

Club 7 miles Cross-Country Championship for the 'H.T. Blackstaffe Shield'

Instigated in 1901, nine editions of the race had already taken place when Henry Thomas 'Harry' Blackstaffe, the 1908 Olympic Sculling Champion, presented the 'H.T. Blackstaffe Shield' in 1910, to be awarded annually to the winner of the Club's 7 Miles Cross-Country Championship.

The inscription of his shield reads:

"7 MILES CROSS COUNTRY CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP SHIELD Presented by PRESIDENT H.T. BLACKSTAFFE, ESQ"

Up until 1916 the courses varied. Much of the land to the south-west of London was open countryside at the turn of the century and beyond. For example: in 1900 the Club's 7 mile circuit headed out from "The Railway Tavern" across Wandsworth Common, over the "Cats Back" railway bridge and across fields to Mitcham Lane before returning to the Tavern; in 1903 the race covered a course of plough, grass and road through Wandsworth and Earlsfield; in 1913 the route started from "The Spencer Arms", Lower Richmond Road, and went across Barnes Common to Sheen Lane, thence over Sheen Meadows to Richmond Park; in 1914 the race was held at Raynes Park; in 1916, combined with a race vs. the 3rd Irish Guards, Surrey AC and two other military units, the race was held at Worcester Park.

In the 1912-1913 handbook rules regarding the holding of the shield were spelled out: "... the Shield shall be a perpetual trophy to the Club, but in the event of a member winning three times in succession the President will double the size and value of the gold medal, set with a diamond, which is to be presented with the Shield. Presumably that rule had been rescinded by the time Arthur Penny came onto the scene in 1932.

In 1928 the race had to be postponed from its then pre-Christmas date and the race was combined with a match against St George's AC, hosted from their headquarters. The course involved a lap of the fields at the top of Lauriston Road plus a 'splash' through Beverley Brook. Later that year a new course was devised due to the construction of the Kingston By-pass. This new route involved a run to the village, down Gravelly Hill, via the horse-ride to 'the Flagstaff' and thence to the Windmill and village – two laps.

As late as the end of the '50s the runners continued to traverse Beverley Brook via the water splash at the side of the bridge over at the far corner of the Richardson Evans Memorial Fields at Kingston Vale. The descent to the brook was relatively gentle to allow horses to pass through but was often a boggy morass and the plunge into the stream took some courage after heavy rain. A tale was told for many years of the international runner from an opposing club who, during an inter-club match, refused to undertake a ducking and turned back. The 'splash' was discontinued when the old bridge was replaced by a more modern one and the banks of the stream steepened at that point.

From the 1960s through to 1990 the race was held over three laps of a course that ran from near the 'pound' on Memorial Ride, past the Windmill towards Curling Pond near Kingston Road, along the horse-ride near the cemetery and back home alongside Queensmere, the Windmill, and along the Avenue and Memorial Ride – 7½ miles in total. With the excavations to build the underpass at Tibbet's Corner¹ (opened in 1968), the spoil was deposited on the Common to form what became known as 'the mound', or in the papers of the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Archives 'the Ghastly Dump'. At first the course went to the right of 'the mound' and then for a time right over it until, as the earth settled, various bricks and rocks protruded to form dangerous obstacles. Eventually the route was switched to the left of 'the mound' – a slightly shorter route.

By 1991, with the proliferation of open road races, the size of the fields had dwindled as cross country became less preferable to racing over a standard distance on the road. In that year the decision was taken to use the Hercules Wimbledon A.C. course, and to combine the event with an inter-club race (which had been done several times over the years). However, the 1992 race saw only eleven Belgrave runners turn out and twelve months later there were just five. In 1994 after 93 years and 85 contests the race quietly slipped out of the calendar.

1901 ²	G. Still.....	A. Martin.....	S.A. Sherrington.....
1902	S.A. Sherrington..... 49:15	H. Lumley..... 52:26	J. Stockman.....54:00
1903	G. Still..... 47:37	S.A. Sherrington..... 48:28	J. Stewart.....49:10

¹ Tibbets Corner was named after a local lodge keeper called Tibbet but the site is famed as being the site of a gibbet used to hang the bodies of criminals, including that of the infamous Kingston born highwayman Jerry Abershaw, hanged on Kennington Common in 1795 and the last highwayman to have his mortal remains so displayed.

² We are unsure as to whether George Still, in 1901, was a 1st-claim member. Therefore, we record, also, the 4th-placed runner - H. Smith, no time. Still won again in 1903 – 4th was W.J. Smith 49:11.

