

Tough Going In Edinburgh — Glasgow Relay

WITH ONLY two teams beating the 4 hour barrier, the 40th annual road relay from Edinburgh to Glasgow on November 16th, sponsored by Barrs Soft Drinks, was won in the slowest time for over a quarter of a century. There was a cold, opposing wind all the way on the 44 ¼ mile course and the only records came on stages 3 and 4 where the third changeover point had to be relocated at police insistence due to traffic safety, with new distances being run for each stage.

Clyde Valley, with four senior and one junior Scottish international in their team, repeated last year's victory with that much improved team, Cambuslang, finishing surprise runners-up.

Colin Shields reports

Edinburgh Southern, without Allister Hutton and John Robson, finished out of the medals for the first time in many years. This was mainly due to a breakdown of team organisation at the third changeover when Colin Youngson, after recording the fastest stage time, arrived in the lead to find that Colin Taylor was out warming up over the course, and 70 sec were lost before Taylor took over the baton in third place.

The race had an international flavour this year, when the Norwegian club, Skjalg AC from Bergen, competed for the third time in five years. Arriving with only seven men, due to a last minute drop-out through illness, they ran marathoner Frederic Aase on the first and last laps. Well though Aase performed, leading the field on the first stage and recording the sixth fastest time on the eighth stage, his team was disqualified from their tenth finishing position, due to infringing the race rules.

The race was, as always, well followed by club supporters and spectators with competitors outnumbered ten times over by the number of casual joggers on the road. The main danger to the future continuance of the race was the flagrant breaking of the rules — by indiscriminate parking, at the roadside in dangerous positions and at changeover points, by supporters' cars. If the race is to be allowed to continue, it must be with the approval of the Lothian and Strathclyde police forces, and the SCCU must seriously consider banning any supporters' cars stopping at the roadside over the first stage, which passes through the busy Edinburgh streets. It would be a disastrous occurrence if this race, which has lasted over 40 years, was to be lost through the unconsidered actions of car-borne spectators.

Leg 1 (5 ½ miles): Frank Clement, in resurgent form in recent weeks after recovery from injury,

forced the pace from the start and broke up the field of 20 runners. However it was the Norwegian, Frederic Aase, who proved the stronger on the 1 ½ mile steep incline to the finish, pulling almost half a minute clear of Clement who won 2nd place from junior, John Gladwin. None of the eventual medal winners were in the first six clubs home — Clyde Valley were best placed in 7th in 28:44. **Fastest:** F. Aase (Skjalg) 27:49; F. Clement (Bella) 28:17; J. Gladwin (ESH) 28:22.

Leg 2 (6 miles): Ian Elliott swiftly moved into the lead for Edinburgh Southern as the Norwegians dropped to 6th place. Rising marathon star Graham Laing clocked 30:59 to finish 2nd, just 5 sec behind the leaders, while Nat Muir shared Laing's time when bringing Shettleston from 14th to 7th. Cambuslang, after placing 11th on the opening stage, dropped to 13th after a disastrous run by Colin Donnelly who ran 2 min slower than expected. Graham Williamson never showed true form, having a disappointing run with only four athletes slower than his 33:31 performance. **Fastest:** N. Muir (Shett) & G. Laing (A'deen) 30:59; I. Elliott (ESH) & R. MacDonald (CV) 31:13.

Leg 3 (4.7 miles): Colin Youngson showed great speed with no ill effects from his ultra-long distance racing in the recent London-Brighton race, building up a lead of 59 sec from Victoria Park. Youngson still had enough breath left over at the end of his record-breaking run to display an outstanding range of vocabulary at the non-appearance of his clubmate at the take-over! Lachie Stewart, former Commonwealth 10,000m champion, turned in a creditable run for Shettleston with Rod Stone lifting Cambuslang four places to 9th. **Fastest:** C. Youngson (ESH) 26:01 (rec); R. Stone (Cam) 26:27; A. Johnston (VP) 26:32.

Leg 4 (5.3 miles): A fine run by Anglo steeplechaser Ian Gilmour made up almost a minute's deficit on the leaders and only a finishing sprint by Albie Smith brought Victoria Park into a 2 sec lead from Clyde Valley. Way down the field, Douglas Frame brought Law & District into 13th position with an inaugural stage record. **Fastest:** D. Frame (Law) 28:18; I. Gilmour (CV) 28:21; A. Gilmour (Cam) 28:25.

