully well. Leading right from the start Andi held off a late surge from old rival Gareth Raven of Sale and now joins a small and prestigious group of athletes who have managed to successfully defend the Northern title. Not bad for a Northern boy who just looves his gravy!!

Phil Leybourne as usual gave his everything to the team cause despite ongoing problems with his knee and finished 33rd and 2nd counter. Believe me if this guy had kept injury free over the years he could have been absolutely top notch. Next came Matt Moorhouse in 47th, a good run considering his lack of proper training. Nice to see Dave Milliken back on the

country again and running well for 59th. Dave has been strutting his stuff on the fells recently with some degree of success. Just a few steps behind came Pumlani Bangani in 62nd. Since joining Salford as predominantly a road race specialist, Pumlani has proven to be a very good team man indeed and turns out on any terrain. Making up the scoring six was James Jackson in 77th, this was James's best run for a while and augers well for a good return on the roads.

Phil West, as usual, gave his wholehearted effort in 90th place ahead of Rob Hughes in 110th who ran ok in spite of a recent spate of injuries. Next came a rejuvenated Paul Birkett in 166th place. Paul has hardly trained recently so this was a remarkable effort. Billy Martin wasn't at his best in 202nd, but knowing Billy he'll be determined to come back stronger and better. Sean McMyler, back in the fold after a short absence, was reasonably pleased with his 242nd place ahead of Mike Wakefield who ran solidly for 286th. Dave Shaw showed signs of an improvement in 380th whilst Tommy Daniels 547th and Roe Bowness 583rd once again donned the red and white vest with pride. Overall the men finished third team and bronze medallists (279points) behind the all conquering Leeds City (80) and Sale (149).

In the ladies race Tess Walker, in her

first ever Northern Championships, ran well for 22nd place. Although somewhat disappointed with her performance I'm sure with her ability Tess can build on this and go from strength to strength. Good to see Trish Sloane back in our colours again after a brief interlude and as always gave 100% effort to finish in 65th place. The effervescent Estelle Malm just couldn't stop smiling afterwards and following her 98th position who could blame her. A fine effort and definitely one for the future. Jane Bilton, another of Stan Currans blossoming new young talents, had a solid run in 202nd despite not relishing the heavy conditions. Not far behind in 242nd was the ever dependable Julie Laverock. Julie is an absolute credit to this club for her perseverance and dedication and long may she be so.

All in all it was the usual tales of highs and lows, and ups and downs, but ultimately the day belonged to the brilliance of Andi Jones. Well done everyone. **Pete Budd**

Jones Celebrates Successive Victories

I'd like to congratulate everyone on their runs at the Northern Cross Country Championships. The weather stayed good for us all, the wind not too strong and the snow all gone. But it

did make it rather sticky and muddy in places!

What was always going to be a tough race, ended up being even tougher, especially that third and final lap. The first lap seemed to fly by, running comfortable with Webb from Leeds and early on in the lap with Salfords Carl Hardman. Second lap and Webb died and I was left on my own. It's always funny how you run passed a group of spectators and you have 60m on the next runner and yet three seconds down the course you have 20m on the next runner!!!!!!

The third lap took its toll on me and Gareth Raven, Sale Harriers, who has medalled in this event on numerous occasions, but still has not taken gold and was very much after it this time, started to make inroads into my lead. I was aware of him early on in the third lap and by the last mile I could not miss the fact that he was right back up with me challenging hard. The noise around the race course kept me going. I had Bob screaming at me that I would have to run hard if I was to hold him off. I had Donna shouting at me not to let him win, even though Gareth and Donna run for the same club. My mum and mainly dad (who was only there because Man City play Sunday and not Saturday this week) were screaming at me and then there was everyone else screaming and cheering. And to top it all off, there were just as many, if not more, screaming exactly the same at Raven!!!!

