

JUNE
1991

PRICE 50p

NORTHBROOK

 **RUNNER**

*The hills are alive
with "The Sound of
Northbrook"*



Cotswold Hilly Hundred Souvenir

I suppose by now that most of the club realise that the club newsletter is now in the hands of the 'People's popular front of Northbrook' and is no longer merely the mouth-piece of bland committee propaganda.

You may also have noticed that the price has risen to a mere 50 pence (gasp). Amazing value I call it considering the wealth of experience gathered between its pages, the feast of literary virtuosity on offer, its biting satirical masterpieces, that art work fit to grace a Sistine renaissance cathedral, race reports so dramatic they'll make your blood boil and your toes curl, and the whole magnificent package assembled with a gourmet's precision: a delicate blend of fact, fantasy and humour that will satisfy without making your guts ache. As for the increase, well with escalating costs and the need to increase the club's ever dwindling income and also because we enjoy screwing ever penny we can out of you suckers, we felt it was worth the gamble.

Now for some really upsetting news: chairman Mick/Mic is a little upset with the magazine's current depiction of him as a meglomaniac, overbearing, attention grabbing egotist, believing it undermines the club's respect for him. He particularly disliked the headlines on the front page of the april issue: "Northbrook are we ready for the Reynolds's revolution?" He believes that some members may have got the impression that he was somehow revolting. Well I apologise to Mick if this was the case and just to redress the balance I will now list some of his good points ... er... ... Mick's shorts are always nicely ironed.

I would also like to thank Richard O'shea for overseeing the production of the march issue. It seems that Rich's photo-copier, well the firm's photo-copier is now a burnt out wreck and a whole year's supply of copier-paper has been used up, but well, it was worth it.

Talking of burnt out wrecks, I would also like to thank John Cox for producing the April and May publications.

I suppose congratulations should be extended to Rob Barry on his winning time in the 'two castle's 10 km': 33-23. What was even more impressive was that this followed a 33-16 set in the Poole GPT 10 km the day before. Rob also won the Liverpool GPT 10 km earlier on in the year so he's really hitting form at the moment.

Still when you think about it what's a 10 k, a couple of laps of the block in the time it takes to read the sun newspaper. I mean proper runners, or athletes run it on the track and call it 10,000 metres. If Barry continues to run these type of distances he's going to be joining 'Lady Godiva's harriets' or something next. So come on Robbie's parents and give him permission to do a man's race.

Anyway I'd like to thank those people who contributed articles to the May issue of 'the runner', eight people actually took the trouble to write something, surely a club record. It certainly makes the magazine more interesting when more people become involved and I was especially happy because this particular issue was on sale at the social evening on the 18th may. I'm sure the other clubs at the meeting found it amusing and well put together. Incidentally it sold out on the night and due to demand we had to have it reprinted on the following Wednesday.

I hope you enjoyed the 'Northbrook-look-a-like' page, I'm sure that those of you who weren't featured are a bit disappointed, but don't worry they'll be other 'look-a-likes' in the future. Remember the Northbrook runner is working to make sure that everyone gets their fair share of abuse, especially if your second name is Flanagan.

On the subject of Flanagan I can't help noticing the new look unveiled on the social evening. A Bodie (the Professionals) type haircut, the tanned face, and dare I say it ... lean, well leaner contours ... just what is going on? ... Surely Shaun isn't undergoing some strange metamorphosis into an athlete. Doesn't he realise that he's become a kind of club trademark ... a whole series of tee shirts has been designed around him stressing his ambivalent attitude towards physical exercise. Younger runners as diverse as John Gardner and Steve Simpson revere him as a role model. One of Shaun's biggest influences Mike Windsor-Smith spelled it out. "Look where was Shaun before he gained his beer gut, a nothing, a nobody, then he wins the cross-country handicap... now he's turning his back on all that. Listen, I know what I'm talking about, anyone can run with this thin, fresh-out-of-concentration-camp look, but it was me who won the first round of the Summer handicap, so don't forget it." Clearly an angry Mike who sees Shaun as a kind of Judas figure willing to sacrifice hard earned fat for superficial social acceptance. Mike goes on to say, "Listen O.K. Barry and O'Shea, their quick right, but put a five stone beer belly on either of them and they'd be nothing... I could whip them any time."

All things considered the social evening was a great success. I myself thought that we'd have trouble getting a buffet together merely by members providing food on a voluntary basis, so I was amazed at the full table that greeted me on arrival. It shows how generous most of the membership is at the moment. Thanks to Alan Bass for helping us get the meat for the barbeque, I think most of it ended up fueling the fire, but then that's all part of the fun. It seems most of the clubs in Coventry were represented on the night, all except those Elvis Safeway types. Surely the whole of GPT were gathered under our roof and certainly lived up to their reputation as one of the most sociable of clubs. I'm not sure that the 'running racquet' stall was as attractive a proposition as it could have been: most of the wares on sale were either over or undersize garments or shoes, it would have been superb for a runner with size 14 feet. Still I managed to buy a pair of running shoes for £20 so I can't complain. If only we'd managed to win one event on the night, mind you some of us had to play with a severe handicap; trying to play darts with a paralytic Steve Simpson as your partner is certain to limit your chances. Still for a time we had Colin Deasy and Masseys very worried. I think it was because Steve's darts seemed to find their way in their direction, rebounding off the walls and homing in like little exocet missiles.

I hope that no one finds any of the humorous pieces that are scattered through some of the pages too upsetting. They are not intended to be deliberately insulting, but if you find them offensive let me know and if you write an article for me in the next magazine I promise it won't happen again,

yours obsequiously

Dave Halford (Editor).



THE 'SHEA TWINS

Yeah, you look the type of person who needs a little running diary...or do I have to work you over with a little P.P.T...yeah a little massage would work wonders on those legs... it'd be a pity if they got a little injury...but accidents can 'appen...

