

**The Origins, Governance and Social Structure of Club Cross
Country Running in Scotland, 1885 – 1914**

Hamish McDonald Telfer

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Abstract

The study examines a particular aspect of the development of athletics in Scotland. The first organised clubs for the sole purpose of purely athletic competition in the contemporary sense, were cross country clubs known as harrier clubs. Through investigation of the origins, governance and the social structure of harriers clubs, the study connects these three fundamental themes in understanding sport within broader social historical study. In this study the origins of cross country running are set within a theoretical framework which recognises the nature of the urban and rural environments which defined the sport. The sport's early growth and governance in Scotland is set alongside the broader ideological position of the 'amateur'. Additionally, club organisation promoted the clubs as cultural institutions. Clubs served as a focus for male sociability and elevated the status of membership of the harriers. Membership meant more than just sporting engagement; it included social and civic standing. The purpose and function therefore of early clubs extended beyond participation. This study demonstrates how membership of cross country clubs conferred upon its members a status, establishing harriers clubs as important social institutions. This research shows how social networks within sport replicated society more broadly. The significance of the contribution of cross country clubs to the development of Scottish sporting culture is therefore implicit. Harriers clubs were the epitome of the complexity of sporting engagement representing both respectability and liminal behaviour.

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For
Janet McDonald

Author's Declaration

The work contained in this thesis is a product of the author's own work and is not a result of collaboration with others. The views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and do not represent the views of the University of Stirling.

Signed:

Date:

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This study addresses the circumstances of the origins of organised cross country running in Scotland. Through a theoretical consideration of the changing perceptions of the engagement in urban and rural environments within people's lives, the study investigates the nature of the formation of the first clubs and charts the expansion of the sport in the early period of its development from 1885 to 1914. Governance of the sport is examined as a means of defining the nature and structure of control of the sport and this is examined further through early forms of international competition. The study concludes by also examining the activities and social fabric of the clubs and the (often) ambiguous nature of the behaviour of their young Victorian gentleman members.

The first athletics clubs in Scotland - in the sense of a club devoted to what we term today as track and field clubs - were in fact Harriers clubs, a term used to denote the principal form of athletic activity of the club namely, cross country running.¹ While the use of the word 'Harrier' did not exclude other forms of athletic activity such as track racing, the Harriers clubs embodied by their title, the earlier values of the activity. These values, located within the Christian gentleman ethos of the athletic male ('athleticism'), stemmed from public schools at a time when the boys sought to diversify their leisure activities and organised, amongst other physical activities, a form of 'human hunt'. Harrier running, or cross country running, emerged in England as a sporting form in the early to mid 19th century with the first English

¹ Cross country running is variously known as hare and hounds, paper chasing, steeple chasing and more latterly as harrier running.

clubs constituted from 1868 onwards. The first Scottish clubs were formed in 1885.

Issues of diffusion and expansion are also examined including Scottish cross country running in an international context with the inauguration of the International Cross Country Championships within this period. The study reaches a natural conclusion at the start of the Great War of 1914–1918 when, in common with a number of sports, limitations were imposed on the sport due to hostilities.

While the study is principally concerned with the nature, structure and social function of the sport, it is also located within a broader societal context. This demonstrates how sport, and in particular, this form of athletic activity, was shaped by social trends within society as well as setting new trends, fashions and standards in relation to the way sport was viewed and practiced. The study demonstrates that participation in cross country running was an attempt to appropriate status and values as well as maintaining them, a mix of custodian and missionary approaches.

Academic research into the origins of Scottish cross country running has not been undertaken before. Given that a number of the early Scottish sporting ‘heroes’ were athletes and specifically cross country runners, the importance of the sport to the general tapestry of Scottish sport has been relatively neglected. In addition, this study shows the fluid inter-relationships of sporting prowess of leading performers in the early days of organised sports clubs in Scotland in the late 19th century. There is only one work by Shields as a centenary history of the sport in Scotland

commissioned on behalf of the governing body.² In England there are a very small number of academic works relating to the history of the development of athletics and athletic clubs.³ These augment non-academic club histories produced by the clubs themselves.⁴ As more clubs approach centenaries, inevitably there will be more published works.⁵

The study uses a club case study approach in investigating the origins of the sport from 1885. It focuses on the three major cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee since this is where the origins of the sport predominantly emerge. It does not provide exhaustive and detailed coverage of all possible sources, but includes discussion of the emerging body of club histories, to ensure a broad picture of the sport in its formative years.

This thesis therefore fills a gap in the literature of Scottish sport generally and cross country running in Scotland in particular. By examining in detail the origins of the sport in Scotland, its governance and the nature of the original clubs and their place in the communities from which they drew their members, a more detailed set of explanations emerge as to the character of the sport in Scotland. Within the study there is a particular emphasis on the homosocial nature of the clubs emphasising and

² Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union 1890-1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

³ See for example James, T. (1977). *The Contribution of Schools and Universities to the Development of Organised Sport up to 1900* (with special reference to athletics and swimming). Unpublished PhD Thesis. Leicester University and Drake, A. (1994). *Athletics in Post-War Britain: The History of a Leading Club, Coventry Godiva Harriers, 1945-1994*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Warwick University.

⁴ See for example Saunders, D. K. and Weeks-Pearson, A. J. (1989). *The Centenary History of the Blackheath Harriers*. London: The Harriers and Hartley, A. M. and Crighton, A. M. (1952). *History of the Cheshire Tally-Ho Hare and Hounds Club: 80 years of Cross Country Running*. Manchester: The Club.

⁵ Cairney, J. (2004). *One Hundred Years of Shettleton Harriers: An East End Odyssey*. Glasgow: The Harriers. This is a good example of a thoroughly researched and detailed centenary history of a Scottish club.

building upon, as well as contributing to, the growing literature on sport and masculinity generally.

The research draws strongly on wide-ranging contemporary sources. This work therefore is knowledge development and adds and contributes to the growing number of studies in other sports to present a broad and more accurate picture of the role and place of sport in the lives of young, and usually, male Victorians. Works of a diverse nature have been examined to demonstrate the range, depth and diversity of the impact of the sport on its participants. In addition to a range of academic secondary sources, fiction, biographies of individuals and official census returns as well as newspapers have been used. Histories of clubs and individuals have been analysed recognising the occasional, inherent partiality of these accounts. This study has relied extensively on the use of newspaper archive material. This brought challenges in terms of accuracy and interpretation. Cross-referencing and the use of supporting documentation was undertaken as much as possible to ensure the veracity of sources. Additionally, there were consultations with the journalist, historian and former President of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association (S.A.A.A.), Colin Shields as well as Hamish Thomson, athletics historian and member of the National Union of Track Statisticians (N.U.T.S.). Thus the use and interpretation of the varied resources were interrogated in a variety of different ways. Nevertheless, the process of interpreting potentially partial reporting of an underdeveloped sport, in terms of the available literature, is acknowledged.

This thesis examines a number of themes. The value that society attached to athletic activity as a desirable social commodity during the period in question (1880–1914)

underpins much of the research. Athletic achievement, in determining not only a sense of maleness, but also as a value central to the concept of Britishness, is important in understanding the fascination that grew with varying forms of sporting activity including cross country running. As everyday life changed and moulded around the quickening pace of industrialised society, new forms of cultural activity developed often based upon older 'traditional' patterns but shaped to represent the new economic and social conditions that were emerging. Sport was no different from other aspects of life in the new civil, metropolitan society that became the reality of so many people's existence in late Victorian and early Edwardian Britain.

As rhythms and patterns of living changed and passed away, the search in many communities for continuities as well as new experiences, developed force. The survival, and the changes, in sporting forms lie at the centre of this study. As people moved and their lives wove with one another, so their experiences generated new ways as well as new sets of expectations. The structure of Victorian society, for so long the focus of historians, was a vehicle for ambiguity and liminality. New activities became connected with new experiences. Sport was a key element of this connectedness.

Not only did people hold customs and practices close in a period of rapid urban expansion as Victorian society adjusted to industrial and social change, but they also embraced new cultural forms. Sporting and social influences therefore came to shape sport in Scotland as new ideas and aspirations impacted upon the more familiar traditions. Time and space came to be viewed differently as leisure in its varying forms, both structured and less structured, became more centrally focused in people's

lives. John Urry's work in social formation and the broader notion of human agency have been at the centre of work in the broader socio-historical treatment of leisure and help in explaining the new tourism and leisure 'phenomena' emerging towards the end of the 19th century Britain.⁶ Scotland contributes in its own right to this view of 'new' leisure.

This study of cross country running explores the way in which one sport exemplified this 'battleground' of control as well as becoming a vehicle for aspiration and shaping change and claiming its own peculiar niche within Scottish sport. It developed its own values and structures as well as positioning itself in relation to other nations through engagement in international competition. It therefore connected to a growing sense of Scottish sporting achievement with its own heroes and successes.

Cross country running came to represent the antithesis of the new urbanisation. The harriers were the active representation associated with positive images of the outdoors, health and the countryside. The sport in this sense came to represent the ambiguity of the impact of industrialisation on urban dwellers and the relationship with individual health and welfare in 19th century Britain.⁷ With demographic shifts to city dwelling and work, the countryside and the coastline of Scotland took on a new value as a playground. There was a social currency in being able to demonstrate that one was able to take one's leisure 'out of town'. Leisure was a social cachet, a form of cultural capital that carried with it an ascribed social, and assumed financial status within a growing civic consciousness of acceptable activity. This is what

⁶ Urry, J. (1990). *The Tourist Gaze*. London: Sage.

⁷ See for example the various national and local government improving acts such as the Public Baths and Wash-houses Act (1846) and the Public Health Act (1848).

Wordsworth derided in his description of the ‘rash assault’ of Victorian Britain on its countryside.⁸

Cross country running was part of this assault on the countryside, this ‘romantic gaze’ as Urry calls it, as young males sought freedom from the cities and the urban habitation as part of the developing concern for the welfare and health of city dwellers.⁹ The study highlights the overt emphasis on health and well being as a desirable social image, as well as the inherent contradictions of the sport in its prosecution of that image of the respectable Victorian male. The use of the countryside to set apart these sportsmen from their more urban counterparts in team games eventually curtailed the growth of the sport. With a changing weekly locale (although many clubs used a municipal facility as a headquarters training venue), it never acquired the local rootedness of other sports. Seemingly of no fixed abode and without the benefit of the privately owned club-houses of team sports, it was transient in people’s mental landscapes as well as actual location. Cross country running did not generally have a base within any community of size to be able to identify with that community positively.

Cross country running was also a sport that belonged to the central ideology of the Kingsleyian tradition. The ‘muscular Christian’ ethos and the strong ideological ‘athleticism’ associated with 19th century sport promulgated from within the public schools, resonated strongly particularly in athletics. Not only was this ideology on the wane by the end of the 19th century in civil society, it also came to represent a

⁸ See the work of Winter for an analysis of industrial, Victorian Britain’s relationship with the countryside. Winter, J. (2002). *Secure from Rash Assault. Sustaining the Victorian Environment*. Berkeley: University of Kentucky Press.

⁹ Urry, J. (1990). *op. cit.*

cultural form associated with 'betters' at a time of growing political and social consciousness that was challenging this hegemonic notion. In the early days of the sport in the public schools, cross country running was always accepted as a relatively peripheral activity to be engaged in usually when other sporting distractions were not so easily to hand. The sport developed from the status of a training adjunct, to a sport that drew its own adherents and specialists towards its own particular sense of sporting form.

The key findings of this study demonstrate the social status of Scottish cross country running clubs. Although of a professed egalitarian nature and 'socially improving' in mission by engagement and association, the clubs retained a somewhat peripheral station in Scottish sport generally. Indeed within athletics itself, it was to struggle in status and governance in relation to the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association, an historical accident of governance more related to the original control of the S.A.A.A., which was to forever position cross country as part of its fiefdom rather than as a sport set apart. The study identifies the initial objectives and attractions of the sport to young men as it became more clearly outlined and defined. Club structure and growth is examined and analysed to determine the way that the sport operated and developed. Within this, the study exposes the social ambiguities often at the heart of the Victorian harrier club in terms of respectability. The study also examines the primary role of Scottish cross country running in an international context. The sport moved towards a more confident position in relation to competition. This was set within a developing global context through the inauguration of various international associations as well as impacting upon the modern Olympic movement as a new, emerging, sporting global force. Cross country was initially and intermittently

included within this new movement.

The following chapter identifies and positions the relevant literature that supports the study as well as identifying gaps in the literature. Chapter three explores the theoretical position of the nature of consumption of the countryside and the changing ways in which individual engagement in sport and notions of health and welfare impacted upon, and helped develop harrier activity.

Chapters four, five and six are devoted to the origins of the sport. The focus is primarily on folk traditions, varying shifts in social acceptance of sporting form, the role of gentlemen's clubs generally as a socially acceptable activity for men and the development of Pedestrianism and the Highland Games as athletic forms. These influences shaped the development of organised club cross country running. The development of the first English clubs is also examined as they provide a benchmark of the structure, ideology and social constructs of the sport against which the Scottish clubs can be gauged. The first Scottish harriers clubs were formed from 1885 and the chapter examining the origins of the first clubs emphasises club structures, patterns of growth, as well as the general development of the sport in terms of rules and refinement. The chapter on governance is specifically devoted to power and the development of the sport.

Scotland's role in the international expansion of the sport is then evaluated in the following chapter while the penultimate chapter explores the social fabric of the Scottish harriers club. The sometimes overt ludic and homosocial behaviour of harriers meant that these clubs were often outlets for high spirits. Engagement in

revelry was condoned as being a mere by-product of sporting activity and this chapter promotes the view that clubs were strongly homosocial in nature while disguising liminal activities.

The conclusion draws the key findings of the thesis together and summarises the value of the study to the broader knowledge base of Scottish sport.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The focus to date of the literature on British sport has tended to be that of ‘team games’, with only minor incursions into other forms of sporting achievement.¹ The historiography of British cross country running is therefore a relatively neglected area. This is not to deny the existence of a relevant empirical, albeit descriptive, body of literature on British Athletics.² A number of specific references to cross country running exist within a more limited but significant field of literature of Scottish sport and society.³ Further material is devoted to pedestrianism and whilst rich in contemporary commentary – mainly relating to the subtleties and nuances of the training practices of the day – little relates directly to cross country running.⁴

Specific studies are emerging relating to the histories of athletics clubs. In considering any study of a sport through investigation of club activity, locale and parochial relevance are of importance. To this end, jubilee and centennial histories of clubs are now being produced adding to athletics literature.⁵ This in itself indicates a potential source of material, as yet untapped, relating to the social relevance of cross

¹ For example Holt, R. (1998). *Sport and the British*. 3rd ed. London: Oxford University Press; Lowerson, J. (1993). *Sport and the English Middle Classes 1870-1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press and Malcomson, R.W. (1973). *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

² A good example is Watman, M. F. (1968). *History of British Athletics*. London: Robert Hale.

³ For example see Jarvie, G. (1986). *Highland Games: The Making of a Myth*. Leicester: Leicester University Press; Webster, D. (1973). *Scottish Highland Games*. Edinburgh: Reprographia and Fittis, R. S. (1891). *The Sports and Pastimes of Scotland*. Paisley: Gardner.

⁴ For example see McCombie Smith, W. (1891). *The Athletes and Athletic Sports of Scotland*. Paisley: Gardner; Jamieson, D. A. (1943). *Powderhall and Pedestrianism*. Edinburgh: Johnston as well as earlier works of Thom, W. (1813). *Pedestrianism, or an Account of the Performances of Celebrated Pedestrians During the Last and Present Century with a Full Narrative of Captain Barclay's Public and Private Matches*. Aberdeen: Brown and Frost, and Egan, P. (1807). *Sporting Anecdotes*. 2nd ed. London: Neeley and Jones.

⁵ Two particularly strong examples of club histories are McAusland, B. (1988). *Clydesdale Harriers: A Centenary History, 1885-1985*. Glasgow: The Club and Cairney, J. (2004). *One Hundred Years of Shettleston Harriers: An East End Odyssey*. Glasgow: The Club.

country running.

This study identifies three key themes in the development of the sport of cross country running to construct a conceptual framework through which the sport is examined. While the historiography outlined above serves as a useful starting point in considering the origins of the sport, the central focus of this study is the nature of the development and governance of both the sport and the harrier clubs. Furthermore, the importance of the social function served by clubs is set in the context of the development of the sport. The literature pertinent to this study is therefore particular, while drawing on more generic literature to locate cross country running within the broader spectrum of Scottish and indeed, British sport.

In reviewing the literature of athletics with regard to this study, the focus has been on cross country running with the word ‘athletics’ tightly defined and constrained to encompass only those activities directly impinging it. Such a narrow definition creates tension but the rationale remains tight to allow the key themes to of the study of origin, governance and social function to emerge.

To this end, this review chapter identifies selected work. Subsequent chapters of the thesis expand on the relevant literature as appropriate in relation to the specific theme of the chapter. This chapter deals only with the key concepts that contextualise and locate the study more deliberately in the titles and themes of the chapters.

Origins and ideology

While the organised club base for the sport of cross country running developed some

seventeen years after the first harriers club activity in England, the influence of the growth of the sport in England is an important factor in its development in Scotland. Never subscribing completely to the ideological roots within the English public school system, Scottish cross country running still identified strongly with the amateur ethos of this athletic form. The ideology surrounding the Victorian athletic male impacted upon harrier club members in Scotland in much the same way as it had in England while at the same time, the sport in Scotland was imbued with a more egalitarian and less exclusive membership. The development of the sport of cross country running or harrier running was therefore as reflexive to the general trends in the organisation and structure of sport at this time as other sports. This period of rapid sporting change is well documented.⁶ The work of Lowerson is particularly focused on the class structure of British sport with the consequent adoption by sport of the Victorian value systems during a period of significant sporting expansion.⁷ Malcolmson and others have examined sport's impact on society more broadly by, for instance, documenting the nature of conditions that led to the more organised forms of mass popular sport.⁸ Birley's work is important in contextualising this current study within the construction of a sense of 'Britishness' and the hegemonic structures that inevitably are inherent in such a notion of identity.⁹

Mangan's examination of public schools is significant as it is within public school ideologies that the sport in its original form of hares and hounds emerged.¹⁰ Nauright and Chandler amongst others, have explored public school ideologies in relation to

⁶ Holt, R. (1998). *op. cit.*

⁷ Lowerson, J. (1993). *op. cit.*

⁸ Malcolmson, R. W. (1973). *op. cit.*

⁹ Birley, D. (1993). *Sport and the Making of Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

¹⁰ Mangan, J. A. (1981). *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public Schools*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

sport assisting in the construction of a framework for the understanding the ethos and cultures surrounding the development of sporting form in Britain in the 19th century.¹¹ These ideological influences imbued the newly formed governing bodies of the day such as the Amateur Athletic Association and the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association with strong and persistent attitudes to amateurism and the ethos of the sport, thus setting the scene for the development of an athletics ‘tradition’.

