

MEMORABLE EDINBURGH-GLASGOW RACE

THE excitement, sensation and keen competition that occurred in the 36th Edinburgh to Glasgow eight-man road relay (sponsored by the News of the World) on November 21st will long be remembered by the competitors, spectators and officials. The race was held for the first time on a Sunday in a successful attempt to avoid the heavy traffic encountered previously, but the traffic-free conditions attracted a large convoy of about 200 supporters' cars that followed the race from start to finish and strained the co-operation of the police.

On a cold, bright day with a head wind which appreciably slowed the runners and kept all stage records intact, Shettleston deservedly won from Edinburgh AC, who repeated last year's runners-up position, with Falkirk Victoria (18th in 1974 and 7th in 1975) continuing their steady climb to the top with a deserved third place. The progress and performance of the young, enthusiastic Falkirk team (sparked by the determination and example of Bill Day and Jim Dingwall) has been one of the success stories of Scottish athletics and a measure of their fine running is that they were only 70 sec slower than last year's time on a day when most of the top clubs were eight to ten minutes slower than the previous year.

Colin Shields reports

At the start, Edinburgh Southern were optimistically aiming for a record four wins in a row and had, for once this season, managed to turn out (with the exception of Allister Hutton) their top runners. However, all their high hopes came tumbling down in ruins on the short third stage of 4M when John Robson, running in second place, inexplicably came to a distressed halt, stepped off the road and refused to run any further. He seemed to suffer a mental and physical breakdown and throughout the anguished and dismayed pleading of the Southern supporters it was the calm, reasoned, soothing voice of Hamish Robertson—pointing out the following five runners still waiting to compete in the race—that finally won the day. A stop of at least ten minutes resulted in Robson walking/jogging the last mile to the change-over in 19th position. It says much for the resilience and determination of their remaining runners that they recovered 11 of those places to finish eighth eventually.

The anticipated close nature of the race was fulfilled when, in the final analysis (excluding the vital third lap), Shettleston were exactly equal in time with Edinburgh AC and only 6 sec slower than Edinburgh Southern over the other seven stages of the race.

Stage 1 (5½M; record—26:00)

Marathon runner Alastair McFarlane set a fast pace and resisted the persistent pressure of Colin Youngson and Jim Golder to establish a 90y lead. Surprise of the lap came from a resurgent Stewart Easton (Glasgow Univ) who with 27:43 finished 4th just 2 sec ahead of equally surprising Willie Logan (Strath Univ). Shettleston were back in 7th and Falkirk 12th, 10y clear of EAC. **Fastest:** A. McFarlane (Spring) 27:11, C. Youngson (ESH) 27:27, J. Golder (Ayr) 27:40.

Stage 2 (6M; record—27:14)

Soon after the start Andy McKean charged ahead of Jim Dingwall, who was quite content to slipstream. They competently weaved their way through the field, catching Ian Elliott (ESH) with a mile to go, and Dingwall burst into a 50y lead to record the fastest time. John Graham lifted Clyde Valley from 11th to 5th while Springburn slipped from 1st to 10th, Ayrshire from 3rd to 13th and Teviotdale from 8th to 19th. Victoria Park supporters suffered the frustrating sight of their team runner Laurie Reilly running in company with Bill Sheridan and Pat McLagan (both Victoria Park athletes) but representing their universities in this race. **Fastest:** J. Dingwall (FVH) 28:34, A. McKean (EAC) 28:40, J. Graham (Clyde V) 29:28.

Stage 3 (4M; record—20:42)

The whole race was settled on this stage as Shettleston eventually won by 74 sec—the exact margin that Lachie Stewart (Shett) was faster than Paul Forbes (EAC) over the 4M. After a fast start John Robson (ESH) moved into 2nd position, passing Forbes in the first mile, and then 'blew up' as previously described. It is hoped he soon recovers from this distressing experience. However, all praise to evergreen Lachie Stewart who lifted his club from 6th to 2nd behind a jubilant Falkirk who opened a 58 sec lead thanks to a fine run by Mike Logue. Other good performances came from Ian Murray (22:42) who raised Springburn from 10th to 5th, Alex McIntosh (23:01) who moved Fife from 12th to 7th, and Jack Boyd (22:38) whose run lifted Ayrshire four places to 9th. **Fastest:** L. Stewart (Shett) 22:03, M. Logue (FVH) 22:15, J. Boyd (Ayr) 22:38.

Stage 4 (5½M; record—27:37)

Nat Muir, with a determined piece of running, cut substantially into Falkirk's lead, closing to within 10 sec at the change-over. Victoria Park's David McMeekin (30:11) had an engrossing struggle with marathoner Sandy Keith (EAC), starting 44 sec down and just failing by 5y to catch him. Paul Kenney gained another two places for Fife, while Ken McCartney (30:29) made up six places for Law to finish 7th. Away down among the tail-enders, Alastair Blamire started Edinburgh Southern's revival by clocking third fastest time and gaining two places. **Fastest:**

P. Kenney (Fife) 29:38, N. Muir (Shett) 29:45, A. Blamire (ESH) 29:50.

Stage 5 (5½M; record—25:44)

Bill Mullett, clocking by far the fastest time of the stage, moved Shettleston to the front for the first time, establishing a lead of 2 min 4 sec over Edinburgh AC who passed Falkirk in the last quarter-mile to come home 6 sec ahead. Harry Gorman (Spring), back in competition after taking a year off to build his own house, had fourth fastest time of 28:52, while Martin Craven gained another two places for Southern. **Fastest:** W. Mullett (Shett) 27:30, A. Wight (EAC) 28:14, M. Craven (ESH) 28:19.

