

Achilles Club 1993 Annual Report

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE BEAT HARVARD AND YALE

For the first time for 30 years, Oxford and Cambridge defeated Harvard and Yale: what is more they did it away from home. The timing could not be better, for it adds a real competitive edge to the next confrontation which takes place in 1995 and which will be celebrated as representing the centenary of the series. The whole team rose to the occasion and special praise goes to Dewi Roberts, who as Chef de Mission instilled in his athletes the belief that victory was possible.

Andre Lill was our outstanding performer, although after a clever tactical win at 1500m he rashly tried to force the pace in the 800m and was run down on the line: but he bounced back with a storming 400m relay leg which sealed the match victory. Ruth Irving produced the best performance on either side in the women's match, long jumping 5.92 in cool and damp conditions, both *a series* and a Cambridge University record. Indeed the jumps were the platform for Oxbridge's success, for their men won all four of the men's jumps: Andre Hodge proved again his high jump consistency off a wet run-up (the hosts were disconcerted that they could not move the event to indoor facilities a mile away), and added the Triple Jump for good measure. Matthew Weaver became the first Briton to win the pole vault in the history of the series (Harvard's own Tom Blodgett won the event while at Cambridge the last time Oxford and Cambridge were victorious, in 1963).

The last time that Oxford and Cambridge won this match, in 1963 at the White City, it brought the running match score to 11 matches to 9 in favour of the British: a string of 13 American victories ensued, and it looked for while, like the Ryder Cup, that the advantage would never be regained. The series no standing at 22-12 to Harvard and Yale: we look forward to further redressing the balance in 1995.

Chris Thorne's report on the full tour is included in the appendix

GRE CUP

Norwich, 2nd May. Ladies first, as there were fewer of them: like last year there were insufficient for a relay team, but Chris Martin (Tuerk), Chris Howard and Nikki Haines made sure that we were well represented in most other events. The men's team, which a few days prior to the match also only numbered three, was swelled by a welcome presence from Cambridge. Nevertheless we failed to score points in 5 events: had we but registered a result in each of these events we would have progressed to the next round in second place... The best performance of the day was Matt Lawson's 49.2 400m, in windy conditions, behind junior international Nicky Budden. This was a personal best for Matt by a considerable margin, and set him up well for the 'Varsity Match two weeks later. He confirmed this fine form by anchoring the long relay in 49.8, and placed fourth in the triple jump for good measure. Winner of the team manager's Mars bar for the most points amassed during the afternoon was George Kollias who gave us a good start by winning the hammer, and then placed 4th in the shot and 5th in the discus. The manager, Jon Crews, would have claimed the prize himself, but he no-heighted in the pole vault and did a Barton in the 5000m, failing to appear at the start. Still, a good 2nd in the high jump, 5th in the long jump and a very gallant 4th in the steeplechase was no mean afternoon's work.

The other class performance of the afternoon came from Tom Stoute, who took the 800m to Paul Larkins, and was only just edged into 2nd place, in 1:54.6. Graham Edmonds moved up a distance to 1500m and sprinted to a good third place. James Carr was another high scorer with a third over 200m, fourth over 100m, and valuable legs of both relays. Your Hon. Sec. was 4th at 400m hurdles, but found that the 110m hurdles had grown too high since he last attempted them: he even set off on the first lap of the 1,000m, but came to his senses after 400m.

The relays brought the day to a satisfactory close. In the 4 x 100m Carr, Stoute and Singham launched the Hon. Sec. in second place with sufficient margin to enable him (just) to maintain it. For Shanker it was yet another comeback, and with only a handful of training sessions in the last year the sterner test was yet to come. Edmonds' blisters, incurred in the 1500m, prevented him from toeing the line for the 4x400m, and James Carr was volunteered to take his place on the first leg: he performed his reluctant duty admirably, handing over in the pack in about third place. All eyes were on Singham: employing his customary slow start to devastating effect, he conserved enough energy to muster a convincing kick in the home straight which carried him back into third spot. However, we were now a good thirty yards adrift of the leader, and it was Tom Stoute's spectacular third leg which put us back in the hunt: by the end of his lap he had reeled in both the runners ahead of him, and handed over to Matt Lawson 5 yards ahead. Matt made no mistake, and the day ended as it had begun, with an Achilles victory.