Exploring an athletics ‘tradition’

James has examined this ‘tradition’ in the context of the development of athletics in England.¹² He highlights the pervasive nature of public school ideology in the early days of the development of English athletics. James clearly defines a relationship between the early governance of the sport and club activity and the ways in which club members assimilated the values and principles underpinning sport at this time. The Amateur Athletic Association in England was particularly resolute in establishing the nature and context of athletics within the principles of the gentleman amateur thus defining and indeed inventing the core of an ‘athletics tradition’. Club structures and organizational patterns often relay how ‘tradition’ is malleable rather than monolithic. By applying ‘impact’ to its immediate geographical area and beyond (nationally), James locates ideology and locale within a broader British sporting framework. Relating local studies to a broader national position remains a key element in the study of athletics in particular and sport generally, since major works have tended towards studies of a national polemic rather than local or regional investigations.

¹¹ Nauright, J. and Chandler, T. (1996). *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*. London: Cass.

¹² James, T. M. (1977). *The Contribution of Schools and Universities to the Development of Organised Sport up to 1900 (with special reference to athletics and swimming)*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Leicester University.

The role and place of athletics development in British sport is ill-defined. The composition of athletics clubs with regard to membership and structures specifically in terms of organization, club activities and social fabric, remain under-researched. Key themes of research of sport in this period have tended to exclude athletics. The amateur question for example was to run through the core of British athletics and whilst it is possible to trace the early ideological beginnings from the formation of the Amateur Athletic Association, the tensions arising from the professional realities of many athletics meetings especially in the north of England and Scotland, have yet to be explored in real depth in relation to the sport.

An athletics 'tradition' is important in the general structure of organised sport insofar as it poses the question of the degree to which sport, in line with society of the day, viewed itself as an element of social change or as a reactionary polemic claiming the need to retain stability. In this sense, the view of this 'tradition' within the broader scope of a 'sporting tradition' is central to any debate on the nature of the development of sport in the 19th century. Hobsbawm and Ranger's debate about the nature of traditions at this time is central in developing this notion further as the Victorian re-working of the past is an essential element in understanding what has genuinely survived and what has been re-invented or subtly changed.¹³

This attempt to construct a discourse on athletics 'tradition' is therefore problematic unless the received forms of 'tradition' are analysed sensitively and in relation to the different situations from which they come. It may well be that this approach

¹³ Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds.) (1992). *The Invention of Tradition*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

however will provide frameworks for future work in this area. James' view of the lack of universality of harrier and athletics clubs recognises this.¹⁴ Moreover, he also makes the point in both this work and in his bibliographic sources that tradition is not static and that it should be seen as an emerging and transient vehicle for a set of values, attitudes and practices that are rooted in the past.¹⁵ It should give a sense of worth, intrinsically to the practitioner, as well as looking to preserve within a contemporary framework of practice, and thus allow club members to have sense of 'tradition' in a living form. Therefore a sense of belonging from within generates a sense of place and thus develops a notion of a 'tradition'. For example, accepting pedestrianism into this 'tradition' allows us to widen the sense of belonging to a 'tradition' from that which is static *within* experience to that which is constantly shaped *by* experiences. This in turn should unravel the nature of the meaning of sporting activities within communities.

Community, identity and belonging

Local community identity was a source of pride and became increasingly important as urbanisation engulfed the smaller (but now suburban) villages. As much a sense of retaining, preserving and reinforcing as responding and countering social forces, change within communities increased at pace in the late 19th century. A casualty of industrialisation, community and a sense of belonging became a nostalgic, sought after commodity. Metcalfe's study of sport in the mining communities of the north east of England, reveals how, through sport, the identity of communities is

¹⁴ James, T. (1977). *op. cit.*

¹⁵ James T. (1997). *Bibliography of British Athletic Club Histories*. Oxford: Centre for Athletics History/Distance Learning Ltd.

characterised as a vibrant living ‘element’ contributing to their sense of belonging.¹⁶ Little research exists on the specific contribution made by athletics to communities and from what is available, the literature merely serves to highlight the nature of the activities rather than offer a clear critical analysis. A notable exception is Watson’s study of Victorian Tyneside offering an excellent portrayal of popular athletics in community life.¹⁷

Telfer’s study of the social nature of harrier club activities offers a different approach to the concept of sport and community.¹⁸ Here, the somewhat ambiguous character of the social function of clubs is portrayed. In a further examination of the nature of this liminal activity, a view of the Victorian sportsman as less than virtuous emerges.¹⁹ Huggins and Mangan’s study of the less respectable features of Victorian sport uncovers the nature of the social practices and customs within sport, suggesting that lines of respectability are far from clear.²⁰

Clearly the literature relating to the social fabric of harriers clubs is less developed. Whilst there is the Drummond tract on the ethics of athletics that extols the virtuous nature of the common bonds uniting young men in athletic activity, only two further works cast light on the social nature of harrier activity.²¹ Firstly, Rye’s early work in

¹⁶ Metcalfe, A. (1982). Organised sport in the mining communities of South Northumberland 1800-1889. *Victorian Studies*, 25 (4). Pp. 469-495.

¹⁷ Watson, D. (1994). Popular athletics on Victorian Tyneside. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 113 (3). Pp. 485-494.

¹⁸ Telfer, H. (1994b). *Of Trails, Whips and Smokers – Gentlemen Harriers of the Late Nineteenth Century*. In: Access to Active Living, Proceedings of the 10th Commonwealth and International Scientific Congress. Victoria: Canada. Pp. 543-546.

¹⁹ Telfer, H. (2004). Ludism, laughter and liquor: homosocial behaviour in late-Victorian Scottish harriers clubs. In: M. Huggins and J. A. Mangan (eds.) (2004). *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play*. London: Routledge.

²⁰ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (eds.) (2004). *op. cit.*

²¹ Finlayson, A. R. M. (1890). *The Ethics of Athletics: Fraternal Words to Young Men, Also Adopted for General Readers*. Stirling: Drummond Tract Depot.

defining the nature of the new harrier activity is important as Rye is viewed as the 'father' of the sport both as a runner and as the founder of organised club harrier running. An advocate of the sport, his early writing established the ethos and fraternal structure within which he crafted a mechanism for the sport to uphold the values of physical determination over adversity through pitting human endeavour against natural elements.²² Cunning and intelligence plus the ability to submit the body to rigorous physical challenge epitomised the early harrier. Secondly, the work of Hill and Williams on sport and regional identity develops a clearer understanding of sport within the more immediate world of 'locale' rather than a view of sporting form as some uniform, monolithic national structure. The study identifies sport as part of cultural life possessing myths which 'influenced how individuals and groups have seen themselves' which in turn developed or generated a view of locale as 'an imagined territory'.²³ This sees a shift in focus from the purely local and immediate to a regional setting in determining the nature of community and 'otherness'.

Jarvie has developed this further in the context of Scottish sport in his research on Scottish and Celtic cultures and societies and the importance of sport within a vision of 'Scottishness' and the Celt.²⁴ Jarvie's work suggests an identity from local and regional perspectives based on culture, and uses local studies to construct a view of a national identity based on a variety of cultures and not one single defining paradigm. Mangan (1996) has explored this sense of identity from the local, regional and

²² Rye, W. (1910). The inception of paperchasing. *The Athletic Field and Swimming World*. 12th February, pp. 22-24.

²³ Hill, J. and Williams, J. (eds.) (1996). *Sport and Identity in the North of England*. London: E. & F.N. Spon. Pp. 10-11.

²⁴ See both Jarvie, G. and Walker, G. (eds.) (1994). *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation: Ninety-Minute Patriots?* Leicester: Leicester University Press and Jarvie, G. (ed.) (1999). *Sport in the Making of Celtic Cultures*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

national into a pan-European perspective.²⁵

The key elements of identity in relation to a sense of community (and in this respect also culture) are raised through these studies which attempt to determine the nature of sporting nationalism based on an emerging 'tradition'. However, it is predominantly at a local level that the nature of 19th century sport was experienced. The ways in which local activities shaped events regionally and nationally, is central to the way in which sports evolved. This is a significant element of this study.

Few studies have been undertaken on the social composition of participation. Tranter's research on sport and the economy is one particularly good example however using local studies and research to determine the economic and social structure of local sporting engagement.²⁶ Mason's work on football should be added to the attempts at defining the nature and meaning of sport within communities and contributing to a more accurate picture nationally of the various social structures of sporting experiences.²⁷

In England the spectre of pedestrianism, in its often more burlesque professional forms, served to cement the amateur as respectable 'athletic' competition. The amateur/professional question, whilst still of critical importance in Scottish athletics, was nevertheless to rest more easily on the general sporting structure. Cross country running was promoted by its advocates as the purer form of 'athletic' competition and more in keeping with aspiring class ideals. However, in England there were

²⁵ Mangan, J. A. (ed.) (1996). *Tribal Identities: Historical Perspectives on Nationalism, Europe and Sport*. London: Cass.

²⁶ Tranter, N. (1998). *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

²⁷ Mason, T. (1981). *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915*. London: Harvester.

notable pockets of resistance to this apparent 'respectable' form of amateur athletics. The north of England was a stronghold of professional sport generally, encompassing most forms of sporting endeavour. These meetings and competitions came to form the backbone of north of England identity in sport - not just in athletics - but also in football.²⁸ Hill and Williams study on cricket is also of importance in this regard.²⁹ The Games that epitomised village sport especially in the Lake District also gave a clear identity to communities.³⁰

The key issues of identity and class are therefore implicit and need to be raised and refocused in relation to Scotland. Greater attention has been paid to English cross country running and to club histories however, it is necessary to determine within this literature the exact relationship between community and members. There is little if any material in any of the existing historiographies as to the status of individual members either occupationally or socially within their respective communities. This was the period of partisan membership where members would almost certainly have been local to their club yet their standing within the broader community has been little explored.

However, it is important to understand the significance of the social networks to those involved in the formation of these early clubs and governing bodies of sport as the social connectedness was often represented as tradition. Hobsbawm defines the nature of much of the 'inventedness' of the traditions on which Victorian society was

²⁸ Mason, T. (1981). *op. cit.*

²⁹ Hill, J. and Williams, J. (eds.) (1996). *op. cit.*

³⁰ See both Mitchell, J. (1982). *Sport and Recreation in Eighteenth Century Cumbria*. Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis. University of Liverpool and Ward, I. (1985). *Lakeland Sport in the Nineteenth Century*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Liverpool.

predicated.³¹ Hobsbawm's work suggests that sport was probably no different from other forms of social and economic life in the middle to late 19th century in its reliance on clearly delineated roots in order to establish a sense of stability in people's lived experiences during a period of rapid change. By making claims on 'traditions', a greater sense of stability was ensured.

The legacy of pedestrianism

The role and place of pedestrianism in a review of literature on a 'tradition' of cross country running becomes therefore less problematic, since its precedence as a running form can be taken to inform, rather than be replaced by cross country as a counter form. McCombie Smith's seminal text on the transition of running from its pedestrian roots to its newer forms of track and field as well as distance running, was a visionary work showing the way the sport was transformed by new thinking and new methods.³² McCombie Smith was a technician of the sport as well as a thinker about the ways in which it should be organised and managed, and his work also linked the athletics of the Highland Games with that of late 19th century athletics in the broadest sense. Whilst the amateur question within athletics was either ignored or the cause of rigorous debate and investigation, McCombie Smith approached this issue in relation to advancement of the sport and is one of the first advocates for a broader discussion of the matter.

Egan's publication, especially the second edition, did much to popularise the 'Ped.'³³

The later work of Thom built on a growing popularity by recounting the feats of the

³¹ Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Mass – producing traditions: Europe, 1870 –1914. In: E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³² McCombie Smith, W. (1891). *The Athletes and Athletic Sports of Scotland*. Paisley: Gardner.

³³ Egan, P. (1807). *Sporting Anecdotes*. 2nd ed. London: Neeley and Jones.

pre-eminent ‘Peds’ particularly Captain Barclay, thus bringing into sharper focus endurance athletics.³⁴ This popular interest reached a zenith in Wilson’s accounts of his own pedestrian achievements.³⁵ Indeed in Wilson’s case his autobiographical account was the basis for the fictional comic character of ‘Wilson of the Wizard’ which reconstructed and exaggerated Wilson’s sporting exploits within a contemporary framework. Westhall’s accounts of pedestrian training helped to establish the training principles upon which the new harrier of the late 19th century based his sport, the publication coming as it did on the cusp of new harrier club activity.³⁶ From 1870 onwards, pedestrianism in its various forms dominated what was written about early forms of running. The majority of the published work, while essentially English in origin, would undoubtedly have impacted upon running and training in Scotland especially post-1867 when the first Scottish football clubs were formed. The growing interest in the formation of clubs for sporting activity especially for swimming, rowing and cycling developed particularly from this period in Scotland.

Jamieson’s study on pedestrianism in Scotland is also important. It reminds us of the strong ‘tradition’ that grew up surrounding the Powderhall meetings of the professional circuit of athletes that were prevalent in the last days of pedestrianism and before the label of ‘professional athlete’.³⁷ Both this study and that of Jamieson and Whitton give detail of the first fifty years of athletics and the nature of running in Scotland but especially within the framework of track pedestrianism and the way in

³⁴ Thom, W. (1813). *Pedestrianism, or an Account of the Performances of Celebrated Pedestrians During the Last and Present Century with a Full Narrative of Captain Barclay’s Public and Private Matches*. Aberdeen: Brown and Frost.

³⁵ Wilson, G. (1815). *Memoirs of the Life and Exploits of G. Wilson the Celebrated Pedestrian*. London: Dean and Munday.

³⁶ Westhall, W. (1868). *Training for Pedestrianism*. London: Ward Locke.

³⁷ Jamieson, D. A. (1943). *Powderhall and Pedestrianism*. Edinburgh: Johnston.

which the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association (S.A.A.A.) and the Scottish Cross Country Union (S.C.C.U.) governed the sport.³⁸ Whilst clubs outside the central belt of Scotland existed, there was limited development of athletics generally and cross country running in particular.

The development of the sport was almost exclusively urban and mainly, although not exclusively, within the central belt of Scotland. Jamieson offers no commentary as to the geographical concentration of the sport but, given the inherent conservatism in the way in which amateur athletics in Scotland was generally run, it can be supposed that there was a general growth of interest in cross country running in line with a rise in leisure time particularly in the urban central belt. It was the professional running circuit that continued to appeal to the working classes as a more traditional form of sporting involvement less constrained by a sense of a class 'amateur tradition'. These are arguably the two key sources in locating athletics broadly within 'traditional' Scottish sports but are limited by their attention to chronology and detail rather than analysis.

Through contemporary commentary the 'Pedestrian' became established as a national sporting figure, creating the genre of the feat of endurance as well as establishing competition of the individual against the clock as an acceptable sporting form. Hitherto, individual sporting achievement was generally under thrall to the team game and whilst team games certainly produced the 'hero', the subservience of self was nevertheless a pervading ideology mitigating against individual endeavour. In this sense, individual sports were seen as plebeian and devoid of the higher ideal

³⁸ Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) (1933). *Fifty Years of Athletics 1883-1933: An Historical Record of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association*. Edinburgh: The Association.

of the common good, a value much idealised in society more broadly at that time. It is against this backdrop that athletic performance developed, running counter to the otherwise pervading team ethos.

The development of cross country running in particular took time to acknowledge that the sport could also be practised as an individual activity. Early forms of organised cross country running placed great emphasis on the role of the 'pack' in relation to the 'hares'. While the introduction to this thesis lays out the broad character of the sport and defines the changing nature of cross country running, it is important in the context of the literature to emphasise the currency of some of these early sources on pedestrianism and their significance in bringing a degree of acceptability to a wider public seeking forms of involvement with an increasing degree of leisure time, especially the lower middle classes. The sport of athletics and cross country running in particular was part of the greater interest in sporting participation of the 1860s to the end of the century. With rapid expansion of towns and cities, the establishment of clubs and the organisation of events was made easier.

McIntyre has added to the literature on the transition of running from pedestrianism to track and cross country and his work is a commendable attempt to define the agencies through which the sport moved within the various social institutions that were developing during this period of growth.³⁹ The development of sporting clubs, governing bodies and the increased focus on physical well-being and health alongside the early development of physical training in schools, produced early

³⁹ McIntyre, E. M. (1986). Pedestrianism to the trust fund: athletics in its historical and social contexts. In: J. A. Mangan and R. B. Small (eds.). *Sport, Culture, Society: International, Historical and Sociological Perspectives. Proceedings of the VIII Commonwealth and International Conference on Sport, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*. London: E. & F.N. Spon.

forms of control and agency. Thus developing and differing social forces relating to society assisted in the growth of the sport. The promulgation of an ideological ‘tradition’ was based on a set of values through which sport became an expression of such values. The sport of athletics also served to sharpen views on the benefits of healthy exercise. In addition to the literature on pedestrian achievement, the literature extolling the virtues of paying attention to the health and welfare of the body became a factor in assisting the growth of cross country running.

Health, lifestyle and sport

There was a growing industry in the 19th century devoted to the production of tracts and texts devoted to the physical improvement of the body and health generally. This embryonic ‘science’ of training often centred around the role of athletic activity as part of a developing pre-occupation with healthy exercise. Typical and pre-eminent of this genre of literature is Sinclair’s early work on training and emetics.⁴⁰ Describing the basic training principles of the day, Sinclair uniquely and conveniently brought together training principles from a number of sports including pugilism, pedestrianism and, somewhat optimistically, the training of racehorses. Donald Walker’s *British Manly Exercises* was singularly well received as one of the key texts of its day with running especially mentioned.⁴¹ Both the publications by Walsh set new standards. In his first work in 1855 he set out to clearly advocate a system of training.⁴² His second publication some ten years later was devoted more to the developing sensitivities surrounding health and well-being.⁴³ Both texts were viewed as essential reading for athletic training.

⁴⁰ Sinclair, J. (1806). *A Collection of Papers on the Subject of Athletic Exercises*. London: Blackader.

⁴¹ Walker, D. (1834). *British Manly Exercises*. London: T. Hurst.

⁴² Walsh, J. H. (1855). *The Training of Man for Pedestrian Exercises*. London: Warne.

⁴³ Walsh, J. H. (1866). *Pedestrianism, Health and General Training*. London: Warne.