ADRIAN LAWTON AND THE FRENCH CONNECTION.

I suppose most club members realise that Adrian (Ade) Lawton is no longer with us, and might add: "gone, but not forgiven"...sorry that should have said "gone, but not forgotten"...but dipping into the collective Northbrook memory bank perhaps the first statement was more apt. Still I know that most of us thought highly of Adey and many a night we'd imagined him swinging gaily from a makeshift gallows.

I'm sure that most club member's would like to wish Ade all the best, and if the obnoxious little toad with the irritating northern accent succeeds in upsetting the French half as much as he's upset Northbrook then he must be really losing his touch.

Still when it came to running Ade had a style all of his own: 'the Lawton walk', which added a new word to an Englishman's vocabulary: IN-ADE-QUATE.

Still I have some good news for Ade's fans, it seems that Ade has consented to continue his highly popular 'Agony Ade' column, answering any personal and hopefully embarrassing problems you might have. So if you care to write to Adrian I'm sure you'll get a sympathetic response. Ade is currently operating from a gentleman's toilet in France, but when he's not I'm sure he'll find time to answer your letters in his own inimitable style.

5
(THE FOOL ON THE HILL X TEN) X TWO.
= SUFFERING

THE COTSWOLDS HILLY HUNDRED BY DAVE HALFORD. (AS SEEN THROUGH HIS EYES)

Previous 'hilly hundred' events have passed into the club's folk lore, tales abounding of runners, guided only by fiendishly microscopic yellow arrows, taking wrong turnings, or collapsing on the side of roads, being reduced to crawling whimpering wrecks. Members discussed it in hushed tones, the infamous legs two and four inspiring the same awe as the size of Paul McCartney's bank balance. It was with some relief that you finished your leg without having some minor catastrophe.

I was running leg six for the A team, with John Cox running this leg for the B team. A Massey Ferguson runner seemed suitably impressed with the fact that we had two teams, believing that our club's membership must have grown. Well I suppose it is quite an achievement getting half the club out to represent us.

John and I had been dropped off very early and, with about three hours waiting ahead of us, we decided to walk to the cross-roads and acquaint ourselves with the first part of the course. On making our way back to the start of our leg, we suddenly saw this runner bouncing down the road pursued by a car full of tracksuited runners brandishing a large Scottish flag. Yes, I've had this nightmare too: there can be few things on earth better equipped to inspire a turn of speed than the close proximity of a gang of Scotchmen. (Newton's first law of dynamics applied to self preservation.)

It was obvious that this was the first of the teams and John and I began to worry about whether we had judged the time our teams would appear correctly. When we got back to the start there was now quite a community of teams assembled, the sleepy little village of Farmington must have tripled its population. Gradually runners began to come through complete with their entourage of cars and supporters. Cars, vans and coaches were constantly pulling up and pulling away and the tension was beginning to reach an unbearable level. Impatiently I waited for Pete Osborne to arrive. A whole convoy of Northbrook cars now surrounded us bearing tidings of how the team was fairing and of heroic personal battles against torturous slopes, and treacherous downhills.

Glyn came into view obviously relieved that the end was in sight, showing all the aggression of a pit bull hamster, relinquishing the baton as though it was a stick of dynamite. Pete was a minute behind him and I grabbed the baton, caught a whiff of the glory to come, and forsaking John Bird's advice on taking it steady, left the launching pad, roaring down the runway with two gallons of adrenalin surging through my veins.

One by one the Northbrook convoy began to pass me and I was borne along upon waves of encouragement. Two lorries that had been shifting fodder from a field all day were obviously not too pleased at having the lane blocked and nearly crushed me against the hedge.

At the crossroads I was directed left and I knew that I was now starting a long energy sapping climb. The Northbrook support was superb, Birdy the camera man, Bob Awcock the mobile drinks station and Martin pointing out the route, (obviously he didn't trust me),

As I was nearing the top of the hill I caught sight of John Cox so I was making good time, although it seemed to take a long time before I was able to catch and overtake him. Martin was at the next junction and directed me down into Bourton-on-the-water. This section was a steep downhill and it was difficult to keep running smoothly.

Through Bourton I caught sight of Alan and co. sunning themselves and sipping pints outside the Mouse Trap inn. Yes, very motivating! Leaving the village and crossing the Fosse way, Jackie spots me and yells out something incomprehensible, probably directions, but she admits that she's not really sure. Now that's what I call being really helpful. Another hill, right and still climbing before heading down into lower Slaughter. As I make the climb out of the village to Upper Slaughter I begin to feel very drained. By the way who goes about naming these villages? Martin (how he gets around) directs me through Upper Slaughter and with a mile to go, most of it up hill, Copse or Corpse hill to be exact, my hill climbing muscles are beginning to protest...with a vengeance. Glyn gives me some encouragement and a Massey's supporter runs alongside me urging me on. Once the hill is behind me I quickly pick up speed again and I make a stubborn sprint finish to the change-over point. Unfortunately I was mistaken in believing this was the change-over point, this is about 200 yards further on. Thank God it's downhill as I at last hand my baton over to Bob Adams.

Later I hear that I was very lucky to have Bob there to exchange the baton with because a minute before reaching the change-over point the said Mr Adams, the man who likes to say 'Yes', was crouching behind the shrubs engaged in a, ahem, lengthy paper job. He was helped in this activity by the club captain Mr. Richard O'shea who galloped gallantly across a field waving a toilet roll and ready to, ahem, oblige his team mate in any capacity he could. Mr. Adam's it seems had already procured all the necessary equipment and declined Mr. O'shea's helping hand, going on to complete the paper work involved in a thoroughly efficient manner and allowing himself to get back to the changeover point in good time, a very relieved gentleman. Incidentally the shrubs have I believe benefited from the event: growing a good two inches thanks to Bob's little contribution to their habitat.

