

## **MILOCARIAN ATHLETIC CLUB**

**Patron: HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG, KT.**

Established 1930

President: Maj Gen K Spacie, CB, OBE.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE 2019/20 SEASON.**

Introduction.

1. Milocarian AC's 90<sup>th</sup> year started very promisingly, but the latter part of the season and any prospects of summer running were blighted by the virus. The committee still harbours hopes of normal service being resumed this autumn.

2. General.

a. The home match, at Sandhurst, opened the season as usual and a further 6 fixtures against clubs in the London area were planned. Five races took place, but the Ellis Trophy, at Ranelagh, a perennial favourite, had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, sufficient matches were contested to meet the requirements for the club individual trophies to be awarded.

b. The club fielded a full-strength team to qualify in all but one event and had a top three finisher at every match, including three overall winners.

c. Milocarian members were prominent in both the Army and the Inter-Services Championships and Lauren Hall capped her best season yet by winning both ladies' events.

d. The virus put paid to the club's extra-curricular activities. The Runnymede Relays, a summer event in which the Milocarrians always do well was cancelled as were the Achilles Relays and the Schools Games at both of which Milocarian trophies are contested.

e. Runners and organisers alike are looking to the coming season with some anxiety and waiting to see whether clubs and events will survive the hiatus. Some, such as the Schools Games and the Achilles Relays, had been suffering a slow but seemingly inexorable decline in participation, in recent years and it is hoped that these meetings, that are so vital for giving young athletes experience and opportunity, will return revitalised.

3. The Committee, 2019/20.

Neil Wood, late Army – Chairman.

Paul French, late Army – Cross Country Secretary.

John McCarthy, late RAF – Treasurer.

Mike Sumpter, late RAF – Website Manager.

4. The 2019/20 Fixture List.

26 Oct 19	Milocarian Home Match, 6 miles. The Terry Lewins Trophy.
23 Nov 19	Kingston & Polytechnic Harriers 7 miles.
28 Dec 19	Orion Harriers, 7 miles.
18 Jan 20	Bank of England, 5 miles.
15 Feb 20	Kingston & Polytechnic Harriers, 9 miles.

08 Mar 20 Thames Hare and Hounds, 6 miles.  
28 Mar 20 Ranelagh AC 5.5 miles. The Ellis Trophy and Dysart Cup. Cancelled.  
04 Jul 20 The Runnymede Relays. Cancelled.

Achievements.

5.Club Matches.

a.General. The season saw able new members join, former members return and improved availability from existing members . The combined effect led to very competitive teams which won three of the events contested and took second place in a further two.

b.The Home Match.

i.The fixture was held in conjunction with the cadets' inter-company race and attracted runners from 6 other clubs for a field of over 200 with the Milocarian contest providing 70 competitors. The club had been the winners for the previous five years and fielded a strong team, but Thames Hare & Hounds put their 6 scorers in the first 10 places – Richard Ollington winning in 30:20 and ran away with the 2019 Terry Lewins Trophy, Milocarian 'A' having to settle for second place. Milocarian 'B' at least had the satisfaction of beating Thames 'B'.

ii.Sarah Pemberton was leading lady, for the club, in 19<sup>th</sup> place overall, but the ladies' trophy was carried off by Runnymede Runners.

iii.The Milocarrians had had a something of a stranglehold on the trophies over recent years, so it was encouraging for all the competitors to see the cups and medals being more widely distributed in 2019. Also, the organisers were happy to see a renowned club such as Thames make a determined effort to win the home match.

iv.As has become customary, the faster competitors from the Milocarian race finished ahead of the leading cadets.

v.Once again, the Sandhurst setting and support were exemplary, the academy provides what must be one of the best backdrops to an event anywhere and the staff were their usual combination of efficiency and wry humour; the event would be impossible without their help, generously given. All the competitors regard the home match as something special and take away an impression of high standards maintained with pride.

c.Kingston and Polytechnic Harriers 7. The club took five of the first 7 places including Andrew Reeves in first followed by Rory Jordan and Sarah Pemberton was the leading lady. The team result was a decisive win for the club, 19 points to 43.

d.Orion Harriers. Taking place so soon after Christmas, it was not expected that many members would trek to Epping for this event, but Ady Whitwam and Felix Keating represented the club and Ady scored an impressive win by 15 seconds in a quality field, over a demanding course; Felix finished in the middle of the pack at 33<sup>rd</sup>.

e.Bank of England. Eight clubs contested this popular event and Ranelagh arrived from the other side of Richmond Park with a team of talent and depth, determined to repeat last year's win; nevertheless, the top 10 places featured runners from four clubs, including Milocarrians Max Walker and Rory Jordan in second and fifth. However, Ranelagh packed well and won with 41 points from Milocarrians with 82 and hosts with 90.

