

November 24

EDINBURGH TO GLASGOW RELAY

THE kings of Scottish road running, Mizuno Racing Club, overturned their capital rivals, City of Edinburgh, to win the 64th running of this event for a record 12th successive year. *Doug Gillon reports.*

Even before the race, with their sponsorship terminated, Racing questioned whether they would be in existence 12 months from now, yet afterwards it was the chaotic nature of what they regard as the most prestigious event on the winter calendar which had them frothing.

When the 49-mile race turned into an orienteering exercise for competitors, spectators and officials, club founder Alan Robson blew his top. The former British professional mile champion, who has entered the Flora 1000-mile Challenge in London, said: "I would rather the race was gone, than have this shambles, but that won't be my decision. It will be a club one."

All of the clubs are to be polled on their views about the future viability of the event.

Racing Club survived going off course to beat City of Edinburgh by more than two minutes on a completely new course, with Shettleston third.

Five of the 20 invited clubs did not complete the course within the rules. Kilbarchan's Robert Fitzsimmons, national 1500m champion 10 years ago, started in sixth place at the start of the fifth stage, but went off course at what he says was an unmarshalled junction. He may have missed an arrow on the roadway, but then so did the three clubs immediately following him, and he led Clydesdale, Inverclyde and Fife into limbo with him, before covering almost 10 miles.

When none of them appeared at the next changeover, the four sixth-stage men were allowed to proceed, baton-less at the rear of the field, but the four clubs were disqualified. They are to appeal.

Law & District finished only thanks to veteran Pat Kelly. He ran the last two stages back-to-back when the next man failed to appear.

The new route was painstakingly plotted, mainly off-road, on cycle tracks, to meet safety requirements, but rural byways could not cope with race traffic. Some incoming runners arrived before their out-going team-mates, who were log-jammed in race traffic.

So Britain's last surviving point-to-point relay is under threat. Despite employing a record 88 marshalls, runners failed to stay on a course now emasculated for spectators, and still lacking, to a degree, on safety grounds.

Even the winning club came close to disaster. Racing's AC Muir was almost out of sight, running with race map in hand, until whistled back by a marshal who arrived late.

Hunter's Bog Trotters, Clydesdale, and then Shettleston, each led before double Commonwealth finalist, Glen Stewart, made the break, for Racing, charging from fourth to lead Racing an unassailable 95-second lead. Davie Ross was the happiest man in Racing's squad with his eleventh winning appearance in 12 years.

Men
 1 Mizuno Racing Club (D Beagley 28:20, M Colligan 37:15, T Hanlon 22:35, G Stewart 35:04, D Ross 35:18, A C Muir 33:19, F McGowan 26:42, D Gardiner 28:52) 4:07:25; 2 City of Edinburgh (A Woods 27:37, M Bell 36:32, L Ottemoller 23:44, R Ward 36:56, J Mareque 34:58, M Ferguson 33:30, J Saunders 27:14, D Blackie 29:17) 4:09:48; 3 Shettleston (A Little 27:55, G White 36:03, M Graham 23:37, W Coyle 37:45, R Montgomery 34:27, I Johnston 35:02, S Gibson 26:29, A Callan 28:48) 4:10:06; 4 RonHill Cambuslang 4:13:59; 5 Hunters Bog Trotters 4:15:12; 6 Central 4:24:48; 7 Irvine 4:25:08; 8 Corstorphine 4:28:49; 9 Calderglen 4:30:56; 10 Metro 4:32:03; 11 Aberdeen 4:35:12; 12 Dundee Hawkhill 4:36:53; 13 Lothian 4:39:41; 14 Falkirk 4:43:04; 15 Victoria Park 4:43:49. **DNF:** Law, Fife, Inverclyde

Fastest:

Stage 1 (5M): S Cairns (HBT) 26:36, A Woods (CoE) 27:37, J Pal (RHC)

Stage 2 (7.5M): A Adams (Clydesdale) 35:48, G Wight (Shett) 36:03, A Lemoncello (Fife) 36:18

Stage 3 (4.5M): S Wylie (RHC) 22:12, T Hanlon (Miz) 22:35, R Russell (Central) 22:37

Stage 4 (7.25M): G Stewart (Miz) 35:04, P Mowbray (HBT) 36:10, S Connaghan (Inverclyde) 36:43

Stage 5 (7M): A Hart (HBT) 34:09, R Montgomery (Shett) 34:27, J Mareque (CoE) 34:58

Stage 6 (7M): C Thomson (RHC) 32:43, AC Muir (Miz) 33:19, M Ferguson (CoE) 33:30

Stage 7 (5M): S Gibson (Shett) 26:29, F McGowan (Miz) 26:42, J Saunders (CoE) 27:14

Stage 8 (5.5M): A Callan (Shett) 28:48, D Gardiner (Miz) 28:52, D Blackie (CoE) 29:17

HAYLING 10

Hampshire

TORRENTIAL rain flooded part of the course, but a contingency plan was put in place, which allowed the event to go ahead over an accurately measured 15km distance.

