

EDINBURGH TO GLASGOW RELAY

American Guests Comfortable Winners

David Cooney Reporting

THE 45th Edinburgh to Glasgow Road Relay, sponsored by 'Barrs Inn Bru' on November 17th, saw Edinburgh Southern, Falkirk Victoria and Cambuslang receive club subventions of £250, £150 and £100 as the leading three Scottish teams, with Springburn also picking up a £100 cheque for the most meritorious performance of the unplaced teams as part of a six year contract between the sponsors and the Scottish Cross Country Union.

However, the race was actually won by the star-studded Kangaroos from New York, who fielded a galaxy of international stars such as fellow 1984 marathon Olympians John Tuttle and Joseph Nzau of Kenya (who finished seventh in 2:11:28) and Welshman Adrian Leek, currently one of the top road runners on the American scene. Not surprisingly the top 20 invited Scottish clubs were a little apprehensive about taking on such exalted company, and with five of the eight stages completed their fears were well founded as the Americans were 2½ minutes ahead of Cambuslang, the leading Scottish club at this point. Yet by the finish Edinburgh Southern, with a strong sting on their tail, had managed to reduce the

deficit to only 43 seconds. To be fair though to the Americans, as team co-ordinator Adrian Leek pointed out after the race: "All of the team are in a recovery stage" with especially Nzau, Tuttle and himself still feeling the effects of the Bank One Marathon held at Columbus on October 13th in hot and humid conditions, as well as recovering from a "crippling" team training session led by 'Billy Goat' Glidewell on the Friday, up and down the 823' summit of Arthur's Seat, an extinct volcano overlooking the city of Edinburgh.

Stage One

On this 5¼M stage from Fettes College, Bellahouston's George Braidwood, in his first outing of the season, was forcing the pace from the gun with only American Mike Cotton, a 2:14 marathoner, and the often underrated Peter Faulds of Falkirk Victoria able to hold on, while Hugh McKay of Dundee and Colin Hume of Edinburgh Southern were locked together ahead of Veteran Adrian Weatherhead (EAC) and Cambuslang's Jim Orr. However, over the final half mile Braidwood (a 7:58 3000m runner) used his superior track speed to finally break clear of Cotton to reach the changeover eight seconds ahead in 26:26, with Faulds a close up third (26:40) and giving the defending champions an excellent start. McKay (27:01), in what was probably his best ever road performance, secured fourth place at the expense of Hume (27:13), while the experienced Weatherhead (27:22) pipped Orr by just three seconds, who in turn held off a late challenge from Spango Valley's Peter Conaghan (27:25).

Fastest: G. Braidwood (Bella) 26:26; M. Cotton (Kang) 26:34; P. Faulds (FVH) 26:40; H. McKay (Dund) 27:01; C. Hume (ESH) 27:13; A. Weatherhead (EAC) 27:22.

Stage Two

On the 6M from Maybury Cross to Broxburn it was expected that Nzau would put the Americans into an unassailable lead. However, Chris Robison of Spango Valley had other ideas as he produced a remarkable stint of 28:33, considering he had spent the previous 12 days at sea on a NATO exercise, to give the Renfrewshire club a 22 seconds lead over the Kangaroos and Bellahouston, for whom Nzau and Tony Coyne clocked 29:49 and 29:57 respectively. Donald Bain (29:49) dropped one place for Falkirk, with Neil Thin, 15 seconds faster, maintaining fifth place for Southern ahead of John Graham (29:13), who had gained four places for Motherwell YMCA. Adrian Callan's effort of 28:51 projected Springburn from 13th to eighth position, only two seconds behind Cambuslang, for whom Callum Murray had run a steady 29:32. Meanwhile, further down the field, Graham Laing

(28:53) was performing a similar recovery job for Aberdeen, as he lifted the Northern District club up from 16th to 11th.

Fastest: C. Robison (SV) 28:33; A. Callan (S'burn) 28:51; G. Laing (A'deen) 28:53; J. Graham (Moth) 29:13; C. Murray (Cam) 29:32; N. Thin (ESH) 29:34.

Stage Three

On the shortest but hilliest section of the course (4½M), John Glidewell threw down the American challenge by knocking 26 seconds off Hammy Cox's record of 23:48, and opened up a 68 seconds lead over Spango Valley. Next came Falkirk, Edinburgh Southern and Cambuslang, although there was not much to choose between their runners — Gary Grindley (24:28), Craig Hunter (24:22) and Rod Stone (24:25) — with Springburn now sixth. The unluckiest runner on this stage was Robert Fitzsimmons, who dropped seven places for Bellahouston, being forced to limp home in obvious pain when on paper he would have been expected to continue his club's promising start.