f.Kingston and Polytechnic Harriers 9. Milocarrians were not quite so dominant over Kingston's longer course, but had too much strength in depth for the hosts. Max Walker was a convincing

winner, nearly 50 seconds ahead of the first Kingston runner. Rory Jordan and Hamish Waring were separated from Rob Poole and Felix Keating by two more Kingston runners, but the club's five to count were all within the first 8 places and Hannah Karas and Celia Waring were the leading ladies. Overall, it was a clean sweep for the club, taking the individual honours and the match result by 23 points to 38.

f. Thames Hare and Hounds. The club balanced accounts with Thames for the season, beating them 64 points to 104 on a very muddy Wimbledon Common course. Alex Gerald was first Milo home, in third place and he was well backed up by Tom Rann, Felix Keating and Nick Wood in fifth, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> respectively. Hannah Karas and Harriet James were the first ladies in 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

g. Ranelagh. Performances to date had encouraged the club to feel that it would be a strong contender for Ranelagh's Ellis and Dysart Trophies, but the virus intervened: next year, perhaps.

6. The 2019 Runnymede Relays. This hugely enjoyable event was another victim of the virus; as last year's winners, the club is very much hoping that the relays will be restored in 2021.

7. Service Championships. Current and former Milocarians were prominent at all the rounds of the service cross country championships.

a. London District. Historically, the club had encouraged runners from London UOTC to enter the London District championships, held at Tweseldown, but none was available this year. This was unfortunate because the O/Cdts had made an increasing impact in recent races and had come second in their unit category at the Army Championships in 2019.

b. Army Championships.

i. Ladies Placings. Lauren Hall won convincingly, at Minley and she was backed up by leading Milocarians, Rohanna Vickers in third, Kelly Haniver in 7<sup>th</sup> and first vet and Hannah Karas in 13<sup>th</sup>.

ii. Men's Placings. Max Walker finished a strong third, Ady Whitwam was 8<sup>th</sup> and first vet and Alex Miller 18<sup>th</sup>.

d. Inter-Services Championships.

i. Men's Placings. The 2020 championships were held at Minley, a world away from the groomed acres of RAF Halton, but the RAF senior men's team adapted well and won the individual and team titles. Milocarian Max Walker came third overall and Guy Thomas, the Milocarian medal winner from the previous year's home match, at Sandhurst confirmed his potential in 17<sup>th</sup> place.

ii. Ladies Placings. To cap a highly successful season, Lauren Hall retained her inter-services title convincingly and Rohanna Vickers and Kelly Haniver maintained their good form in fifth and 10<sup>th</sup>.

Membership.

8. Membership is open to members of the regular and reserve forces, male and female, serving and retired and their dependants. Twenty nine active members contested the Ploen Trophy in 2019/20, of which five were female; the total was down on the previous year, due to service commitments, but the standard of the club's runners continued a recent rising trend.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Officer Cadets and undergraduates in OTCs and equivalents 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.

12. Although a tri-service club, currently Milocarian AC is 'Army heavy' and it would be appreciated if the RN and RAF sports boards would encourage participation by their runners when possible.

Trophies.

13. Milocarian Medals.

The annual home match takes place in conjunction with the Sandhurst cadets' inter-company cross country competition and the club awards medals for the fastest male and female cadets in the race who were respectively OCdts Thomas and Duncan in 2019.

14. Club Champions.

a. Ladies. Hannah Karas

b. Men. Rory Jordan.

Acknowledgements.

15. Particular thanks are due to Maj Ady Whitwam, the academy cross country officer and Maj (MAA) Sean Semple of HQ RMA Sandhurst for being unfailingly supportive and a pleasure to work with and to WOs David Brandfoot and Kelley Haniver for using their influence with the Army teams and their competitive abilities to the club's benefit.

16. The Army Sports Control Board has been a valued point of reference and the club is much indebted, in particular to John Killoran and Mrs Claire Murton, secretary and assistant secretary Army athletics respectively for their help.

17. Finally, the club would not function without the dedicated work of the cross country secretary, the treasurer and the website manager; 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 such encouraging results being achieved.

18. Keeping the Club Alive. The club is still looking for potential committee members, either serving or retired. Age is not a barrier, however, the current committee members are in their late sixties and their seventies and it would be good were any applicants to be a bit younger. 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.

19. The club's website is accessible on [www.milocarianac.info](http://www.milocarianac.info) and will contain the 2020/21 race calendar, results and details of club activities in due course.