

WINNERS for the past two years, Racing Club Edinburgh (1991) and Falkirk Victoria Harriers (1990), lived up to their pre-race billing as joint favourites in the 54th running of the famous Edinburgh to Glasgow Road Relay on Sunday.

The Edinburgh side, fielding six members of last year's successful line-up, were always in command and eventually ran out clear winners, although Falkirk gave them a few worrying moments during the 45-mile slog across central Scotland.

Sometimes the action off the road was more intense than that taking place on it, as supporters of the two clubs shouted unpleasantries at each other throughout the duel.

Racing Club proved worthy winners, however, and go into the record books as the first side to retain the *News of the World* silver cup since Edinburgh Southern Harriers in 1982.

Veteran Brian Kirkwood, who lives alongside the first stage, made full use of his local knowledge to put Racing Club into an early lead ahead of Falkirk's Ken Rankine, with Douglas Runciman giving Cambuslang, the other likely contenders, third place.

Steve Binns, making his second appearance for Falkirk since switching allegiance from Annan, propelled his side into the lead on the second stage, just holding off international steeplechaser Graeme Croll, who pulled Cambuslang into second spot. Racing Club slipped back into fourth, 29 seconds off the pace. The outstanding performance of the stage came from Bobby Quinn, who elevated Kilbarchan into third place after taking over in 11th.

Racing Club were back into pole position at the end of stage three, however, by virtue of a sparkling run from the ever-improving Scott Cohen, who probably ensured that there would be no way back for the challengers.

Norwegian visitors Skjalg, of Stavanger, moved into second, 40 seconds behind, with Cambuslang slipping to third and Falkirk dropping to sixth.

Ian Brown, who won a bronze medal with Falkirk in the 1976 Edinburgh to Glasgow, increased Racing Club's lead to 1min 24sec on the next leg as Cambuslang came back into second and Kilbarchan moved up to third. Gary Grindley made up some lost ground on the leaders as Falkirk got back into fourth place.

By the end of stage five, the Edinburgh men held a lead of 1min 33sec over a recharged Falkirk, who had hill running international Dickie Jones to thank for hauling them a little bit closer to their rivals.

The Vics final card was played on the long sixth stage, when John Sherban pulled out all the stops with a fabulous run which nar-

Racing Club stand firm on roads

Racing Club Edinburgh retained their relay crown, but not before some stiff competition from Falkirk Victoria Harriers, as FRASER CLYNE reports

rowed Racing Club's advantage even further. However, John Robson, who had won gold with Edinburgh Southern in 1977, 1981 and 1985, was still able to hand over a 44sec lead to Tom Hanlon.

The Olympic steeplechaser, who a few days earlier had turned down a place in Scotland's Commonwealth Games preparation squad for the second year in a row, revitalised the Edinburgh lead despite a brave run by Mike McQuaid, for the chasing Falkirk side. Racing Club were now 1:46 ahead.

Peter Fleming was not in the mood simply to go through the motions on the final leg into Glasgow. The marathon specialist celebrated his inclusion in the Commonwealth squad with a fine run, bringing his team home almost three minutes ahead of the pack.

Racing Club's eventual domination was marked by the fact that their runners clocked the fastest times on five of the eight stages.

Falkirk were clear in second place, with the Norwegian guests finishing third in their first appearance in the race since 1980. Their fine showing was assisted by Ethiopian marathon runner Tesfaye Bekele on stage six and 1990 World Orienteering Cup champion Havard Tveite on stage seven.

The visitors were not, however, eligible for any of the prizes, so the bronze medals went to national cross-country relay champions Cambuslang, who were fourth overall. Fifth placed Kilbarchan were aggrieved at the outcome, however, as they alleged that Cambuslang's last leg runner, Mark Gormley, was assisted by a pacemaker in the closing stages.

Greenock Glenpark Harriers, 20th in last year's race, picked up the most meritorious award by finishing

the road on the first five stages and thereafter to stay on the left and the finish was moved from the traditional George Square venue to Crownpoint Stadium, all in an effort to improve safety.

However, SAF Road Running and Cross-Country Commission secretary Ian Clifton reported afterwards that he had received reports of numerous athletes cutting across the road at various points, action which could lead to the loss of police backing for the event.

Clifton also expressed concern about athletes wearing logos on their vest which exceeded accepted dimensions, although no action was taken against the persons involved.