Now I am known for not having a Sprint finish which was a bit of a problem yesterday. Raven was hunting me down and he knows better than most I don't have the speed to pick it up in the last few hundred metres of a race. But somehow I managed to hold him off and for that I thank you all for cheering me on, supporting me and ensuring I crossed that line first. Thank you very much.

As I crossed the line and chucked up it began to sink in that I had managed to win the Northern Cross Championships twice on the run. Raven looked a little peeved off, but I don't blame him one little bit. In third place was a very excited Matt Barnes of Alty AC who really worked hard and wanted to medal this year.

And we even managed a bronze team medal without our full team out. Well

done to all those who ran and to those who got in the scoring six. Hopefully at the National in Sunderland we will have Tomas with us and Carl back running well.

I would just like to add how touched I was after the race that Mike Holmes gave me a very nice glass shield, that I should have been awarded at Salfords annual presentation evening but couldn't make this year. The trophy was given to me for winning the International Snowdon Mountain Race last July which ranks amongst one of the toughest, hardest and hottest races I have done so far. The marathon is always tough, cross country races are tough, but the Snowdon race seemed tough due to the height it climbs and descends again in the distance it covers. It was also one of the hottest days in the UK! Many thanks to the club for the trophy and to Mike for the kind words he spoke as he presented me with it.

Hope you have all recovered by now. Hope Alfie enjoyed his first Northern Championships. Maybe he will win it one day? **Andi Jones**

Winner Joins Illustrious Company

After the race, there was a lot of discussion about how many runners had successfully defended the Northern senior title. Initially, there was a suggestion that it had never been done before but a glance at the past results in the programme showed this to be wrong with Dave Lewis's name appearing as the winner in 1994 & 1995. I investigated this and it did not prove difficult to find the total - 16. Andi has now joined a select band of athletes, some of whom have been among the greats of British Athletics.

NORTHERN CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 1883-2007. MEN'S SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP.

- (4) Trevor Wright (Hallamshire H): 1971-74.
- (3) Ernest Glover (Hallamshire H): 1912-14.
[also 1921].
- (3) Ernest Harper (Hallamshire H): 1925-27.
- (3) Jack Potts (Saltwell H): 1936-38
[also 1932].
- (3) Frank Aaron (Leeds St.Marks): 1949-51.
- (2) Will Parry (Salford H): 1888-89.
[also 1891].
- (2) James Hosker (Farnworth H): 1898-99.
[also 1903, 1905]

- (2) James Murphy (Hallamshire H): 1909-10.
- (2) Walter Beavers (York H): 1928-29.
- (2) Fred Norris (Bolton Utd H): 1953-54.
[also 1959].
- (2) Gerry North (B'pool & Fylde): 1960-61.
- (2 – twice) Ron Hill (Bolton Utd H): 1964-65
[also 1967-68].
- (2) Steve Kenyon (Bolton Utd H): 1978-79.
- (2) Geoff Turnbull (Gateshead H): 1986-87.
- (2) Dave Lewis (Rossendale H): 1994-95.
[also 1983].
- (2) Andi Jones (Salford H & AC): 2006-07.

In addition to the above, some runners have won the race more than once, but not in consecutive years. The record number of individual wins is 4. The complete list of multi-winners:

4 WINS:

Hosker, Glover, Potts, Hill, Wright.

3 WINS:

Parry, Harper, Aaron, Norris, Lewis.

2 WINS:

Murphy, Beavers, North, Kenyon, Turnbull, Jones.

Plus:

George Crossland (Salford H – 1894, Manchester H. – 1896).

Chris Vose (Warrington AC): 1911, 1920.

George Bailey (Salford H): 1931, 1935.

Mike Turner (Liverpool H & AC): 1963, 1966.

Paul Roden (East Cheshire H – 1988, Sale H – 1997). **Roy Proffitt**

Still Going Strong

I read with great interest and not a little nostalgia Dave Townsend's piece in the last newsletter where he shared a few highlights of his 30 year stint with Salford. I have to admit to thinking that Dave had actually been with Salford longer than that as I myself must have been a member for about 30 years and he was an old man when I joined - I think he was even in secondary school already!!