1904	G.F. Pepper.....	43:17	W. Edwards.....	no time	J. Lumley	no time
1905	G.F. Pepper.....	41:45	G. Piper	42:22	H.J. Smith	43:18
1906	G. Piper	41:45	W. Edwards.....	42:17	A.E. Huskinson	43:14
1907	G. Piper	41:38	G. Blow.....	43:18	P.C. Franklin	43:27
1908	G. Piper	42:30	T.J. Brown	44:01	R.A. Ilsley.....	44:16
1909	R.A. Ilsley	42:55	G. Piper	43:05	C. Bull	43:37
1910	C.F. Blow.....	44:03	J.W. Hall.....	44:29	C. Bull	44:35
1911	R.A. Ilsley	43:56	G. Robertson.....	44:10	C.F. Blow	44:13
1912	J.J. Carroll	43:10	C.F. Blow.....	43:12	F.H. Foster.....	43:25
1913	J.J. Carroll ³	43:19 1/5	F.H. Foster	43:23 3/5	H. Parker.....	44:01 2/5
1914	H.J. Sexton.....	40:14	J. Helm	40:38	J. Garnett	40:50
1915	F.H. Foster	43:52 2/5	J.F. Offen.....		H.J. Sexton	
1916	F.H. Foster	39:20	J.F. Offen.....	41:11	H. Parker.....	41:27

1917 — 1919 No races held during First World War period

1920	C.C. Arnold.....	43:50	A.L. Porter		J.F. Offen	
1921	J.F. Gray.....	41:50	H. Parker		R.J. Savage	
1922	J.F. Gray.....	42:42	J.G. Flatt.....		A.D. Pyer	
1923	J.G. Flatt.....	39:28	A.D. Pyer.....		H.E. Footer	
1924	A.D. Pyer.....	39:34	A.E. Smith		J.G. Flatt	
1925	K.B. O'Kell.....	45:30.6	H.E. Footer.....	45:34	F.L.G. Buckingham	46:46
1926	K.B. O'Kell.....	45:24	H.E. Footer.....	45:59	A.D. Pyer	47:10
1927	A. Clark.....	43:53	H.E. Footer.....	44:14	H. Cook.....	44:45
1928	(Jan) A. Clark	40:50	E.A. Duffett.....	40:53	W.A. Rice.....	40:59
1928	(Dec) E.A. Duffett	38:40	A. Allum	38:45	W.G. Webb	39:04
1929	H.E. Footer	40:06	J.E. Flower	40:14	A. Allum	40:32
1930	A. Allum	39:03	A.W. Penny	39:36	J.E. Flower.....	40:24
1931	A. Allum	39:51	J.E. Flower	40:04	C.T. Carter	41:10
1932	A.W. Penny	39:23	C.T. Carter.....	40:00	C. Mains (D Mains?).....	40:39
1933	A.W. Penny	38:04	A. Allum.....	38:50	C.T. Carter	39:18
1934	A.W. Penny	39:01	H.E. Footer.....	39:14	J. Ginty.....	40:10
1935	A.W. Penny	38:46	L.J. Cohen.....	39:36	A. Allum	39:59
1936	A.W. Penny	38:40	L.J. Cohen.....	38:49	C.T. Carter	39:41
1937	A.W. Penny	35:17	D. Patience.....	35:29	J. Parker	35:50
1938	C.T. Carter.....	39:42	D. Patience.....	40:20	J.C. Smart.....	40:30

1939 — 1944 No races held during Second World War period

1945	C.T. Carter.....	39:39	L.W. Herbert.....	41:04	T. Clinton	41:07
1946	L.W. Herbert.....	39:55	V.S. Blowfield	40:11	H.E. Footer	40:21
1947	V.S. Blowfield	39:02	L.W. Herbert.....	39:06	R.F. Towndrow	39:23
1948	L.W. Herbert.....	40:30	E.S. Stimpson	41:07	G.F. Lucas	41:33
1949	D.R. Burfitt.....	37:41	V.S. Blowfield	37:48	J.W. Brown	37:57
1950	C.W. Walker	37:50	L.W. Herbert.....	37:51	W.E. Lucas	38:35
1951	C.W. Walker	39:11	J. Bromley	39:30	A.W. Bedford	39:33
1952	J.W. Brown	37:53	C.W. Walker	38:38	W.E. Lucas	39:00
1953 ⁴	J.W. Brown	36:17	G.T. Olding.....	37:06	R. Linstead.....	37:25
1954	C.W. Walker	37:14	J. Braughton.....	37:15	J. Masters	37:20
1955	J.W. Brown	35:20	E.A. Short.....	35:34	G. Davidson	35:54
1956	J.W. Brown	34:57	C.W. Walker	35:57	R.C. Tooby.....	36:36
1957	E. Gebbett	36:47	R. Weate	37:32	L.C. Bishop	37:52
1958	C.W. Walker	36:01	P. Newell	36:18	J. Moore.....	36:30