Fastest: J. Glidewell (Kang) 23:22; C. Hunter (ESH) 24:22; R. Stone (Cam) 24:25; G. Grindley (FVH) 24:28; D. Hunter (EAC) 24:44; B. Scally (Shett) 24:48.

Stage Four

This leg (5¼M) saw another record fall to the Americans and the gap between them and their Scottish rivals widen, as John Tuttle delivered an impressive 25:11. Behind him a lively scrap was taking place among the leading native clubs, as Cambuslang's Alec Gilmour (25:30) overtook Falkirk's Gordon Mitchell (26:01) on the long drag up to the changeover at Armadale. Colin McIntyre (26:18) held fourth for Southern to keep them in touch and ahead of Spango Valley, Springburn, Dundee, Motherwell and Aberdeen, with Richard Barrie (26:16), Paul Dugdale (26:12) and Colin Farquharson (26:22) making useful contributions for the last three named teams.

Fastest: J. Tuttle (Kang) 25:11; A. Gilmour (Cam) 25:3; G. Mitchell (FVH) 26:01; P. Dugdale (Moth) 26:12; R. Barrie (Dund) 26:16; C. McIntyre (ESH) 26:18.

Stage Five

There was little positional change on this undulating 5¼M leg as Leek (27:22) kept the New York club well to the fore ahead of Cambuslang's Colin Donnelly (28:02), who took 13 seconds off Derek Easton of Falkirk and Keith Lyall of Southern, although Cammy Spence's 27:36 allowed Spango to nip in between these two clubs. Former Scottish marathon champion Colin Youngson (27:05) gave his traditional high class performance in this classic race to hoist Aberdeen into sixth place, just catching Springburn's Jim Cooper ten yards from the changeover outside the popular Forestfield Inn. However, the star man on this stage was Alan Puckrin, who has been slowly building up his fitness after injury. His time of 26:59 brought Kilbarchan into tenth place, thus making up some of the ground which had been lost



Chris Robison (18) ran the fastest on stage two to take Spango Valley into the lead.

Photo: Graham McIndoe

by an uncharacteristic poor opening leg from first year Junior Paul Mayles.

Fastest: A. Puckrin (Kilb) 26:59; C. Youngson (A'deen) 27:05; A. Leek (Kang) 27:22; C. Spence (SV) 27:36; C. Donnelly (Cam) 28:02; K. Lyall (ESH) & D. Easton (FVH) 28:15.

Stage Six

In many ways this 7M stage was the most fascinating of the entire race as a fierce domestic struggle was taking place behind front man Tom Graves (32:51). Eddie Stewart was in an unenviable position; his American rival was well out of sight, whereas he was an obvious target for Jim Dingwall, Lawrie Spence and Neil Tennant, who started at regular intervals within 43 seconds of the Cambuslang man. After an electrifying start Tennant was soon level with Spence, and both runners then proceeded to reel Dingwall in. All three now had their quarry in view, but repeated bursts by the Edinburgh and Spango athletes eventually forced the Falkirk man to give ground and at the same time allowed them to move alongside Stewart with two of the seven miles remaining. This trio stayed locked together until the final half mile, when Spence (31:51) managed to open a narrow four seconds lead over Tennant, who nonetheless had the satisfaction of returning the day's fastest time of 31:42, with Stewart next home in 32:47 ahead of Dingwall (32:55). Further back Charlie Haskett was putting in a very relaxed and confident looking 32:15 to confirm his recent fine form for Bolton, and to put Dundee into a very creditable sixth, ahead of Aberdeen, Springburn and Kilbarchan, for




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Neil Tennant (Edinburgh Southern) setting the fastest on stage six to take his team from fifth to third place.

Photo: Graham McIndoe

whom Robert Quinn's 32:23 had gained only one place. Motherwell were the unlucky team on this leg as an in-form Peter Fox missed the changeover by a few minutes and John Graham's brother Fraser was press-ganged from the local hostelry to stop in as a late substitute.

Fastest: N. Tennant (ESH) 31:42; L. Spence (SV) 31:51; C. Haskett (Dund) 32:15; R. Quinn (Kilb) 32:23; E. Stewart (Cam) 32:47; T. Graves (Kang) 32:51.

Stage Seven

On the penultimate stretch, between Airdrie and Ballieston (5¼M), Southern played their trump card by unleashing John Robson, who launched his club into an uncatchable second place and indeed brought the Americans back into view by taking 78 seconds off Terry Perrault with a new stage record of 23:44; thus slicing nine seconds off the 1972 record belonging to former UK steeplechaser Gareth Bryan-Jones. John Pentecost (24:56) repeated his second fastest stage of the previous year to consolidate third place for Falkirk, as Cambuslang and Spango lost some ground timewise, while Dundee and Aberdeen retained sixth and seventh places.

