

BARR'S EDINBURGH TO GLASGOW RELAY

DESPITE claiming just one of the fastest individual stage times of the day, Leslie Deans Racing Club battled their way to a fourth successive Edinburgh to Glasgow title, *Fraser Clyne report*

They now need one more win to emulate Victoria Park AC's five-in-a-row in the 1950s.

Conditions for the 56th edition of the great inter-city race were absolutely horrendous, with driving rain and a strong westerly wind blowing into the runners' faces throughout the 45-mile journey across Central Scotland.

Terry Reid gave 1989 winners Dundee Hawkhill Harriers an early lead on the opening stage. The Taysiders had hoped to field Liz and Peter McColgan, but both were unable to appear and the Hawks' resources were subsequently severely stretched.

David Cameron brought Shettleston

through in second place behind Reid while veteran Brian Kirkwood opened up for Leslie Deans by finishing just 10sec off the pace.

Phil Mowbray was the man of the moment on the testing second leg. The British junior track international, who also has hill running ambitions, blasted Hunters Bog Trotters into the lead with the fastest time of 29:50 for the six mile stint.

Ken Chapman pulled Leslie Deans up into second place, 36sec behind the leaders, while Cambuslang consolidated third spot with Shettleston slipping to fourth.

Dave Gardiner put the defending champions into the lead for the first time on the mainly uphill third stage, with mountain running expert Dermot McGonigle lifting Shettleston back into second.

The fastest time was, however, recorded by Falkirk's John Sherban, who was over a minute quicker than any of his stage rivals.

Billy Coyle took Shettleston closer to the leaders on the fourth leg but Racing Club's Alan Robson still held a 19sec advantage at the end.

Tommy Murray clocked the fastest stage time of the day when lifting Spango Valley from 18th to 14th.

Olympic steeplechaer Tom Hanlon extended Leslie Deans' lead over Shettleston on the rolling fifth stage while Stephen Wylie hauled Cambuslang into a clear third place with the fastest time.

But if Leslie Deans felt it was all over, they were wrong. On the hilly but fast seven-mile sixth stage, Graham Wight turned in arguably the best individual performance of the day, clawing back 54sec of John Robson's lead and putting Shettleston right back into contention for their first title since 1976.

It was all set up for an exciting finale with Robson handing Frank McGowan a 35m lead over David Connelly at the start of the penultimate leg.

The Shettleston man edged closer and closer to his prey, eventually taking a three-second lead at the final handover.

But then Racing Club's Davie Ross

unleashed a superb last stage run, taking over a minute off Shettleston's Alan Little through the East End streets of Glasgow. The title had been secured well before the finish line in Crownpoint Stadium.

While Leslie Deans celebrated a fourth title win, Shettleston had the consolation of collecting their first place medals since 1978.

Clydesdale Harriers were controversially awarded the prize for the most meritorious performance after finishing ninth in what was their first appearance in the race since 1991, when they were last.

Seventh finishers Metro Aberdeen were, however, aggrieved by the decision. The North-East side were making their first ever appearance in the race, never before having done enough to even qualify for the event. They found it hard to understand how race officials could ignore them after finishing two places ahead of Clydesdale.

1, Leslie Deans Racing Club 3:53:43 (B Kirkwood 28:35; K Chapman 30:26; D Gardiner 25:43; A Robson 27:56; T Hanlon 29:10; J Robson 35:21; F McGowan 26:35; D Ross 29:57; 2, Shettleston Harriers 3:54:44 (D Cameron 28:27; J Mackay 30:45; D McGonigle 26:12; W Coyle 27:35; J McMillan 30:04; G Wight 34:15; D Connelly 26:25; A Little 31:01); 3, Cambuslang Harriers 3:57:45 (C Thomson 28:28; A Robertson 30:32; S Fleming 26:56; D Runciman 29:07; S Wylie 28:54; G Croll 35:08; D Thom 27:16; M Gormley 31:24); 4, Falkirk Victoria Harriers 3:58:41 (S Rankine 29:46; G Grindlay 31:36; J Sherban 24:37; I Johnstone 28:19; K Sturatt 29:57; S Binns 36:09; K Rankine 27:21; M McQuaid 30:56); 5, Kilbarchan 4:02:27 (T Hearle 28:33; R Fitzsimmons 32:08; G Tenney 27:35; I McDougal 30:16; T Anderson 29:33; R Quinn 35:46; G Gibson 27:49; G Fairley 30:47); 6, Hunters Bog Trotters 4:02:51 (C Farquharson 29:00; P Mowbray 29:50; N Blissett 27:01; R Brown 30:06; S Wright 30:24; S Axon 37:07; P O'Kane 27:00; A Jenkins 32:23; 7, Metro Aberdeen 4:05:27 (G Main 30:20; N Milovsorov 32:34; C Youngson 26:45; M Johnson 29:35; K Varney 30:13; F Clyne 36:42; D Watt 27:17; R Taylor 32:01); 8, Teviotdale Harriers 4:05:30 (B Emmerson 29:20; A Walker 31:24; I Elliot 27:25; B Law 29:53; C Nichol 31:06; D Cavers 35:34; A Reid 28:17; N Maltman 32:31); 9, Clydesdale Harriers 4:06:32 (D Roache 28:50; G Graham 32:18; P Halpin 27:02; M Divers 30:40; J Austin 29:57; I Murphy 35:56; R Rossborough 28:48; D Halpin 33:01); 10, Dundee Hawkhill Harriers 4:07:23 (T Reid 28:25; C Haskett 32:29; I Matheson 27:23; C Hall 30:02; M Carroll 30:25; M Strachan 37:23; G Barrie 28:39; G Rennet 32:37; 11, Edinburgh Southern Harriers 4:07:39; 12, FMC Carnegie Harriers 4:09:27; 13, Edinburgh AC 4:09:49; 14, Livingston 4:11:11; 15, Aberdeen AAC 4:11:41; 16,

IBM Spango Valley 4:12:34;
17, North District Select
4:12:39; 18, Irvine AC
4:14:43; 19, Greenock
Glenpark Harriers 4:16:09; 20,
Victoria Park 4:22:52; 21, Law
and District 4:28:05

Fastest

Stage 1: Reid 28:25; Cameron
28:27; Thomson 28:28; Hearle
28:33; Kirkwood 28:35

Stage 2: Mowbray 29:50;
Chapman 30:26; Robertson
30:32; Mackay 30:45; A. Reid
(North) 31:22

Stage 3: Sherban 24:37;
Gardiner 25:43; McGonigle
26:12; P Morrison (Carnegie)
26:39; Youngson (Metro)
26:45

Stage 4: T Murray (SV) 27:32;
Coyle 27:35; Robson 27:56;
Johnstone 28:19; G Mathieson
(ESH) 28:56

Stage 5: Wylie 28:54; Hanlon
29:10; Anderson 29:33; Stirrat
& J Austin (C'dale) 29:57

Stage 6: Wight 34:15; Croll
35:08; Robson 35:21; Cavers
35:34; Quinn 35:46

Stage 7: Connelly 26:25;
McGowan 26:35; O'Kane
27:00; Thom 27:16; Rankine
27:21

Stage 8: Ross 29:57; Fairley
30:47; McQuaid 30:56; Little
31:01; Gormley 31:24