Levett's training manual is typical of a number of manuals being produced by professional runners at this time, usually to further develop reputations and thereby employment as trainers.⁴⁴ Archibald Maclaren's *Training in Theory and Practice* is recognised as one of the more influential texts.⁴⁵ Maclaren, a leading educationalist in physical training, was generally viewed as an authority in this area. Montague Shearman's numerous texts on athletics dating from 1887 contribute mainly to the various athletic techniques employed in athletic events as well as in defining training regimes.⁴⁶ Mordern and Godbold produced one of the first dedicated handbooks of training for athletics as the sport developed a more popular following by the end of the 19th century.⁴⁷

As a distinguishing marker however, the text by Cortis made a clear distinction in its title by targeting the amateur athlete, clearly wishing to distinguish the nature of training which was still seen by some as something a gentleman did not need to do.⁴⁸ Hoole's text of 1888 specifically addresses the science of training and devotes much of its content to the current state of medical understanding of the physiological benefits.⁴⁹ Street-Smith's *Complete Training Guide* is one of the first examples of a training lexicon for all sports.⁵⁰ Schmidt and Miles followed this with their

⁴⁴ Levett, J. (1862). *How to Train*. London: Harrison.

⁴⁵ Maclaren, A. (1866). *Training in Theory and Practice*. London: Macmillan.

⁴⁶ Shearman, M. (ed.). (1888). *The Badminton Library: Athletics and Football*. London: Longmans Green.

⁴⁷ Mordern, W. E. and Godbold, E. H. (1887). *A New Handbook for Athletic Exercises*. London: Seale.

⁴⁸ Cortis, H. L. (1887). *Principles of Training for Amateur Athletes*. London: Iliffe.

⁴⁹ Hoole, H. (1888). *The Science and Art of Training: A Handbook for Athletes*. London: Trubner.

⁵⁰ Street-Smith, J. (1891). *The Complete Training Guide for Amateur and Professional Athletes*. London: Publisher unknown.

comprehensive work attempting to cover athletics, games and gymnastics.⁵¹

In all these texts the underlying principles of training are set out in relation to running not only as a sport, but as a means of achieving fitness with applications being made for other sports. The development of the form of cross country running was in many senses tied into these definitive works. The nature of pack runs; the use of ‘whips’ and ‘pacers’ as well as the distances covered, were developed over time in relation to the received wisdom of the literature.

Crump’s study of athletics within British sport is an important contribution to understanding more about the social position of the sport within British sport more broadly.⁵² Inevitably however, given the broad diaspora of athletic activity his treatment of athletics within a framework of understanding of the social importance of British sport only managed to formulate an initial working paradigm with which to develop further work. Nevertheless his work is important in defining the social importance of the sport.

Detailed contemporary histories of the sport of British athletics are best exemplified by the study of Watman.⁵³ They garner considerable work on the early forms although seldom revealing more than a glimpse of the nature and meaning of the sport tending towards a history of athletic performances. Added to this genre of

⁵¹ Schmidt, F. A. and Miles, E. (1901). *The Training of the Body for Games, Athletics, Gymnastics and Other Forms of Exercise for Health, Growth and Development*. London: Swan Sonnenschein.

⁵² Crump, J. (1989). Athletics. In: T. Mason (ed.). *Sport in Britain: A Social History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵³ Watman, M. (1968). *History of British Athletics*. London: Robert Hale.

literature is Lovesay's excellent history of the Amateur Athletics Association.⁵⁴ Both works are necessary for the student of athletics who has less than a competent working knowledge of the sport in its variety of forms since they also serve to determine the key moments that have helped to elevate the sport in Britain.

Education, advancement and patronage

Public schools are important to the historian of athletics since public schools helped shape the nature of many sports within their school activities. However, there is very little examination of athletics or the various forms of hares and hounds. While the various unpublished records of the schools and Universities contain good primary source evidence, only Twigg's account of student sports at Cambridge in the 17th century sheds any light on the antecedents of athletic sports.⁵⁵ Croome's account of the links between the public schools and Cambridge is another good example of an early anthology detailing the evidence linking the diffusion of running through the schools to the universities.⁵⁶ The cross country clubs of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh and Glasgow contain rich archive sources. In certain cases these archives denote the schools from which the students came and in turn may provide a strong source of material from which to base the transformation of the sport from that of packs within hares and hounds to the more individual form of cross country running.

Given the general thrust of this research in locating the harrier 'tradition' within social standing, there is a paucity of work in the area generally of sport and

⁵⁴ Lovesay, P. (1979). *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association*. London: The Association.

⁵⁵ Twigg, J. (1996). Student sports and their context in 17th century Cambridge. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 13 (2). Pp. 80-95.

⁵⁶ Croome, A. C. M. (ed.) (1913). *Fifty Years of Sport at Oxford, Cambridge and the Great Public Schools Vol. 1*. London: Southwood.

patronage. While literature on sport and society has developed, there is little in the way in which sport became bound up with specific elements of social advancement. Given the level of patronage that certain sporting clubs enjoyed in the 19th century, the lack of written material on the ways in which this patronage was an accepted vehicle towards civic and political advancement represents a gap in the literature. The ways in which the clubs were formed and their subsequent development largely mirrored the development of the majority of other sports at this time. Sports clubs may have served the interest of the ‘gentleman’s club’ in the same way that being seen at the ‘right’ dinner occasions was a necessary part of the social and political adventurer’s cultural mark.

One particular exception to the study of the relationship of gentlemen’s clubs to sport is Webb’s treatment of Freemasonry and sport.⁵⁷ Given the civil and political context within which ‘the Craft’ operates, there is good reason to suggest that the framework within which advancement operated, included sport. Certainly in relation to sport in Scotland, the records of the Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge of involvement of freemasons within the development of the city of Glasgow list the formation of social clubs with sporting interests.⁵⁸ Within one harrier club of the west of Scotland the patrons appear to be of Unionist political affiliation; Freemasons, Protestant and ‘Orange’. Given this evidence, Webb’s work should be open to further investigation relating to club formation, sports participation and rise of the sports club as a surrogate fraternal form. The rapid spread of clubs and the subsequent setting up of the governing body would be more quickly expedited by the involvement of men who had access to existing networks of a familial nature.

⁵⁷ Webb, J. (1995). *Freemasonry and Sport*. Addlestone: Lewis Masonic Lodge.

⁵⁸ Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge (1999). *Sign of the Globe 4th ed.*. Glasgow: Publisher unknown.

Cross country running in England

The historical sources relating to cross country running in England are emerging as surviving clubs reach their centenaries and mark the occasion with detailed club histories. While tending to the particular, these histories have shed light on club development and the social and organisational structures of clubs. The nature of community and social cohesion is crucially demonstrated in a number of key works. Benton's study on Newham and Essex Beagles is insightful in recounting the early forms of club activity.⁵⁹ Stan Long's history of Gateshead Harriers is an account rich in social anecdote much of which gives credence to the view that clubs served a broader purpose than merely running.⁶⁰ Scott's account of the history of Salford Harriers deserves specific mention with its detailed account of life in a developing urban landscape.⁶¹ Scott's work is a particularly strong club history giving a good description of the venues for meetings, the runners and the structure and fabric of the way the club operated through their social as well as athletic activities. Smokers and dinners were key elements of Harrier clubs' social calendar. Telfer's study on the Scottish harriers mirrors in this sense the similarities between the two countries.⁶²

The changing nature of towns and cities and their relationship with the countryside surrounding them can be found in many of these histories. The descriptions of club runs and venues of the early Scottish cross country meetings coincide with that of their English counterparts. The studies above represent just a few examples of the

⁵⁹ Benton, T. (1987). *A Fine Spirit: A Centenary History of Newham and Essex Beagles A.C. 1887-1987*. Newham: The Club.

⁶⁰ Long, S. (1978). *From Dirt Track to Glory: A Story of Gateshead Harriers*. Gateshead: The Club.

⁶¹ Scott, D. (1984). *Borrowed Time: Centenary History of Salford Harriers and Athletic Club 1884-1984*. Salford: The Club.

⁶² Telfer, H. (1994b). *op. cit.*

richness in detail of sport set in the rapid urbanisation of the English industrial north. Detail of transport, course and venue are given conscious treatment alongside leading athletes and results. Of particular interest is the relative emphasis of these northern narratives on the key social factors affecting clubs compared to their southern colleagues and adversaries. This suggests, in the case of Scott's study of Salford Harriers, a keener sense of recognition of 'Northernness'. Membership of these harriers clubs were upper working class and middle class in composition. Industrialisation and increasing leisure time as well as civic rivalry accounted for a sense of clear identity not just in relation to club but also in relation to locale. Scott's accounts of the early successes of the Salford club indicate a clear rivalry locally with other clubs whilst putting Salford 'on the map'.

The tension between creeping urbanisation and the independence of the open fields and countryside is further demonstrated by the gradual move of most of these clubs from forms of running that were over the country to running on roads as the urban sprawl took hold on successive generations of club members. These general club histories also contribute to the social standing of the sport within a community by defining the traditions, occupations and status to the communities which they serve. The early history of Cheshire Tally-Ho Hare and Hounds Club is a fine example of a harriers club overtaken by urbanisation.⁶³

Further studies and club histories are somewhat more partisan and offer little beyond names and the achievements of the membership. In the main, the literature tends towards sketches of human endeavour rather than suggesting explanation for events

⁶³ Oxley, H. (1893). *History of the Cheshire Tally-Ho Hare and Hounds Club*. Manchester: Lockwood.

and change. These studies however constitute good accounts of events at a local level that allow for comparison across localities and regions, and in this respect serve as a form of barometer for change within the sport, especially in relation to the clubs which were formed from within large urbanised areas. Additionally, they depict the way that British society moved from the class structure of the Victorian period through post-war liberalism to a more globalised understanding of the sport. These histories therefore operate as landmarks in the ways in which individuals and clubs responded to the changing social conditions of their time.

Of particular significance is the way in which clubs responded to the advent of regularised competition structures. The move towards increasing mobility and the way in which the sport, as was the case with many others, became more centralised is located within these histories. All the previous club histories pay particular attention to their status and results in local and national competition. In a sport where the club's senior team position in a national championship was to a great extent the defining standard of their strength beyond all else, the status of clubs and individuals only tend to record and be recorded in relation to results in area (eg. Northern) and National championships.

The majority of the literature underlines the relatively lowly status of cross country running by comparison with other sports. However the literature also depicts a strong sense of sport loyalty with a strong community following in the formative years. Indeed the study by Cairney in his excellent history of Shettleston Harriers emphasises the importance and degree to which the local communities identified

with the club.⁶⁴ Without a broader spectator appeal however, the sport was always only ever likely to appeal to the participants themselves. Much of the appeal of sport is a sense of the immediate and the impact of that within a cohesive social and sporting grouping. The general drift towards a more globalised significance of ‘place’ within communities was evident in the nature of a burgeoning sports press which depicted sport and located it within communities forming a strong sense of identity in the formative years of club development. Local ‘derbies’ were to be of particular interest and whenever new clubs were set up, rivalry was usually intense. This was to be a key factor in the development of the Scottish harrier clubs and the role of the press in developing not only an athletic rivalry, but also rivalries related to class and civic sense were factors in the development of sport in Scotland.

Governance

The organisation and globalisation of sport generally is rooted in the very way in which sport came to be organised and conducted ie. by the very individuals who were at the same time consumers as well as rule makers. The nature of this rule making or governance of the sport is contained within various works designed to assist in an understanding of the ways in which the sport developed over the last one hundred years. In this regard for instance, Lovesay’s *Official Centenary History of the A.A.A.* gives excellent detail.⁶⁵ Dunn’s *Centenary History of the English Cross Country Union* also contributes to the general understanding of the early governance of English cross country running.⁶⁶ These works demonstrate the ways in which the respective governing bodies governed their sport as well as defining the way in

⁶⁴ Cairney, J. (2004). *op. cit.*

⁶⁵ Lovesey, P. (1979). *op. cit.*

⁶⁶ Dunn, G. (1983). *Centenary History of the English Cross Country Union 1883-1983*. Birmingham: The Union.

which they responded to change over the years through, for example, encompassing county associations.

Richardson's account of the International Cross Country Union (I.C.C.U.) is useful in situating the growth of the sport domestically in relation to the international stage and the role of Scotland in staging the inaugural international race at Hamilton in 1903, is acknowledged.⁶⁷ The position of cross country running on the broader stage of Scottish representative sport has much to do with the membership of the officers of the governing body many of whom were also officers of other governing bodies. Formed from the existing football, rugby union, cycling and rowing clubs, it is unsurprising that cross country followed rapidly from both sports in offering an international fixture only 16 years on from the formation of the governing body. Mackenzie has demonstrated the currency of sport to the general political imperialist policies of the time.⁶⁸ It should not be surprising therefore to find that the Home Nations of Britain were the first to codify the sport, and also to offer to host the first international cross country.

Given limited material it is evident that there are critical gaps in the nature of our understanding of cross country running. Generally the literature describes the landmarks of club achievements in relation to key national events such as the national championships, area championships or leagues. However, little or no attempt is made at discussing the role of clubs in relation to the governing body nor has research been undertaken examining the importance to the sport of international

⁶⁷ Richardson, T. N. (1954). *Jubilee History of the International Cross Country Union 1903-1953*. Ambergate, Derbyshire: The Union.

⁶⁸ Mackenzie, J. (ed.). (1986). *Imperialism and Popular Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

achievement either within the sport or more broadly, in a Scottish context.

This perspective is important when developing a critique of the development of the sport and its impact charted along a time line when the assertions about the relationship between sport and society relate to all sports and not just a few of a particular genre (e.g. team games). Individual sports need careful examination in this respect in relation to defining the participant nature of specific sports and not just sports generally. Any examination should therefore define and explain the nature of the sport's development in relation to its constituents. Certainly English forms of 'athletic' competition of pedestrianism, hares and hounds and the emergent organised and codified track and field events, seem to follow the more dominant themes of the period in relation to codification, respectability, professionalism and organization.

Participation rates to a degree defined the depth of cross country's penetration in popularity. In a sport that almost exclusively relied upon the use of the facilities of other sports clubs or hotels as a base from which to run from and return for baths, as well as the nature of the activity mitigating against strong spectator interest, cross country running was viewed as a 'healthy' training medium for most sports in its early days rather than as a sport in its own right.

The literature on cross country running raises questions of ownership and control. The relationships that existed between the harriers clubs and other sporting clubs notably football, is central in understanding the difficulty of the sport in reaching a point of self-advocacy. Cross country running's original position of surrogate activity to that of other sporting forms and from thence to an established sport in its

own right, has not been adequately dealt with in the literature.

The Harriers of Scotland

The major study on cross country in Scotland is that of Shields.⁶⁹ His work addressed social and political aspects of the sport within the limitations of land-marking the achievements of Scottish cross country clubs, runners and officials. Shields refers to early forms of running over fields and land dating to about 1807 in Carnwath, Lanarkshire. The race seems to have been a relatively well known feature of village customs. Shields also mentions Edinburgh's 'Six Foot Club'. Burnett confirms these earlier forms of athletic games that included steeplechasing and gives details of earlier forms of running races which were rooted in community.⁷⁰ In the case of the Edinburgh's 'Six Foot Club', their overt ambition was to protect what they perceived to be 'national pastimes'. To this end, they constructed a select band of members as custodians of this ideal and held regular meetings as well as designing their own uniform. Smith in his work on south Edinburgh gives particular attention to this group of men who included, amongst the literati of Edinburgh, Sir Walter Scott.⁷¹

The practice of athletic sports however was sporadic and usually confined to the public schools and universities until the football and rugby clubs in the 1870s used athletic sports days as a means of raising revenue. Sports days also became part of the normal demonstration of sporting prowess of a club with its players pitted against each other in much the same way on the games field. The notion of engagement in

⁶⁹ Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union 1890-1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

⁷⁰ Burnett, J. (2000). *Riot, Revelry and Rout: Sport in Lowland Scotland before 1860*. East Lothian: Tuckwell.

⁷¹ Smith, C. J. (2000). *Historic South Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: John Donald.

sport as a ‘gentlemanly’ activity is reinforced by Shields.⁷² Dallas also developed this view of the gentleman in his work on the early years of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association.⁷³ Dallas’ account is particular in detail but falls firmly inside the convention of an official history through a focus on key events. Both Shields and Dallas mention the presence of ‘gentlemen’ in the formation of the new Harriers clubs and it is clear from their studies that while clubs were in the process of being formed, the binding catalyst was the social standing of the members.

The earliest Harriers clubs of Scotland were formed in 1885 and 1886. Of the original three major harriers clubs of this period, only Clydesdale Harriers has been subject to historical analysis.⁷⁴ The history of Edinburgh Harriers has been somewhat obscured by a number of amalgamations over the years and has had little attention. The remaining club of the initial three, the West of Scotland Harriers, went out of existence in 1989. There is only the history of Teviotdale Harriers founded in 1889 to add to the histories of clubs founded in the 1880s.⁷⁵ The history of the Clydesdale club is invaluable not only as the history of the first continuous club in existence, but also due to its pre-eminent position in the formative years of the sport. McAusland’s study, while inevitably recording the athletic successes, also attempts to cast light on the nature of the formation of the club and deals, if only briefly, with the politics of the sport in its initial years. In all other respects, the origins of the first clubs are obscure.

⁷² Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

⁷³ Dallas, G. (1933). Cross country running in Scotland: its origin and development. In: K. Whitton and D. A. Jamieson (eds.) *Fifty Years of Athletics 1883-1933: An Historical Record of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association*. Edinburgh: The Association.

⁷⁴ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.*

⁷⁵ Coltman, J. L. (1989). *First Hundred: Teviotdale Harriers Centenary 1889-1989*. Hawick: The Club.

Nevertheless, it is possible to piece together from other sources the way in which cross country running evolved in Scotland. Public school influence was at play, albeit not to the same degree as in England. Credence to this argument lies in Usher's study documenting the history of the Edinburgh University Athletic Club (not to be confused with athletics in a contemporary track and field sense).⁷⁶ Cross country running (or initially hares and hounds) is given some attention specifically in relation to the contribution made by students in the formation of new clubs as well as the governing bodies of the sport Scottish Amateur Athletics Association (S.A.A.A.) in 1883 and later the Scottish Cross Country Union (S.C.C.U.). Participation in cross country within the universities was limited to informal runs by groups of students as an adjunct to training for other sports. Inter-varsity competition between the four major universities of Scotland started to flourish at about the same time as clubs started developing.