Well would you believe it, no sooner had I thought this than I also received an approach by our diligent Editor to provide my particular perspective so here it is, perhaps a different slant but still quintessential Salford Harriers memories for me.

Two miles warm up, two miles warm down – my journey to and from the Clough for every training session (often with Paul Roberts another 30yr member) and as regular as that was the solid presence of Jim Plant, always there, come rain or shine, guiding us on to

greater things. You didn't have lengthy coach/athlete chats with Jim, he just seemed to understand what we needed and then told us what to do. This was true for all his charges and not at all the chats related to running!

'The Tree' by the Clough track – our shelter and changing room for many years. Much better in Summer than Winter as it was deciduous which was unfortunate. Maybe it was the smoke from Jim's cigarettes, the spike peppered root system, the concrete compacted earth, the occasional helpful watering or perhaps a combination of all but eventually we killed it!

The Mile Lap – Stan Clegg, Stan Curran, Alan Sladen et al clogging out 4 by 1 mile laps round the Clough. Believe it or not it was quite inspiring to watch in those days – we were very young and impressionable!

Cross country races in days of yore – they were bl**dy tough: The Manchester Leagues, Northern and National (who could forget the Milton Keynes National – believe me I've tried) to name but a few.

I recall after a Mcr League at the Clough once warming my hands on the radiator in the changing rooms so I could undo my spike laces that had frozen. Some helpful runner came in and kindly informed me that actually the radiator wasn't on – I should have known, this was the Clough after all!

The Bluebell runs on a Thursday night – in particular I liked the Vinegar Works run, don't know why, just enjoyed it, a large pack of runners at the start all banter and gossip (usually Stuart Cripps making most of the noise) gradually quietened and whittled down as the pace increased through the run – good times.

The Isle of Man – running for Liverpool University at the time, I'd meet up with the Salford contingent in Douglas, their team made up of various youngsters let loose for the long weekend. Salford earned something of a reputation at the festival (Duncan can confirm), on one Black Sunday two of the party ended up unfairly detained by the local constabulary – the urinal was loose anyway, it practically fell off in his hands and the palm tree on the Prom was definitely blown over by a freak gust of wind, he was just trying to pick it up again, honest guv!!
Relays – always enjoy the spectacle

(I'm usually watching) – 6 stages, 12 stages, Cross Keys, Calderdale, all are great events. Memorable runs include: Tony Leonard at Oulton Park doing the second fastest short leg on the first half of his long; Larry Mathews on the long leg at Sutton Park – you always new he was on his way, Steve Kenyon flowing over the ground and Stan telling us all about how good his long leg time in the National is.

I broke with tradition and actually competed in the Calderdale this year and last dragging my svelt figure up onto the moors – what fun. Strangely I ended up on the same leg as Dave Townsend this year (he'd been co-opted onto the A team at the last minute) so it was truly a battle of the oldsters. I set off on leg 3 just before the mass start and knowing full well that Dave would already have finished. My partner and I gamely battled wind, rain, mud and a total lack of knowledge of the route (footprints can be so useful) to complete the course 5 secs down on Dave according to official timings. He beat me in the race and beat me to 30yrs point. Life's just not fair sometimes! **Mark Ediker**

Whats Lee Dunn now?

As the runners filed past on another 400 metre circuit, a newish member of this great club pointed to the lead man asking 'who's that?' And so yet another chapter opens on the remarkable story of Mr. Lee Dunn. Had we not been aware of the facts surrounding the hero of the piece we would swear we were all playing minor roles in a kind of modern day fairytale!