The women then did themselves proud with a top quality race that belied the conditions. Amanda Proctor continued her consistently good 2002 form with another victory, this time over Michaela McCallum, who ran 2:41:41 in the Paris Marathon in the spring.

Proctor, who has won the opening two Hampshire League fixtures over much shorter distances, found the 15km course much to her liking and opened out more than a minute on the Winchester runner who, in turn, was nearly a minute clear of the informal fellow veteran, Liz Hartney.

With the 15km distance being run but rarely in this country, times were difficult to compare, but Proctor's time worked out at 36:25 10km pace.

Men's winner James Baker has made a habit of winning races where the opposition has sometimes been less than top class, but the Chichester Runner's victory here was perhaps his best yet as he narrowly held off Steve Bishop in 49:35, with leading veteran Mike Grist third.

Men (15km)

1 J Baker (Chich) 49:35; 2 S Bishop (Denm) 49:37; 3 M Grist (Bmth, M40) 50:24; 4 P Phillips (unatt) 50:25; 5 A Holt (Herts Phoenix AC) 50:26; 6 D Thomson (Ports, M40) 50:46; 7 I White (Eleigh) 51:30; 8 A Grice (Stubb G) 51:44; 9 J Perry (Win) 52:22; 10 D Carter (Alton) 53:32; 11 D Vosser (Over, M40) 53:42; 12 P Turrell (Liss, M40) 53:43; 13 R Kindersley (Salis, M45) 53:43; 14 R Houghton (Alton) 53:44; 15 G Bungay (Lords) 53:51; 16 D O'Brien (unatt, M40) 53:52; 17 D Fletcher (Havant, M50) 53:59; 18 S Hunt (Salis, M45) 54:03; 19 R Millard (Denm) 54:13; 20 K Dowson (Win) 54:20; 21 C Scott (Ports) 54:22; 22 M Lacey (Poole R) 54:23; 23 J Mann (Win) 54:48; 24 M White (Havant, M40) 54:50; 25 K Sparey (Avon VR, M45) 54:54; 26 A Simpson (Stubb G) 55:02; 27 D Arnold (Denm) 55:02; 28 P Sidaway (Win, M45) 55:17; 29 G Rhimes (Ports, M45) 55:32; 30 B Pentland (Ports J, M45) 55:34

M40: 7 M Boyton-Salts (Denm) 56:27; 8 G Beauvoisin (Denm) 56:37; 9 A Butler (Victory) 56:48; 10 B Elkins (Tott) 57:20.

M45: 7 K Taylor (Win) 55:51; 8 C Guerrier (Poole R) 55:55; 9 N O'Dowd (Eleigh) 56:10; 10 P Spurge (Ports J) 56:25. **M50:** 2 M Robinson (Ports J) 58:24; 3 B Hughes (Ports J) 59:02; 4 J Morris (W&B) 59:45; 5 C Jackson (Farn R) 60:39; 6 S Pothecary (Stubb G) 66:5; 7 A Hall (Ports J) 61:46; 8 P Royce (Gosp) 61:53; 9 D Walker (Victory) 62:06; 10 T Avey (Phoe) 63:08. **M55:** 1 M Anglim (Hardley) 58:44; 2 E Tilbury (Over) 61:30; 3 G Phelps (Wimb W) 62:47; 4 B Farnham (Ports Tri) 63:02; 5 D Goodchild (Lords) 63:08; 6 D Jarvis (Avon VR) 63:40.

M60: 1 B Millo (Havant) 62:30; 2 M Willers (Havant) 65:26; 3 C Henderson (BMH) 66:20; 4 B Davies (RN) 67:12; 5 A Spiers (Havant) 67:18; 6 G Davies (Lords) 68:33.

M65: 1 B Bennett (Win) 69:34; 2 A Hickson (Avon VR) 70:04; 3 J McKerracher (Havant) 74:08. **M70:** 1 G Mills (Hardley) 73:04; 2 R Todd (SW Vets) 78:18; 3 D Porter (Vets) 78:33. **M75:** 1 W Williams (unatt) 1:46:50

TEAM: 1 Winchester & District 80; 2 Denmead Striders 85; 3 Stubbington Green