The press and publicity

Further sources are the various archives and contemporary accounts contained in special collections and from the press. Within these sources lie rich veins of contemporary commentary of the events and runners. The specialist sporting press of the day was very detailed in its accounts of club runs, the leading runners, the packs and the social events run by the clubs as well as commentary on the tensions surrounding the early days of the new harriers clubs.⁷⁷ The period 1885 to 1888 is of particular importance as the sport started to move from its 'hares and hounds' approach of pack runs to a more familiar cross country running approach of individual contest. The changing nature of the runs has never been fully examined.

⁷⁶ Usher, C. M. (ed.). (1966). *The Story of Edinburgh University Athletics Club*. Edinburgh: The Club.

⁷⁷ Specifically the *Scottish Athletic Journal* (1885-1888); *Scottish Sport* (1888-1891); *The Scottish Umpire* (1884-1888) and *The Scottish Referee* (1891-1915).

Whilst there was increasing interest in the forms of running over country in England, Scotland by comparison appeared to make the transition from pack to individual running relatively quickly in its evolution. Contemporary press sources are also valuable for the detail and level of social commentary in relation to ‘smokers’, hospitality, meetings, debate and the nature of the venues of the early runs. It is within such commentary that the nature of the sport develops a particular resonance and meaning.

Whilst the attention of historians has been limited to recording and describing events relating to cross country running principally in the form of records and personnel, some archive sources remain important in determining the nature of cross country running from its inception. Some of Keddie’s personal research for his work on the centennial history of the S.A.A.A. was donated to and is held by the Scottish Records Office. Of particular interest in this collection is the correspondence of John Guthrie Kerr, Headmaster of Allan Glen’s School in Glasgow and President of the S.A.A.A. in 1905-06.⁷⁸ Kerr has been the subject of a study by Mangan who regarded Kerr’s tenure as headmaster as an educational idealist. Kerr, along with H. H. Almond of Loretto developed a form of liberal education within which sporting participation played a central role.⁷⁹ The Jamieson correspondence is also of importance.⁸⁰ Keddie’s own collection of biographical data on various Scottish athletes is of further interest.⁸¹ These sources form a valuable insight into the way in which the sport of athletics and cross country running in particular was organised and managed and

⁷⁸ Kerr papers. Scottish National Archives, Edinburgh. Accession ref. GD445/2, No. 114.

⁷⁹ Mangan, J. A. (1988). Catalyst for change: John Guthrie Kerr and the adaptation of an indigenous Scottish tradition. In: J. A. Mangan (ed.). *Pleasure, Profit Proselytism: British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad, 1700-1914*. London: Cass.

⁸⁰ Jamieson papers. Scottish National Archives, Edinburgh. Accession ref. GD445/4, No’s 2, 3 & 4.

⁸¹ Keddie papers. Scottish National Archives, Edinburgh. Accession ref. GD445/4, No. 9.

indeed changed over the years, as well as defining the nature of the competitions and the runners. The growth of County, District, Junior as well as Senior Championships in cross country and its expanding membership between the wars is particularly well documented in these sources as is Scotland's international success during this period.

There is little archive material remaining from the governing body. What few sources exist relate primarily to the growth of the sport for example in the international arena. While this inevitably makes the task of reconstructing official views more difficult, the nature of governance through office bearers can often reveal the varying degrees of tension between the east and west coast interest groups in vying for control of the organisation.

The nature of the links between cross country running and other sporting forms in Scotland has also not been fully explored. The membership of the earliest clubs contained men who were also members of other sporting clubs. There are strong connections between swimming, rowing and cycling club members as well as players of the new emerging football clubs. Telfer describes the nature of the beginnings of the new harrier clubs recounting the various sporting backgrounds of the runners many of whom were strong oarsmen, good swimmers and cyclists.⁸² The link that Telfer establishes between the early cross country club members and the football clubs is developed further in his examination of a new harrier 'tradition'.⁸³ These studies outline a picture of the strength of commitment to physical activity in a certain section of the community at a time of increasing leisure opportunities. The

⁸² Telfer, H. (1994a). Cross Country Running in Scotland – the Genesis and Context of Organised Club Running in the Late 19th Century. Unpublished paper at Winter Sport and Winter Games, 2nd International I.S.H.P.E.S. Seminar. Norway: Lillehammer.

⁸³ Telfer, H. (1994c). The Genesis of the Harrier Tradition in Scotland. Unpublished paper at 10th Commonwealth & International Scientific Congress. Victoria: Canada.

early connections between, for example, Queen's Park Football Club and the West of Scotland Harriers is of critical importance in understanding the nature of sporting engagement in Scotland from the 1860s onwards.

This early period of organised sport in Scotland is characterised by the sporting polymath. Further examples of this are the players of Renton F.C., Battlefield F.C., Abercorn F.C. and Rangers F.C. all of whom were prominent athletes either on track or on the country and many were cyclists, swimmers and rowers. The special relationship that existed between the football clubs and the harriers clubs is further exemplified by the 'Rangers Sports' of the West of Scotland Harriers which was one of the most popular spectator athletic meetings in the country with crowds regularly in excess of 10,000. Whilst Telfer's work on the genesis of Scottish harriers lacks some depth, it opens up areas of further study especially in arriving at an understanding of the Scottish sporting performer of the late 19th century and the nature of his social standing.

Summary

Attention to gender, class, social position and socio-economic issues within the literature of athletics and cross country running in particular, is largely deficient. The limitations of the scope of the literature however should not be seen as impossible hurdles in exploring the prospect of a coherent body of knowledge, since in attempting to synthesise these sources within the general body of athletics literature, seminal texts can be identified. Such texts are generally accepted by historians in this area of study as contributing strongly to the general picture of athletics and its growth as a major sport in Britain. Within this context, cross country

running - as a sport in its own right - clearly emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Broader based studies on athletic 'tradition' have ignored the contextual element of the sport of cross country within the framework of society and focused on the statistical and organisational. These studies are in themselves important but are limited in explaining the activities within any wider context. The key text of Shields in this area is therefore particularly important as it attempts to go beyond this hagiographic approach.⁸⁴ Various sporting annals give detailed accounts of competition with occasional discourses on individuals.⁸⁵

In terms of arriving at a harrier 'tradition' within cross country running, James rightly points to the number of clubs which have roots in the 19th century.⁸⁶ This makes a 'tradition' somewhat problematic and any such claim must therefore be viewed as a more contrived contemporary position. The Scottish harriers clubs appear to have evolved without significant commentary. From what little research has been conducted in this area, the links with the general development of Scottish sport indicate that this type of study would contribute strongly to a more coherent understanding of the nature and character of the development of Scottish sport generally. To this end, there is certainly a need to investigate the place of these clubs alongside the general development of organised sport in Scotland. In the general rush to describe and analyse the transformation of sporting forms during this period, the opportunity now exists to define the nature of the contribution of one particular sport and to relate that contribution to a wider field of sporting engagement.

⁸⁴ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

⁸⁵ For example *Bell's Life*, *The Sporting Chronicle* and the *Sporting and Athletic Register*.

⁸⁶ James, T. (1977). *op. cit.*

The utility of sporting engagement is a further underdeveloped area within the study of Scottish sport. Sport as a vehicle for social and civic advancement is not well documented. And yet, from examining the ‘First Clubs’ chapter of this current study it is clear that men of social standing valued and viewed their sporting connections as a form of continued social and civic position, including club patrons. Apart from Bradley’s research on Irish Catholic immigration in Scotland and the surrogate sporting forms inherent within this religious and social grouping, little has been produced which informs the historian of sport about the subtle ways in which sporting organisations were used as a means of advancement as much as they were legitimate sporting outlets.⁸⁷

Gaps exist in relation to the history of the sport and athletics generally, especially relating to the role of the sport *in* history rather than *of their* history. This study of harriers clubs addresses this absence in the literature.

⁸⁷ Bradley, J. (1998). *Sport, Culture, Politics and Scottish Society*. Edinburgh: John Donald.

Chapter 3

Urban Sport and Rural Consumption: paradise regained?

Introduction

This chapter explores aspects of critical theory in relation to physical activity with a view to establishing a stronger grounding in causal explanations for the elevation of the countryside as a contested ideological site influencing the growth of cross country running in the late 19th century. It offers explanations relating to the development of cross country through identification of ideological and structural catalysts at the core of its development. At the heart of the initial success in the growth of the sport lay changing views of the countryside and the development of a new relationship between increased urbanisation and rurality.

Cross country running embodied a number of valued characteristics of 19th century society. These characteristics were multi-faceted and, on occasions, contradictory. The emergence of organised cross country running as a sporting form during the latter years of the century was due not only to the growing interest and demand for sport, but also to changing attitudes and values within society in relation to physical activity and leisure generally. Within this milieu was a shift towards a view of the countryside as a place of consumption. Far from regarding rurality and its ways of life in terms of social status as plebeian and backward, society - especially in the last decades of the 19th century - came to view 'the rural' as an idyllic natural component of civilised society, melding natural form and nature with urban human achievement.

At work in this arena of competing tastes were a number of critical factors. Pleasure

and the status of activities in the pursuit of pleasure reached novel levels. As amusements and old community festivals were replaced by new urban ways of living, the nature of pleasure also changed. Pleasures in 19th century society were seen as rewards. In concert with the control and structure of work patterns, so pleasures were more structured and controlled. Such control was always partial however, and Huggins and Mangan remind us of the ambiguity at the heart of Victorian respectability in its pursuit of pleasure.¹ Polemics of respectable behaviour were especially accentuated in Victorian society. This was a period of clear overt distinctions within society, with more covert blurred boundaries often existing within personal life. The ‘contested cultural space’ of leisure activities generated a legitimate setting for the testing of new pleasures.²

The nature of social change and its role in relation to the development of cross country running is especially explored with regard to the changing nature in the way the countryside was viewed. As a sport that fundamentally engaged *with* the countryside as opposed to engaging *in* the countryside, this examination of the relationship of the sport with its environment is central to understanding the development of harrier running activity.

Politics and change

Different and competing claims for the authenticity of the nature and form of leisure in the countryside were rooted in old forms of land ownership in Scotland with estates bound up in more stratified forms of leisure such as hunting. Emerging, from this as a consequence of shifting labour populations from the early 1800s, were new

¹ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (eds.). (2004). *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play*. London: Cass.

² *Ibid.* p. xiii.

forms of leisure such as organised and codified sports. As urbanisation progressed and cities developed and expanded, the ways in which the countryside was viewed also changed. The relationship between land, ownership and the shifting socio-political power relationships in society, developed a political impetus during the last decade of the 19th century. Liberal politics made the issue of land reform one of the key platforms of the re-election of the Liberal Party in the general election of 1906. The relationship therefore between new liberal notions (in the social sense) of the pursuit of new leisure in and around the countryside took on a resonance that went to the heart of the social structures of society and tested the values and power of both new class tastes and existing social structures.

Nostalgia for a perceived view of a 'lost' way of life coupled with the rise of a new urban class culture whose appropriation of class values combined with a new political idealism, facilitated a reclamation of the countryside as a symbolic gesture in marking new class boundaries. Idyllic perceptions of rural ways of life featured strongly in the way in which Victorian society constructed a view of the countryside. Engagement of the new urban classes in this constructed vision was a critical factor in the development of leisure pursuits. This 'rural idyll' characterised the development of working class movements, self help groups and importantly, the growing interest in worker sport movements.

Worker sport and emerging political influences on sport

Although worker sport movements in Britain were less radical than some of their European counterparts, sport was a fundamental opportunity for the development of a new class-consciousness. The overt politicisation of sport as a utility presented

new urban classes with an ideological framework and confidence in moulding new sporting forms as well as appropriating older sporting forms. Thus both land and leisure–work patterns became the focus of new sporting forms. Certain sports and activities such as cycling, walking, mountaineering, day trips, sailing and cross country running became vehicles for engagement in a politicised view of the countryside as it became one of the ideological battlefields of new urban classes.

Kruger and Riordan highlight the fact that capitalist or bourgeois society ‘excluded workers from public life as well as from amateur sports clubs and competitions.’³ This was certainly a feature of the early governance of some sports including athletics although the first Scottish harriers clubs demonstrated a more egalitarian approach to club membership. This tension between governing body and harrier clubs is examined further in chapter six.

The roots of the use of leisure activities as a political tool in Britain however, were slower to develop. It was a combination of the rise of socialism and workers’ movements, particularly in the last decade of the 19th century, and new working patterns and the consequent rise in leisure time that helped the development of sports clubs. Jones develops these socio–political links with regard to sport in Britain by suggesting that notwithstanding the political pull of the new organised sporting forms in Britain as a product of capitalism, socialists recognised the potential political force that sport could harness for their aims and thus set about encouraging a ‘proliferation of socialist agencies catering for sport’.⁴ This allowed organizations such as the

³ Kruger, A. and Riordan, J. (1996). *The Story of Worker Sport*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. P. vii.

⁴ Jones, S. (1996). The British Workers’ Sport Federations: 1923-1935. In: A. Kruger, A. and J. Riordan (eds.). *The Story of Worker Sport*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. P. 99.

Clarion movement to flourish. The use and appropriation of activities in the countryside allowed working-class men and women as well as children to discover a relationship with the countryside through activities that emphasised inclusion rather than exclusion.

Taking the urban population into the countryside was not just a matter of health and welfare - an increasing concern - but also of demonstrating broader social horizons and 'improving'. This developed a belief in the values of self-advancement and 'getting on in life'. From the Sunday school trips of churches to the new youth organizations of the Boy Scouts and The Boy's Brigade or the organised day trips of workers, the development of a new view of the countryside as a utility to be shared and enjoyed and indeed, as a rightful aspiration of all, resonated with city populations. Thus youth organizations, political parties and organizations such as the Co-operative movement and trade unions enjoyed a new (and renewed) relationship with the rural environs of urban centres. It also created tensions with those who owned land.

A figurational approach in understanding these relationships between sport, society and representations of 'betterment' is suggested by Dunning and Elias.⁵ This clarifies the advocacy for cross country running extolling the virtues of the open air. It also assists in understanding the social currency of 'improving' linked to sporting participation as well as ideological positions associated with the higher values of sport such as amateurism, fairness and athleticism.

⁵ Elias, N. and Dunning, E. (1986). *Quest for Excitement. Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

By such skilful manoeuvring the sport was able to represent all the attractions necessary to young men without offending the social establishment to any great extent. It also negotiated access to the countryside by the simple expedient of elevating local landowners to Patrons of their clubs, thus appropriating a certain cachet to their activities while, more pragmatically, making sure that clashes of interest were kept to a minimum by ensuring that runs within the policies of the principle landowners of the area were, as a consequence, tacitly permitted.

The issue therefore of a new industrial society viewing the countryside as something lost to them was, at least partially, regained. A form of paradise that was rendered without utility was re-invented through an idealised engagement. Through the work of authors, poets, artists and social improvers the countryside became an idealised form of social utility. Through the use of leisure pursuits the countryside developed a purpose and a credo. Through leisure, society could re-engage with the more organic nature of society, often viewed symbolically as embodied in the core of village and parish life; the cornerstone of the 'rural idyll'.

The 'rural idyll' and romanticised notions of the countryside

The social construction of the rural as a site of 'natural' activity is central to the development of new sporting forms that engaged with the countryside. Harrison, in her work on society and change, develops the notion:

'... of a 'countryside aesthetic' which seems to have developed amongst parts of the professional middle class in the nineteenth century ... an educated and cultured few began to regard the countryside as a source of spiritual renewal and

inspiration.’⁶

Urry argues that this created ‘cultural desires’ for particular kinds of experiences and generated a view of landscape and countryside as ‘unpeopled’ and therefore juxtapositionally, a desirable site for urban dwellers.⁷ The countryside came to be perceived as the site of natural life balance. With natural flows and patterns, the rural was regarded as the antidote to urban life with its artificial, time/life constrained rhythms. Bunce defines this polemic thus:

‘As urban civilisations reached their zenith the sense of city and country dichotomies became highlighted and the sentimental pendulum swung in favour of the countryside (Tuan, 1974). Add to this the thesis that countryside satisfies basic spiritual needs and that its landscapes stand as metaphors for associations buried deep in our memories (Schama, 1996) and the rural idyll becomes a natural and therefore inescapable response to the rise of urban civilisation and a separation from daily rural experience that this establishes.’⁸

The ‘romantic gaze’, a cultural construction of the nature of rural life and landscape, symbolised the way in which many groups advocated the benefits of their activities. Cloke goes further by claiming that the rural ‘also establishes a political and cultural expectation of orthodoxy which actively seeks to purify rural space from transgressive practices.’⁹ Thus by engagement with the countryside, harrier clubs were able to gain respectability and credibility for their sporting form.

Cross country running celebrated the healthy virtues of the outdoors. It advocated

⁶ Harrison, C. (1991). *Countryside Recreation in a Changing Society*. London: TMS Partnership. Cited in: Urry, J. (2002). *Consuming Places*. London, Routledge. P. 213.

⁷ Urry, J. (2002). *op. cit.* P. 214.

⁸ Bunce, M. (2003). Reproducing Rural Idylls. In: P. Cloke (ed.). *Country Visions*. London: Pearson/Prentice Hall. P. 15.

⁹ Cloke, P. (2003). Knowing ruralities? In: P. Cloke (ed.) *ibid.* P. 3.

the freedom of physical activity in a setting without boundaries and frontiers as a counter to the structure of urban life as well as developing the health in mind and body that such experiences could give. While retaining the values of new middle-class sport, it also claimed a new socio-political position as an activity for all men irrespective of station. Indeed, cross country running clubs - these new harriers clubs - were exceedingly socially egalitarian in composition and membership compared to some other sports.¹⁰

Changing rhythms of life: Time – Space determinants

The relationship in the utility of leisure between time and the changing nature of space, determined the character of a new sporting cultural landscape. Urban living and changing human landscapes ensured the enforcement of cultural shifts with inevitable necessary adjustments to the nature of interactions with immediate physical environments. The pace of change impacting upon these immediate physical environments was to shape the way they were viewed. This evolution *in situ* created a revised image of the countryside as conducive to change and innovation in the way that society traditionally perceived and used it for leisure purposes.¹¹ The adoption and adaptation of the countryside as part of a new urban playground is central to the rise in popularity of harrier running. Supporting this thesis of sporting spatial diffusion is the work of Hagerstrand who set out key principles in understanding the nature of this diffusion. Morrill *et al* used Hagerstrand's model in contending that people were key agents; that the contact networks of most people are quite localised and consequentially the nature of

¹⁰ The composition of Edinburgh Harriers membership for example included surgeons, Writers to the Signet, an iron moulder, bricklayer's labourer, Book-keeper, a retail stationer, gardeners and scholars (students).

