

# CROSS-COUNTRY

## Canal Bridge Halts two North Championships

Despite atrocious weather conditions, a grand total of 197 runners took part in the annual Cross Country Championships of the North of Scotland Amateur Athletic Association, held on Saturday afternoon, starting and finishing at the Queen's Park, the Bught, Inverness. However, for 31 of the guileless competitors, in the junior and senior sections, the finish came sooner than anticipated, for, after battling their way through many hazards, hampered by driving sleet and snow, and with the finishing line virtually in sight after completing over 5 miles of the arduous course, the final hazard was insurmountable. The Tomnahurich bridge over the Caledonian Canal was opened to allow a vessel passage!

At that stage, Iain Mackenzie, **Portsmouth**, the reigning champion, was being pressed by Ian Johnstone, Inverness **University**, and although Iain Mackenzie reluctantly accepted the situation, Ian Johnstone, urged by enthusiasm and frustration, attempted to swim across the canal, but discretion eventually got the better of valour and he turned back as the vessel approached. As a result, both of these races will be re-run at Kinkora on Saturday, 17th March.

Three of the five championships, however, were decided, and Marion Ramsay, Milburn School, Inverness, gallantly held off the late challenge of Eileen Turnbull, Inverness High School, to win the girls' event by 16 seconds, in a time of 17 minutes 26 seconds. In the boys' (13-15 years) section, G. Taylor, Lochaber High, stormed home in a time of 14 mins. 28 secs. for the two miles course, 28 seconds ahead of B. Jenks, Gordonstoun, with W. Horne, Inverness High, only seven seconds behind in third place in a field of 83 runners, and the youths' race was won by S. Cassels, Caithness Athletic Club, who completed the three mile course in 17 mins. 38 secs. Trophies and certificates were presented to the winners by Mrs Walter Banks, wife of the immediate past-president of the North of Scotland Amateur Athletic Association. The full results were as follows:—

**Girls (3 miles)** — 39 runners — 1 M. Ramsay, Milburn School, 17 mins. 26 secs.; 2 E. Turnbull, Inverness High, 17 mins. 52 secs.; 3 J. Gillanders, Lochaber High, 18 mins. 14 secs. Team placings — 1 Lochaber High, 22 pts.; 2 Milburn, 31 pts.; 3 Inverness Royal Academy, 42 pts.

**Boys (3 miles)** — 83 runners — 1 G. Taylor, Lochaber High, 14 mins. 28 secs.; 2 B. Jenks, Gordonstoun, 14 mins. 56 secs.; 3 W. Horne, Inverness High, 15 mins. 43 secs. Team placings — 1 Lochaber High, 35 pts.; 2 Gordonstoun, 33 pts.; 3 Caithness Athletic Club, 51 pts.

**Youths (3 miles)** — 25 runners — 1 S. Cassels, Caithness Athletic Club, 17 mins. 38 secs.; 2 S. Brownlee, do., 17 mins. 46 secs.; 3 D. Allan, **Portsmouth**, 17 mins. 56 secs. Team placings — 1 Inverness High, 43 pts.; 2 Portsmouth Academy, 45 pts.; 3 Gordonstoun, 56 pts.

The Junior (6 miles), 11 runners, and Senior (6 miles), 20 runners, were abandoned.

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## Forre Harriers Successes

Iain Mackenzie, **Forre Harriers**, successfully defended his North of Scotland Amateur Athletic Association senior cross-country championship title over his "home" course at **Forre** on Saturday in the re-run of this event, which had previously been declared void at Inverness on 24th February when the opening of the Glenquhart Road bridge over the Caledonian Canal had brought the runners prematurely to a halt.

The winning time for the 5½ miles course was 27 min. 3 sec., and R. Bennett, R.A.F. Kinloss, was less than a minute behind in second place while H. Cameron, **Forre**, was third of the 18 runners. Ian Johnston, Inverness **Harriers**, who was challenging Iain Mackenzie for the lead in the "race that never was," and who had plunged into the Caledonian Canal through sheer frustration, unfortunately had to drop out of Saturday's race after completing only a mile, because of a knee injury.

The junior championship was won by Donald MacLean, **Forre**, in 28 mins. 5 sec.

### LAST LEAGUE RACE

The final race in the North of Scotland Cross Country League was run in conjunction with the championships, and was won by **Forre**, who also became the first winners of the Claymore Shield, donated by the North of Scotland Milk Marketing Board for the league championship winners.

### NORTH BEAT ABERDEEN

A friendly contest between Aberdeen Amateur Athletic Club and a representative North of Scotland team was also included in the race, and despite Alastair Wood's winning time of 28 mins. 13 sec., the North won the match with 37 points to Aberdeen's 46.

Ex-Provost R. B. S. Braid, **Forre**, president of the North Association, presided at the prize-giving ceremony at which the trophies were presented by Mrs Walter Banks, wife of the Association's immediate past-president. The principal results were as follows:—

**N.S.A.A.A. Championship** — Senior (individual plaques) — 1 I. Mackenzie, **Forre**, 27 mins. 3 sec.; 2 R. Bennett, R.A.F. Kinloss, 28 mins. 2 sec.; 3 H. Cameron, F.H., 28 mins. 25 sec. Team winners (N.S.A.A.A. Cup) — 1 **Forre** (16 pts.), 2 R.A.F. Kinloss (25 pts.). Junior (individual plaques) — 1 D. Maclean, **Forre**, 28 mins. 5 sec.; 2 C. Tod, Gordons, 28 mins. 34 sec.; 3 I. Johnston, R.A.F. Kinloss, 30 mins. 19 sec. No team entries.

**Final League Placings** — team (Claymore Shield) — 1 **Forre**, 3,289 pts.; 2 R.A.F. Kinloss, 3,115 pts.; 3 Lochaber A.C., 1,861 pts. Individual (N.S.M.M.B. plaques) — 1 D. Maclean, **Forre**, 592 pts.; 2 M. Scott, do., 574 pts.; 3 B. Mitchell, R.A.F. Kinloss, 543 pts.

**Invitation Race** — North of Scotland (37 pts.) beat Aberdeen A.A.C. (46 pts.).