The Northbrook convoy moves off after Bob, while some of us wait for John to arrive. He certainly looks pleased to finish his leg as he hands over the baton to the wily Welshman, Mark. Now it's our turn to travel in the car and watch others pounding the tarmac. I must admit that, but for the support, running my particular leg would have been a very lonely experience because the only other runner I saw was John. It certainly helps to have familiar faces cheering you on.

We overtake Mark and wait for him on Bourton hill, a very nastily long protracted climb through woodland. He seemed to be running very well suprising us at how quickly he reached us. He looked very tired and grateful for the water we provided.

As Mark turned left onto the A44 so it became difficult to provide support and we drove along to see how far ahead Bob was. We soon spotted him, about a mile ahead and enjoying the large downhill stretch into Moreton-in-the-marsh and the Swan inn, his change-over point. Time for a smooth pint of Murphys in the company of John Bird and Pete Osborne.

Chris Leeson now took over from Bob and at one point nearly made a disastrous detour into the great unknown. Thankfully this was averted, and having lost only a couple of yards Chris managed to complete his leg inside the hour, pulling back some time on the Sphinx team, lying in second place. Royal Sutton held first place and barring a complete disaster were virtually uncatchable. The Massey Ferguson teams were well behind us and our third position looked secure, it was just a question of whether or not we could catch Sphinx.

It was now time for our captain, Rich to do some surging and he looked in a determined mood as he took the baton. A man with a destiny. Not so his keys whose current destination was certainly a mystery. Rich had forgotten to leave his car keys with anyone or put them in a place where anyone with a n interest in driving his car could find them. So a fuming Dawn spent a lively five minutes searching his car and cursing him in some very colourful ways. Eventually the car keys were found, having been thrown through the window onto the back seat.

Meanwhile Rich was surging, surging up a real heartbreaker of a hill, up to the BBC aerial masts, surging along a dirt track with a spectacular view of the valley below, and surging after the Sphinx runner who seemed to be tiring considerably. Finally at Ilmington, to the delight of the Northbrook supporters assembled at this point, Rich surged all over him and on into the distance, opening up a considerable gap. Northbrook were now in second place. Rich's surging time of 57.42 isn't really a fair reflection of just how good his run was as even a rough measurement of leg nine shows it to be something like three quaters of a mile longer than ten miles. So much for the Hilly hundred, more like the Hilly hundred and a bit.

The last leg was ran by Alan Dodd, who was running very smoothly and had no difficulty in breaking the hour. He was cheered into the finishing field and crossed the line to take second place. The A team's final finishing time of 10 hours 8 minutes and 28 seconds was well ahead of the club's previous times: a new club record.

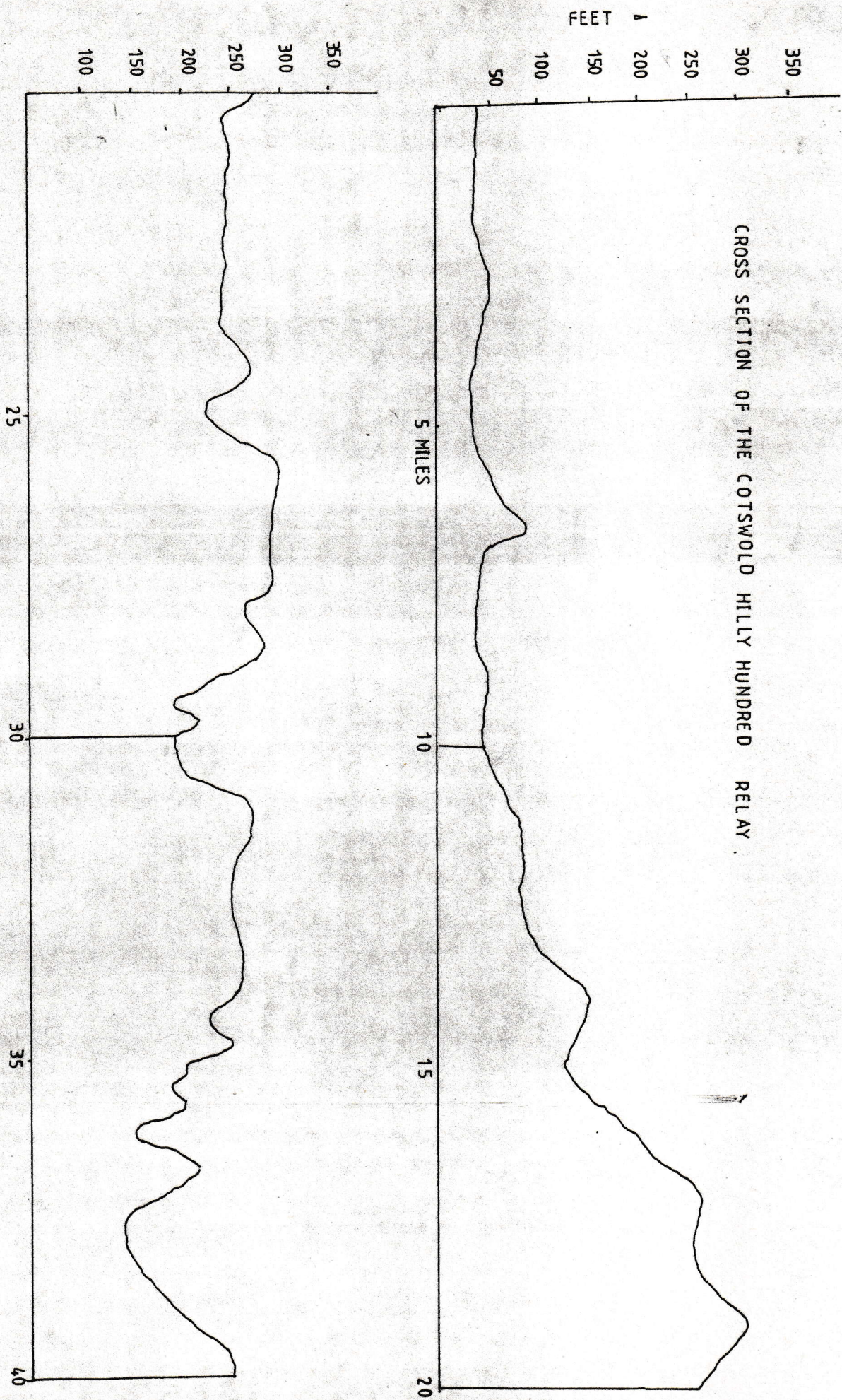
So what of the B team. Well Mark ran a very good leg in 65:58 and handed on to Tom who did very well, finishing in 70 minutes. Jackie however, still not completely recovered from a torrid haircut, and clearly not relishing having to run the ninth leg, and obviously hoping that her visit to the Cotswolds would only be of a supportive nature, and no doubt not having the time to train at college due to work commitments and having to go out and get rat arsed every night ... made a right dog eared mess of her leg. But she gave it her all before Bob Awcock was gentleman enough to relieve the poor burnt out piece of womanhood of the baton.