Lets go back twenty odd years ago and emerging as a product of the renowned Moston Brook High School Academy, Lee was one off a conveyer belt of gritty and talented North Manchester lads who would all carve a niche for themselves in local athletics. Just remember their names; Karl Harrison, John Cookson, Jason Boothroyd, Tony Barlow, Dave Hibbert, Mark Peters, Pete Budd. In the writers opinion the best of these potentially was Lee Dunn.

Joining Stretford A.C. whilst at school Lee easily transferred his promise into club athletics, but really began to make his mark after signing for rivals Sale in the late eighties. A superb silver medal at steeplechase in the National Junior Championship behind Spencer Duval followed by sixth place in the National

Junior Cross Country ahead of such notables as Jason Lobo, Ian Hudspith, Justin Pugsley and Rob Birchall served notice of a prosperous future in the sport. Around this time a steeplechase P.B. of 8min 50sec was established and allied to consistently excellent displays in area and National Road Relays proved testament to his ability to perform on any surface over most distances.

Thus we all awaited the inevitable international appearances that would surely follow. Yet here the reality turned to fantasy and as the years inexorably rolled by the expectation changed to hope and finally to exasperation and despair for those of us who were aware of such a prodigious talent. Perhaps a return to his Moston roots and move to Salford in the late nineties would rekindle what had become a mysteriously disjointed running career.

Yet akin to the mythical genie from the magical lamp he would vanish then reappear again as if from nowhere after long spells of inactivity. The fact that when he did return he could produce superb performances without apparently any build up of proper training left everybody dumbfounded. I well recall a top thirty odd placing in the Northern XC at Sheffield helping us to team gold and this added to fastest leg efforts in the major relays surely underlined the fact.

Coming right up to date and after another long absence, bear witness to a brilliant 3rd placing in the Manchester area league meeting. Amazing! Yet therein lies the reason why, despite the hitherto labyrinth of a career thus far, Lee remains so highly regarded by us all. It is that when he does toe the starting line he nearly always produces and never ever gives any less than 100 percent effort. As the immortal Geoff Doggett would often reflect: 'Lee is Lee,' he would say 'you just have to accept him for what he is.' Indeed. Maybe, just maybe, all of the relative inactivity has actually helped to elongate his career and perhaps more and even better things are still to come. So as we enter what could be the final chapter, looking deeply into our crystal ball, who could possibly predict the outcome of this particular fairytale? I think I can. He wins the National Vets and anchors Salford Harriers to relay glory! **Pete Budd**

Birthdays

Birthday wishes are extended for January to Dave Crawley(39), Stuart Cripps(58), Pat Curran(21)!, Tommy Daniels(59), Rachel Jones(37), Julie Laverock(39), Chris Lord(37), Chris Paul(49), Jon Sacks(30), Derek Seymour(65), Eddie Simpson(39) and Roy Standing(68).

Members News



Nice group set off from Chadderton for Salfords annual Christmas run.

Three runners put in their once a year run, Stuart Cripps, Peter Allan and Brian Buck, set off for our annual run up-to Tandle Hill on a cool but pleasant morning.

The banter was good as one would expect with Stuart in the group (when he could get his breath). For those who didn't know Tandle Hill is the last resting place of Mick Wood, making sure we would never forget him. After the run Mike used to lay on a spread in the car park, wine cans and mince pies and cake. Once a runner had his wife deliver hot bacon butties (Pete White I think).

Those were the days !!!!!

Happy New Year to all **Sid Sacks**



I was recently in Morocco and happened to see Sky News without any sound in a bar.

Speaking on it, I think about Nuclear Power, was Frank Briscoe, former member of Salford Harriers. **Pat Milroy**



I have received a medal from the AAA stated to be in recognition of my work as Chief Medical Officer at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. These were my 4th Commonwealths as CMO, and will be my last, as I am getting a little too old to be chasing round after these young athletes! **Pat Milroy**



John Brown here from Argentina, thought this would be easiest way to let members of the club know how i'm getting on, I remember promising Hilary at my party I would, but I couldn't remember her address. Guess everyone knows coxy went his own way, it was his choice, its seems funny looking back, but last time I saw him he was marching off into the

distance across some wild desert grassland shouting and swearing. We never had an argument he just seemed to crack up.