¹¹ Morrill, R., Gaile, G. L. and Thrall, G. I. (1988). *Spatial Diffusion*. London: Sage.

diffusion is initially restricted to a 'field of information'.¹² Thus early harriers clubs were restricted in membership by locale. The sport diffused through new developing urban networks and an urban membership appropriated the sport. The first organised clubs developed in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee between 1885 and 1888. The growth of the sport in this context presents a potential epidemiological approach in theorising reasons for development.

The relationship the new urban Victorians had with time and space in relation to work and leisure became more defined than in previous decades. The economic impact of industrialisation inevitably shifted and changed lifestyles, creating different cultural landscapes for city dwellers. This in turn meant an increasing, and more susceptible changing relationship with their environment.

There was a relationship between the economic impact of urbanisation in terms of social structures such as living conditions embodied in the nature of housing, working time and community, and the personal physical costs of new work and living patterns. Migration patterns relating to the growth of cities are of critical importance in determining the nature and success in the growth of sport. Not only were patterns of migration into cities important but also patterns of migration between cities and within cities significant in developing sport and leisure patterns. Guinness uses Ravenstein's 'Laws of Migration' in explaining migration flows.¹³ Central to these 'Laws' is the contention that in industrial and post-industrial societies migrants in reality move only short distances; there is an absorption of cultural features and that town dwellers (as a generalisation) are less inclined to

¹² *Ibid.* Pp. 23-24.

¹³ Guinness, P. (2002). *Migration*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

migrate out of urban settings. While origin and destination in relation to migration can be seen as mainly economically inter-related, the migration flows of 19th century Scotland created disproportionate pressures on the growing urban landscapes especially in relation to living conditions. Thus one counter to living space and living conditions was the nature of ‘respectable’ leisure.

Concern over the nature of nutrition, sanitation and the human cost of environmental pollution meant that a growing interest and responsibility for the health of city dwellers was given a greater sharpness in terms of encouraging popular acceptable leisure activities, and in particular physical activities. This growing concern over municipal health and welfare from the middle of the 19th century was a pre-occupation of civic authorities. The density of population per acre in Edinburgh for example in 1865 was 42.5 persons with mortality rates in 1871 being almost 28 in every thousand inhabitants.¹⁴ Edinburgh Corporation’s civic duties were almost exclusively encapsulated in the various reports and Acts that essayed from its chronic overcrowding and insanitary conditions as well as from the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867. From infectious diseases, water quality regulation, sanitation, sewerage, disinfection, regulation of cow sheds (not to mention ice cream parlours), municipal authorities set about the creation of a healthier urban landscape.¹⁵ In most cities, this generated in the general population an interest in a variety of physical activities for health reasons. Cross country running was one of a number of new club activities that developed in the cities in the late nineteenth century with such a focus. Swimming, rowing, cycling and gymnastics and a general quest for the outdoors

¹⁴ Edinburgh City Council (n.d.) *City of Edinburgh Report on the Evolution and Development of Public Health Administration*. Edinburgh Central Library. Accession No. YRA244.

¹⁵ See also Littlejohn, H. D. (1865). *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the City of Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: The City Council. Better known as ‘The Littlejohn Report’.

were the most popular of the new ‘health improving’ sporting activities alongside team games such as cricket, football and rugby. The balance between ‘improving’ and hedonistic or even libidinous was often, however, a fine one and not all club activities were universally approved. Chapter eight develops this theme of ambiguity and contradiction in respectable and improving forms of leisure pursuit further.

Changing and emerging ‘cultural landscapes’

As sport organised and developed in the latter decades of the 19th century, so a paradigm shift occurred in the nature of sport. What Guttman calls ‘achievement sport’ characterised and appropriated most sporting forms.¹⁶ In this sense industrial values of quantification resonated within new sporting forms. The revisionist romantic notion of sporting form as a hedonistic and socially ritualistic activity runs counter to the notion of the more rational, quantifiable nature of sport that Guttman suggests emerged as a consequence of industrialisation. The qualities of urban environments and the perception of the inhabitants of these environments in particular determined how shifting cultural landscapes were assimilated. Constructed images of locale, a form of local identity, were important to the new urban communities and sports clubs were one example of the emergent forms of new urban identity.

Lynch characterises the images of cities for their inhabitants using a five-factor system of paths, boundaries, districts, nodes and landmarks.¹⁷ Coupled with selected indicators of social patterning in populating cities such as wealth, status and

¹⁶ See Guttman, A. (1978). *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*. New York: Columbia University Press for his treatment of Lenk’s work on the nature and meaning of sport.

¹⁷ Lynch, K. (1960). *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press. Cited in: Golledge, R. and Stimson, R. (1997). *Spatial Behaviour*. London: The Guilford Press.

affiliation, sports clubs became primordial benchmarks of local identity.¹⁸ The creation of such a *habitas* was a critical element in the development of harrier clubs.

The new harriers club runs explored not only contiguous rural areas but also urban environments, taking part in urban exploration not only on Saturday afternoon runs but also by ‘moonlight’ midweek runs.¹⁹ Continual changes in the physical structures of cities meant that land previously the domain of cross country enthusiasts came under the influence of urban expansion. Thus culture (ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge streams) combined with *habitas* (perceptions of meaning) to give a grounding to cultural processes and to endorse forms of social, sporting and cultural identities. Club development therefore promoted reference groups against which self-referencing was possible.

From this position, the first clubs, as they organised and developed a sporting form, acquired and often assumed status within their communities as well as within their sport. Through membership, an acquired social status - a factor of identity - was also assumed by a small self-professed elite who ran the clubs and governed the sport. The positioning of the sport within a time/space locus assists in developing a view of sport and in particular harrier running within new developing cultural landscapes. This same locus also allows an examination of the relationship between body and health and sporting form more generally in the formation of more discrete sporting identities.

¹⁸ For full detail of selected indicators see Golledge, R. and Stimson, R. (1997). *op. cit.* P. 454.

¹⁹ This was especially popular with the harriers clubs of Dundee.

Time, space, identities and sporting cultures

The engagement by researchers in seeking explanations as to why and how sports emerged at particular times and in particular ways with particular forms, is a central thesis in understanding the nature of sports. That is to say, the central values of sports and their varying forms and what this may communicate about their participants becomes more sharply focused and relevant when located within the context of a wider social world. Eichberg's 'trialectic' in relation to studying the nature and mechanisms of sporting forms is one of the constructs that help us understand the ways in which any new, developing sporting form shifts and reacts to its participants and its environment, both in social and physical terms.²⁰ This 'trialectic' is of particular value in this study of the development of cross country running through the notion of sport for achievement, fitness as well as the experiential.²¹ The development of the first harrier clubs was characterised by all three elements of this 'trialectic' with each assuming a separate but inter-related role in the development of the sport. Eichberg, in further, work makes the case for running in particular as existential, embodying metaphorical precepts combining progress and career with the "natural" hegemony of the straight line and the right angle.'²² If this is accepted, then harrier running in its original form was a perfect counter to the linearity of the city and the regulation of city life. In further developing his argument he comments on the 'otherness of running' presenting running as a dialogue between body and environment. In doing so he presents the primordial conditions for the development of harrier running as an urban phenomena with a requirement for the human condition to explore and garner a sense of freedom.

²⁰ Bale J. and Philo C. (eds.). (1998). *Body Cultures: Essays on Sport, Space and Identity* by Henning Eichberg London: Routledge.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Eichberg, H. (2000). *The Labyrinth – Course of Movement and Course of Life*. [online]. Available from: <http://www.taiiku.tsukuba.ac.jp/~sshimizu/research4.htm> [Accessed 7/11/05].

Eichberg develops this in the notion that ‘Space and body are connected, feelings and emotions involved.’²³ In addition, he maintains that ‘In bodily action, place and space are fellow players.’²⁴ The tension balance therefore between quantification and rationalisation on the one hand and the free exploration of human emotion in the form of running in natural settings is essential in understanding the draw of sport for young men in urban environments.

The roots of modern industrial society, characterised by a focus on achievement, are located in this period thus giving credence to the fact that sporting forms at this time also adapted and adopted quantification characteristics. This should not be surprising. With a focus on records, times and quantification, sport responded to the changing ‘rational’ world in which it was situated.²⁵ However, the value of Henning Eichberg’s ‘trialectic’ to this study is the inclusion of sporting experience beyond the purely rational. A key factor in the development of the sport was not only an emphasis on the utility of the fitness aspects of the sport but also the experiential; the mind/body synthesis. Certainly the impact of early club propaganda as to the values of the sport embodied all three elements at varying times and for differing reasons and purposes. For example the health benefits to young men were often interwoven with social and Christian values. A further example was the emphasis placed on escape from urban life with its structured patterns to the freedom of the countryside and strong emphasis was placed on activity in the countryside as being less constrained and therefore giving a sense of physical, spiritual and emotional ‘freedom’. Therefore the notions of production, reproduction and aproduction, sit comfortably together within this sporting form. The urban–rural continuum

²³ *Ibid.* P. 8.

²⁴ *Ibid.* P. 8.

²⁵ See also Guttmann, A. (1978). *op. cit.*

arguments extend beyond the spatial. They also embody the spiritual and the experiential. The promotion of an ‘idyll’ in the rural made it attractive, desirable and inevitably, of value. Belonging to a group using the rural as a means of deliberately setting itself apart from others, gave individuals social capital.

Relationships with time and space were also changing. In what Eichberg labels the ‘‘geometricisation’ of the body - the subjugation of the body to rigid temporal and spatial disciplines’, the attraction of engaging in a sport which saw all natural elements of nature both physical and meteorological as ‘natural’, released the participants from what Eichberg called the ‘‘iron cage’ time–space order’, thereby delivering them into more liberating experiences.²⁶ The relationship of cross country running with its physical environment is therefore by extension, extremely close.

In this period of the late 19th century, sport was moving from a more ritualised form to one of regulation. This shift was the very catalyst that led Rye (one of the first to organise a club run and formulate the rules of the sport) to view the future of harrier running with apprehension believing that this stratagem would ultimately destroy the very basis of its being. The very essence of the sport for Rye was the freedom of running in open spaces, and regulation was anathema. Eichberg refers to this increasing regulation as the ‘secularisation of sport’, destroying the essential spirit of the sense of liberation in running.²⁷ The fact that organised club cross country running placed great emphasis on the experiential may have been the attraction of the

²⁶ Bale, J. and Philo, C. (1998). Introduction: Henning Eichberg, space, identity and body cultures. In: J. Bale and C. Philo, (eds.). *op. cit.* P. 13.

²⁷ Brownell, S. (1998). Thinking dangerously: the person and his ideas. In: J. Bale and C. Philo, (eds.). *op. cit.* P. 30.

sport at a moment when the ‘time–space prism’ of individual experience was being ever limited.²⁸ This period in the development of sport generally is the first move from recreational forms to more defined spatial experiences. Cross country running in its early form deliberately resisted notions of quantification, although Bale notes that in its more modern form, it has perhaps succumbed to modernity with its ‘artificially imposed spatial and temporal limits.’²⁹

The cultural landscape of sport in the late 19th century was therefore multifaceted. Different sports structured and symbolised their activities in different ways based on cultural attitudes and invented and adopted iconographic representations of their sports as a way of offering distinctiveness in a cultural landscape that was drawing society more inwards through the industrial process. Examining sport through the notion of a changing cultural landscape with varying ‘natural’ factors is a useful technique as it assimilates a number of critical factors rather than seeing them as unilinear. The ability of the young Victorian male to seek ways of living in symbiosis with his environment allowed him to be both reactive and proactive (in control). Sport was one way of doing this.

Summary

This chapter has set out selected aspects of critical theory against which the evidence of the following chapters can be gauged. This allows a charting of the rise of the first harriers clubs and an analysis of the circumstances that led to the development of the sport more generally. It permits an examination of the way clubs were formed, the men who formed them and the early forms of club ‘meetings’ that characterised

²⁸ See Hagerstrand’s work on time and space in Golledge, R. and Stimson, R. (1997). *op. cit.*

²⁹ Bale, J. (2003). *Sports Geography*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

harrier running in relation to wider theoretical constructs in relation to identity, culture and civic sense. In particular, the study documents the nature of harrier running through a focus on the claims the clubs made about their sport, about themselves through their participation in the sport and also by locating the sport within an emerging sporting 'tradition'.

The romantic utopian view of the countryside was a singular view. In examining the nature of engagement of harriers in their sport it is important to acknowledge that there were multiple ways in which the countryside was viewed, many of which were far from the 'rural idyll'. Commitment to cross country running for those early evangelists of the sport was about a constructed view of regaining a lost paradise. This was a key stage in the social processes of leisure activity that moved engagement in the countryside from passive consumption, to more active consumption.

Chapter 4

Origins and influences on a sporting form: ‘Human Harriers’

Introduction

This chapter sets out the context for organised cross country running in Scotland in the late 19th century. It outlines those sporting forms and themes that resonate with regard to the development of cross country running. While appearing initially to be eclectic, they nevertheless shaped and moulded sporting form and context, including cross country running, within society. These very disparate forces acting upon cross country running were to re-emerge as distinct forms appropriated by the sport as it established its own discrete identity and appeal. In this sense, this chapter sets out the background for the development of the sport within a broad social and sporting diaspora. While no single factor or moment could be taken as the genesis of the sport, this chapter identifies the key forms and structures within which the sport operated. From diverse starting points, cross country running was shaped by inter-related sets of social activity and forces with varying utility and form but all being potential critical change agents.

Society and transitions

Transitions and change in society often subtle, sometimes more overt, have rendered ‘traditions’ malleable. Clarke and Critcher, in their excellent study of leisure and society in Britain, comment on the industrial polemic of pre-Victorian and Victorian

society as being a society in such a transition.¹ This transition and the shifting nature of leisure forms were to impact upon the fabric of all parts of society. A key theme which emerges is the struggle for status and order within society; a form of stratification in essence which resonated within the games and pastimes of the people. While mob games of villagers acquired a certain notoriety for their excesses, the pastimes of their 'social betters' also acquired a particular prestige as symbolic of the way of life of British civil society.

Best has associated the view of structure, order and the quest for respectability within Victorian society as the epitome of Victorian society.² Huggins and Mangan have challenged that view, at least within Victorian sport, by outlining the notion of ambiguity in relation to the nature of respectability.³ The very structures that seemed to protect, also at one and the same time, often blurred distinctions with regard to respectability within society as well as opportunity of aspiration. The ambiguities inherent within the social structures at varying levels of society were ever present over centuries of change. Challenges to these social structures were developing and distinctiveness became a social value much sought after.

While contemporary concepts of civil society from a new industrial city base along with a new 'nationhood' were developing in Victorian Britain, this new civil society was casting around for a sense of its roots and it is within sporting forms (amongst others) that such a sense of 'rootedness' was found. The games and traditions of bygone days were enthusiastically 'rediscovered' by Victorian Britain. Thus the old

¹ Clarke, J. and Critcher, C. (1985). *The Devil Makes Work: Leisure in Capitalist Britain*. London: Macmillan.

² Best, G. (1979). *Mid Victorian Britain 1851-70*. London: Collins.

³ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (2004). *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play*. London: Cass.

often came to be the basis of the new. This emotional and structural connectedness was highlighted by various social commentators of the day such as Dickens who commented on the plight of the new industrial and urban classes through popular fiction, as they struggled with the transitions from rural to urban economies as well as an appropriation of leisure forms that sought to represent them. It is precisely during this period that leisure in its varying forms moved from a relatively vicarious, non-institutionalised (although nonetheless structured) base to an organised, patterned and formally structured existence. This reinvention of a 'tradition' posited by Hobsbawm and Ranger⁴ is central therefore to the change and continuities within the historical study of sport and leisure.

No particular issue, period or phenomena could lay claim to acting as the precursor for modern organised running. What did emerge came from a rather complex social milieu of factors that determined both the physical and social form of cross country running. The structures that developed and the 'type' of men to which it appealed, emerged from the Victorian predilection for clubs and societies as well as the need for 'order' in society. Tranter comments that sporting form has a long history, and that we should not 'exaggerate the penchant of Victorian and Edwardian sport for commercialism, codification and institutionalisation.'⁵ In the case of some sports for example horseracing and cricket, this had a longer history than others.

In Robert Colls' study on *Identity of England*, he makes a persuasive case for the notion of locale and parish as the determinant of custom and practice of leisure and

⁴ Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds.) (1992). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵ Tranter, N. (1998). *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 14.

sport, with time and place as well as the defence of 'what's ours' as a key element in sustaining custom; a form of moral right in a sense.⁶ Inevitably, these customs developed a credence and form; what Pearson in his fictional work on football, sport and culture in the 20th century describes as 'mongrel truths'.⁷ These 'truths', allowing as they do the attribution of whatever evidence was chosen to be placed against them, enabled an interweaving of ideas of social respectability. Thus they consequently develop a life of their own leading in turn to what King claims as the need for social elites to seek ways of 'taming the chaos of activity'.⁸

McKibbin in his research on English civil society, gives sport a pre-eminent position as a powerful civic culture.⁹ This contributed ultimately to the process of civilising the people by means of acting as a 'gatekeeper'. To this end, sport became a vehicle through which ideology and practice interfaced. Here, while sport cemented society, it also emphasised social distinctions through different types of sports and their forms. Thus sport, at one and the same time, became a social cachet for some, as well as a form of resistance for others.¹⁰

The evidence for the same impact of sporting forms in Scotland is also persuasive given similar class distinctions within Scottish society, as well of course, as its strong civic traditions of egalitarianism. Running was first documented in Scotland however, as a form of distraction and demonstration of prowess.

⁶ Colls, R. (2002). *Identity of England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷ Pearson, H. (1994). *The Far Corner*. London: Warner.

⁸ King, P. (2002). *Squads and Ha's: Gender Roles and Civic Space in Lerwick's Up Helly Aa*. Unpublished paper, at Lodges, Chapters and Orders: Fraternal Organisations and the Structuring of Gender Roles in Europe (1300-2000). Centre for Research into Freemasonry, University of Sheffield.

⁹ McKibbin, R. (2000). *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁰ McKibbin, R. (2002). *Class and Sport*. Unpublished paper at Historians on Sport Conference. Leicester International Centre for Sports History and Culture. De Montford University.

Running and folklore

Sport in Scotland has had a variety of influences brought to bear upon it. The Acts of the Scottish Parliament of the 15th century (principally of James I and James II) indicate a healthy preoccupation with village and parish life principally, the presence of mob games which caused concern for the stability of social order.

The 1457 Act is of particular note since it offers interesting commentary not just about the games concerned but also substantiates the view that life centred around the parish, the Kirk, Sundays and the ambiguity surrounding participation in sporting activity in relation to public decency as well as wanton waste of time.