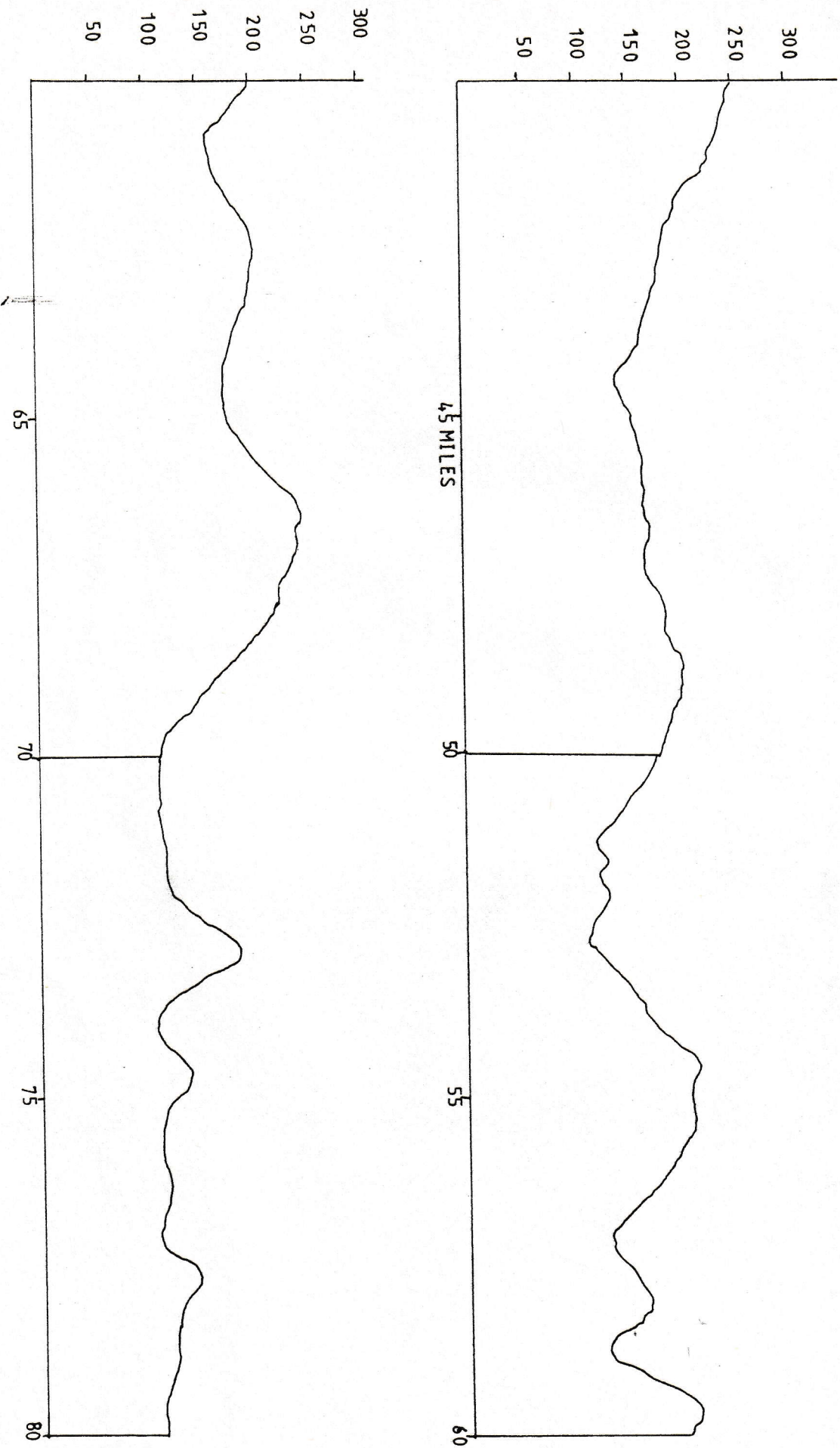
Finally it was Shaun's big moment. The last time I had seen him he had been panicked into accepting a last minute massage from Dawn. As we drove off to see Alan finish, my last glimpse of Shaun had been of him lying on his back at the side of the road with an expression of complete and utter misery on his drooping face. Still what's new? Driving back from the finish to find out how he was progressing, I wondered what kind of state he'd be in now. I expected the worst and wasn't disappointed. Here he was coming around the bend, his little turtle like head thrust forwards, unable to support its weight, it rested on one shoulder, the arms twitching convulsively, the legs shuffling and stumbling stubbornly on, in defiance of the brain which was clearly begging for a halt to this madness. John Cox and Glyn were in attendance offering encouragement and water.