That was way back in December, since then i've been going at a steady pace, I had a couple of weeks over christmas in Chile where its never seemed to stop raining and the road was quite bad gravel. Sometimes I had to drag my bike out of the gravel and try again, it got really hard sometimes. But since new year i've been in Argentina, i've biked through amazing scenery with lakes and mountains everywhere, ran half way up a volcano, they wouldn't let me go any further in my puma racers which now look like flip flops.

The roads have improved and I plan to stay in Argentina all the way to the Bolivian border. Its much cheaper than Chile, you can have an enormous steak and beer in a restaurant for around a fiver. I've seen a bit of wildlife too, a condor flew right over my head in Chile and the other day I was cycling late looking for a place to camp by the road when a hairy tarantula looking spider the size of a small dinner plate just missed my front wheel. Camping that night was a bit scary.

Well done to Jones for retaining his northern title. See everyone soon, don't put me on any relay teams for a while when I get back my legs are looking more shirehorse than racing horse these days. **John Brown**



Congratulations to Dave Townsend on his 30 years membership of the club and best wishes for the next 30 years. When he gets there in 2036, he will have exceeded Geoff Doggett's membership by 2 years. Coincidentally, Geoff's 58 years as a member (1946-2004) was the same as the club's other great leader, Harry Hardwick. Harry founded the club in 1884 at the age of 23, was immediately elected Hon. Secretary and held that position for 58 years until his death in 1942, shortly before his 82nd birthday.

There have been longer memberships than Geoff and Harry including that of Geoff Brownlow. His membership from 1938 to 2003 totalled 65 years. However, the record for longevity must surely go to George Bailey, an outstanding runner from the 1930's who was a track and cross country international for much of that decade. He joined the club in October 1927 at

the age of 21, was made a life member in 1938 and died in August 2000, aged 94, giving him a total of 72 years 10 months. Thus, it will be 2049 before Dave can match this, by which time he will have reached the M85 age category.

The current member with the longest membership is probably Arthur Walsham. He joined the club in December 1950 and has now just completed his 56th year of membership. Arthur has remained an active competitor throughout his years with the club and now runs in M75 age group events. **Roy Profit.**



In his report on this year's race at Mansfield, Roy Standing gave some detailed information on recent club performances there, including the men's victory in 2002. This was actually the third time that the men had won the championship. We won the inaugural race at Crystal Palace in 1985 by 10 seconds from Aldershot, with Cornwall AC 4 seconds further back in 3rd place. The team was Steve Kenyon, Tony Leonard, Mike Deegan and Gary Crowther. Gary was our fastest runner and had the 3rd best individual time in the race. Athletics Weekly for 30th November, 1985 has a photo of the winning team displaying their medals.

By 1990, the race had moved to its now familiar venue at Mansfield and the club gained its second victory that year. Mike and Gary were in the team again and were joined by Mark Peters and Larry Mathews who were then in the early stages of their distinguished careers. Salford won by 17 seconds from Tipton with Shaftesbury Barnet 5 seconds further back in 3rd place. Larry ran a tremendous final leg from the front which gave him 3rd fastest individual time overall. No photograph in Athletics Weekly this time! **Roy Profit.**



We now have the invitation to enter the Welsh Castles Relays on the 9th and 10th of June 2007. This is the 25th year of running the event and the race is likely to be oversubscribed so there will be no guarantee of entry.

The intention is to enter one senior team with runners accepted on a first come first served basis - any ideas on how this may be done fairly given the problems with communicating to everybody who might like to run? The cost of race entry to each runner

this year is £12.50.

A suggestion was made that we should enter two teams but in the light of the race being oversubscribed it is highly unlikely that we would have two senior teams accepted. If we entered a senior team and a vets/mixed team it is likely that the vets/mixed team would be accepted and the senior team rejected which we do not want.