BUSF CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ruth Irving (long jump, 5.89), Kenny Stirrat (presently at Birmingham: steeplechase 8:56.39), Malcolm Croad (hammer, 51.90) and Nick Barrable (3k Walk, 13:59.76) are to be congratulated on winning their respective titles.

119TH 'VARSITY MATCH

Matches in recent years have been close, and this one was no exception, seeming to be even tighter for much of the afternoon due to a regretted scoring error. However, it was Cambridge's athletes who seemed to rise just that fraction higher to the occasion, and they emerged winners of both men's and women's contests by 113-108 and 96-83 respectively. The Centipedes victory over Alverstone for the Graham Goddard Trophy was some consolation for Oxford, and Alligators and Millipedes were found (on a recount the next day after it was initially announced that Alligators had won by a point) to have drawn.

Cambridge President Andy Hodge led from the front, winning the high hurdles, the high jump and the triple jump, placing second in the javelin and running a leg of the relay: he achieved personal bests in 3 events, including a 4cm gain to 2.10 in the high jump, which earned him the Le Touquet Trophy for most improved performance. Many would have argued, however, that Tom Stott's 1:52.6 in strong wind, a full second inside his previous best also merited the award: he led from gun to tape.

Exceptional new match records were established in the Long Jump. In the men's event first Gareth Davies sailed out (yes, it was windy but the gusts made the run-up difficult) to 7.49 adding c to Dwayne Heard's 1987 mark. However, within a few minutes his Oxford team-mate Simon Walker had surpassed even this with a massive 7.62 (25 ft exactly), a feat which earned him the Drake Digby Trophy. Ruth Irving was similarly impressive in the women's event, reaching 6.17, eclipsing Emma Westlake's 5.84 of 1990, and thereby winning the Susan Dennler Trophy. Best race of the afternoon was the 5000m where 'Harkers', Ian Harkness, trailed 'Bainsey', Simon Baines, for almost 12 laps of raucous partisan encouragement for both protagonists, and found just enough to edge past on the final lap. Close duels were fought, too, by Matthe Birchall and Chris Martin in the 200 hurdles and 400 hurdles, each scoring one victory.

The foundation of the Cambridge women's victory was laid by Kathryn Purchase (100 and 200), Rachel Jordan (400 and 800) and Emma Coleman (1500 and 3000) who between the three of them won a11 the flat track events. Eleanor Cave and Halcyon Martin were towers of strength for Oxford, winning 5 events between them and scoring well in several others.

The third match record of the day was Matthew Weaver's fine 4.80 pole vault, a personal best and fully 60cm higher than the 4.20 set by Peter Edwards in 1976 and equalled by Nigel Clarke in 1987. Other notable performances included Warre Gilder' unpressed sprint double, while Malcolm Croad wa awarded the Paul Gomme Trophy for best performance in throwing events during the season.

Adrian Metcalfe performed his refereeing duties with conscientiousness, and those of Dinner Chairman with aplomb. But let's give next year's speaker a little more courtesy, please, and don't talk over his speech.....

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Richard Nerurkar made an auspicious start to his marathon career, winning in both Hamburg and at the World Marathon Cup competition in San Sebastian. The latter victory in 2:10:03 put him at the top of the UK rankings for the year (he also heads the 10,000m lists), and is a tribute not only to Richard's hard work but to the meticulous planning of his coach, Bruce Tulloh.

Danielle Sanderson also made a big impact in San Sebastian, placing 21st in 2:37:33 as second scorer for the bronze medal winning British Team.

Tim Berrett, last year's Achilles Medallist, placed fourth in the World Indoor Championships 5k walk, a few weeks after setting a Commonwealth Record of 18:47.56. He holds the Canadian and North American Records for 20k and 50k track walks (track performances being the only ones officially recognised for record purposes) of 1:22:38.1 and 3:56:14 respectively, both marks superior to the British Records.

Chris Cheeseman, the former Oxford steeplechaser, is making notable advances up the national rankings as a born-again walker. A regular winner of local races, after placing 5th in the UK 10k Road Walk Championship, he achieved 7th place in the AAA's on the track.

Others well placed at the AAA's were Ruth Irving, 5th in the long jump, and Tony Hatton, 5th in the javelin.

Achilles (and Marlborough) scored a notable one-two in the Great West Run half marathon: Richard Nerurkar won impressively in 62:39, with Jerry Barton second in 68:46. Their coach Bruce Tulloh was 39th in 79:00.

BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Pride of place went to Joanna Latimer, who broke through to a new Northern Ireland Record of 2:03.65 in placing third over 800m. Andre Lill (800m) and Ruth Irving (Long Jump) both achieved fourth places, while Tony Hatton (Javelin) and Matt Weaver (Pole Vault) were both seventh, Simo Baines (5000m) was 8th and Paddy Brice (3000m steeplechase) placed 9th. An Achilles contingent of at least 17 also included Richard White (800), Ian Harkness (16th, 5000m), Kenny Stirrat and Andy Robinson (3000 steeplechase), Matthe Birchall (400m hurdles), Andy Hodge (12th, High Jump), John Moreland (15th, Discus), Malcolm Croad (15th, Hammer), Sue Bevan (800m), and Gill Howard (11th, High Jump).

ACHILLES V. COMBINED SERVICES V. ESSEX V. SURREY V. HAMPSHIRE

For the first time this fixture, the premier event of our calendar was combined so that men and women's events were held on the same day. And what a difference it made to Achilles team spirit, especially as the Stinsons hosted a hugely enjoyable barbecue after the match. There was the usual Achilles difficulty with filling all the events: there seems to be no pattern to this problem: a few years ago we lacked throwers; this year we won several throwing events but it appeared that the club's entire distance running contingent had gone back-packing round Europe. The Achilles women outshone the men in most events, and were rewarded with 3rd place in the match. The men were not disgraced, however, and finished fourth.

If an individual participant is to be singled out, it will be Roderick Thorne, down on his annual holiday from the Orkneys, visiting his brother, the CUAC Senior Treasurer. Roderick, as mentioned before in past years' Reports, still turns out in the inter-island sports in the long jump. But it was many years since he had participated in his speciality, the triple jump, at which he achieved about 45 ft/14.75 during the 1960's while at Cambridge. In 'sensible' shorts, flip-flops and an Achilles polo-shirt Roderick was volunteered as a last minute replacement for the absent Segun Osuntokun (who competes almost as sparingly). In borrowed spikes he improved round by round, reaching a respectable 10.23.

THE FRESHMEN'S MATCH

Not many tears were shed, although Allan Malcolm admitted to a twinge of sadness, for what most hope will be the last inter-'Varsity competition to be held at Milton Road. The track itself was in characteristically awful condition, its curious bright green colour being caused by a uniform and thick covering of moss. An enjoyable afternoon's athletics was had by all, nevertheless, and some good performances registered notably in the women's discus. Oxford won the men's' match on the final relay event. Cambridge won the women's match.

THE 1993 CROSS COUNTRY MATCH

History was made when Emma Coleman won the women's race in Oxford colours, having won for Cambridge two years ago. She led the field from start to finish and her team to victory. Cambridge dominated the men's' race, anchored by individual winner Ian Harkness. Richard Nerurkar won the Old Blues race, from Stuart Nash and Dave Benton.

VETERANS

Max Jones won the over 60 age division in the UK 100k Championship, held at Holme Pierrepont - 21 times round the lake - on May 23rd. He finished 17th overall in the men's race, in 9 hours 13 minutes and 56 seconds, a UK and Commonwealth Best on Record in the 65-69 age group, breaking the old record by well over 2 hours, and only 23 minutes short of Max Courtillon's World Best. Max writes: "For those of my contemporaries who still measure in old money, 100k is 62 miles and 241 yards. And for those thinking of having a crack at what is still quite a soft record - it's only 8 minutes 55 seconds per mile - the last 241 yards is the easy bit; the first half marathon (of nearly five!) isn't difficult: it's the 49 miles in between which present the little challenge...." Max's contemporaries will remember that he ran in the 3 miles for Cambridge in the 'Varsity Matches of 1947, placing third, and 1948, placing second.

Later in 1993 Max further excelled by winning the American Masters Marathon Championships (65-69 division) held in conjunction with the Twin Cities Marathon (Minneapolis to St. Paul in 3:07.49. The British Veterans Championships were held the same day, but Max reckons he made the right choice: at home he would have just won a medal: in the U.S. he got a medal, \$250 in cash, and a pair of Diadoras...

Other vets to the fore were Brian Hull, who again topped the British M40 TJ rankings with 13.54, Sarah Owen, who aside from her world ranked multi-event efforts was first Briton in the W35 HJ, and second in the 100h, LJ and SP, Chris Melliush, first in the M45 HT with 48.76, and Julian Goater, 2nd in the M40 5000m, with 14: 43. 5.