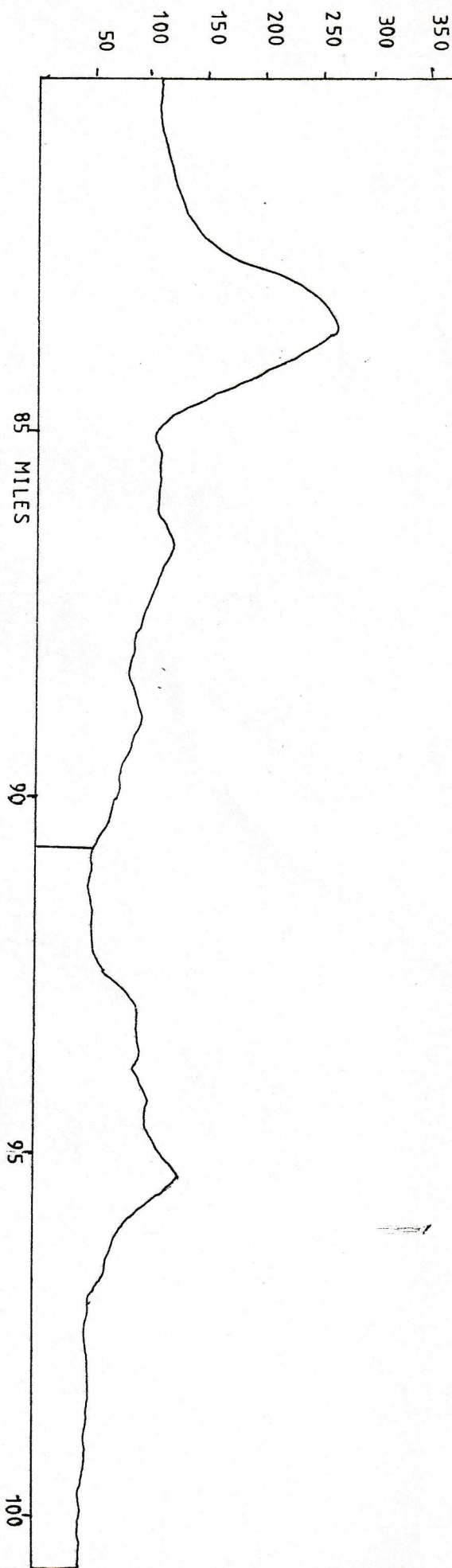
As he entered the finish a huge roar went up: some bugger had closed the bar. It was deemed necessary and humanitarian to keep this information to ourselves as it might have been too much for Shaun's consciousness. The B team finished, which was an apt description of Shaun's present state. With pints drunk and no bar the Northbrook faithful soon dispersed, heading back to Coventry.

We reassembled later at the Chestnut tree pub and visited the rest of the pubs in the area, the ale flowed freely and exploits were told and retold. And finally we were crammed into a robin reliant and shaken, rattled and rolled all the way home.

CROSS SECTION OF THE COTSWOLD HILLY HUNDRED RELAY.







Results of the Cotswold's hilly hundred.

Northbrook A team:

1. John Bird 60.49
 2. Martin Warwick 67.52
 3. Alan Bass 60.19
 4. Rob Barry 59.22
 5. Pete Osborne 58.16
 6. Dave Halford 63.41
 7. Bob Adams 62.55
 8. Chris Leeson 59.55
 9. Richard O'shea 57.42
 10. Alan Dodd 57.37
- Total Time: 10 hours 8 minutes .28

Northbrook B team:

1. Bob Griggs 76.20
2. Dawn Robinson 67.09
3. Bob Awcock 78.43
4. Ingle Corbett 70.42
5. Glyn Perrens 69.57
6. John Cox 73.18
7. Mark Baker 65.58
8. Tom Gillan 70.00
9. Jackie Hart 87.42
10. Shaun Flanagan 74.36.

Total time : 12 hours 14 minutes 25.

THE FINAL NAIL IN THE NORTHBROOK COFFIN !?

Social evening winners read as follows :

Pool : G.P.T. Spartans
Darts : Massey Ferguson
Doms : Coventry Godiva

Thumbing through the annals of Northbrook history revealed that there seemed to be a subtle difference between these results and the past years. After many hours devoted by the finest statistical and analytical minds that could be congregated under the one roof of the Telepost club thumbing through the records we found the missing ingredient... NORTHBROOK A.C.. Basically we won 'naff all', it was a completely pathetic effort and as a result the club should finally give up any glimmer of a hope that we are sociably acceptable. Following this humiliation the club should withdraw into the dreaded world of single-mindedly nurturing elite athleticism (say that after an Irish soft drink).

... or so it may have seemed on the night to the uninitiated, BUT, as with all the grandest strategic game plans the Northbrook teams had done their homework and had decided to make their main offensive thrust on a second social front, and when it comes to being offensive we're not short of a few bob... tony... Shaun... Jones's... etc.. It had come to the teams attention that the hurling of darts and potting of balls required some of the evenings drinking time to be sacrificed and therefore, the black belt third dan 'Northbrook Bar Stars' decided to throw the games in the first round and excell in what comes most naturally to them (answers on a postcard, please). Unfortunately no-one told Tony Murphy that you can place dominoes and drink at the same time, and therefore as a result he also played like a complete 'jess'.

Seriously, though I thought that it was a damn good do and would like to thank the many people who offered help on the evening and also those that provided nosh for the buffet. The way that members volunteered to helpas opposed to being bullied or begged into helping made the organising job really simple. It was truly a club effort and I very much look forward to the next social event.

Thanks alot ,

Rob Barry (Sec)

HANDICAP

We have now reached the third round of the Summer 'yacht' handicap, the half-way point, and John Cox has built up a commanding eight point lead to head the league. With 54 points and the championship usually being won on 90 points John is in a very strong position. However, in round four bonus points are awarded to runners setting personal bests and I believe that John will find it difficult to break 21.28 he set in June.