We have at present 3 people who are prepared to drive a mini bus for the 2 days and 16 runners have already shown an interest. Phil West has now taken on the team management for the Castles so people should contact him asap if they would like to run. His contact number is

Hilary Towell



Many thanks to Ruth Bordsley for all her effort in organising the annual awards dinner and well done to all the recipients:

ANNUAL TROPHY WINNERS 2006

Geoff Brownlow Trophy

Male Athlete of the year

Tomas Abyu

Female Athlete of the year

Tess Walker

Male Vet

Dave Lockett

Female Vet

Rachel Jones

Pat Steinitz trophy

for achievement in adversity

Maria Lowe

Most Improved Male

Phil West

Dorothy Emerson Trophy

Most Improved Female

Estelle Malm

Geoff Doggett Trophy

for Outstanding Service

Bob Towell

Road Race Champs (Male)

1st Tarus Elly

2nd Dave Lockett

3rd Dave Shaw

Road Race Champs (Female)

1st Hilary Towell

2nd Pat Curran

3rd Tess Walker

Life Memberships **Keith Burns**

Special Merit Award **Tomas Abyu**

Special Merit Award **Andi Jones**

The Special Merit Awards were for Tomas representing Great Britain in the marathon at the European Championships in Gothenburg and for Andi winning the International Snowdon Mountain Race.



We will be entering teams in the Wilf Richards Relays on March 3rd at Heaton Park, the race starts at 2.30 pm. Julie Laverock will take ladies names and I will do the men's, for this race we can enter three times as many names for each team, so I just want to know if you are interested and the more interest, the more teams we will put in. The closing date is 24th Feb, so I will send the entries in on the 19th Feb.

Last year we finished second team to Sale, we beat Leeds by nearly a minute, our team was Carl Hardman, Dave Milliken, Rob Hughes and Paul Birkett. Carl Hardman had the fastest lap. **Roy Satndring**

Xmas Handicap



Dave Lockett expresses dismay as the President presents him with the bar bill.

Seventeen runners braved the cold for the annual xmas handicap with Dave Lockett winning it from the back.

I promised certain people these results would not be published but what the heck.....

1	Dave Lockett	21.10	-4.00	17.10
2	Sean McMyler	21.37	-3.00	18.37
3	Tess Walker	21.45	-2.30	19.15
4	Dave Williams	22.08	-3.15	18.53
5	Stan Curran	22.29	-1.45	20.44
6	Dave Shaw	22.37	-2.30	20.07
7	James Williams	22.42	-3.15	19.27
8	Roe Bowness	23.18	-1.00	22.18
9	James Kovacs	23.19	-4.00	19.19
10	Tommy Daniels	23.25	-1.30	21.55
12	Estelle Malm	23.27	-2.00	21.27
13	Kristian Holbrook	23.28	-2.00	21.28
14	Bob Towell	23.47	-0.00	23.47
15	Dennis Moran	24.55	-0.30	24.25
16	Tony Smith	25.30	-2.00	23.30
17	Paul McNamara	25.42	-2.00	23.42

2006 Road Rankings

The 2006 road rankings published in Athletics Weekly in January featured 4 Salford runners. Thomas Abyu proved his class over any distance finishing within the top 6 in five of the seven distances.

