

Civil Service Athletic Association

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

1 Civil Service Athletic Association

2020 has been a year which will long live in the memory as the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted the whole world in a way not seen before and ruined countless numbers of lives in the process. Even in early 2021 there is some hope as the vaccines start to roll out but unfortunately no-one knows how successful they will be. We all hope that there is a better future to come.

Like every other aspect of life the CSAA was not immune and for the first time since the Second World War no events took place in 2020 due to the initial lockdown in March and the subsequent social distancing in the summer and then more lockdowns.

The only event that was held was the Sefton Brancker & SEAX Representative Cross Country Matches in January at RAF Halton where the Civil Service won both team titles. The Men's team was probably their strongest for almost 25 years which was really encouraging.

Early in the year CSAA & CSSC were saddened to learn of the death of former Chairman Alan Mason who had recently turned 90. He gave outstanding service to both organisations over many years and unfortunately due to the Covid restrictions no representatives could attend the funeral.

Then in October there was more tragic news with the death of Chris Smith during a training run in the Scottish hills. Chris was a Great Britain International and twice a CSAA Cross Country Champion and still a very active runner at the relatively young age of 43.

2 Events During 2020

As mentioned above the Sir Sefton-Brancker & SEAX Cross Country Matches against the RAF went ahead and in the Men's Race CSAA dominated for the first time in many years with the first 5 home and then 7 in the top 8. Owen Hinds won the race by 7 seconds from Tom Adams with Tom Aldred a further 11 seconds behind. In the Ladies Race the RAF had first and second places but CSAA then filled positions 3 through to 10 to completely dominate the team event. Thanks must go to the CSAA Team Managers Ian Statter and Claire Cameron along with John O'Shea for turning out such strong teams.

Just out of interest the first Representative Cross Country Match was held on 30th January 1929 at Uxbridge when it was a three-way competition along with Middlesex. Whilst Middlesex won the team title CSAA took the individual honours with B C V Oddie winning in 38.30.

Sir Sefton-Brancker, who was associated with all three Associations, was killed in the Airship R101 disaster at Beauvais in France in the early hours of 5 October 1930. After his unfortunate death, it was decided that the 3 Associations would jointly provide a Challenge Cup to commemorate Sir Sefton, and to include Track & Field events in addition to the Cross Country race already being held.

The Women's SEAX event was first held at RAF Halton on 26th January 1987 when CSAA's Caroline Horne won the first of her 6 consecutive titles with CSAA taking the team award. The SEAX Trophy was donated by Sir Arthur Gold CBE in 1991 when the Track & Field was also included.

The only other event that CSAA organised was a Virtual 4 Mile event to try and keep the interest up amongst runners who would have rarely raced during most of 2020. The event attracted 46

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runners of all ages and abilities and included a few runners new to CSAA events including the overall fastest Jack Millar (DfT) who recorded 20.01 which was almost two minutes faster than Darren Rowlands (DWP) in 21.59 a M50. Fastest Lady was Stephanie Robson (F45 MINERVA) in 26.01 just 16 seconds faster than Sue Frances (F50 MINERVA).

3 The CSAA History

During Lockdown and with the Centenary of the Civil Service Sports Council in 2021 it was felt that now was the time to try and produce a History of the CSAA 1864 – 2020. This would detail the CSAA's illustrious history from its early beginnings when the only event was a magnificent Sports Day in London and to try and list all of the individual winners in each event up to 2020. As the Project took off it was amazing the wealth of information that could be found for the period 1864 – 1939 and it certainly provided a good use of time during the National Lockdown 1. The information found included contemporary Newspaper articles from 1864, Athletics Weekly Reports from 1949 and the CSAA's own records, especially for the Race Walk with detailed results back to the first race in 1922.

Hopefully this will lead to some kind of publication during 2021 but will certainly provide a very detailed record for future generations of athletes and perhaps social historians as it also charts the development of how Women's roles in society changed during this period.

4 The CSAA Committee

The CSAA is an elected body and the Committee meets three times a year to discuss matters relating to the forthcoming events. This year Meetings have been held via Zoom and worked very well. The AGM is usually held in January to which all members are welcome to attend. There are places on the Committee for anyone who is genuinely interested in contributing to the objectives of CSAA. However, anyone who is prepared to assist at any of the events, without the responsibility of becoming a Committee Member, is equally welcome as a willing volunteer. If anyone wishes to discover more about what is involved or offer their services for a particular event then please contact the Secretary or a member of the Committee for more information. Volunteers remain the lifeblood of the sport and CSAA will welcome anyone who lives locally and wishes to assist at any event. For example, this might involve timekeeping, number recording, course marshalling, officiating, handing out race numbers, course marking etc and would assist the Committee in so many ways and continue to maintain the high quality that athletes currently enjoy when participating.

The elected Committee for 2020, with the Meeting held in February, was as follows:

President Marian Holmes OBE

Chairman: Ian Statter

Secretary: Nick Hume

Treasurer: Paula Booth

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Life Vice Presidents: Bill Berry, Brian Craig, Dave Evans, John Hall, Neil Hornsby, Nick Hume, Bill Kingston, Alan Mason, Roger Smith, Gerry Trainer, Ted Wingrove

Committee: Bob Brimage, Claire Cameron, Gaye Clarke, Michaela Dempsey, Steve Hallas, Grete Howarth, Jason Holt, Steve Norris, Ros Townsend-Hope, Steve Uttley

Accounts Examiner: J Dransfield

Within the Committee there is a wide range of knowledge and experience that covers all aspects of the athletics spectrum. A number of the Committee Members also serve in volunteer capacities from national to local level for Clubs, Counties and National Associations and/or are qualified Coaches, and/or Officials thus bringing increased expertise to the organisation of CSAA events.

5 Final Round-Up

Without live events and the chance to compete against each other something has been lost and hopefully it was only the racing and not the athletes love of the sport. At the moment there is no certainty regarding which events will take place and in what format as this will be dependant upon the advice from Government and England Athletics. We can only hope that it is an improvement upon 2020 and that CSSC can celebrate its Centenary year in some form or another along with CSAA.

Nick Hume CSAA General Secretary January 2021