

MILOCARIAN ATHLETIC CLUB

Established 1930

President: Major General K Spacie, CB, OBE

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE 2014/15 SEASON.

Introduction

1. The club has been in existence for 84 years and the 2014/15 season extended its recent resurgence in both results and membership.
2. A fixture list of 8 cross country races against civilian clubs in the London area and entries in the Runnymede Relays formed the backbone of the 2014/15 programme; in addition, the revived home match attracted a competitive field and a good turnout of supporters.
3. On the margins, individual members featured well up the order in the Orion 10 mile race and strayed abroad to the annual Brussels 20km road event.
4. Two club members achieved notable marathon performances, one having won a competition to be sponsored by a sports goods company through a preparatory training programme.
5. Sandhurst and London UOTC again provided support for the club whenever commitments allowed and the help and co-operation of the permanent staff were much appreciated.
6. The Milocarian trophies have continued to be awarded for prominent schools athletics championships.
7. Recruiting of young members, principally by word of mouth, has been encouraging and this, accompanied by an overhaul of the club's membership fees, helped to put the finances on a firmer footing.

The Committee

8. During the year the following members served on the club committee:

Neil Wood, late Army – Chairman.

Paul French, late Army – Cross Country Secretary.

John McCarthy, late RAF – Treasurer.

Michael Sumpter, late RAF – Secretary.

The Fixture List

9. The club contested the following fixtures:

5 Jul 14	Runnymede Runners, The Runnymede Relays.
25 Oct 14	Milocarian Home Match, 6 miles. The Terry Lewins Trophy.
22 Nov 14	Kingston & Polytechnic Harriers 7 miles.
13 Dec 14	Hercules Wimbledon 5 miles.
17 Jan 15	Kingston & Polytechnic Harriers, 9 miles.
14 Feb 15	Thames Hare and Hounds, 5 miles.
7 Mar 15	Ranelagh AC 3.8 miles. The Ellis Trophy.
15 Mar 15	British Airways, 5 miles.
21 Mar 15	Bank of England, 6.3 miles.

Notable Results

10. General.

This was the club's most successful season in the committee's collective memory, highlighted by winning two trophies. Teams were consistently strong in ability and numbers which led to wins in 5 of the 8 fixtures contested and second place in the remaining races. In addition, during the

preceding summer, the club came first in the Runnymede Relays out of a field of more than 50 teams. Driving the results was the increase in young members with real ability who boosted the club's performance. When further reinforced by cadets from Sandhurst, Milocarian teams could take on any opposition with confidence. The success of last year's home match, held at Sandhurst, attracted more clubs and runners to the fixture's second running and the usual combination of a challenging course, good facilities and an epic tea with urns, cups and contents kindly provided by Birchalls, the tea importers, ensured that all the visitors expressed a determination to be back for the next one. Milocarrians won the event for a second time, but by a much tighter margin than in 2013.

11. Highlights.

i. The Home Match: the fixture attracted a quality field of 6 clubs fielding 7 teams and over 60 runners to a demanding 6 mile course. Notwithstanding the Sandhurst cadets being committed to their own inter-company race, the Milocarrians turned out sufficient strength to hold off a determined challenge from Thames Hare & Hounds to take the Terry Lewins Trophy. Nevertheless, Thames took the individual prizes, but strength in depth kept the team cup in Milocarian hands for another year.

ii. Kingston & Polytechnic Harriers 7 and 9 Mile Races: strong Milocarian packing won both contests and Hugh Aggleton showed great form to take first place in the 7 mile event and third in the 9 against strong opposition.

iii. Thames Hare & Hounds 5 Miles: a record turnout of 18 Milocarrians allowed the club to enter two teams which finished first and second in this inter-club fixture against well-regarded opposition. OCdt Steel led the field and only a strong finish by a Thames runner prevented the Milocarrians from claiming the first three individual places.

iv. Ranelagh AC, The Ellis Trophy 3.8 Miles: this year, everything fell into place and a strong Milocarian turn out, supported by Sandhurst, made for a convincing win against a field of significant London clubs. The Milocarrians' 8 to score all packed into the first 19 places, OCdt Sayer leading the club in second place. None of the opposition could achieve this level of consistency and The Ellis Trophy was taken by a margin of over 40 points.

12. The Runnymede Relays.

i. Held in Windsor Park, for teams of 6, this event suits the club's membership profile as it offers opportunities for male and female runners of all ages and is a regular in the club calendar.

ii. This year, after a total distance of just over a marathon the Milocarrians 3 entries finished first, eighth and sixteenth out of over 50 teams: the club last won in 1999. Capt Alexander of the RMAS permanent staff took the prize for the fastest male runner over a long leg of the relay and Dr. Hannah Jarvis, of Headley Court, the equivalent ladies' award. This summer event is always well-organised, hard-fought and held in a picnic atmosphere; it is a splendid example of how enjoyable amateur sport can be.

