

CROSS-COUNTRY NOTES.

BIG MEET AT HAMILTON.

By an S.A.A. Official.

The Western District Junior Seven Miles Cross-Country Team and Individual Championship (24th of the series) will be decided next Saturday at Hamilton. No better or more ideal centre for such a contest could be chosen. The W.D. Committee are indeed fortunate in securing the permission of the Hamilton Park Racecourse authorities and the Town Council of the burgh for the privileges, which are destined to make this popular event one of the most successful of the series.

Since the institution of the fixture in 1895, when A. McCullum, Partick Harriers, won the Individual and Wishaw Harriers secured the Team honours, fifteen clubs have held the championship. The clubs who have been successful in winning on two or more occasions are:—Glenpark, 1900 and 1902; Bellahouston, 1901, 1903, and 1914; Garscube, 1904, 1921, and 1923; Motherwell Y.M.C.A., 1905, 1907, and 1908; Maryhill, 1910, 1922, and 1926; Shettleston, 1920 and 1924.

This year's event promises to exceed all others in the matter of support from the clubs in the district. The record entry to date—twenty-eight clubs—should be excelled out of a possible thirty-six this time. At no time in the history of the race or of cross-country running has there been a greater following or manifestly more enthusiasm than at present.

What should be of interest to all aspirants for the Team Championship is the recent announcement that Mr Wm. Maley, of Celtic F.C., will offer a challenge trophy of unique design to be held for one year by the winners. Curiously enough, this was the only championship without something to show for it, and that Mr Maley's name should be associated with it is only further testimony of his desire to foster a sport of which he can claim to have been a devotee.

During the past half-dozen years (excepting 1925), Shettleston, Garscube, and Maryhill have dominated the race, but it is exceedingly doubtful if it is possible for either to retain their usual pre-eminence next week.

Last year at Bothwell, Maryhill narrowly won from Plebeian Harriers, and, though their counting six in that race become ineligible, the wearers of the royal blue are not without hope of coming very near to repeating the success, even with a new team.

PLEBEIAN FAVOURITES.

Plebeian, however, become favourites because of the high standard of such leaders as S. K. Tombe (club champion), A. Allan, and W. Gunn. With the assistance of a half-dozen other youths of equal merit, Plebeian are confident of easily breaking last season's total of 144, and thereby registering their first important District Championship—which is due them even for their perseverance and diligence.

Other clubs likely to figure in the first half-dozen are Motherwell, Beith, Kilmarnock, Shettleston, and Garscube.

Owing to the fact that the club teams will not be known until the scrutiny, which will be held early in the week, it is not possible to publish the personnel of the teams named.

Keen interest is invested in the Individual title won by T. M. Riddell, our Scottish mile champion, in the previous contest. Neither R. Henderson, Glasgow Harriers, nor F. L. Stevenson, Monkland, who ran respectively second and third to Riddell, is eligible this year, but if C. H. Johnston, Glasgow University, elects to run I cannot see anyone beating him for the premier honour. His running against T. M. Riddell in the relay race at Shettleston early in the season stamps him a worthy successor to his great rival.

Whether Charlie Durning, the athletic coach of the Gilmorehill students, has been successful in persuading Johnston to tackle the task will only be known on the day of the race, when the teams are declared.

Peter Nicol, Kilmarnock, who followed R. Miller, Mauchline, in the Ayrshire Championship the other week, will also have his supporters, and, failing Johnston, he is the Ayrshire fancy. S. K. Tombe and A. Allan, Plebeian, are both possessed of the ability to head the field of nearly 300 runners. If Tombe retains the form exhibited in his club races, and particularly the running which enabled him to beat A. Allan in the championship, he will be a difficult nut to crack.

The Wilsons, of Irvine; J. Roxburgh and M. Stobbs, Catrine; Hugh Gilchrist, Paisley; G. Dick and A. McHattie, Mauchline, if they enter as individuals, are all capable of giving a good account of themselves.

The course at Hamilton will be a three-lap one, and a splendid view of the competitors will be obtained from the "five bob" enclosure. The local arrangements and responsibility for details are wisely delegated to the two clubs in the district—Motherwell and Hamilton. Tea and presentation of medals takes place in the Y.M.C.A. Restaurant, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, about 6.30 p.m. on Saturday.

Y.M.C.A. HARRIERS

Last Saturday the club participated in the 28th annual Western District Championship, held at Hamilton. The weather gave of its worst throughout the race, and although the runners had quite a lot to complain about, the stewards, who were posted at certain points on the course, were in a worse position, and only the Motherwell men were cheered by the fact that their team was well in the running for the championship. The start was very fast, and in a short time the field of runners was drawn out into a long line. After the second short lap it was noticed that the Motherwell team was very well placed, the only rivals being Plebeian, who seemed to be hanging well into the Motherwell lads. W. McCulloch, of Motherwell, showed great form throughout the race and led the team home. He was followed in closely by J. MLuckie and P. S. Findlay.

At the finish it was evident that the winners lay between Plebeian and Motherwell, the former having their first three men well up, but the next three lagging a little; the latter running closely together as a team. When the points were counted the two teams had 167 points, which was a good result. Shettleston were third with 190 points. Motherwell—W. McCulloch, 14; J. MLuckie, 15; P. S. Findlay, 20; J. Aitken, 28; A. B. Ingram, 42; W. MEwan, 48—total, 167. Plebeian—W. Gunn, 3; S. K. Tomlie, 10; J. Ferguson, 19; R. T. Hollinger, 36; N. M'Callum, 43; E. James, 56—total, 167.

This is Plebeian's first success in this race, and Motherwell's fourth. If our boys keep improving as they are doing at present, they will have something to say for themselves when the National Championship comes round on the 5th March. Good luck to them.

To-morrow, the club travel to Hamilton for an inter-club run with Hamilton Harriers.