³ J.J. Carroll has previously been shown as the winner of the Championship in 1913 but the 1914-1915 handbook clearly records H.J. Sexton as the winner that year. In view of the fact that Sexton joined the club on February 13, 1913, and the race at that time was traditionally held in January, we have stuck with the former and have assumed that the handbook was wrong. Probably the Shield itself was the source for the earlier information, but double checking is no longer possible as its whereabouts are unknown to the author. The result as shown above is also backed up by a contemporary newspaper cutting.

⁴ In the 1953 race G.T. Olding was 2nd-claim so the silver medal went to R. Linstead and the bronze to D. Brickwood 37:33.

1959	C. Dabbs	40:51	P. Newell	41:02	D. Maclean.....	41:38
1960	A. Black	42:15	M. Robinson	42:34	C. Dabbs.....	42:55
1961	B. Sawyer	40:40	R. Linstead	41:54	C. Shippen	41:58
1962	Gerry North.....	40:43	C.W. Walker	41:49	A. Black.....	42:04
1963	C. Dabbs	41:27	J. Moore	42:03	T. Hart.....	42:18
1964	W. Kerr	42:47	T. Hart	42:59	L. O'Hara	44:10
1965	J. Thresher	42:30	L. O'Hara	42:37	J. Bicourt.....	42:41
1966	Gerry North.....	41:53	Geoff North.....	42:00	J. Thresher.....	42:05
1967	Gerry North.....	42:37	P. Whewell	42:54	L. O'Hara	43:14
1968	A. Fairclough	44:00	L. O'Hara	44:15	P. O'Connor	44:18
1969	L. Mann	42:44	A. Major	42:49	A. Fairclough.....	43:17
1970	L. Mann	42:08	A. Brien.....	42:09	J. Thresher.....	43:03
1971	L. O'Hara	42:48	P. Carton	43:54	J. Thresher.....	44:15
1972	J. Phelan	43:13	L. O'Hara	43:31	A. Binda	44:46
1973	Gerry North.....	42:57	L. Mann	43:57	J. Rimmer	44:23
1974	Gerry North.....	43:52	L. O'Hara	43:52	C. Pearson.....	45:38
1975	J. Stow.....	44:15	P. O'Connor	44:44	L. O'Hara	45:00
1976	L. O'Hara	45:09	J. Rimmer	45:57	M. Riley.....	46:38
1977	L. O'Hara	45:18	C. Pearson	46:08	L. Mann	46:43
1978	I. Duncan.....	45:17	L. O'Hara	45:52	J. Rimmer	46:42
1979	A. McIntosh	45:03	I. Duncan.....	45:56	L. O'Hara	46:03
1980	J. Gladwin.....	44:44	G. Macky	45:31	L. O'Hara	45:50
1981	J. Gladwin.....	45:26	O. Foote	46:05	S. Williamson	46:32
1982	D. North	44:54	J. Gladwin.....	45:28	J. Bicourt.....	46:25
1983	D. Anderson	45:16	D. Clack	46:34	K. Sinclair.....	47:48
1984	M. Lake.....	43:27	D. North	43:38	L. Lyons	45:11
1985	J. Bicourt	43:42	M. Lake.....	44:02	M. Kinane.....	45:13
1986	M. Bizio.....	43:28	M. Lake.....	43:36	F. Ward	44:25
1987	M. Bizio.....	45:55	M. Lake.....	46:44	D. Anderson	47:43
1988 ⁵	C. Dickinson	45:24	<i>No other details known.</i>			
1989	J. Mather	44:22	M. Lake.....	44:30	G. McGarren	45:59
1990	M. Bizio.....	44:19	L. Lyons.....	45:26	C. Dickinson.....	45:33
1991	F. Ward.....	40:37	M. Bizio.....	41:00	J. Estall	41:50
1992	K. Tadesse	42:02	M. Bizio.....	43:17	D. Anderson	47:03
1993	G. Adams	41:37	O. Lewes	43:07	D. Anderson	46:12
1994	and onwards – race no longer held					

⁵ Information from C. Dickinson.