Fastest: J. Robson (ESH) 23:44; J. Pentecost (FVH) 24:56; T. Perrault (Kang) 25:02; R. Creswell (A'deen) 25:35; J. Adair (Bella) 25:49; P. McCormack (Dund) 26:13.

Stage Eight

Although Peter Wilson (27:15) pulled back a further 25 seconds on the Kangaroos, Jamaican Mike Feurtado was the first to breast the tape in George Square at the end of the final stage (5½M). However, with the Americans not eligible for the awards, the

Edinburgh man was able to add another 'gold' medal to the one he collected in 1983 when competing for Aberdeen. Jim Evans (27:19) held off Andy Beattie, whose time of 26:34 was a new record for the slightly altered stage, thus underlining the recent fine record which Falkirk and Cambuslang have in this event. Spango Valley were a safe fifth through Terry Wilkie (27:36), exactly one minute ahead of Aberdeen (Mike Murray 27:26), with Dundee Hawkhill an excellent seventh, slicing 64 seconds off their previous best performance. Gerry Fairley (27:22) completed Kilbarchan's recovery to anchor them in eighth position in front of Springburn and Bellahouston. Promising junior Kevin Newberry produced an eye-catching 27:02 in his first appearance in this premier road relay, which enabled the newly formed Motherwell to overtake Victoria Park and finish 12th, five seconds behind Edinburgh AC.

Fastest: A. Beattie (Cam) 26:34; K. Newberry (Moth) 27:02; P. Wilson (ESH) 27:15; J. Evans (FVH) 27:19; G. Fairley (Kilb) 27:22; M. Murray (A'deen) 27:26.

RESULT

- Kangaroos (US-guests)**.....3:37:40
(M. Cotton 26:34, J. Nzau 29:49, J. Glidewell 23:22, J. Tuttle 25:11, A. Leek 27:22, T. Graves 32:51, T. Perrault 25:02, M. Feurtado 27:29)
- Edinburgh Southern**.....3:38:23
(C. Hume 27:13, N. Thin 29:34, C. Hunter 24:22, C. McIntyre 26:18, K. Lyall 28:15, N. Tennant 31:42, J. Robson 23:44, P. Wilson 27:15)
- Falkirk Victoria**.....3:40:23
(P. Faulds 26:40; D. Bain 29:49; G. Grindley 24:28, G. Mitchell 26:01, D. Easton 28:15, J. Dingwall 32:55, J. Pentecost 24:56; J. Evans 27:19)
- Cambuslang** 3:40:48 (J. Orr 27:25, C. Murray 29:32, R. Stone 24:25, A. Gilmour 25:30, C. Donnelly 28:02, E. Stewart 32:47, D. McShane 26:33, A. Beattie 26:34); 5,
Spango Valley 3:42:24 (P. Conaghan 27:28, C. Robison 28:33, S. Conaghan 24:52, C. Leck 27:00, C. Spence 27:36, L. Spence 31:51, D. McCabe 27:28, T. Wilkie 27:36); 6,
Aberdeen 3:43:24 (P. McErean 28:52, G. Iaing 28:53, J. Doig 25:54, C. Farquharson 26:20, C. Youngson 27:05, S. Axon 33:19, R. Creswell 25:35, M. Murray 27:26); 7,
Dundee Hh. 3:44:27 (H. McKay 27:01, C. Ross 30:28, D. McGonigle 24:56, R. Barrie 26:16, S. Borland 28:30, C. Haskett 32:15, P. McCormack 26:13, B. Cook 28:48); 8,
Kilbarchan 3:45:25 (P. Mayles 29:56, R. Hawkins 29:51, R. Gardner 25:42, N. Walker 26:30, A. Puckrin 26:59, R. Quinn 32:23, T. Mooney 26:42, G. Fairley 27:22); 9,
Springburn 3:46:37 (D. Donnet 28:08, A. Callan 28:51, A. McIndoe 24:58, S. Begen 26:43, J. Cooper 28:25, G. Crawford 33:47, S. McLean 26:56, A. Chalmers 28:49); 10,
Bellahouston 3:46:39 (G. Braidwood 26:26, T. Coyne 29:57, R. Fitzsimmons 26:39, G. Getty 27:47, A. Daly 28:26, P. Fleming 32:53, J. Adair 25:49, D. Brydon 28:42); 11,
Edinburgh AC 3:47:45; 12, **Motherwell YMCA** 3:47:50; 13,
Victoria Park 3:48:13; 14, **Fife** 3:50:14; 15, **Shettleston** 3:51:34; 16, **E. Kilbride** 3:55:37; 17, **Edinburgh Univ.** 3:55:57; 18, **Ayr Seaforth** 3:58:50; 19, **Glasgow Univ.** 4:02:43; 20, **Hunters BT** 4:02:46; 21, **Dumbar-ton** 4:06:52.