Stage 6 (6¾M; record—31:00)

Rees Ward ran an isolated race, starting fast and gaining almost a minute on his pursuers but tiring badly to clock 7th fastest time of 33:41. He handed over a lead of 87 sec from Edinburgh AC who finished 8 sec clear of Falkirk after Doug Gunstone and Bill Day had an engrossing neck and neck struggle throughout the long stage. Jim Brown ran a lonely race and, bothered by a heavy cold, was disappointed with his 33:08 clocking. David Logue (ESH) was not deterred by his lowly position and was in a class of his own to clock the fastest time and hoist his club up another three places. **Fastest:** D. Logue (ESH) 32:48, D. Gunstone (EAC) 33:04, W. Day (FVH) 33:06.

Stage 7 (5½M; record—24:32)

Danny Knowles, who clocked fastest time, was nevertheless 1½ minutes outside his own record and, despite gaining 47 sec from Falkirk, only gained slightly on Shettleston who retained a 75 sec lead with just one stage to go. Ian Orton continued Southern's relentless charge through the field, moving up to 9th. **Fastest:** D. Knowles (EAC) 26:02, J. Burns (Shett) 26:14, I. Orton (ESH) 26:16.

Stage 8 (6M; record—27:01)

Steeplechaser Fraser Clyne gained some consolation for a very disappointed Aberdeen team when he clocked the fastest lap through the busy streets of Glasgow. Ronnie Knowles, like his twin brother Danny on a strict track training schedule of only 35 'quality' miles per week, only gained 1 sec on a determined Allan Marshall who ably retained Shettleston's lead. It was good to see Ronnie Macdonald in action again for Clyde Valley after a long absence through injury. **Fastest:** F. Clyne (Aber) 28:40, R. Knowles (EAC) 28:48, A. Marshall (Shett) 28:49.

Fife AC, in their first year of entry in this race, surprised everyone by finishing fifth and were presented with the award for the most meritorious unplaced performance—a decision that delighted Donald Macgregor, who has done much to build the club up to its present position.

Result

1, Shettleston (D. Lang 27:53, L. Spence 30:25, L. Stewart 22:03, N. Muir 29:45, W. Mullett 27:30,

R. Ward 33:41, J. Burns 26:14, A. Marshall 28:49)
3:46:20
2, Edinburgh AC (D. Hunter 28:36, A. McKean
28:40, P. Forbes 23:17, A. Keith 30:54, A. Wight
28:13, D. Gunstone 33:04, D. Knowles 26:02, R.
Knowles 28:48) 3:47:34
3, Falkirk Victoria (I. Brown 28:34, J. Ding-
wall 28:34, M. Logue 22:15, J. McGarva 30:33,
W. Sharp 29:50, W. Day 33:06, R. Adam 26:49,
B. Morton 29:54) 3:49:35
4, Victoria Park (H. Barrow 27:46, L. Reilly
29:59, P. Mitchell 23:32, D. McMeekin 30:11, I.
Mitchell 29:46, A. Johson 33:40, P. McGregor
27:17, R. Blair 29:36) 3:51:47
5, Clyde Valley (I. Moncur 28:27, J. Graham
29:28, N. Agnew 23:54, J. Small 31:54, E. Devlin
29:08, J. Brown 33:08, G. Paterson 27:07, R. Mac-
donald 29:29) 3:52:35
6, Fife (S. Dalglish 28:45, D. Macgregor 30:32,
A. McIntosh 23:01, P. Kenney 29:38, I. Graves
29:23, P. Hay 35:11, R. Morrison 28:48, R.
Chapman 30:11) 3:55:29
7, Springburn (A. McFarlane 27:11, T. Patter-
son 31:45, I. Murray 22:42, W. Ramage 33:01, H.
Gorman 28:52, C. Lennox 35:47, J. Bremner 27:12,
G. Crawford 29:34) 3:56:04
8, Edinburgh Southern (C. Youngson 27:27, I.
Elliott 30:12, J. Robson 32:47, A. Blamire 29:50,
M. Craven 28:19, D. Logue 32:48, I. Orton 26:16,
F. Murray 29:19) 3:56:58
9, Bellahouston (B. Kerr 29:31, F. Clement
30:37, J. Russell 23:36, R. McCrone 31:09, J.
Irvine 29:22, M. Black 36:44, J. McMillan 27:39,
N. Scott 29:27) 3:58:05
10, Law & District (J. Thomson 28:25, J. Myatt
30:24, M. Benyon 25:04, K. McCartney 30:29, D.
Fairweather 30:26, D. Frame 35:32, D. Simpson
28:31, A. Miller 29:41) 3:58:32
11, East Kilbride 3:59:03; 12, Ayrshire AAC
3:59:10; 13, Cambuslang 4:01:49; 14, Glasgow
University 4:02:22; 15, Aberdeen 4:02:53; 16,
Strathclyde University 4:04:33; 17, Clydesdale
4:07:16; 18, Dumbarton 4:12:18; 19, Teviotdale
4:15:03; 20, Edinburgh University 4:22:21.
(Apologies for the delay in publishing this
result.)