Club 10 Miles Cross Country Championship for the 'Macher Shield'

The Macher family, brothers Albert and Gus with their father A.F.W. Macher, were staunch supporters of the club in so many ways. In the early '20s, they believed that for Belgrave Harriers to make a mark in the major cross-country championships held in January to March over a distance of ten miles, it was no good solely focusing on the then highlight of the Club cross-country season – the 7 miles championship. The three of them presented a shield, to be competed for over a ten miles distance. The new championship was to be held after Christmas with the 7 miles race, formerly held in January, now being given a December date.

The idea worked. By the end of the '20s and coupled with the emergence of Bert Footer – who always focused on the English National Championship the clubs standing had changed and by the '30s top ten team positions were obtained in the 'National' followed by medals and a team win in 1935.

The inscription of the shield reads:

"BELGRAVE 1887 HARRIERS – Macher Challenge Shield – 10 MILES CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIP"

The race became a major event in the Club's winter fixtures list, with all the leading lights taking part; and as for the 7 miles race, it was not for the faint of heart, taking in the "splash" through Beverley Brook at Kingston Vale. The Club's regular circuit of the Common settled on a slightly over-distance '2½ miles' lap in the '60s, and whereas the extra distance was inconsequential for a Surrey League just taking in two loops, when it came to four laps for the '10', the distance covered was nearer 11 miles.

As with all other Club Championships, they became less popular in the '90s. Fifteen men finished in 1991, eleven the following year (of whom only six were established team runners), then eight in '93. A two-lap course was devised shortly before the 1994 race, with the start and finish outside Lauriston Cottage; perhaps that would spark a little more interest. As it happened, the lure of the club-house just a quarter of a mile down Lauriston Road swayed two men into coming out after a single tour of the Common, during which the leading three ran further than was intended and were startled to encounter the rear of the field ahead of them. Just six men finished, and it was the last time that the race was held.

1923	A.D. Pyer	55:21	R.J. Savage	no time	J.G. Flatt	no time
1924	A.D. Pyer	56:20	W.L. Bayliss	no time	G. Still	no time
1925	H.E. Footer	60:26	K.B. O'Kell & A.E. Smith	dead-heated	63:13	
1926	H.E. Footer	60:35	A.D. Pyer	61:07	G. Still	64:53
1927	A. Clark	59:49	H.E. Footer	61:40	A.D. Pyer	63:52
1928	A. Clark	63:34	E.A. Duffett	64:52	A.D. Pyer	65:24
1929	W.S. Mitchell	59:44	E.A. Duffett	59:51	A.W. Penny	60:28
1930	H.E. Footer	59:49	J.E. Flower	60:03	A. Allum	60:23
1931	A. Allum	59:53	A.W. Penny	61:36	S.H. Warboys	61:44
1932	A. Allum	60:21	J.E. Flower	60:40	H.E. Footer	60:40.2
1933	H.E. Footer	57:31	A.W. Penny	58:26	A. Allum	60:19
1934	A.W. Penny	57:09	H.E. Footer	57:31	A. Allum	60:43
1935	H.E. Footer	59:00	C.T. Carter	60:03	A. Allum	60:43
1936	A.W. Penny	60:00	H.E. Footer	60:44	C.T. Carter	61:13
1937	J. Ginty	58:42	A.W. Penny	58:45	J. Parker	59:42
1938	A.W. Penny	58:27	H.E. Footer	58:35	C.T. Carter	59:17
1939	A.W. Penny	58:29	C.T. Carter	58:38	E.S. Stimpson	59:30

1939 — 1944 No races held during Second World War period

1946	C.T. Carter	59:13	D.J. Main	59:21	T. Clinton	60:32
1947	V.S. Blowfield	59:58	A.W. Penny	60:45	G.M. Pearson	60:57
1948	V.S. Blowfield	59:59	F.J. Abberton	60:15	L.W. Herbert	60:42
1949	V.S. Blowfield	60:21	F.J. Abberton	60:27	L.M. Marchant	60:46
1950	J.W. Brown	59:31	S. Charlton	60:03	W.E. Lucas	60:37
1951	J.W. Brown	60:21	S. Charlton	61:12	J. Bromley	61:30
1952	J.W. Brown	59:05	C.W.G. Walker	59:25	W.E. Lucas	60:30
1953	J.W. Brown	57:45	J. Bromley	60:14	E. Short	60:39
1954	J.W. Brown	55:09	C.W.G. Walker	?	J. Masters	55:17