5 Miles

1.	23:23	Peter Riley	Leigh
2.	23:28	Tomas Abyu	Salford
3.	23:38	Tom Humphries	C&S
3.	23:38	Steve Bateson	E Hull
5.	23:44	Andrew Norman	Alt
6.	23:51	Stuart Stokes	Sale
17.	24:30	Carl Hardman	Salford

10km

1.	28:37	Mohamed Farah	NEB
2.	28:38	Chris Davies	Tel
3.	29:02	Peter Riley	Leigh
3.	29:02	Tomas Abyu	Salford
5.	29:12	Dan Robinson	Stroud
6.	29:13	James Walsh	Leeds C
30.	30:00	Andi Jones	Salford

Ten Miles

1.	47:19	Jon Brown	Sheff
2.	48:05	Adam Sutton	Prest
3.	48:34	Phil Wicks	Belg
4.	48:42	Dan Robinson	Stroud
5.	49:05	Tomas Abyu	Salford
6.	49:09	Jason Ward	Alt

Half-Marathon

1.	63:58	Dan Robinson	Stroud
2.	64:05	Tomas Abyu	Salford
3.	64:09	Peter Riley	Leigh
4.	64:15	Jon Brown	Sheff
5.	64:58	Andi Jones	Salford
6.	65:20	Matt Smith	Tip

Marathon

1.	2:11:46	Jon Brown	Sheff
2.	2:14:31	Peter Riley	Leigh
3.	2:14:41	Matt Smith	Tip
4.	2:14:50	Dan Robinson	Stroud
5.	2:15:38	Huw Lobb	Bed C
6.	2:15:50	Tomas Abyu	Salford
10	2:19:16	Andi Jones	Salford
	2:22:27	Pumlani Bangani	RSA

Fancy Running Abroad?

I've done quite a few races abroad now. I think my favourite has to be the Paris marathon (early April) which I've done 5 times. The course is fantastic, passing most of the famous sites of Paris. It starts on the Avenue des Champs Elysees near the Arc de Triomphe and goes right through the city to the Bois de Vincennes in the east. This is a big park containing a chateau and you run round this park between about 10K and 20K. You then go right back to the west of the city along the banks of the River Seine. There is a slightly unpleasant bit here – you have to run through a long road tunnel for just under 1K. You eventually turn away from the river, go through various streets for about 5K and end up in the Bois de Boulogne, another park that you run round for a few kilometres. Once you come out of the park, it's about a kilometre to the finish.

Second to Paris has to be the Berlin marathon (late September), which I have done 3 times. This is a very fast course although the scenery is a bit dull in parts – a lot seems to all seem the same, running through the streets of the Berlin suburbs. I got my PB on this (2 hours 45 in 2004). The weather has been OK whenever I've done it although I heard that this year was very hot.

Other marathons I've done in Germany are Cologne (early October) and Frankfurt (late October). I did Cologne this year. It was a flat course taking in a lot of the sites of the city and I would recommend it. To my surprise given how easy and cheaply it was to get there, I didn't notice any other British runners and, when I looked at the results, I discovered that I was the first British person to finish! Frankfurt was my least favourite German marathon although it was perhaps spoilt a bit by the wind the year I did it. I didn't like the last bit as you ended up passing very near to where it finished a couple of kilometres from the end and then seemed to just be running backwards and forwards in the streets by the finish – very monotonous at the end of a marathon.

I did the Los Angeles marathon in March last year. It started in downtown LA but the course was pretty dull – largely through suburban areas. I have heard that they have changed the course now and the new course is

more interesting. It was a brilliant atmosphere and was a really good experience to do a marathon in America, although it was a bit too hot for me and my time suffered as a result. I couldn't resist doing a 10K in Torrence (a suburb of Los Angeles) a week later, the day before we came home. I had picked up a leaflet on this at the marathon exhibition. This meant getting up at the crack of dawn for the start which was at about 8 a.m. Torrence is certainly not anywhere any normal tourist would go – certainly not at that time on a Sunday morning!

I did the Havana half marathon when we were on holiday in Cuba in 1999. I didn't plan to do this – we booked the holiday and then I later read an article in Runners' World about the Havana half and full marathons. By coincidence they were on the time we were there and so naturally I couldn't resist the temptation to do the half! It started at about 6 in the morning but was really hot and humid even then. I don't run well in heat and ended up doing it about 15 minutes slower than my normal half marathon time. It was incredible to see the footwear (or lack of it) of many of the runners. Lots were running in either bare feet or normal shoes. I wished I had taken a few pairs of old running shoes to give away. I don't think I'll be going back to Cuba – we thought it was a pretty awful place and certainly the worst place we have ever been on holiday!

