

# Southern on the right road to glory



By DOUG GILLON

THE loudest noise above the patter of some 500 pairs of flying feet round Shettleston on Saturday was a warning that Edinburgh Southern Harriers will not easily surrender the blue riband of Scottish road relay racing.

Southern, having tucked the national cross-country relay title under their belt last weekend, proved they are equally at home on roads as they won Shettleston Harriers' Allan Scally Memorial relay on Saturday by the overwhelming margin of two minutes.

The race, one of the top events on the road calendar in its own right, is widely used as a final trial for the Barr-sponsored eight-stage Edinburgh to Glasgow relay which takes place a week on Sunday.

Southern, in John Robson (21-57), and Callum Henderson (22-25), had the two fastest men of the day in the four-stage event, while their second team, twelfth

overall, was the first B string to finish. This pointer for the "E to G" should not be missed.

Cambuslang and Spango Valley, fourth and seventh respectively on Saturday, still have the resources to mount a challenge. Cambuslang, runners-up to Southern last weekend, were without the services of Alec Gilmour, who was campaigning with distinction at Gateshead, while Spango suffered disaster at the gun.

Steven Connaghan fell at the start and the Greenock club's A team finished twenty-ninth on the opening leg, ironically a full 20 places behind their B string.

Brian Scally, the former AAA junior 1500 metres champion, led Shettleston home first on the opening leg (22-43) but the hosts faded to finish tenth overall.

Southern were given a comfortable start as Alan Robson brought them home seventh, firmly defusing the threat from Rod Stone, running the first leg

for Southern's B team in a bid to secure a place in a fortnight.

But the real turning point came on the third leg. Teviotdale were in the lead with a 22-second margin over nearest pursuers Motherwell YMCA and 24 seconds ahead of Southern when Henderson set out.

Not for the first time Southern will bemoan Henderson's absence a week on Sunday — he won't race on the sabbath — for on current form, and after only his second race since July, Henderson is red hot. He handed John Robson a lead of 62 seconds and Robson's only motivation for putting his foot on the gas to record the fastest lap was a £25 voucher and a new trophy in memory of the former Scottish champion Eddie Bannon.

By the time Robson brought Southern home in 90-45, Teviotdale were a distant 1-59 behind with Motherwell a farther 30sec away in third. In the universities championship, held concurrently,

Edinburgh won what amounted to a photo finish with Aberdeen. Results:

1, ESH (A. Robson 23-06, C. Hunter 23-17, C. Henderson 22-25, J. Robson 21-57) 90-45; 2, Teviotdale 92-41; 3, Motherwell YMCA 93-14; 4, Cambuslang 93-30; 5, Falkirk Victoria 93-45; 6, Edinburgh AC 93-50; 7, Spango Valley 94-01; 8, Kilburnian 95-49; 9, Bellahouston 95-52; 10, Shettleston 97-54.

Scottish Universities Championship — 1, Edinburgh 98-39; — 2, Aberdeen 98-39; 3, Glasgow 99-32; 4, Heriot-Watt 102-23; 5, St Andrews 104-07.

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YVONNE MURRAY began her winter athletics season where she left off on the track . . . up front. The EAC woman, European medallist indoor and out this year and also a medallist at the Commonwealth Games, won the women's two-and-a-half mile Gateshead Road Race on Saturday in 13-18. She was 21sec clear of Jill Hunter (Blaydon), with British international Carole Haigh a distant third in 14-03.

Mike McLeod, the Olympic 10,000 metres silver medallist, tackling that distance on the road, won in 29-53 from Kevin Foster,

with Springburn's Adrian Callan third in 29-59. Alec Gilmour (Cambuslang) was fifth in 30-22.

GIANNI PILLI, the Italian record holder, scored an upset victory in the New York Marathon yesterday, easily beating favourite Rob de Castella (Australia) in a time of 2-11-06.

De Castella, the World and Commonwealth champion, and Italian Orlando Pizzolato, were the pre-race favourites, but Pizzolato burned himself out with a 4-47 ninth mile, and Antoni Niemczak (Poland) picked off De Castella to finish second at 2-11-21. De Castella was third in 2-11-43 and Pizzolato to fourth in 2-12-13.

Scotland's Lindsay Robertson clocked 2-17-31, twenty fifth. Grete Waitz (Norway) won the women's race for the eighth time in 2-28-06.

The winners received \$25,000 and a new Mercedes car, plus bonus incentives based on time.

LARKHALL runners dominated the Scottish YMCA road race championships at Kirkcaldy, winning three of the four individual titles. John Beaton took the senior four-mile race in 20-38, with his club winning the team race from Seafar, Cumbernauld. Clubmates John McGhee and Ken Woods won the senior and junior boys races respectively with John Houston (Motherwell) breaking the Larkhall monopoly when winning the youths 2½ miles event in 13-39 and leading his team to victory over Kilmarnock.

MIKE McQUAID won the senior men's title in the Central Region Athletic Club cross-country championship at Alton yesterday. He covered the muddy and hilly six-mile course in 36-27.

JOHN ROBSON  
lap

fastest