Leg 5 (5 ½ miles): Jim Brown quickly went into a lead, which Clyde Valley were to hold to the finish, leaving Victoria Park 53 sec behind at the change-over. Aberdeen continued their consistent running in 4th place as Cambuslang (Ed Stewart) gained another important place to finish 6th. **Fastest:** J. Brown (CV) 29:59; G. Getty (Bella) 30:42; E. Stewart (Cam) 30:46.

Leg 6 (7 miles): This was Gordon Rimmer's lap! Defying the elements which blasted him on the open, exposed road, he recorded a time

almost 40 sec faster than last year's performance when his rivals were running, on average, up to a minute or more slower than the previous year. He pulled in four positions to finish runner-up to John Graham, who recorded 35:01 in his isolated leader's position, at a distance which must almost seem a sprint to him after his New York marathon performance. **Fastest:** G. Rimmer (Cam) 33:30; J. Dingwall (FVH) 34:01; J. Graham (CV) 35:01.

Leg 7 (5½ miles): A fastest lap time by Eddie Devlin wrapped it up for Clyde Valley leaving them 2½ min clear with just one stage left. Veteran Martin Craven edged ESH into 3rd just behind Victoria Park while Cambuslang, though nudged back to 4th, were still handily placed for a comeback on the final stage. **Fastest:** E. Devlin (CV) 26:54; M. Craven (ESH) 27:27; D. Ross (EAC) 27:35.

Leg 8 (5 miles): Steve Rimmer emulated twin brother Gordon's feat of recording the fastest lap by gaining two places through the busy streets of Glasgow, finishing over 2 min clear of Victoria Park. Adrian Callan shared third fastest time with marathoner Bill Day (FVH) when he gained a place for Springburn Harriers, who gained the award for the most meritorious performance when improving from 18th last year to 12th. **Fastest:** S. Rimmer (Cam) 28:08; D. Hunter (EAC) 29:07; A. Callan (S'burn) & W. Day (FVH) 29:12.

1, Clyde Valley (J. Small 28:44; R. MacDonald

31:13, M. Agnew 27:28, I. Gilmour 28:21; J. Brown 29:59, J. Graham 35:01, E. Devlin 26:54, P. Fox 29:39) 3:57:19

2, Cambuslang (G. Cooper 29:24, C. Donnelly 33:27, R. Stone 26:27, A. Gilmour 28:25, E. Stewart 30:46, G. Rimmer 33:30, C. Feecham 28:36, S. Rimmer 28:08) 3:58:43

3, Victoria Park (D. McMeekin 28:49, A. Douglas 31:14, A. Johnston 26:32, A. Smith 29:09, G. Meredith 30:54, D. Austin 35:49, G. Diverty 27:49, R. Blair 30:29) 4:00:45

4, Edinburgh Southern (J. Gladwin 28:22, I. Elliott 31:13, C. Youngson 26:01, C. Taylor 30:30, A. Robertson 31:01, E. Cameron 35:55, M. Craven 27:27, I. Steel 30:48) 4:01:17

5, Edinburgh AC (S. Laing 28:43, S. Keith 32:47, N. Jones 27:32; C. Keir 29:45, A. Gourlay 30:48, L. Robertson 36:00, D. Ross 27:35, D. Hunter 29:07) 4:02:17

6, Shettleston (J. Burns 29:51, N. Muir 30:59, L. Stewart 27:50, L. Spence 28:30, I. Shaw 31:28, D. Smith 36:16, J. Evans 27:54, W. Scally 30:25) 4:03:13.

7, Falkirk Victoria 4:03:24; 8, Aberdeen 4:03:27; 9, Bellahouston 4:04:59; 10, Skjalg (Norway) 4:08:18; 11, E. Kilbride 4:08:49; 12, Springburn 4:09:00; 13, Fife 4:11:50; 14, Clydesdale 4:11:54; 15, Westerlands 4:13:25; 16, Edinburgh Univ. 4:14:34; 17, Law 4:17:27; 18, Greenock Wellpark 4:20:21; 19, Ayrshire 4:27:30; 20, Lochaber 4:28:25; 21, Spango Valley 4:31:55.