What then of the old brigade's challenge, this year headed by Tony Murphy, currently in second place. Well consistency has never been one of Tony's strong points and his May time is witness to this, but as only five of the six rounds count towards the final points if he can keep knocking out his best times he should finish highly placed.

It is refreshing to see the club's faster runners making an appearance in the higher section of the table, with Rob Barry third and Rich O'shea eighth. However the handicap system is weighted against these runners who can't possibly improve their times by the minutes less fit runners do who suddenly put in some extra training.

New members, who are just developing their running potential and have the enthusiasm of the beginner to motivate them, usually do well. Last year Paul Davies was the eventual winner, John Bird was runner-up in 1988, Bob Garner champion in 1983. Could Tom Gillan win this year's handicap, his form is gradually improving and a couple of personal bests could be enough to take him from fourth to first place.

Meanwhile what about those Buckenham boys, Ken and Neil, always highly placed in the final positions and old hands at out-foxing the handicapper. In April they totter round in 24 minutes, come June and 22 minutes looks on, come August and 21.30 is always a good bet. Beware! past form shows they are both capable of beating 20 minutes. No doubt about it, we are looking at two veritable old masters.

Still in with an outside chance are Mark Baker, Andy Kemshall and D. Reynolds, but none of these can afford to have any bad times or they will certainly slip from contention.

It was good to see the flying Scotchman, George Steele back in action in June, although I think the handicapper was being very generous to the lad. George won the race, had warmed down and showered while the rest of us were still running.

and so to the Ladies championship. Well if Jean Jones turns up to the next two handicaps she will be the winner. At the moment she has 27 points, 17 ahead of Jackie Hart.

NEW H/CAP	LADIES SUMMER 'YACHT' HANDICAP	APRIL 3rd	MAY 1st	JUNE 5th	TOTAL POINTS
SCR	JEAN JONES	27.47(7)	27.11(11)	26.58(10)	27
2.00	JACKIE HART	23.11(10)	-	-	10
6.30	DAWN ROBINSON	19.58(9)	-	-	9
SCR	KAREN MARLOW	27.38(8)	-	-	
	<u>JUNIORS</u>				
	B. BUCKENHAM	-	-	24.33(10)	10

NEW HANDICAP	NORTHBROOK ATHLETIC SUMMER YACHT " HANDICAP 1991				TOTAL POINTS
	Senior men's results:	APRIL 3rd	MAY 1st	JUNE 5th	
4.30	JOHN COX	24.13 (12)	22.01 (24)	21.28 (18)	54
0.30	TONY MURPHY	24.40 (22)	25.23 (3)	24.45 (21)	46
9.00	ROB BARRY	16.59 (18)	17.25 (11)	17.06 (15)	44
4.30	TOM GILLAN	22.04 (4)	21.55 (19)	21.22 (20)	43
4.30	NEIL BUCKENHAM	24.08 (6)	22.08 (20)	21.32 (16)	42
2.30	BOB AWCOCK	22.35 (24)	22.51 (15)	23.41 (2)	41
3.00	KEN BUCKENHAM	24.08 (9)	24.04 (9)	22.49 (23)	41
9.30	RICH O'SHEA	16.35 (19)	16.27 (13)	16.34 (7)	39
6.00	D. REYNOLDS	20.42 (21)	19.59 (18)	-	39
6.00	MARK BAKER	20.16 (17)	19.47 (17)	19.59 (4)	38
4.30	ANDY KEMSHALL	22.35 (3)	21.30 (25)	21.27 (10)	38
4.00	RAY JONES	22.24 (7)	21.57 (22)	22.04 (8)	37
3.30	MARTIN TURRALL	23.06 (2)	23.33 (12)	22.34 (22)	36
6.00	INGLE CORBETT	20.57 (16)	20.06 (14)	20.06 (6)	36
4.00	SHAUN FLANAGAN	22.29 (8)	21.39 (23)	21.58 (3)	34
6.30	MARTIN WARWICK	19.22 (23)	19.39 (8)	21.24 (1)	32
6.30	DAVE HALFORD	19.42 (14)	19.55 (7)	19.25 (11)	32
3.45	COLIN PRESTON	22.14 (1)	22.15 (16)	22.13 (9)	26
4.30	GLYN PERRENS	22.03 (5)	21.31 (21)	-	26
SCR	MIKE WINDSOR-SMITH	26.18 (25)	-	-	25
7.30	GEORGE STEELE	-	-	18.40 (25)	25
1.00	PAUL JONES	26.48 (1)	-	24.46	25
6.30	IAN JAMES	-	19.57 (6)	19.32 (17)	23
9.30	TIM WRIGHT	16.32 (20)	-	-	20
6.30	S. COOK	-	-	19.22 (19)	19
6.30	MICK REYNOLDS	-	19.48 (5)	19.25 (14)	19
1.30	BOB GRIGGS	-	24.36 (4)	24.13 (13)	17
3.45	NEIL PORTER	22.50 (10)	-	22.24 (5)	15
5.15	M. O'SHEA	20.14 (15)	-	-	15
7.30	CHRIS LEESON	18.25 (13)	-	-	13
7.00	ALAN BASS	-	-	18.53 (12)	12
7.30	JOHN BIRD	-	18.55 (10)	19.22 (1)	11
7.30	JOHN GARDNER	18.47 (11)	-	-	11

VETS ROAD RACE CHAMPIONSHIP

POSITIONS AFTER 7 RACES:

1st	T. CORBETT	105pts
2nd	B. GRIGGS	83pts
3rd	S. FLANAGAN	82pts
4th	K. BUCKENHAM	66pts
5th	R. JONES	65pts
6th	B. AWCOCK	64pts
7th	T. MURPHY	63pts
8th	I. JAMES	51pts
9th	N. BUCKENHAM	48pts
10th	J. BIRD	46pts
11th	M. WINDSOR-SMITH	20pts