I did the Tallin half marathon in September 2002. This was a pretty good but small race – I ended up coming 12th. It was freezing, as was most of that week that we spent in Estonia. I thought at one point that we weren't going to have anywhere to stay that evening and that I would be stuck in Tallin with nothing but sweaty clothes I was wearing! When we got back near the hotel we could see lots of smoke that looked to be coming worryingly close to where our hotel was. When we got to the hotel there were fire engines there and a disused building next door was in flames. The flames were pretty close to our hotel but fortunately the hotel didn't catch fire!

Finally, I have done the St Tropez 20K – a nice scenic race although a bit on the warm side.

The number of races that I have done abroad are nothing compared to Andrew Bennett who runs for Ackworth

Road Runners. He has written a book, Middle of the Packer, about all of the races he has run abroad. It makes a fantastic read and anyone is welcome to borrow my copy. **Mark Seed**

Blast from the past

In the last issue we heard from club historian Roy Profitt about the amazing Alfred Tysoe. Here he provides us with another example of our rich and varied history.

BEN JONES.
OLYMPIC CHAMPION 1908.

In the 2004 Olympic Games, the British cyclist Bradley Wiggins won the full set of 3 medals, a gold, silver and bronze. This was the second best ever haul by a British cyclist at the Olympics, only bettered by Ben Jones who won 2 gold and 1 silver in the 1908 Games held at London's White City. Ben Jones was a Salford Harrier. In those days, one of the main areas of competition was the local sports meeting which catered for both athletes and cyclists. Consequently, Salford Harriers and other athletic clubs had a cycling section. This situation started to break down around 1910 when the governing bodies of the two sports, the AAA and NCU failed to agree on a number of things and went their separate ways. Salford Harriers continued to have cyclists in their ranks for some years after this and programmes for 1920's sports meetings show club members among the entries for cycling events. Ben Jones was born in 1882 and was a collier from the Wigan area. He was a member of Salford Harriers from 1905 to 1912. There is little on Ben's performances in the club's surviving records but it is known that he was an outstanding performer with many fine results at National and International level. Naturally, his Olympic performances in 1908 stand out. He competed in 5 events which involved 11 races. His first event was the 20 km. in which he finished runner-up to Charles Kingsbury of Portsmouth. He then won his first gold in the 4000 metres team pursuit in which Great Britain beat Germany by 10 seconds. Included in the British team was Ernest Payne of Worcester who was also a fine footballer, playing for non-league Worcester City. In 1908, Manchester United won their first football league championship (sorry to be mentioning this, James!). Billy Meredith, their legendary Welsh winger, was unable to

play in 2 matches because of international commitments so United borrowed Payne to replace him. He scored a goal in one of his appearances. I do not suppose that he got a championship medal for his efforts but the experience would have been a useful addition to his C.V. Jones won his second gold in the 5000 metres. Two Frenchmen were favourites, but Ben narrowly won the sprint at the finish. Ben was unfortunate not to win a fourth medal in the 1000 metres sprint. He was just outsprinted at the end but the race was declared void because the riders exceeded the pre-arranged time limit. There was no chance of a re-run. His fifth event was the 500 metres sprint but he did not survive the semi-finals in this. He subsequently moved to London and rode for Southwark CC and Putney CC. It looks as though he was also based in South Africa, at least temporarily, as he had 4 wins in their championships from 1911 to 1914. We have no information on the rest of his life. **Roy Profitt**

Would just like to add that City became the first Manchester side to win a major trophy when they won the FA CUP in 1904 at Crystal Palace!!!

Last Word

Good effort from everybody this month. Keep the articles coming! As usual send all your info to:

James. Williams@hotmail.com

