

COLCHESTER HARRIERS A.C.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 29th September 2000

REPORTS

COLCHESTER HARRIERS A. C. - REPORTS FOR 1999/2000

Chairman's Report - Rick Thompson

The past year has been very productive one for the Club. The membership list stands at some 270 names, with a good 80% of those taking an active part in athletic events. The other 20% of our membership make up the volunteers that help to keep the Club running. To see where all these fit in I had to draw a family tree which will be placed on the notice board after the AGM, when new names can be placed against their elected jobs.

I heard last week that Colchester Harriers are once again the Sport England Eastern Region Sports Club of the Year. This was gained because of our excellent network of volunteers working behind the scenes. The award carries an award of 1000.00, which is designated for spending on the volunteers. The club is automatically entered into the next stage of the judging at National Level, which, if we are lucky enough to win, carries a first prize of 3000.00.

On the athletics front we have had a superb season, made all the easier by the sponsorship of Mr. Steve Harrington, owner of Sloppy Joes. His sponsorship allowed us to subsidise transport to all away fixtures this summer. This in turn helped us take at least 40 young athletes to Eastern Young Athletes matches this year and they ended up gaining promotion into Division One next year. The road running squad were also subsidised on their trip to the Veteran Relays in Manchester, making it easier for them to travel the day before and stay in a hotel overnight, rather than making an early start on race day. Also on the Track and Field front may I add my congratulations to the Women's Squad who also gained promotion mainly due to being able to travel together. The Men's Team narrowly missed out on promotion, better luck next year.

As part of our agreement with Steve, we have been allowed to place a notice board in Sloppy Joes, which is regularly updated with photographs of the Harriers in action. There are also two large banners that are displayed at track and cross-country meetings advertising our link.

Some of you may be wondering what is happening in the respect of two newspaper articles imploring us to amalgamate with Colchester & Tendring AC. I can tell you that their committee has not approached us formally. I feel that if they want a merger then it should be they who make the first approach, either to the Chairman or to the Secretary.

My thanks go out to all members of the Committee who have worked so tirelessly this year and I believe my job was made all the easier by their diligence, and attention to detail.

Whoever is elected to serve as your Committee next year look like having a busy time as the Club Development Plan is due for renewal and to make volunteering for Committee easier we need to write job descriptions for all Committee posts.

Team Managers Report - David Wright

Cross Country

This year got off to a real bang with the heavy clatter of a host of county medals. The Senior Cross County Championship held at the Secret Bunker saw the green vests take silver medals in the Men's category - our best ever result, and just missing out on the gold medals by a handful of points. The Veterans went one better and won the Over 40 Championship at the rough Woodford Green, Claybury course from the home club. Gold winners were Richard Gaine, who was also individual champion, Eddie White. Paul McHugh and David Wright.

Not to be out done David Lacy, Paul Bryan, John Driscoll and Henry Emerton took the Over 50's Championship, with Henry taking the individual silver.

It was bronzes at the Cross Country Relays held at Ilford with Adrian Mussett and Tim Bartrum running their hearts off to bring us home, after Richard Gaine had gone accidentally off course.

The Essex League was not so good for us, with a bad start meaning we could never get back to have a hope of retaining the Championship won in 1998/99. Individual medals were again taken at the end of the season including Melvyn Smith and Eddie White.

The Today's Runner League was won by a mile with the Men winning by a canter, but the ladies disappointingly struggling for a team. The Juniors enjoyed the 1 to 2 mile races that were staged alongside the main race.

Richard Gaine won the London Veteran Championships and again tasted success at the Southern Veterans Championships, where along with Paul McHugh, Eddie White and Tony Seakins, took the team medals. This was followed up by a good 4th position for the team at the National Veterans held at Grimsby.

The Club also staged an Essex League meeting at the University, and competed in the Boxing Day Runners and Riders at Friday Woods.

Trail Running

The year 2000 has been a tremendous year for the Trail Running fraternity of Colchester Harriers. The South Downs 100km saw us yet again finish two teams with all eight runners coming home between 11 and 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Even better news was that we finished 6th and 12th teams home out of the 260 entered. Also the Veterans Championships was won for the second consecutive year.

The Compton 20 and 40 mile events were a big success with individual and team glory coming our way. A mass of green vests ran the Grizzly 20 in deepest Devon, with fine runs from Alan Smalls and Tom Cudmore the highlights.

Perhaps the hardest of the events was the National Trail Race Championship. The 44-mile race saw Bob Clarke, Alan Smalls, Glen Robertson and David Wright pick up silver National Teams medals, while the sturdy Bob Clarke took individual glory.

The Ladies also took team medals in the shorter 26-mile event, over an extremely tough course Rachel Bennett, Liz Cahill and Elaine Rose-Richardson were the silver medallists. Liz Cahill also won an individual medal to savour.

As a Club, trail running was as popular as ever with the Sloppy Joes Monday Night Series held from local pubs were very well attended. The Pie and the Pint and numerous other Harriers Trail events including Bobs Millennium Run and the Christmas Great Blakenham events highlights. Other races, which a big effort was made, include the tough 30 mile Downland Challenge, the Jogshop 20, the Otterpeaks 40 and the Grand Union Canal 147-mile event. In this event saw a very brave Barry Gould collapse with injury after 70 miles in diabolical weather conditions.

Many thanks must go to all the Club Members who have been involved Trail Running in the last 12 months either competing, setting out course or backing up runners.

A final mention must go to Lance Williams who made the South Downs victory possible by his and Roy Moore's back up. Lance's Trail Race, held at Great Horkesley for the Red Cross raised 300.00 and is a good way to finish this splendid report on off road running.