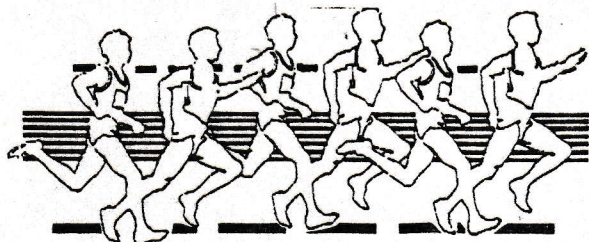
AS YOU CAN SEE BY THE ABOVE TABLE, YOURS TRULY HAS A GOOD LEAD OVER BOB GRIGGS, AND SHAUN FLANAGAN, BUT I'M SURE THEY WILL BE PUTTING ON THE PRESSURE AFTER A STEADY START WITH ANOTHER 11 RACES TO COME.

ANYONE COULD SNEAK UP AND CHALLENGE FOR THE LEAD BEFORE THE END, IN NOVEMBER. SO ALL YOU NORTHBROOK VETS GET OUT AND RUN THE REMAINING RACES TO MAKE THE COMPETITION FOR ALL THE PLACES MORE EXCITING.

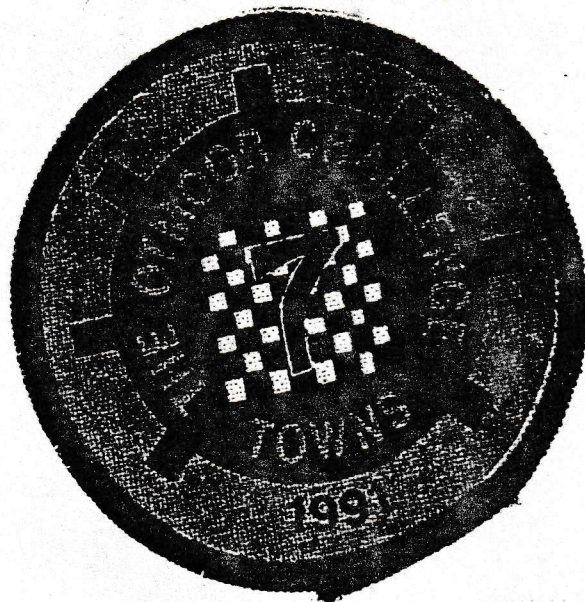
P.S

I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME TWO NEW VETS AT THE CLUB GEOFF FEATHERSTONE, AND TONY HOLMES WHOM I'M SURE WILL GIVE THE REST OF THE VETS TO DO EVEN BETTER.

**INGLE CORBETT
VETS SECREATRY**



NORTHBROOK MEET THE CHALLENGE .



Six Northbrook runners represented the club in the Otmoor challenge cross country half marathon. It was held on Saturday June 1st and had been recommended to us by Martin Warwick who had ran it the previous year and promised us a demanding, but interesting course. Unfortunately Martin's knowledge of the course was to prove as useful as a packet of smokey bacon crisps in a Jewish synagogue. The route had been altered and Martin's memorable course was left behind after 200 yards.

However, the event was certainly enjoyable. It was a low key affair attracting about 150 runners and starting and finishing in a large field bedecked with stalls, and marquees selling beer, tea, coffee and cakes. The locals were out in full force and could best be described as being of a genteel class of person for whom taking tea in which the milk had been added first, or slicing a scone in half using a butter knife, was bordering on social anarchy. Thus when the Northbrook mob entered the tea tent and Glyn and co. discussed the failure of Dolly Parton's breast implants, whilst Shaun, not to be outdone, waxed lyrical about a stag party, a pint of beer, a strip tease artiste and a mammary gland... the tent rapidly cleared, all except for one old boy in the corner who was a quivering, slobbering pitiful wreck by the time we departed. Thank God we didn't bring Jackie and Mick Reynolds otherwise we might have cleared the entire field.

Meanwhile I was wandering about the fields and bought a house plant off one of the stalls and had a go at trying to get a golf ball into a bucket. I was not as Glyn informed his associates "roaming around scaring the kids."

The trouble with these small town fetes is that you always get some guy who's been given a microphone, and as he's always fancied himself as a sports commentator-disc jockey, continually harangues those poor souls who have turned out with what he considers as pithy comments and inane jokes. The type of person who believes himself to be the life and soul of the party, but is in fact the one who is most likely to put a stake through its heart and render even the undead, dead. And so he went on and on and on...

"Yes, I can see some people in the book stall, and yes theres Mr. Protheroe Oh yes and he's going to by one of Mr. Jones's fruit cakes. I say things are really swinging now... I can see quite a little community gathered around the plant stall... yes and some moneys actually changing hands..."

and so the commentator went on:

"Right I've just had some information handed to me. It seems that someones dropped a sum of money in the book stall tent, so if you've lost any money please come to the commentator's van. If you want to throw your money away we've got plenty of things on sale... Ha, ha, ha..."

And so to the start of the race with the commentator asking where the starter was. Que the starter making his way out of the beer tent.

"Ah yes here comes the starter, Ted, yes and he's carrying the Otmoor seven towns flag... with its distinctive check board representing the chess board in Alice-in-wonderland... and what a wonderful site it makes there, fluttering in Ted's hands..."

The marshalls made sure that the road was clear and we started. Rob, obviously hoping for great things, hit the front, followed by Martin and not to be outdone, I darted through the chasing pack to join them at the front. Three Northbrook vests stretched out across the road, heading the race, it made the heart swell with pride. Alas it was all wasted on the commentator...

"And there they go, I can't quite make out who's in the lead at the moment, but it looks a most impressive sight with all the different coloured vests and all the runners trying their best..."