13. Individual Exploits.

i. Tod Ledwith completed the 2015 London Marathon, his first, in a creditable 3hrs 24min and raised £2,000 for a disabled charity in the process.

ii. Tom Rann applied for the Asics Target 26.2 competition, organised by Runners' World magazine. Three thousand hopefuls entered the selection process for one person to benefit from the services of a coach, nutritionist, physiotherapist and psychologist during preparation for a hoped-for sub 3 hours Paris marathon. Initial selection reduced numbers to 50 for a 'bootcamp', at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium from which Tom and 3 others emerged to campaign over 7 days

for votes on the basis of their marathon manifesto. Milocarian members followed the established dictum of vote early and vote often and swept Tom to victory. He may not have thanked us as he undertook a 16 week training course involving speed work and longer slow runs. Hot weather on the day conspired to scramble the script and a bout of cramp meant that Tom finished a frustrating 11 seconds outside the 3 hour target. Nevertheless, it was a fascinating experience for him and one that raised his game well beyond his expectations – the sub-3 hour marathon cannot be far away.

iii. Dr Hannah Jarvis became Surrey Cross Country League ladies' champion, between running for the Milocarrians and represented Wales twice in mountain running events.

Membership.

14. Membership is open to all members of the regular and reserve forces, male and female, serving and retired and their dependants.

15. The committee has decided that club subs should continue to be £15 for the first year, which includes the cost of the member's club vest and £10 a year thereafter, payable by direct debit.

16. Non-running members' subs have been raised to £7.50 a year which will entitle them to be circulated with race details and invitations to attend events, including the home match.

17. Cadets and undergraduates in OTCs are signed up and given a vest on the understanding that their direct debits will not be activated until they are commissioned or they graduate.

18. A race programme is arranged every year and published on the website, www.milocarianac.info, so that opportunities to run are available to members whenever their commitments allow. It is hoped that members, particularly those recruited as o.cdts and members of the OTC, will get into the habit of keeping in touch and turning up to run when they can.

19. The intention of the club's founders had been to encourage young officers to continue participating in athletics when they left the service colleges and joined their units. It was satisfying that, during 2014/15 the club recruited three members who had first run for the club as cadets.

Publicity

20. Approaches to service journals, such as Soldier and RAF News have continued seemingly to disappear down a 'black hole' – emails not responded to, phones always on voicemail and no replies to messages – however, the club is grateful to The Pennant, The Wagonner and The Wish Stream for giving it space.

21. Posters have been circulated to units and headquarters around the London area, for displays in gymnasias and HQ Londist has been generous in publicising the Milocarrians' race programme.

22. The club would be grateful for this report to be circulated as widely as possible

Milocarian Trophies

23. General. The club has two trophies that are pledged to schools athletics competitions, a further one that is the team trophy for the home match and an individual cup to be awarded annually to the club's leading runner.

24. The Milocarian Cup. A George III silver urn was bought in 1946 to commemorate the club's war dead and was pledged to the then AAA for youth sport. In May 2012 it was presented to the winning SE Region athletics team at the national Sainsbury's Schools Games, held in the Olympic Stadium and has the distinction of being the first athletics trophy to be presented there. In 2014 the Midland Region took the trophy, but this time, the event was run at the Etihad Stadium, in Manchester where it will be contested again in 2015.

25. The Milocarian Trophy. This was adopted by Achilles AC for their annual inter-schools relay championships and awarded to the winning girls team. The event takes place annually in May, at Iffley Road, Oxford, where Roger Bannister broke the four minute mile and Millfield is the current holder.

26. The Terry Lewins Trophy. This trophy was inaugurated in memory of a long-standing member of the club, in 1988 and has since been competed for by the clubs running in the Milocarian's home match, held at RMA Sandhurst. The Milocarrians are the current holders, having won it for a second successive year in October 2014.

27. The Ploen Trophy.

a. A former member and international triple jumper, Derrick Frost, very kindly donated funds for a cup to be awarded annually to the member scoring the highest number of points, based on races run and finish positions over the course of each season's race programme. The name of the trophy commemorates the town in north Germany where King Alfred's School for service children was based, the connection being that the school had won the Milocarian Cup 6 times in 7 years, between 1952 and 1958.

b. The winner of the trophy for 2014/15 season, who will receive it at the next home match, is Capt. Felix Keating, Int Corps.

Acknowledgements

28. Particular thanks are due to Maj Ben Cassons and Capt Jack Swannick, at Sandhurst, who have promoted the Milocarian cause with great enthusiasm and in particular, gave invaluable help with the re-establishment of the home match. The continuity of contact willingly provided by two busy officers has been fundamental to the recent success of the club and the President and committee extend their warmest appreciation to them.

29. The staff of HQ LonDist, London UOTC and of 4 Para (V) have also continued to provide help and encouragement and the club is grateful for their willing assistance.

iii. Finally, the club would not function without the dedicated work of the cross country secretary, the treasurer and the secretary; their energy and enthusiasm are exemplary and it is satisfying that their efforts have been seen to pay off in terms of more runners taking part in club events and better results being achieved.

The Future

30. Keeping the Club Alive. As well as recruiting more runners, there is a need for succession planning in respect of the committee. All four members are now retired and only the chairman still competes; younger, more active members are required to carry the club forward and at least two of them ought, ideally to be still serving. Anybody who is interested or anybody who knows anybody who might be interested should contact the chairman on 01622 718665 or the match secretary on 01264 710623.

The Website

31. The club's website is accessible on www.milocarianac.info and contains the race calendar, results and details of club activities.