

## **MILOCARIAN ATHLETIC CLUB**

Established 1930

President: Brigadier Tony Ling CBE, Late The Queens Regiment.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON THE 2021/22 SEASON.**

Introduction.

1. Milocarian AC's 92nd year was a first step towards post-Covid normality. It did not prove possible to run the annual home match, but three established fixtures were contested and the club was able to put on a strong showing in each.

2. Maj Gen Keith Spacie, who had been President for 12 years, stepped down and he was succeeded by Brig Tony Ling.

General.

3. Some competitor clubs struggled to regain momentum after successive lock-downs and fixtures were hampered by both a lack of runners and restrictions on the use of some regular venues.

4. The virtual running competition maintained club continuity and cohesion as it provided a regular excuse to get in touch with members, when publishing results. Also, through the co-operation of the staff at London and Birmingham OTCs, it broadened awareness of the club amongst the officer cadets.

4. Once again, members showed energy, imagination and originality in finding other things to do when they were not running for the club.

5. The Committee, 2021/22.

Neil Wood, late Army – Chairman.

Paul French, late Army – Cross Country Secretary.

John McCarthy, late RAF – Treasurer.

Mike Sumpter, late RAF – Website Manager.

Achievements.

6. Virtual Running.

a. The virtual competition allows participants to log times for runs of over 5km on Strava which are then converted into 5km times and consolidated fortnightly into an order of merit. Six fortnightly sessions make a season at the end of which an overall ranking is produced and the results published on the club's website.

b. The virtual running series is now in its fifth season and it is intended to continue the sequence when 'proper' competition resumes as it seems to have achieved a momentum.

c. Just over 60 runners are signed up to the competition and about 30 regularly submit times. There has been a brisk battle for overall honours between Rory Jordan and David Branfoot since the competition started with Freddie Strachan intervening whenever he is available: sub-19 minute times, for 5km, have been necessary to get among the leading runners.

d. The club has been delighted by the depth of participation and is very grateful to the staff of London and Birmingham UOTCs for encouraging cadets to take part and for handling the dissemination of instructions and results.

#### 7. Team Matches.

a. General. The club entered teams for three events, all regular fixtures from previous seasons and won the lot – such a satisfying thing to write.

b. 13 Feb 22 v Thames Hare and Hounds. The course on Wimbledon Common had been tidied up somewhat since the club's last visit, most of the paths had been re-surfaced and ruts and mud reduced. The club's runners, led by Freddie Strachan and Tom Rann, adapted well and packed strongly, taking 8 of the first 12 places to secure a convincing win.

c. 2 Apr 22, The Ellis Trophy. It was good to be back in Richmond Park which looked as lovely as ever. Ranelagh hosted the Ellis Trophy on their Surrey League course, 4.5 miles of smooth, firm grass and the club's runners were very much at home. Tom Rann turned the tables on Freddie Strachan to win the event overall, Jessie Lutwyche was the fastest lady. The Milos' 6 to score packed into the first 18 places which was sufficient to take the trophy from The Stragglers.

d. 2 Jul 22, The Runnymede Relays. The club turned out three teams, in Windsor Park and the first team led the event throughout, after a very strong opening leg from Tom Rann. Woking AC closed the gap towards the end with the two fastest times of the day, but the Milos' margin was still two minutes at the finish; the second and third teams were 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Jessie Lutwyche produced the outstanding performance of the event by running the third fastest individual lap overall.

e. Looking Ahead – The Home Match. The home match is planned to take place at Sandhurst on Sat, 29 Oct 22 but will inevitably be dependent on the Covid situation.

#### 8. Those Other Things.

a. Celia Waring was third lady finisher in the North Downs 50km on 1 May 22.

b. On 2 Jul 22 Celia and Hamish Waring completed the Saloman Serpent 100km trail race on the Sussex Downs finishing 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> and first couple in 12hr 18min 26sec.

c. Meanwhile James Rann won the UKIPT London Main Event poker tournament over the weekend 9 and 10 Apr 22; this event does not count towards the club championship.

#### Membership.

9. Membership is open to members of the regular and reserve forces, male and female, serving and retired and their dependants. In spite of the reduced club activity, due to the virus, retention of members has been good and the club has kept its competitiveness.

10. The committee has decided that club subs should increase to £25 for new members for the first year, which includes the cost of the member's club vest, prices of which have risen significantly recently and £10 a year thereafter, payable by direct debit.

11. Non-running members' subs have been held at £7.50 a year which entitles them to be circulated with race details and invitations to attend events, including the home match.

12. 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 after commissioning or graduation.

13. 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.

14. General. One of the Milocarian trophies awarded externally has come back into service, but the other remains hostage to uncertainties over the funding of the Youth Sport Trust's national schools' games.

15. Awards to External Competitions.

a. The Milocarian Cup. The club's memorial trophy is pledged to the Youth Sport Trust to be awarded to the winning regional athletics team at the national schools' games, however, the games have had to be held biennially, owing to lack of funding and the current southern region holders will not have to defend the cup until 2023.

b. The Milocarian Trophy. This was adopted by Achilles AC for their annual inter-schools relay championships, to be awarded to the outstanding girls' team. The meeting was revived in May, at Iffley Road, Oxford and the club's chairman presented the trophy to The Coopers' Coburn School's 3 x 800m girls relay team who broke a long-standing meeting record in winning the event.

16. Club Trophies.

a. The Terry Lewins Trophy. Inaugurated in 1988, this cup has been awarded to the winning team in the club's annual home match, usually held at Sandhurst, in October. Milocarian AC hosts the clubs against which it will compete during the rest of the season. The cup was last won by Thames Hare and Hounds, in 2019 and it is hoped that it will be contested again in October this year.

b. The Milocarian Ladies Trophy. First awarded at the last home match before the virus struck, this cup goes to the winning ladies team at the event and is currently held by Runnymede Runners.

c. The Ploen Trophy. Named after the location of King Alfred's School, in Germany, the perennial winner of the The Milocarian Cup in the 1950s, it is presented annually to the club's best runner over the course of the cross country season.

d. The Wyvern Cup. Donated by the Wyvern Club, the association of former pupils of King Alfred's School, it is awarded to the club's leading lady runner each season.

e. 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.

Acknowledgements.

17. The club looks forward to renewing its associations with the staff of HQ RMA Sandhurst and of the gym to help to resurrect the home match and with the Army Sports Control Board for its support in recruiting runners.

18. It has been a pleasure to work with the staff of Birmingham UOTC and to channel the enthusiasm of the cadets into the club's virtual running competitions.

19. The club would not function without the dedicated work of the cross country secretary, the treasurer and the website manager; it is a tribute to them that the club looks forward to emerging from the pandemic with confidence. The website, managed by Mike Sumpter, has been of particular

value over the last two years as a means of keeping the club together and maintaining a competitive challenge via the virtual running sessions.

20. Keeping the Club Alive. The club has been looking for potential members to replace the existing long-serving committee and there is now the prospect of a new cross country secretary and treasurer for next season. Nevertheless, the club would still like to hear from anybody who might be interested in helping to keep it running. Neither age nor athletic ability is a barrier, enthusiasm and imperviousness to British winter weather are what is required. Anybody who is interested or anybody who knows anybody who might be interested should contact the chairman on 01622 718665 or the cross country secretary on 01264 710623.

21. The club's website is accessible on [www.milocarianac.info](http://www.milocarianac.info) and will contain the 2022/23 race calendar, results and details of club activities in due course.