Track Season - 2000 - Linda Garnham

Ladies Southern

The ladies and girls really worked hard this season and it paid off with promotion to the Second Division, we travelled far and wide with some really early starts but we were all there, some too cheerful for words for that time of the morning. The team spirit was great, they all pulled together doing things that they don't normally do for that extra point, some people found that they had a talent they didn't know they had!

There were obviously some excellent performances by those involved, but overall it was not individual but team performance that counted.

Everybody was fantastic, making my job easy (but nerve racking). We had a few disasters along the way - Richmond had memories concerning a 999 call for a suspected broken ankle (a few grey hairs added), then Guilford - a triple jumper twisted an ankle (a few more). Then on the last meeting Deangate 'WOT NO BUS' - cars were used, many thanks to everyone who pitched in (alot more added)

But it was worth it - DIVISION 2 - here we come - **WELL DONE EVERYONE!**

Men Southern

The men's team did themselves justice this year with many of the younger one joining the ranks for the first time. The competition was hard but they worked, trained and pulled together, held their own with the older members helping the younger ones along. We brought in transport this year which helped in getting the team spirit going, just missing out on promotion this year but looking very good for next. The throwers, runners, jumpers, and hurdlers should all be very pleased with their performances.

The men has some problems too - like turning up at Mile End and having to supply nearly all the officials for the meeting to take part. **WELL DONE** to you all

HERE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR!!!

Eastern Young Athletes League

The younger members of the club compete in this league i.e. U13, U15, U17 boys and girls. This year they got promotion to the First Division for the first time and also reaching the final. All age groups performed well especially the U15 girls who won their age group.

The final positions were U13 girls - 2nd, U15 girls - 1st, U17 girls - 6th, Girls overall - 3rd. The final positions for the boys were U13 boys - 4th, U15 boys - 4th, U17 boys - 5th, Boys overall - 5th. Well done to everyone who took part this season. Now look forward to next.

East Anglian League

All age groups take part in this league from the U11 (selective meeting) to the senior ranks. Again everyone taking part did very well,, showing that Colchester Harriers are a force to be reckoned with. The athletes become very competitive within their own age group, with the will to better their own time, jump or distance - which make the future look great.

Again we reached the final in the four age groups U13 girls, U15 girls, U17/Senior Ladies and U17 boys. Unfortunately the petrol crisis ended that and as far as we know it is not being restaged. So all the best for next year.

A word of thanks to all the officials , who without you all of this would not be possible. Rick Thompson - field and track, Jerry Everett - field and track, Karen Wheat - field, Joan Stuart - Field, Bob Kimber -

field, David Wheat - track, Chris Akehurst - timekeeper and Jill Hempstead - timekeeper. Also to all their helpers - too many to mention and the Team Managers - A BIG THANK YOU!

Race Walking - Jerry Everett

For the second year in a row the Club's Race Walking squad will finish runners up to Ilford AC in the 12 race Essex League. A lack of numbers in a couple of races has meant that we are unable to push for the title we won for the only time in 1995.

The whole sport of Race Walking was rocked and deeply saddened by the sudden death of one of the most dedicated walkers in the country, former club member John Hedgethorpe. The massive turn out at his funeral was a testament to how much this character will be missed, as it was he who started a monthly handicap at the Garrison Track 11 years ago. This event introduced many from our club to the sport, I am sure he would be very pleased with the progress and contribution the club has made to Race Walking over the years. In fact now we have two of the top Junior Walkers in the country.

It is not just Dominic and Daniel who have brought great recognition to the Club during the last year. Don Cox at the age of 53 won his first International vest in Roubaix, France following his excellent 110 miles in 24 hours, at Newmarket in August. At this event he won a silver medal in the National Long Distance Walking Championships.

Other major honours have gone to Neil Loader who won a Silver medal in the Welsh Track Championships in Cwmbran. Cath Reader who won a Gold and Alan Ellam who won Silver at the National Veterans Championships in Bedford. Cath also won the National Veterans Indoor title at Birmingham last March.

The Club won Southern Counties Silver Team medals for 20km and Essex Team Silver medals for the 10-mile event. Stacey Wheat won a Bronze Southern Counties medal at the National Championships in Dartford, where she came home 9th, she also won the Essex Juniors Girls title.

It has been an exceptional year for Dominic King the Colchester Young Sports Personality of the Year. He won the National Indoor and Outdoor titles, broke the National Indoor U20 5000m record by 50 seconds while representing Great Britain in Germany. Dominic also won an International vest in Vittel, France a few weeks ago and at Leamington Spa at Easter. There has also been disappointment with the disqualification at the Southern Championships at Enfield and the AAA Olympic Trials at Birmingham. As well as winning the North East Essex Schools Cross Country Championships he also won the Senior Essex Track Walk titles at 3km and 10km, only losing out in the Senior 10 miles Championship in the last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Dominic last year became the youngest person ever to win an Essex County Senior title at any event. At 17 years old he is now ranked as the UK's No. 1 Under 20 and No. 2 Under 23, he has nearly every Club Walking record in the book and still continues to produce personal bests in nearly every race.

Daniel is also regularly improving with every race, beating all the old Club Records and he is now ranked No. 4 for his age in the country.

It would be nice for me as a coach to see a few more of the Club come and have a go at Race Walking - I am willing to teach anyone!!!!

I feel that it would be a great tribute for as many of the Club as possible to turn out and support the John Hedgethorpe Memorial Walk next January in Chelmsford.

Treasurers Report - see attached