VERNON MORGAN

Further to last year's obituaries of Vernon Morgan, Sandy Duncan recalls with appreciation Vernon's help in averting a crisis at the Cardiff Commonwealth Games. Vernon tipped Sandy off that a news story was going out to the effect that the coloured nations felt that they were being discriminated against and that the Pakistan delegation were organising a protest meeting. Without Vernon's warning, which enabled Sandy to conduct some hasty midnight diplomacy, the first of the boycotts of subsequent years would have ensued.

RUGBY FOOTBALL

The Club can be proud of fielding two members of the victorious England team in the World Cup Sevens tournament, Chris Sheasby (winner of the Shot in the 1991 'Varsity Match) and Andre Harriman (second to Chris Cholerton over 200m in 1984). Meanwhile Tony Underwood has established himself as a regular England and Lions wing at 15-a-side.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

The Reverend Archie Markby sends best wishes to the Club and in particular to A.G.K. Brown, R.K.I. Kennedy and his other contemporaries.

We have received a long and splendid letter from Bob Tisdall in Australia: it is reproduced in full in the appendix.

60 YEARS ON

We omitted the results of the 1932 'Varsity Match from last year's Report, so they are appended this year, together with those from 1933.

James Mahoney writes again from Australia: he was a spectator at the 1931 'Varsity Match and witnessed Bob Tisdall's 'remarkable performance in winning four events'. He also recalls running for Oxford in the 4 x Mile Relay on 28th November 1931 at Iffley Road: his team-mates were Christopher Gowan, Jerry Cornes and Jack Lovelock. (Oxford won by 15 yards, averaging 4:27.5 per leg).

C.J. Mabey and J. St L. Thornton were the Presidents of OUAC and CUAC: Oxford beat Cambridge by 8 events to 3 in the 'Varsity Match, with C.F. Stanwood winning both hurdles races plus the high jump. However, the highlight of 1933 (as indeed it has been 60 years later) was the very successful Oxford and Cambridge tour of the USA, and in particular Jack Lovelock's world mile record against Princeton and Cornell. As Philip Noel Baker wrote in the Report for that year: "Words fail me to express my admiration for such achievements. His name will be immortal in the records of the Track." And that was three years before his Olympic triumph.

Achilles won all its interclub matches, including the Thornton Cup in Antwerp for the third time. An international club meeting was attended in Brussels by a team including our Vice-President, Peter Ford, who placed third in the hurdles.

25 YEARS ON

The results from 1967 are appended as well as those from 1968. Mike Hauck and Jan Arriens were OUAC and CUAC Presidents. Oxford won the 'Varsity Match for the fourth consecutive year, by 90 points to 63: Bonzo Howland was Match Referee and Dinner Chairman. Five members of the Club were selected for the Olympic Games in Mexico, Messrs Boulter, Johnston, Winbolt Lewis, Parker and Bobb (Trinidad): Davi Hemery won the Gold Medal in the 400m hurdles, and was elected to the Club on going up to Oxford a year later. Tim Johnston (27:22.2 6 Miles) and Chris Pardee (6' 10¾" high jump) were Achilles Medallists.

IN MEMORIAM

Lord Porritt, GCMG, GCVO, CBE, Bt. (Magdalen College, Oxford, 1923-26), on 1st January 1994. Arthur Porritt was President of OUAC in 1926, and won the 100 yards in the 'Varsity Matches of 1925 and 1926: his match record of 9.9 seconds survived until Adrian Metcalfe recorded 9.7 in 1962. One of his greatest athletic achievements was the Olympic bronze medal in the 100m in 1924, behind Harold Abrahams. After a distinguished career a surgeon he was appointed Governor General of New Zealand from 1967 to 1972: copies of obituaries in both the general and sports pages of The Times are enclosed in this Report.

Sir Dick White, KCMG, KBE (Christ Church, Oxford, 1925-28), on 20th February 1993. Dick White competed for Oxford against Cambridge in 1926 (mile), 1927 (half mile, placed 2nd; mile) and 1928 (half mile), usually as the Oxford first string: he was Hon. Sec. of OUAC in 1928 (but the report in The Times obituary that he competed in the Olympics is erroneous). He became the only man to have led both MI5 and MI6.