While these Acts are often quoted in work relating to the genesis of sporting traditions, it would be disingenuous to describe these games as the true basis of today's games. However, the various forms of diffusion through migrations and trading, link the basic form of the game to an emerging local custom or form of game, with each locale determining their own rules and basic equipment.

These varying forms of sporting activities take on resonance some three centuries later as sport became more organised to give an impression of an enduring cultural form, supporting the thesis of Colls of a strong sense of community creating ownership and identity in time related to place.¹¹ It was the 'tradition' or 'right' of the people to express themselves in relation to others; one half of the town against the others; this parish against that parish. This theme of exercising a 'right' was to play a central role in harrier running especially in the case of the first English club,

¹¹ Colls, R. (2002). *op. cit.*

Thames Hares and Hounds and their rights in relation to running on Wimbledon Common detailed later in this chapter. Scottish clubs exercised this right in a rather more direct way through the acquisition of patronage of clubs as well as through the ambiguous relationship and tension inherent in the urban interfacing with the rural that was to personify the uneasy relationship between landowner and urban harrier. This is arguably one aspect of the ‘rash assault’ that so offended Wordsworth¹² in his observations of how the ‘new’ urban came to view the ‘old’ rural.

Burnett emphasises the notion of control by the parish through the local presbyteries and Kirk sessions, although he notes the persistence and ingenuity at local levels in continuing common sporting practices which are encapsulated in Sir David Lindsay’s wonderful social commentary ‘Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estates’.¹³

In this sense football was the metaphor for voicing disquiet and behaving ‘as we always have’ thus defining ‘who we are’. While the Catholic Church one of the subjects of the satire made attempts at directing the energies of the common folk to more pious activities, the Protestant Reformation was to bring greater strictures than Catholicism. Burnett cites the controlling nature of the new church, especially relating to the way in which ordinary folk conducted themselves on Sundays as well as disorder and activities that were viewed as ‘irrational’.¹⁴ This set the tone within Scottish civil society in viewing activities without an immediate and obvious utility as frivolous. Thus leisure time was to be filled with less light-hearted activities. It

¹² Wordsworth W. in Winter, J. (2002). *Secure From Rash Assault. Sustaining the Victorian Environment*. Berkeley: University of Kentucky Press.

¹³ “Thocht I preich not I can play at the caiche: I wait thair is nocht ane amang yow all Mair fairlie can play at the fut-ball” in Hamer, D. (ed.) (1936). *Lindsay’s The Works (4 Vols.)*. Cited in: Burnett, J. (2000). *Riot, Revelry and Rout: Sport in Lowland Scotland Before 1860*. Edinburgh: Tuckwell. P. 19.

¹⁴ Burnett, J. (2000). *op. cit.* P. 20.

was within this context that sport developed in the 19th century.

Footracing

The Red Hose Race of Carnwath, Lanarkshire is the oldest recorded foot race. The race has clear evidence of its existence from 1456.¹⁵ The race date was based on the Julian calendar on the day after 22nd August which was St Lawrence Day and traditionally the great lamb fair. The race, still in existence, is commonly thought to commemorate the need to encourage messengers to stay in a state of readiness in order to be able to convey orders and news of English invasion.

The Lannermer celebrations in the early 1820s replicate the running traditions at Carnwath with a one mile race round the village green. This tradition of ‘short dash’ races stems in part from the strong pedestrian culture of the late 18th and early 19th centuries and managed to pervade the academic sanctuary of Edinburgh University with reports of student preparations for sports by running up Arthur’s Seat.¹⁶

However, Burnett cites the return of the monarchy in Scotland as the major catalyst of a sporting revival in the 17th century. It was the establishment of royal burghs of Scotland in particular that were central to the revival of horseracing in particular but there is also clear evidence at this time of hare coursing, golf, bowls, archery and curling as well as billiards.¹⁷ The further emergence in the 17th and 18th centuries of sports such as bowling and throwing games such as bulleting and quoiting linked once again to traditional holidays, demonstrates again the enduring qualities not only

¹⁵ McNeill, F. M. (1957). *The Silver Bough: A Study of the Natural and Local Festivals of Scotland*. Glasgow: McLellan. Pp. 56-58.

¹⁶ Usher, C.M. (ed.) (1966). *The Story of the Edinburgh University Athletic Club*. Edinburgh: The Club. P. 202 lists Robert Louis Stevenson as one of the students.

¹⁷ Burnett, J. (2000). *op. cit.*

of the people, but also of the appeal of the sports.

In England, the wakes, fairs, holidays and markets occasioned sporting activity around both Christian and pagan festivals, while in Scotland the traditional year revolved around New Years day (Old and New style), Hansel Monday, Imbolc, Candlemas, Fastern's E'en, Pasch, Beltane, Whitsunday (also Flitting Day), Midsummer (Johnsmas), Lammas, Michaelmas, Samhuinn (or Martinmas), Hallowmas (All Saints Day) but seldom, until the later 19th century, Christmas itself.¹⁸

These involuntary days of leisure activity were of concern to ruling elites. The issue of leisure as part of idleness and vice greatly concerned the upper echelons of the British class structure. However, as the benefits of the industrial revolution changed society, so too did the attitudes towards leisure and customs. Revelry and meeting together for social intercourse gave way to a harder nosed version of social custom. The reinvention of tradition as far as sports were concerned, started during the late 18th century as the 'Protestant work ethic' bit ever harder and greater industrialisation propelled the nation towards more control and productivity.

The general populace however contrived to continue with their customs thus perpetuating a view of a 'leisure problem'. Clarke and Critcher outline the 'ideology of spontaneity' and the notion of '[social] divisions being abolished, we can play as 'equals''.¹⁹ While it is a somewhat Utopian view that sport and leisure could have provided this ideal of unlocking the social divisions within society, nevertheless the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Clarke, J. and Critcher, C. (1985). *op. cit.* P. 11.

notion of celebration and participation in performance in sport as a social leveller, is important. This was certainly a recurrent theme in the rhetoric of the Scottish harriers clubs who took great pride in claiming that the sport embraced all within Scottish society, thus being the vehicle of aspiration; a leveller in effect. This vaunted aspiration of equality in Scottish society is encapsulated in much of the romantic writing of the time, especially that of Burns. In Chandler's work on construction of manliness however, the idea of struggle and sacrifice is located centrally at the heart of a particular class and he quotes the Darwinian notion of 'strength through struggle' as a significant precept of the emerging public school system.²⁰ Mangan's exploration of the relationship between games and manliness further develops this idea of 'struggle'.²¹

In Scotland however, the hold of the Kirk Sessions on Sabbath breaking was to define more generally the tastes required for 'respectable people'. The records of the Kirk Sessions identify the nature of Sabbath breaking and usually extend to social commentary outside of the Sabbath to give broader observations of parish life. It is important to emphasise that in this transition towards a more industrial society and hence a more urbanised form of society, local 'folk' events still ensured that ordinary parishioners were able to identify with their sense of time and place through the customs that had developed. Regular athletic events were a feature of the various holiday activities of parishioners and a variety of athletic forms emerged that loosely related to foot racing and what might be described as the province of athletics as we understand it today.

²⁰ Chandler, T. J. L. (1994). *The Structuring of Manliness: Rugby Football at Oxbridge and the Public Schools 1830-1880*. Unpublished paper, at 10th Commonwealth and International Scientific Congress. Victoria: Canada.

²¹ See also Mangan, J. A. and Walvin, J. (eds.) (1987). *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Pedestrianism

Pedestrianism, was a form of athletic activity that broadly encompassed foot racing and walking events and was in vogue particularly between the 17th and 19th centuries. It has been described, not unjustifiably by McNab *et al*, as ‘the dark side of the athletics moon.’²² This dubious sobriquet is earned through the various practices associated with the sport, for example betting, wagering, ‘ringing’ and eccentric training practices. Pedestrian activity was also characterised by the inter-relationships that the various echelons within society had with the sport. Despite or perhaps because of all of this, Pedestrianism became an established sporting activity with strong public interest encouraged by the sporting press. Interest in cross country running no doubt benefited from the general interest in pedestrian races.

In a curious piece of social commentary, *The Free Lance* directs its readers to the nature of how pedestrian events in the neighbourhood of Manchester lifted the social tone of the area with ‘the invasion of the swarm of outsiders ... [These] ... are mostly young men. They can readily be distinguished from the natives by ‘recognition’ of a higher standard of personal cleanliness.’²³ The article continues in a similar vein noting not only their social habits, but also seemingly to direct the sartorial preferences of the local population to the attire of their visitors with a detailed commentary, presumably seeing these visitors as the epitome of fashion.

‘Hats are unknown amongst them. The favourite substitute is the cloth cap, well pulled back on the nape of the neck ... As a rule they seem to have an especial partiality for black clothes of the respectable small tailor’s cut, plentifully furnished with good-sized, wooden looking creases at the knees of their trousers and

²² McNab, T., Lovesey, P. and Huxtable, A. (2001). *An Athletics Compendium*. Wetherby: The British Library. P. xxxi.

²³ *The Free Lance*, Vol III, No.63. 29th February, 1868. P. 65.

the elbows of their suits.’²⁴

The article characterises the fascination the public had with the way in which sport provided new social opportunities. Influxes of strangers, new social activities, the role of public houses in the active patronage of sport and the opportunities that large numbers of visitors afforded local trade, all contributed to the diffusion of a sporting form. The mixture of all strata of society in some way or another meant the sport could not be ignored.

Indeed, pedestrianism represented to a great extent the nature of social stratifications within society at the time. Gentlemen ‘Peds’ were as common as those of a lower social status thus embracing all sections of society. While the ordinary man competed (for example the match between Cummings and George), so too did the landed gentry of whom the most well known was arguably ‘Captain’ Barclay of Urie (Robert Bridges Barclay Allardice) of Angus.²⁵

There is an important distinction however which needs to be made about the social circumstances in which sport was played out at this time. Sport and physical challenges during this period were inextricably linked to money. Whether it was a game or individual endeavour, wagering or betting usually was associated with it. Burnett makes key distinctions between the two forms of financial involvement.²⁶ Betting was associated with those activities where rules were established and therefore the acceptance of the rule structure was an inherent part of risking money or goods. Wagering on the other hand was usually associated with the establishment

²⁴ *Ibid*

²⁵ for a more detailed consideration of the feats of Allardice see Radford, P. (2001). *The Celebrated Captain Barclay: Sport, Gambling and Adventure in Regency Times*. London: Headline.

²⁶ Burnett, J. (2000). *op. cit.*

of rules or the determination of the boundaries of human endeavour. From prize fighting and horse-racing to shinty, caich and ploughing matches, money and goods exchanged hands and as pedestrian activity grew, it too was characterised by gambling. Pedestrianism embraced various forms of challenge from match-racing to challenges of time or distance and indeed latterly involved handicap competition.²⁷

While the social commentary of the time with regard to gambling is dealt with later in chapter six relating to governance of the sport, it is important to note here the ever increasing role of the Church in combating what it saw as a ‘social evil’. In Scotland the schism in the established Kirk accentuated the views of gambling as this ‘social evil’, with the Free Church especially using what Burnett describes as ‘lurid language’ encapsulated by the remarks of one Free Church elder in particular: ‘Ah! There will be no racing there [in hell], but everlasting chains; no Italian music, but weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.’²⁸

Pedestrianism and military endeavour shared common ground in the development of athletic practice with the military viewing pedestrian achievement as a benchmark of the British fighting unit. Swiftens of mobility was a key feature of the military campaigns that preoccupied the expansion of the British Empire during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.²⁹

These feats were to set the principle of standards for the British army. Regiments

²⁷ For a brief but inclusive summary of pedestrian activity see McNab, T., Lovesey, P. and Huxtable, A. (2001). *op. cit.*

²⁸ Sloan, G. (1986). *Stirling Races*. Cited in: Burnett, J. (2000). *Riot, Revelry and Rout: Sport in Lowland Scotland Before 1860*. Edinburgh: Tuckwell. P. 211.

²⁹ MacFarlane, H. (1915). Famous marches and military pedestrians. In: A. E. T. Watson (ed). *The Badminton Magazine of Sports and Pastimes, Vol. XL*. London: Hulton. P. 322. The account tells of a 2,000 mile march by the 60th Rifles in 1870 and 300 miles by 10,000 men in 88 degrees Fahrenheit.

attempted to set regimental markers such as the 35 miles in 24 hours by the Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1904; the 72 hours by Colonel de Lisle's column in the Cape Colony in 48 hours and the Aldershot to Woolwich march of the Royal Horse Artillery of 48 miles in 11 hours. The pedestrian feats of the officers of the 3rd Battalion Scots Guards conducting their own walking match (presumably for wagers) from Winchester to Aldershot in just under six hours is also worthy of note.³⁰ These standards set by British forces were to put in train similar responses by other military units across Europe, the most notable being the military walk organised by the French journal *Matin* in 1904, who organised an open military walk from the Place de la Concorde to St Germain and back which encouraged an entry of some two thousand in teams of ten from infantry, cavalry and artillery.³¹

The utility of pedestrianism in the military was to have an impact on the notion of athletic endeavour as a central character of the desirable qualities of the youth of the country. This ascribed a status to running and walking that was seen to encapsulate the Corinthian public schoolboy officer. Indeed it was this military need that enabled 'hares and hounds' to be set into the fabric of public school life with greater tolerance and ease thus adding to the ensemble of activities suitable for generations of officer classes. Not all pedestrian activity therefore was viewed as being associated with 'the dark side of the athletics moon'; it was to depend upon who engaged and for what purpose.

However within civil society such nobility of enterprise and exemplary high professional standards were often difficult to determine as more insidious influences

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.* P. 323.

came into play as foot racing in the form of pedestrianism took hold and forms of athletic activity developed and diversified. From match-races to racing against the clock and distance, the sport developed in differing ways with its zenith in the 19th century. McNab³² identifies a number of key factors in the ultimate demise of pedestrianism. Firstly, the lack of any real organised structure as well as the haphazard nature of contest, rendered participants a distinct lack of secure and regular income. Secondly, the relatively poor income, as handicap races took hold and thirdly, corruption from gambling. The lack of a real organising body, no doubt due to the diverse interest groups being unwilling to submit to the rules of any other group, was also a critical factor.

The Jockey Club and to an extent the relevant Football Associations were able to navigate a path through their respective sports with regard to professionalism and the regulation of gambling. Athletics, at the critical moment of moving towards a governing body in England in 1880, eschewed the professional approach and instead embarked upon a strictly amateur 'ideal'. Indeed *The Athletic News* of 1879 comments upon the moves to form a 'Jockey Club for athletics' in an article on the tensions inherent in the sport at that time relating to gambling and the professional/amateur debate which often exposed runners as 'shamateurs'.³³

This perhaps was a defining moment in the history of the sport in relation to its form and content. From match-racing and time and distance contests, the sport embraced the more Corinthian ideals of the public schools and the 'gentleman amateur'. The bid for control in essence had been won by a social elite who defined the sport in

³² McNab, T., Lovesey, P. and Huxtable, A. (2001). *op. cit.*

³³ *The Athletic News*, Wednesday 19th March, 1879. P. 4.

their own way. This was a key moment in the development of hares and hounds or paper chasing as it now moved centre stage as an athletic form by virtue of its roots in the public school system. This aspect of the development of the sport is dealt with in more detail in chapters four and five. The embracing of the ‘amateur ideal’ was to have a more delayed effect in Scotland than in England due to social and cultural differences in the education systems and the role education played in developing sport.

The influence and revival of the Highland Games

A distinctive developing form of athletic competition in Scotland was the reinvention of the Highland Games for more public consumption as part of the general rehabilitation of Scottish culture in the wake of King George III’s visit to Edinburgh in 1822. The Highland Games have been the subject of scrutiny by historians of Scottish sport and in particular by Jarvie.³⁴ His research on the Highland Games of the Victorian period argues the case of a general drift to a vision of the kailyard, tartanry and what he calls ‘Balmorality’ as a sentimental idealised vision of a 19th century Scottish ‘noble savage’. This rehabilitated the Scots as a safer version of an inhabitant of a nation. Scotland therefore emerged less as ‘North Briton’ and more as Scotland, with a sense of unity between the Ossianic north and the industrial south combining to create a modern state with a strong ‘tradition’.

The regeneration of a particular ‘Scottishness’ was embodied in the birth of the Highland Games, developing from the new euphoria of the accession to the throne of the young Victoria. The reinvention of the Highland Games belongs in no small part

³⁴ Jarvie, G. (1991). *Highland Games: the Making of the Myth*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

to the combination of folklore, tradition and a modernised version of athletic contest. All of these factors were appropriated as part of a new Scottish heritage and identity.

This theme and vision of the Scots is developed particularly in the work of Fry³⁵ in arguing for the Empire as built more on expendable highland, warrior Scots, with English political power benefiting more overtly in financial terms. The rising popularity and reinvention of various Highland Games around the country allowed a more conservative reapplication of a national ideal to be consumed as fact by the patronage of Queen and Consort and 'new' Games. The 'new' interest in existing local gatherings gave an acceptable focus for migrating populations both within and from Scotland.

The emigrations the 19th century also brought a deeper sense of custom, culture and belonging which strengthened the need to keep alive the ties and common bonds of the mother country. By 1863 for example, the Dunedin Caledonian Society had been formed in New Zealand. The relationship therefore between the Highland Games of Scotland and the Scots relationship with the Empire helped develop the image of the Scot. The early Games in Scotland were organised on the basis of ensuring travel time between the respective venues as professionalism was encouraged in order to attract crowds and as a means of earning money for local men to offset poor wages; a structure replicated especially in the Games of Canada and New Zealand

A second aspect in the emergence of distinctive sporting forms was that professional athletics in its variety of forms, found a clear expression in working-class culture

³⁵ Fry, M. (2002). *The Scottish Empire*. East Lothian: Tuckwell.

through some of these Highland Games and, for example, the Powderhall meetings of east coast Edinburgh. While there were professional matches in Scotland throughout the late 18th and 19th centuries, English 'Peds.' were reluctant to come north of the border too often as stake money was not as good as that found in England and the crowds in England were larger thus allowing for greater returns on side betting.³⁶ However, Scotland did produce pedestrians of note and the Cummings-George races came at exactly the time when the first Harriers clubs were established.³⁷

The mid to late 19th century is the last real period in which popular professional athletics in the form of pedestrianism holds credence. Tainted by scandal and corruption and with new forms of recreation developing, more reputable forms of social activity were to replace the less socially acceptable 'Peds.' with their connections to betting, drinking and dubious practices of 'throwing' races. The moral high ground that amateur athletics captured was based on values of health, virtue and moral manliness. Athleticism and manliness and the appropriation of sport as a vehicle for their expression, while not the central focus of this study, nevertheless underpins much of the activity of the 19th century harrier as it emerged as a clear credo of the new Harriers clubs.