Thankfully the commentators voice was soon left behind, a bit like the Northbrook contingent. The local runners soon took off their kid gloves and raised the pace. The first three miles was along a flat section of narrow country lane which eventually turned to mud track. Because the weather had been so dry recently this was very hard and rutted and it was difficult to run on. I was particularly worried about turning an ankle because the Potteries marathon was only a fortnight away.

The route was interspersed with dirt track and road until we got to halfway when we were suddenly running on grass along the hedges bordering a huge field. Not many of the runners seemed to relish running on the grass and I began to overtake quite a few people. I must admit I wasn't that keen on the grass part, but this is what I'd thought the whole race would consist of. I expected something more like the sandstone trail, I mean this course even had mile markers and water stations, not really any more challenging than a normal half marathon. Still I was glad to get back on the road even though we now had to ascend a steep section which was quite hard on the legs after running through grass. This was the only hill on the course and once you were over it there was a large grass downhill part which was very welcome. A couple of stiles and you were on the road to the finish..

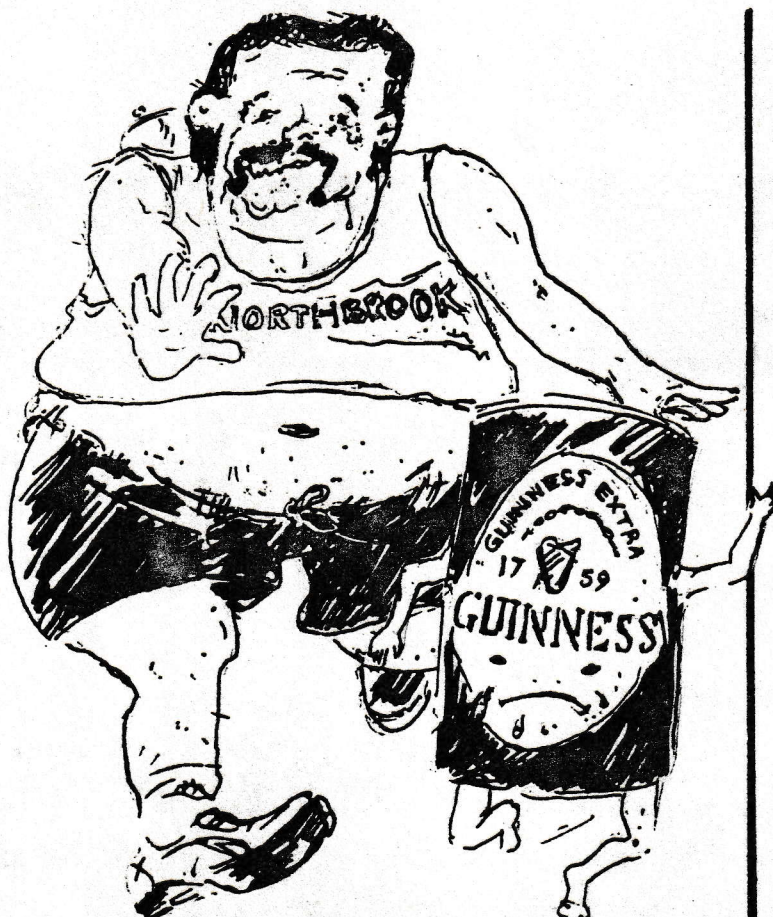
Rob Barry was the first to finish gaining a personal best of 1:19:02, and claiming 19th place. I finished 37th in 1:24:02, whilst Martin was close behind in 45th place with 1:25:49. With Glyn finishing 89th in 1:33:00, it looked as though we might make a strong challenge for a team prize. This wasn't to be, although on leaving the site the commentator announced the fact that there was a mistake in the allocation of team places; Martin slowed his car down... the new order was read out... No we weren't mentioned. So the car accelerated away to the Rainbow.

John Cox finished 133rd in 1:40:50 and Shaun came in 157th in 1:44:07. Unfortunately as John and Shaun finished so the beer barrel in the beer tents ran dry, and despite managing to get hold of another barrel it didn't take long to finish that off either. There were a lot of thirsty finishers about. Still it was a good day out and I think the club should organise more of these trips to these types of races because it's more enjoyable racing as part of a large group.

Dave Halford.

NORTHBROOK FASHION EXTRA

The committee seem very keen on getting us noticed this season and a wide variety of accessories bearing the word Northbrook are to be made available.



Surely no fashion conscious northbrook runner can afford to miss out on the sleek black tracksters, competitively priced at a mouth watering £10.50, be the envy of every other jogger on the block and catch the eye of every lady pedestrian with these thigh hugging sensuously cut bottoms.

In an incredibly generous gesture the price has been slashed from £11.00 by the committee.

... and as if you needed any further encouragement the word Northbrook is emblazoned in electric yellow down one leg ... a final dashing touch ... a must for those winter runs when because of the dark colour you'll blend in beautifully with the night ... and get run over.

Still live fast, die young and make a good looking corpse in those cheeky black tracksters.

Also available is a new style club tee-shirt from the Barry-Halford collection. A huge success in Paris and something that will definitely get you talked about. Yes it's that Northbrook Bar stars tee-shirt, guaranteed to turn heads and stomachs and bearing the Shaun Flanagan body-as-a-symbol-of-social-excess

There has been much speculation as to the actual colour of the shirt, with puce green or fungal yellow being strongly fancied.

Retailing at £5, these are sure to be snatched up quickly, mainly by the Jones's and others cultivating an interest in bad-taste-chic. So order yours now and avoid disappointment ! ! !

The club has also ordered some of the standard club vests in the usual depressing colours of black, yellow and green. Fabulous for soaking up the heat in those marathons under the sun; with flock printing accurately positioned to sandpaper your nipples. A must for any self respecting masochist and selling for £8.40. (see Bob Awcock).