1955	J.W. Brown.....	57:44	J. Masters.....	59:46	C. Roffey.....	59:55	
1956	J.W. Brown.....	53:57	P. Newell.....	54:17	C.W.G. Walker.....	54:52	
1957	J.W. Brown.....	50:27	C.W.G. Walker.....	52:32	D. Baulch.....	53:04	
1958	C.W.G. Walker.....	52:57	D. Baulch.....	53:44	E. Gebbett.....	54:37	
1959	P.G. Newell.....	57:50	C.W.G. Walker.....	59:23	J. Moore.....	59:57	
1960	C. Dabbs.....	58:09	C.W.G. Walker.....	60:03	D. Jones.....	60:44	
1961	P.G. Newell.....	58:14	J.W. Brown.....	60:34	C.W.G. Walker.....	61:59	
1962	R. Linstead.....	58:29	B. Sawyer.....	59:11	C.W.G. Walker.....	59:28	
1963	R. Linstead.....	59:55	P. Newell.....	60:37	A. Black.....	61:20	
1964	C. Dabbs.....	57:42	B. Sawyer.....	58:03	A. Black.....	58:34	
1965	Gerry A. North.....	54:28	Geoff A. North.....	56:51	A. Fairclough.....	57:09	
1966	A. Fairclough.....	58:15	L. O'Hara.....	58:16	C. Dabbs.....	58:36	
1967	L. O'Hara.....	58:55	A. Fairclough.....	59:00	T.K. Hart.....	59:29	
1968	R. Piotrowski.....	60:31	L. O'Hara.....	60:31	T.K. Hart.....	60:45	
1969	T.K. Hart.....	61:11	A. Major.....	61:46	P. O'Connor.....	62:09	
1970	A. Fairclough.....	58:24	L. O'Hara.....	58:38	T.K. Hart.....	58:58	
1971	L.T. Mann.....	58:51	G. Monnet.....	58:56	T.K. Hart.....	59:28	
1972	Gerry A. North.....	57:06	J. Phelan.....	58:12	L. O'Hara.....	58:53	
1973	L. O' Hara.....	58:38	L.T. Mann.....	59:57	T.K. Hart.....	60:27	
1974	J. Rimmer.....	58:47	L.T. Mann.....	59:37	L. O'Hara.....	60:18	
1975	Gerry A. North.....	63:53	L. O'Hara.....	65:41	C. Pearson.....	66:06	
1976	J. Bicourt.....	63:53	L.T. Mann.....	64:36	B. Gorman.....	67:59	
1977	J. Rimmer.....	64:36	B. Gorman.....	68:49	D. Maughan.....	69:29	
1978	L. O'Hara.....	63:09	I. Duncan.....	64:21	W. Weller.....	64:35	
1979	I. Duncan.....	62:21	L. O'Hara.....	62:36	J. Rimmer.....	63:10	
1980	A. McIntosh.....	60:48	L. O'Hara.....	62:34	I. Duncan.....	64:53	
1981	L. O'Hara.....	63:48	S. Williamson.....	64:37	J. Smith.....	65:16	
1982	S. Williamson.....	64:43	L. Lyons.....	65:41	A. Binda.....	66:16	
1983	S. Williamson.....	62:10	M. Sinclair.....	62:45	L. O'Hara.....	64:08	
1984	M. Nouch.....	61:26	L. Best.....	61:33	Martin Lake.....	61:38	
1985	Martin Lake.....	59:39	L. Lyons.....	60:51	M. Bizio.....	62:49	
1986	Martin Lake.....	59:55	M. Bizio.....	61:53	M. Head.....	63:04	
1987	F. Ward.....	59:58	Martin Lake.....	60:22	P. Anthony.....	60:25	
1988	F. Ward.....	63:28	<i>No other details known.</i>				
1989	F. Ward.....	59:42	<i>No other details known.</i>				
1990	F. Ward.....	63:29	M. Lake.....	65:14	M. Lewington.....	66:06	
1991	G. Teahan.....	60:26	C. Dickinson.....	61:22	Mark Anderson.....	64:06	
1992	M. Lake.....	58:31	Mark Anderson.....	59:58	M. Lewington.....	60:25	
1993	M. Bizio.....	59:13	O. Lewes.....	60:21	S. Willimont.....	63:47	
1994	L. Lyons.....	62:32	Mark Anderson.....	62:59	Marlon Anderson.....	65:18	
1995	and onwards – race no longer held.						

References:*Athletics Weekly.**Belgravian, The.*

British Newspaper Archive.

Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators Archive.

Club handbooks 1912-13 & 1914-1915