Women pedestrians

Running and in particular harrier running, was an almost exclusively male preserve. While there is little detail of the involvement of women in athletic activity, there are

³⁶ See *Edinburgh Evening Times*, 4th October, 1886 for an account of the last of the three matches between Cummings and George for £200 stake money which George won.

³⁷ Gregson, K. (1999). Master of the running pump: the career of a Scottish athlete. *British Society of Sports History, Newsletter No.10, Autumn*. Pp. 32-33.

records of female pedestrian races. Radford's study of women's foot races is useful in highlighting the key features of women's running in the 18th and 19th centuries.³⁸ Some seventy events in which women or girls ran or walked is detailed in his work demonstrating that women's participation in what loosely could be called foot racing was part of folk events as well as more regularised fairs and other sporting meetings. Many of these races were sideshows or races for goods or victuals such as tea. However not all races were for such utility. A small circuit developed of women 'Peds.' who earned not unsubstantial sums in their own right. While Radford's work is located mainly in reviewing English custom, he cites at least one instance of two runners racing in Scotland reported in the Edinburgh press of the day.³⁹ Women's participation in pedestrian events is further documented by Lovesey *et al*⁴⁰ and is located primarily (but not exclusively) in the period 1815 to 1890. Women's events, while serious in their attempts to achieve records, were nevertheless seen by men as a form of burlesque.

Clubs and civic society

The period immediately after the Napoleonic war in sporting terms mirrors the complex and shifting demographic nature of society itself. In Scotland the gradual development of a form of self-conscious 'identity' was supported by, for example, the literary work of Scott. The poems of Ossian⁴¹ were a further example of a literary genre that epitomised the perception of the nature and character of the Scot as well as generating considerable interest in the idea of 'nationhood'. This

³⁸ Radford, P. F. (1995). Women's foot-races in the 18th and 19th century. In: A. Gounot, T. Niewerth and G. Pfister (eds.) *The World of Games: Political, Social and Educational Aspects. Proceedings of the 2nd ISHPES Congress, Vol. II*. Berlin: Academia Verlag. Pp. 58-63.

³⁹ *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 23rd September, 1802 in Radford, P. F. (1995). *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ Lovesay, P. (1998). Women behaving badly. *Inside Track*, April. Pp. 60-62.

⁴¹ See the numerous nineteenth century writings of Hugh Blair on the writings of Ossian as well as McNaughton, P. (1861). *The Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*. Publisher unknown.

introspection of ‘things Scottish’ helped to develop a desire to regenerate, and at times completely reinvent, customs.⁴² To this end, clubs and societies started to flourish. Horseracing claims the oldest of the governing bodies of sport in the Jockey Club (variously 1751 or 1752).⁴³ However the Royal and Ancient can trace its roots to 1754 in its original form of the St Andrew’s Society of Golfers while the Marylebone Cricket Club was formed in 1787. One of the earliest sports clubs in Scotland was the Company of Edinburgh Golfers (1744) pre-dating the Royal and Ancient, while curling clubs at local level were known to have existed in Perthshire from 1739.⁴⁴

Defining patterns during this period is problematic. As well as taking into account the growth of gentlemen’s clubs from the late 18th century there is also a need to be cognisant of the various local sports ‘clubs’, many of which had very loose affiliations. In addition to these were the burgeoning clubs centred around radical politics and labour movements as well as the local public house. The antecedents therefore for the development of sports clubs cannot be seen as a phenomenon which either led or followed social trends. Burnett gives evidence to the general growth of sport in Scotland citing the Aesculapian and Gymnastic Clubs of Edinburgh.⁴⁵

The members of the Edinburgh Gymnastic Club were essentially medical men with their friends and embodied a developing trend of the late 18th century for forming small clubs for drinking and conviviality in this case with sport as the focus.

⁴² Jarvie, G. (1999). *op. cit.*

⁴³ Huggins, M. (2000). *Flat Racing and British Society 1790-1914: A Social and Economic History*. London: Cass.

⁴⁴ Tranter, N. (1998). *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ Burnett, J. (2000). *op. cit.*

Burnett associates its roots at least in part with the evolving medical view of health linked to exercise. A critical element in the development of the Scottish harriers clubs some one hundred years later is the underpinning ideology of the Edinburgh Gymnastics Club. Burnett identifies the ‘maintenance of health with the promotion of sociability and the use of a Club to create a structure for sports.’⁴⁶ This was to set in train forms of sporting activity by other clubs for example the Athenaeum clubs. Burnett is clear in his argument of the primacy of the Edinburgh Gymnastic Club according their position as ‘a prologue to the growth of general games days in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.’⁴⁷

As the numbers of gentlemen’s clubs in Edinburgh grew, so the social culture changed. The development of Edinburgh as the ideological and social driving force in some senses countered the industrial and commercial Glasgow of the Scottish west coast. As well as developments in education, the notion of belonging to ‘the Club’ was to persist as an ambition of the young Scottish male of even moderate social and professional aspiration. While society was to undergo considerable change, the rhetoric of the first sports clubs some one hundred years later was to remain remarkably similar. Particular genres of male clubs in relation to the development of sport in Scotland seem relevant to consider at this stage as well as the types of males they attracted.

Gentlemen’s clubs

There were a range of clubs essentially social in nature and formed usually, although not always, for the furtherance of some social good. Particular examples are the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* P. 214.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* P. 215.

Friendly Societies and Freemasons. The sometimes less reputable gentleman's clubs such as the society clubs usually of the major cities for example The Benison of Fife and Edinburgh; the Wig Club and the London equivalent, the Hell Fire Club, provided an interesting counter to the more overt respectability of the Friendly Societies. Huggins places considerable emphasis on the ambiguity of respectability around the clubs and activities of the period and this theme is developed in chapter eight.⁴⁸ What is of critical import are the antecedents of a defining credo of a sporting form. The inherent and often selective and deliberately ambiguous activities of clubs, point to the varying functions that these clubs often served within civil society giving at one and the same time respectability and a rite of passage to that respectable station. Males also entered a more hedonistic world where by virtue of belonging to an 'elite', one is able to indulge one's whims and predilections often at odds with conventional norms of respectability.

Stevenson's work on the sex clubs of the Enlightenment in Scotland demonstrates that there was a changing climate relating to society during this period. In quoting from the dictionary of Samuel Johnson of 1755 that clubs are 'an assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions', Stevenson further defines clubs as '... institutions (that) lay at the heart of the spread of the Enlightenment ...'⁴⁹ The sharing of interests and the friendships developed often extended beyond the club. In this sense the layers of 'ritual' that clubs acquired transcended that of the original purpose for which they met in that other outside interests of fellow members were considered to be a point of principle in honouring. In this way, clubs and society's grip on wider civic life extended beyond that of the mere club. Through this process,

⁴⁸ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (eds.) (2004). *op. cit.*

⁴⁹ Stevenson, D. (2001). *The Beggar's Benison: Sex Clubs of Enlightenment Scotland and their Rituals*. East Linton: Tuckwell. P. 2.

diffusion of ideals and change was negotiated.

Central to most social clubs of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was the sense of conviviality, exchange of views and discussion. Stevenson makes the point that clubs during this period were essentially an urban phenomenon usually with the advancement of some cause or other and indicates that in the case of golf ‘actually playing golf could be merely a preliminary to socialising’.⁵⁰ He further emphasises the importance of ritual, both elaborate and symbolic (as is the case with Freemasons), as well as custom, claiming the use of ritual in binding men together.

While Stevenson’s other work on the early Freemasons in Scotland makes it clear that Freemasons were often ‘men of relatively humble status’, the acceptance of these clubs and societies in Scottish culture was often attributed to the Christian idealism that embodied their claims for existence such as beneficent acts.⁵¹ Furthermore, the development throughout Britain from the mid 17th century of ‘informal sociability and of voluntary social institutions providing settings outside the dominant groupings of family and occupation’ led to the clients of the new coffee and chocolate houses forming clubs.⁵² These clubs were essentially focused on debate and ideas of ‘high culture’ and were also occasionally for the pursuance of hedonism. Tranter relates club formation to the burgeoning of ‘belonging’ that club membership was to accord through his analysis of club formation and sporting form in relation to shifts and changes within society.⁵³

⁵⁰ Stevenson, D. (2001). *op. cit.* P. 3.

⁵¹ Stevenson, D. (2001). *The First Freemasons. Scotland’s Early Lodges and Their Members.* Edinburgh: Grand Lodge of Scotland. P. 10.

⁵² *Ibid.* P. 10.

⁵³ Tranter, N. (1998). *op. cit.*

The second type of club was that which met for the furtherance of Scottish traditions. These clubs had a broad social agenda that linked to the preservation and regeneration of a Scottish ideal and on occasions would encompass, sporting activity. The gatherings of the Royal Company of Archers - who acted in the ceremonial capacity as the 'King's Body Guard for Scotland' - traditionally practised in the area of Edinburgh known as the Meadows, are one such example.

Further examples of these Edinburgh male clubs are the Friday Club and the more distinctive, if somewhat eclectic, company of men who met at the south side of Edinburgh at Hunter's Tryst, the Edinburgh Six Foot Club. This club is an exemplar of the type of nouveau Scottish gentleman's club of the day that celebrated the athletic male while extolling the virtues of men of letters. While the obvious criteria for membership of the 'Six Foot Club' is contained in the title, honorary membership was also bestowed upon significant citizens including Sir Walter Scott and the 'Ettrick Shepherd', James Hogg. *The Edinburgh Courant* enthusiastically commented on the meetings of the club by publishing regular reports of their activities either at their club rooms at East Thistle Street Edinburgh (later at Malta Terrace) or at their regular outdoor meeting place at Hunter's Tryst. The club was formed specifically to 'practice the national games of Scotland and gymnastics'.⁵⁴ In two particular reports of activities in May 1828, the club's activities included quoiting, hammer throwing and triple jumping (peculiarly Scottish) as well as steeplechasing. It is also known that the club practised golf, rifle shooting and curling.

⁵⁴ Smith, C. J. (2000). *Historic South Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: John Donald. P. 358.

Detail from the *Edinburgh Examiner* reprinted in the *Sports Quarterly Magazine* gives a particularly good account of a Steeple Chase although the time related to the distance should be noted.

‘Steeple Chase. – A handsome silver medal with appropriate device. The competition for this medal excited considerable interest among the spectators. The distance to be run was about a mile. Eight competitors started, who all kept very close for some time; but when it came to the push, some of them gave in, finding it rather up-hill work. A hard contest took place by the others, which ended in favour of M. Wilkie Esq. who first reached the flag, which was held by the Lieutenant of the Club, Archibald Sinclair, Esq. R.N. The distance was run in three minutes and a half.’⁵⁵

The club developed a dress uniform described in Smith’s study as ‘the finest dark green cloth coat, double-breasted with special buttons and a velvet collar. The vest was of white Kerseymere. Trousers were white. On special occasions, a tile hat was worn.’⁵⁶ Attention to detail of uniform was to be a particular mark of the harrier clubs some sixty years later. Despite being formed in 1826, the Club was invited to perform civic duties as Guard of Honour to the Lord High Constable of Scotland by 1828. Such recognition perhaps confirming the nature and form of acceptable gentlemen’s clubs that were the foundations of Scotland’s early sporting clubs by the mid 19th century some forty years later.

The various Border Games are arguably the precursor of the earliest sporting clubs which had strong influence on the sporting culture of the Scottish east coast in particular. These Games derived from sports meetings which featured running,

⁵⁵ *Sports Quarterly Magazine*, No 15, p.16. The National Archives of Scotland. Accession No. GD445/4/15, C44598, 4A4.

⁵⁶ Smith, C. J. (2000). *op. cit.* P. 358.

jumping and leaping and dated from at least 1569.⁵⁷ In line with a more orderly society, the athletic programme at these Games came to be more standardised and in the case of the Border Games, rekindled an awareness of the games and pastimes of the area of Northumberland that at one time stretched well into what is now West Lothian and the Cheviots. In many senses the Border region shared common language, social customs and culture and this was never more apparent in the development of athletics generally than in the Games of the St Ronan's Border Club. The Club started annual meetings at Innerleithen in 1827 and soon local sports were being held along the St Ronan's model in Leith, Roslin, Dalkeith, Haddington, Jedburgh and over the border itself in Northumberland.⁵⁸

Flourishing on the rich indigenous heritage of the Northumberland sports, the new Border Games quickly established a niche in the social structure of society in the early to mid 19th century. Instituting new events such as high jumping, long jumping and the triple jump (hop, step and jump), hammer and shot throwing, these Games were hugely successful. The Border Games attracted athletes from Edinburgh, across the border area into Northumberland and developed an athletic following of athletes such as triple jumper William Leyden, hammer thrower Richard Armstrong and 'circuit' athletes such as Nevins, Stevenson, Burnett, Unthank, Vardey and Newton.⁵⁹

The influence of key individuals in the revitalised Border Games helped to disseminate the ethos of such Games further afield. The Ettrick Shepherd, James

⁵⁷ *Sports Quarterly Magazine*, No. 11. P.17. The National Archives of Scotland. Accession No. GD445/4/15, C44598, 4A4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* P. 18.

Hogg, so influential in the Edinburgh Six Foot Club, was a key figure in the St Ronan's Border Games Club as was his contemporary, the poet Henry Glassford Bell. The Games, often managed by local society luminaries such as Matthew Paxton of Etal House in the case of the Tillside Border Games, combined patronage with furtherance of athletic sports. Patronage of the various Games by the likes of Scott and his colleagues, suggests that Wilkinson's⁶⁰ assertion that these early Games were popular with the 'upper classes' is correct, with the lairds more often taking prizes than the tenants.

The importance of the Border Games as a venue for running races grew as the neighbouring Lakeland Games became more synonymous with wrestling and other forms of athletics. The introduction into the Border Games of the steeplechase helped to establish endurance events within the racing calendar. Both the Six Foot Club and the St Ronan's Games featured steeplechasing contrary to the work of Watman and others all of whom state that the evidence of such endurance events did not pre-date 1850.⁶¹ There is clear evidence for steeplechasing at the Edinburgh Six Foot Club's meeting on May 3rd 1828.⁶² There are also contemporary newspaper reports of the Border Games in the 1830s holding cross country steeplechases.⁶³ As the Games progressed into the 1850s however, it was more difficult to counter professionalism in the form of pedestrianism and by 1860 not one amateur meeting could be found north of the Tweed.⁶⁴ It was to be the province of the schools and

⁶⁰ Wilkinson, H. F. (1877). *Modern Athletics 3rd ed.* London: The 'Field' Office.

⁶¹ Watman, M. (1968). *History of British Athletics.* London: Hale. Other authors such as Quercetani, R. L. (1964). *A World History of Track and Field Athletics.* London: Oxford University Press and Arlott, J. (1954). The British approach to sport. In: E. Andrews and A. McKay (eds.) *Sports Report Number Two.* London: Heinemann, also omit these early races.

⁶² *Sports Quarterly Magazine*, No 15. *op. cit.*

⁶³ *Ibid.* P. 18.

⁶⁴ Wilkinson, H. F. (1877). *op. cit.* P. 17.

universities to hold and preserve the amateur ideal.

Increasing urbanisation and the new emerging middle classes associated with new wealth were to be central catalysts in the development of cross country running as an organised sport. These new classes, educated in a system that encouraged the values of selflessness and manliness embodied in the use of games as the vehicle by which young men would be taught to serve and understand that discipline (especially self discipline), underpinned civic duty and therefore civic society. Clubs and organisations were to be formed helping to demonstrate civic pride and sense of duty as well as to demonstrate the aspirant higher ideals of an educational system.

Urban sporting development

Town councils saw municipal provision as a public statement of civic sense as well as civic duty and embodied all that was good about the city in its treatment of its citizens. In Glasgow, the erection of diving boards on the Clyde at Fleshers Haugh as well as changing huts from the late 1850s led to the development of municipal baths, the first at Greenhead Street in 1878.⁶⁵ An open-air gymnasium was given as a philanthropic gesture and erected in 1860 and regattas on the Clyde at Glasgow Green attracted large crowds. Hugh Macdonald writing in the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* of 1854 produced a series of articles (later to be published as a pamphlet) on *Rambles around Glasgow* and in addition, church, temperance and political groups formed their own rambling clubs.⁶⁶ The 'Rambling' craze seemed to grip Glasgow especially where much of the developing political radicalism was gaining ground. Additionally, a strong temperance movement actively promoted healthy living and

⁶⁵ Glasgow Corporation (1914). *Municipal Glasgow: Its Evolution and Enterprises etc.* Glasgow: The Corporation. Pp. 95-99.

⁶⁶ Macdonald, H. (1856). *Rambles Around Glasgow 2nd ed.* Glasgow: Thos. Murray.

abstinence amongst the working class as a means of active social control as well as being religiously correct. Non-militant suffragettes and women's guilds co-operatives favoured the Glasgow Health Culture Rambling Club while many clubs were formed on a street basis encouraged by the church, and rambling was still a key activity amongst the inhabitants of Elcho Street, Calton into the 1920s. Indeed, by 1888 the temperance movement had a club registered with the Scottish Football Association as 'United Abstainers F.C.'⁶⁷ Bilsborough gives a particularly detailed account of the nature of the provision for sport in Glasgow at this time.⁶⁸

The Volunteer movement, early cricket clubs, especially the West of Scotland Cricket Club, and educational establishments all generated a sense of civic belonging. In the case of the volunteer movement this came to a sharper focus by the 1860s when the Empire and British interests were under pressure abroad and the Volunteer forces used sports as a means of establishing strong loyalty to the crown and in fostering 'esprit de corps' amongst the men. The Volunteer movement was especially strong in Scotland and no more so in the more rural areas where it was used as a means of men meeting together on a regular basis. While the Volunteer movement came and went in its involvement in sport within a very brief time (approximately 1860 to 1880), the Volunteer forces were led by local men of means and usually with good educational backgrounds, who had been educated at public school and then followed this with careers in the military, diplomatic service or in land ownership and management. Many had attended a Scottish or English university and therefore experienced the new 'athleticism' sweeping the public

⁶⁷ Annual Reports of the Scottish Football Association. National Library of Scotland, Archive 9017, Minute Book 5.

⁶⁸ Bilsborough, P. (1983). The Development of Sport in Glasgow, 1850-1914. Unpublished M.Litt Thesis, University of Stirling.

schools.