RESULTS

1, Racing Club Edinburgh 3:38:50 (B Kirkwood 26:38; A Robson 30:13; S Conen 24:08; I Brown 25:46; D Ross 27:21; J Robson 32:35; T Hanlon 24:24; P Fleming 27:45); 2, Falkirk Victoria 3:41:41 (K Rankine 26:51; S Binns 29:31; W Grieve 26:00; G Grindley 26:02; R Jones 27:15; J Sherban 31:46; M McQuaid 25:32; D Bain 28:44); 3, Skjalg, Norway 3:43:19 (R Vestre 27:41; D Exnead 29:14; B Langeland 24:44; K Nordbotten 28:37; J Holmen 26:51; T Bekele 33:06; H Tveite 24:25; B Ketbrugg 28:41); 4, Cambuslang 3:44:45 (D Runciman 27:04; G Croll 29:19; J Brown 25:17; S Wylie 26:29; W McTaggart 27:56; T Murray 33:16; M McLaughlin 27:01; M Gormley 28:23); 5, Kilbarchan 3:45:20 (T Anderson 27:58; R Quinn 28:41; G Tenney 25:08; T Hearle 26:36; I McDougal 27:59; M Fitzsimmons 34:03; G Gibson 26:31; G Fairley 28:24); 6, Teviotdale 3:46:52 (R Hall 27:55; A Walker 29:31; K Logan 25:28; D Barr 26:54; A Fair 27:40; D Cavers 33:28; N Maltman 27:11; I Elliott 28:49); 7, Shettleston 3:47:15 (J Mackay 27:07; N Muir 29:58; A Little 25:16; D Cameron 26:35; T Coyne 28:14; B Coyle 33:25; A McCormack 28:06; P McDevitt 28:42); 8, Edinburgh 3:49:12 (M Steele 27:52; M Ferguson 30:56; B Farrell 25:36; M Ward 28:15; J Garland 27:33; K Mortimer 34:21; M Fellows 24:50; R Riddell 29:45); 9, Dundee Hawkhill Harriers 3:50:13 (I Campbell 27:21; D Storey 31:03; R Bell 25:18; G Pattison 28:05; M Strachan 27:33; C Hall 33:56; B Cook 26:30; S Borland 30:27); 10, IBM Spango Valley 3:52:09 (T McCallion 28:49; C Robinson 30:13; G Clark 26:06; C Leck 27:12; S Hodge 28:35; E McKeen 35:39; S Connaghan 26:25; C Spence 29:10); 11, Greenock Glenpark 3:53:35; 12, Livingston 3:55:00; 13, Victoria Park 3:55:30; 14, Hunters Bog Trotters 3:56:48; 15, Fife 3:57:50; 16, Edinburgh Southern 3:58:02; 17, Ayr Seaforth 3:58:15; 18, North District 4:00:57; 19, Springburn 4:01:36; 20, Carnegie Harriers 4:01:57; 21, Irvine 4:03:57; 22, Aberdeen 4:07:12

Fastest stages

Stage 1: B Kirkwood (RCE) 26:38; K Rankine (FVH) 26:51; D Runciman (Cambus) 27:04; J Mackay (Shett) 27:07; I Campbell 27:21; G Braidwood 27:26

Stage 2: R Quinn (Kilb) 28:41; D Exnead (Skj) 29:14; G Croll (Cambus) 29:19; S Binns (FVH) 29:31; A Walker (Tev) 29:31; A Reid (North) 29:40

Stage 3: S Cohen (RCE) 24:08; B Langeland (Skj) 24:44; G Tenney (Kilb) 25:08; K Logan (Tev) 25:08; A Little (Shett) 25:16; J Brown (Cambus) 25:17

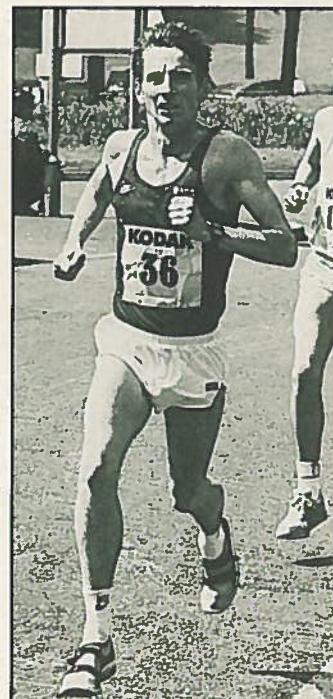
Stage 4: I Brown (RCE) 25:46; G Grindley (FVH) 26:02; S Wylie (Cambus) 26:29; D Cameron (Shett) 26:35; T Hearle (Kilb) 26:36; D Barr (Tev) 26:40

Stage 5: J Holman (Skj) 26:51; R Jones (FVH) 32:35; T Bekele (Skj) 33:06; T Murray (Cambus) 33:16; B Coyle (Shett) 33:25; P Dymoke (Liv) 33:25

Stage 6: J Sherban (FVH) 31:46; J Robson (RCE) 32:35; T Bekele (Skj) 33:06; T Murray (Cambus) 33:16; B Coyle (Shett) 33:25; P Dymoke (Liv) 33:25

Stage 7: T Hanlon (RCE) 24:24; H Tveite (Skj) 24:25; M Fellows (Edin) 24:50; M McQuaid (FVH) 25:32; S Conaghan (SV) 26:25; T Brand (Liv) 26:29

Stage 8: P Fleming (RCE) 27:45; 2, M Gormley (Cambus) 28:23; G Fairley (Kilb) 28:24; B Eltervaag (Skj) 28:41; P McDevitt (Shett) 28:42; D Bain (FVH) 28:44



CELEBRATING: Racing Club's anchor man, Peter Fleming

11th, despite being without international Alan Puckrin.

For Aberdeen AAC, the glory days of the Eighties, when they won the Edinburgh to Glasgow three times and finished third on four other occasions, are well and truly over. The men from the north-east, winners as recently as 1988, finished in last place for the first time in their history, a drastic 3min 15sec behind the second last team.

The future of the race remains as precarious as ever, despite adjustments to the course aimed at alleviating the escalating conflicts with heavy traffic. Runners were instructed to keep to the right-hand side of