Ivor Bulmer-Thomas (St. John's, Oxford, 1924-28), on 7th October 1993. Ivor Thomas, a regular member of Oxford's 3 mile and cross country teams from 1925 to 1928, won the 3 Miles in the 'Varsity Match of 1927, in which year he also competed internationally for Wales at cross-country. He became distinguished journalist, for the Times, News Chronicle and Daily Telegraph. As MP for Keighley from 1942 to 1950, he served under Attlee as Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Aviation, and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, before resigning the Labour whip in favour of the Conservatives over the nationalisation of steel.

The Right Reverend C.J. Tucker, CBE (St. Catharine's, Cambridge, 1930-34, Wadham, Oxford, 1949-57) in September 1992. Cyril Tucker finished third for Cambridge in the 1934 'Varsity Match 880 yards. He served Cambridge and Achilles as Senior Treasurer of CUAC from 1959 to 1963.

Gerald M. Moll (Pembroke, Cambridge, 1930-33), in 1991.

Lt.-Col. William H. Olivier, TD, DL, JP (Trinity, Oxford, 1923-26), in June 1992.

E.B. Edmunds, MBE (Caius College, Cambridge, 1933-36), in 1992. Edward Edmunds competed in the Long Jump at the 1934 'Varsity Match.

THE C.N. JACKSON TROPHY

In 1926, Sir Montagne Sheannan and other Achilles members presented a Trophy in memory of C.N. Jackson, to be awarded annually to the winning team in the Oxford v. Cambridge Sports. 'Jacky' had been a brilliant athlete, setting an English Record for the 120 yards hurdles of 16 seconds which stood for many years, in the days when hurdles were real hurdles and tracks were meadows. After retiring from competition (he cut his foot badly on an oyster shell while competing against none other than W.G. Grace), he became not only an outstanding administrator, working with Shearman and Bernhard Wise to establish the AAA, but also a dedicated coach, helping many generations of OUAC athletes and guiding his nephew Arnold Strobe Jackson to the Olympic Gold Medal at 1500m in 1912.

This year, perhaps because the trophies were being presented in comparative sobriety before rather than after the 'Varsity Match Dinner, someone noticed that the trophy being awarded for the Blues Match was inscribed as the 'ARNOLD Jackson Memorial Trophy'. Why? Was it the wrong trophy, or was it wrongly inscribed? Much consultation between past and present Officers of the Club ensued, and after a few weeks our former Hon. Treasurer Derek Steel was able to confirm that during the 1970's the original had been stolen, and that the Oxford people at the time had made the mistake when ordering the replacement: 'Of such bloomers', Derek concluded, 'is history made!'. A further inscription, correcting the error, has been added to the trophy.

ELITE ATHLETES SCHEME

The following athletes have received awards from the Achilles Trust for the 1994 season: Malcolm Croad (Oxford: Hammer), Ruth Irving (Cambridge: Long Jump), Matthew Weaver (Oxford: Pole Vault) and James Hurrion (Oxford: Javelin).

The purpose of these awards is to help athletes to achieve top international standard in the increasingly competitive modern environment: we wish this year's recipients every success, and we thank all contributors to the Trust (listed elsewhere in this Report) for making this initiative possible.

1993 RANKINGS

The following members were ranked in the UK top 20 for their events:

Richard Nerurkar	1 st	10,000	27:40.03
	1 st	Marathon	2:10:03
	4 th	5,000	13:30.06
	11 th _h	3,000	7:56.94
(Tim Berrett, Canada)		5k-50k Walks	
Jon Ridgeon	4 th	400m Hurdles	50.42
Danielle Sanderson		Marathon	2:37:33
Joanna Latimer	6 th	800	2:03.65
Ruth Irving	6 th	Long Jump	6.17
Andy Lill	6 th	800	1:46.62
Tony Hatton	10 th _h	Javelin	71.86
Chris Cheeseman		10k Walk	

Andy Hodge	11 ^t h	High Jump	2.10
Paddy Brice	15 ^t h	3000m Steeplechase	8:54.03
Kenny Stirrat	17 ^t h	3000m Steeplechase	8:56.39
Matt Weaver	18 ^t h	Pole Vault	4.80
Sue Bevan	19 ^t h	800	2:06.2

Time Berrett's walking performances for Canada would have put him at the top of the British rankings. We have not seen walks rankings but we expect Chris Cheeseman to be in the top 10. Likewise we have not seen updated rankings for the women's marathon, but expect Daniell Sanderson to be well to the fore.