Sport and the Scottish education system

Sport generally took longer to penetrate the Scottish school system. Emerging from a blanket of professional activity both associated with pedestrianism and Games events (Highland, Border and local), the Scottish educational institutions were to hold fast to the amateur ideal so much valued by English public schools as well as a strong historical educational tradition of its own. Initially little room was found for physical activity in Scottish schools in the 19th century. The Scottish tradition of education was based upon a view of the utility of an educated populace set out in John Knox's *First Book of Discipline* of 1560. The basis of this doctrine was a minimum of an elementary school education for every child. Progression to a secondary school was available to most children but not all. Every child was in theory, if capable, able to progress to a university. A generation of new Grammar Schools came into existence in provincial towns.⁶⁹

However, the reality for children of all but a few, was that until well into the 19th century and beyond, education was a singular chore which obliged children to apply themselves to a narrow curriculum bereft of any acknowledgement of the role of a healthy and active body. The body was to get its activity through the daily chores. It was only in the 19th century that some of the Scottish schools broke with this stiff translation of the Knox discipline and encompassed physical activity as a means of engaging boys with the moral doctrine much in evidence in England.

⁶⁹ Hendrie, W. F. (1997). *The Dominie: A Profile of the Scottish Headmaster*. Edinburgh: John Donald.

Hendrie paints a relatively bleak picture of physical activity in the life of the school in late 19th century Scotland in his historical account of the Scottish headmaster.⁷⁰ Payment by results of the 1872 Scottish Education Act essentially limited the curriculum, and physical activity was mainly military drill in many schools. He quotes however from Grant who attests to gymnastics being taught at Edinburgh High School and Glasgow High School.⁷¹ Edinburgh Academy founded their annual sports in 1858 followed by Merchiston Castle School and in 1864, the Royal High School of Edinburgh.⁷² In Glasgow, the Glasgow Academy held spring meetings.⁷³

Involvement in games at anything other than one of the more elite schools of the country, traditionally earned a ‘whipping’, and it took some time for this austere mentality of the Scottish school to erode.⁷⁴ While new teachers entering the profession in Scotland were often educated at English universities, the Scottish predilection of ‘employing their own’ was a clear practice, thus Scottish school to Scottish university and back to a Scottish school was the norm. However, the role and place of Scottish educational institutions and the Scottish universities in the development of athletics and in particular cross country running was to be critical in not only redefining the nature of athletics events, meetings and clubs, but also the ethos underpinning these activities. This process was assisted by Oxbridge Scots returning to teach in Scotland, the most notable of which was H.H. Almond of Loretto who also taught at Merchiston Castle School.

The principal Scottish schools were often endowed with a hospital school ethos.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Grant, J. (1876). *The History of the Burgh and Parish Schools of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Collins.

⁷² Usher, C. M. (ed.) (1966). *op. cit.* P. 36.

⁷³ Wilkinson, H. F. (1877). *op. cit.* P. 18.

⁷⁴ Hendrie, W. F. (1997). *op. cit.* Pp. 84-85.

Merchant companies set up schools with the object of educating the sons of ‘decayed merchants’, and the schools often focused on poor children fallen on hard times. Coupled with the fact that population demographics of the 1880s were such that 40% of the population were aged between 18 to 35, new creative ways were found at this time of occupying an increasingly more literate youth. One of the responses to what was seen at this time as a developing ‘youth problem’ was The Boys’ Brigade, and the increasing interest in sport as an acceptable outlet for young men was beginning to gain ground especially in the development of cricket, rugby and football clubs. While schools in Scotland often had scant regard for games and physical activity, they could scarcely resist the rising tide of interest by pupils.

The evidence of one school, George Watson’s College, may serve as a barometer in this regard. Most of the activities of the boys were boy led. Saxby states, ‘such games as cricket and football received little encouragement from the Governors and the masters of the school.’⁷⁵ From the formation of the pipe band to Volunteer force activities involving rifles from the Franco-Prussian war, it was the pupils who took the initiative. W.L. Carrie is however singled out as a key influence on the boys while head of English in the 1870s and indeed he became the first President of their Athletic Club from 1895 to 1897.

Football was introduced to the school in 1872 by a pupil from another school which led in turn, to Ogilvie (the Head Teacher) receiving a deputation of boys demanding a field to play on.⁷⁶ Until this point during the 1870s and 1880s the boys played in the Meadows of Edinburgh where John Paterson recalls they played scratch games

⁷⁵ Saxby, J. M. E. (1884). *Ben Harrison: A Story of George Watson’s College*. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier.

⁷⁶ *Watsonian*, Vol.11, No.1. Dec. 1905. P. 5.

of Hatty, Bulls, Tops and Pieries, 'kick the can', King and 'sixty a side soccer with a threepenny rubber ball ... and Hares and Hounds through the Grassmarket'.⁷⁷ The dress of the students allowed for spontaneity: 'We wore long stockings with tight garters above the knee, and our short breeks were puckered with another elastic round the knee.'⁷⁸ Paterson's account is one of the earliest recollections of a pupil of 'hares and hounds' and all the more important as he went on to win three successive Scottish cross country titles in 1898, 1899 and 1900.

The Meadows was a distillation ground for sport in Edinburgh at this time. The Scottish Archers practiced on the Meadows (in a railed enclosure) and football teams were known to have played there. Certainly the vicarious nature of the opportunity to engage in sport in the Merchant schools of Edinburgh at this time is further reinforced by commentary in the 'Watsonian' by a former pupil who stated that 'No one worried whether we played games or not; and if they did there was no money to spare in our family for equipment.'⁷⁹ Clearly not all were of the means to afford what were seen as trivial pursuits.

Although difficult to extrapolate from this singular example of a school, key forces are clearly indicated in the way pupils engaged with sport. Initially games were vicarious and probably mimicked from experiences with other boys as well as what was seen in the public areas of the city such as the Meadows. New forms of games had penetrated society such as 'hares and hounds' and various forms of football. Certainly in the schools a games ethos, while not strong, was of sufficient substance

⁷⁷ Waugh, H. L. (1970). *George Watson's College: History and Record 1724-1970*. Edinburgh: George Watson's College. P. 89.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* P. 89.

⁷⁹ *Watsonian*, Vol. LVI, 1960. P. 8.

to be able to capitalise on the social mix of pupil and acquiescent master in the development of the various forms of sporting activity. In certain cases, involvement by masters was predicated more on encouraging pupils to 'self help' than in outright promotion. 'Self help' was a strong moral and social virtue characterising this period.

The role of the Scottish universities

The role served by Edinburgh University in particular was to force the pace of change not only in embracing new athletic practices but also in its students becoming the backbone of many clubs and new governing bodies of sport. The governance of sport was to become the key issue in the latter half of the 19th century and public school boys and former university students were to play a major role in defining and shaping new forms of sport. The University had a tradition of games dating back to the 15th century when Regents supervised students playing games on the Borough Muir.⁸⁰

Running as a means of getting fit for sport was a feature of the new more organised games, however much such training preparation was frowned upon by traditionalists. Paper chasing rose in popularity as a means of achieving some form of fitness for these other sports, thus the utility of cross country was accepted. By the time Edinburgh University had founded its University Athletic Club in 1865 with the help of the Senatus based on Oxford and Cambridge customs, the University had already a history of cricket. Soon the sports of rowing (1867), rugby (1869) and cycling

⁸⁰ Usher, C. M. (ed.) (1966). *op. cit.* P.1.

were to be added (1878).⁸¹

The first University sports were held on Greenhill Park on June 27th 1866 just two years after the first Oxford versus Cambridge sports, and by 1876 they had the lease of a field at Corstorphine for which the Senate minutes noted the club were obliged to pay coal and gas for the rooms and a janitor was appointed by the Senate but paid for by the club. In addition to voting ten guineas towards the project, the Senate wisely insisted on the club paying for all damage.⁸² The annual sports drew large crowds and by 1869 attendance at the sports was estimated at 4,000. On March 18th 1871, the first Scottish (but termed Scotch) inter-university reunion was held at Raeburn Place, the grounds of Edinburgh Academicals in Edinburgh and was rotated around each of the competing universities which added further impetus for athletic development and investment in facilities and equipment at the universities of Glasgow, St Andrew's and Aberdeen.

A key feature of all of these meetings however was the introduction of 'strangers' races. Principally for former pupils but also for friends, this system built up a market for athletic events that the new football (soccer) clubs of the day used to develop and spread their name through a series of athletic sports which were to become a standard feature of the football club calendar. These athletic sports days remained a feature of a football club's fixture calendar until the Great War of 1914. Many sportsmen were sporting polymaths, competing competently across a range of sporting forms and they quickly established themselves in various combinations as footballers, runners, gymnasts, cricketers, rugby footballers and swimmers as well as

⁸¹ *Ibid.* P. 2.

⁸² *Ibid.* P. 5.

cyclists. The student athletes of Edinburgh in particular were no exception. Despite their more elevated social station many students, perhaps uniquely to Scotland, competed as professionals. The cast for the statue on the dome of the Old Quad is that of Anthony Hall, an Edinburgh student and professional athlete. Ephraim McDowell, an American student at Edinburgh, competed against an Irishman in Edinburgh for 10 guineas over 60 yards but allowed himself to be beaten in order to stimulate a return over 100 yards for a stake of 100 guineas which, in the classic ‘sting’, he won.⁸³

The key catalyst to the position of the Scottish Universities pre-eminent position in society stems in no small part to the University Act of 1858 which brought new life to all Scottish Universities. In his first Rectorial address of 1858 as Rector of Edinburgh University, Thomas Carlyle stressed the need to care for body and mind and it was clear that staff were interested in athletic sports, especially the Principal of the day Sir Alexander Grant.⁸⁴ This created the necessary conditions for clubs to thrive and develop. The strong initial interest by former pupils of the Edinburgh Merchant schools including Edinburgh Academy created a demand, for this new-found physicality. This demand was also fuelled by students at Scottish universities from English public schools. By 1886 the University had added a gymnasium to its growing facilities at Gilmorehill at a cost of just over £2,000 provided by the University, as well as by donation by former students, and a full-time member of staff had been appointed who had trained under Archibald McLaren.⁸⁵ The facilities of Edinburgh University were to be the focus for sports events in Scotland for some

⁸³ *Ibid.* Pp. 34-35.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Glasgow Herald*, 6th Sept., 1886. Letter – although the first groundsman and cricket professional had been appointed in 1876.

time.

Edinburgh University was the first of the Scottish universities to follow the examples of the Oxbridge institutions as well as Trinity in Dublin in holding annual sports. Cambridge and Trinity held sports as early as 1857 and Oxford in 1860 and the first inter-varsity between Oxford and Cambridge was in 1864.⁸⁶ The working through of sports from the public schools to the universities happened very quickly in comparative terms both sides of the border. It was only a matter of time therefore that the third phase of diffusion of the ludic ideal impacted upon society more broadly with the formation of sports clubs in the community.

In the records of Edinburgh University Athletic Club there is mention of one of the key individuals who influenced both the formation of the cross country clubs, especially in Edinburgh through Edinburgh Harriers but also the eventual governing body of cross country running. David Scott Duncan was instrumental in the formation of Edinburgh Harriers in 1885. He competed in the 1883 Scottish Championships at Powderhall. Duncan won the mile representing Edinburgh University in a time of 4 minutes and 35 seconds. Other Edinburgh University men served on the new governing body of athletics, the Scottish Amateur Athletics Association, one in the capacity of secretary and treasurer (A.S. Paterson) and one as general committee member (W.S. Brown).

The cerebral hold of athleticism in the rise of the new Christian man was in evidence almost from the beginning in university men, with the view that sport complemented

⁸⁶ For more detail of Oxbridge athletes and results in both track and field and cross country matches see Abrahams, H. M. and Bruce-Kerr, J. (1931). *Oxford v Cambridge: A Record of Inter-University Contests from 1827-1930*. London: Faber and Faber.

study through the belief that ‘he who runs may read’.⁸⁷ The traditional resistance of the Kirk in Scotland to what some saw as frivolous activity was also steadily eroded by students of Divinity who were champion sportsmen. W.W. Beveridge for example competed in the 100 yards of the Edinburgh University Sports of 1880 and also captained the Glasgow University football team. Beveridge is credited with even time for 100 yards (10.0 seconds) and went on to hold the championship of Scotland over 100 yards as well as representing Scotland at football. He was to become better known for his strong advocacy of total abstinence amongst athletes proselytising to packed audiences.

In one meeting at the St Andrew’s Halls in Glasgow he addressed some 3,000 people on the subject, regaling the audience with the view that the recent football match between Scotland and England in which Scotland lost, had been due to the ‘physical and moral ruin of drink.’⁸⁸ These moral values were to epitomise athletic activity in the new harrier clubs and set them apart from the sport politics that was to engulf, for example, football and cycling in relation to training and professionalism. From the outset, the harrier clubs were altogether ‘different’ in ethos with a seamless link to the values of the sport in its earlier forms in the public schools within a Corinthian ideal.

The new athletic meetings however, and the new forms of athletic events and activities, bred men who were to become the focus of increasing media interest. Many names became well known for their prowess across ranges of sports. The influence of the universities in developing athletics and recognising the value of

⁸⁷ Quoted from Alexander Grant in Usher, C. M.(ed.) (1966). *op. cit.* P. 43.

⁸⁸ *Scottish Sport*, 4th Nov., 1898. P. 5

physical endeavour helped in the formation of the first harriers clubs and in the governance of the sport.

English precedents and Scottish cross country running

The roots of organised club cross country running are associated with the English public school system. Replicating the ‘Hunt’ meetings, boys would set out as the ‘hares’ with packs in pursuit known as the ‘hounds’ thus leading to the term, ‘Human Harriers’, a term also associated with professional runners who were known to have kept race fit by following the hounds of hunts on foot. The development of hares and hounds in schools coincides with restrictions on boys keeping their own horses and beagle packs at school, thus the social trappings of language associated with hunting. With ‘hares’ and ‘hounds’ and various ‘packs’ of hounds according to the relative speed at running, the sport also included within the packs ‘whips’ and ‘pacers’. The first forms of ‘hares and hounds’ were noted for their sense of team running with packs running together rather than as individuals. The sport therefore fitted neatly into the team ethos of the time.

There are a number of notable English Public School steeplechase races. Shrewsbury had one known as the ‘Hunt’ dating from 1819 while arguably the most famous, the ‘Crick Run’ of Rugby School, was instituted circa 1838. Eton’s race was known simply as the ‘Steeplechase’ the exact date of which is uncertain but certainly pre-dates 1846, while the race at Winchester, first run in 1872, was known as ‘The Senior Steeplechase’. Sedbergh School’s ‘Wilson Run’ after its founding master Bernard Wilson, was instituted in 1881.⁸⁹ Other schools such as Harrow,

⁸⁹ Berry, N. F. (1980). *The Wilson Run: The First 100 Years*. Sedbergh: The School.

Wykeham, Charterhouse and Wellington had their own versions of steeplechases. At Wellington it was Charles Kingsley who instituted the run and the course. Kingsley is a central figure in the development of paper chasing, his proselytising influence creating a powerful impact on Walter Rye of Thames Hares and Hounds. The Kingsleyan tradition of the Christian gentleman was to guide Rye's thinking and attitudes in the development of the sport generally.

Run distances have varied over time as have the relative severity of the countryside over which they were run. Winchester's course was noted in particular for its severity with numerous hedges and water obstacles although it was short. Rugby's 'Crick' was known to have been run over 14 miles in the early stages of its development. Sedbergh School's 'Wilson Run' has remained 'around' 10 miles, a standard distance of the early club runs, but was often run in the snow.

Terminology gave the activities an acquired status to pupils. For example, at Shrewsbury, the captain was known as the 'Huntsman' with other pupils gaining colours known as the 'gentlemen of the runs'. At Rugby, the captain was known importantly as 'Holder of Bigside Bags', presumably a reference to the method of laying the trail. Paper was torn into small pieces, contained in a bag by the hares and scattered as they ran to lay a 'trail' or 'scent' for the hounds.⁹⁰ The impact of such activities was to remain however within each school. There was no inter-school contest, the activity seemed to resonate more within the ethos of each individual school tradition.

⁹⁰ Berry, N. F. (1980). *op. cit.*

The rise of the popularity of the sport was undoubtedly the publication of Thomas Hughes' 'Tom Brown's Schooldays'. In this fictional account of public school life with its heroes and anti-heroes, there is an account of a steeplechase called the Barby Hill run. This run was to become the model for the first club runs. A number of practices were established in these early days of public school running many of which seem idiosyncratic today such as the habit of 'running in', where a boy not involved in the run would assist another boy who was, in the final stages of a race.⁹¹

With this new form of schoolboy activity there also came its detractors. The very individualistic nature of the activity, even when run in packs, cut across traditional public school values amongst traditionalists. The value placed on team games was considerable and those boys opting for 'other' sports such as steeplechasing or paper chasing were often referred to as 'might-have-beens'.⁹² Many of the boys used steeplechasing as a means of getting fit for games, a form of training much despised in certain quarters of the public school establishment. This was often expressed in forthright views signalling such training as the 'mark of the crank and the pedant.'⁹³ Indeed, in order to redress the increasing popularity of the new sporting form, Eton allowed its boys to keep their packs of beagles as this was seen as the infinitely more superior sporting form.

Nevertheless, the new sport did take hold and developed its own cultures and rituals, not least of which was the need to develop a new dress code in order to avoid wear and tear on ordinary clothes. At Harrow, the boys ran in trousers and flannel shirt

⁹¹ Berry, N. F. (1980). *op. cit.* P. 154.

⁹² Lyttleton, R. H., Page, A. and Noel, E. B. (eds.) (1922). *Fifty Years of Sport at Oxford, Cambridge and the Great Public Schools*. London: Southwood. P. 97.

⁹³ *Ibid.* P. 97.

with long sleeves and cricket shoes or ordinary walking boots. At other schools they often ran in sweaters and flannels again with cricket boots presumably to give extra purchase over difficult ground. While training was generally and publicly denounced, evidence of training habits began to emerge in certain schools. Training also encompassed eating, purgatives and ‘sweating’, procedures all in vogue within pedestrianism.

At Harrow, the boys would ‘eat practically raw beefsteak for tea at six, weeks before the event.’⁹⁴ Boys would also use a number of sweaters to reduce body weight on training runs and on the day of the race would eat no lunch. Sleeping with closed windows was also common, as the night air was believed by many to be poisonous. Some of the more eccentric training runs were well documented. P.M. Thornton and E.T Booth are reputed to have run from Cambridge to Harrow (some fifty miles) in 1862 whereupon Booth went on to play football while Thornton went to bed. No mention is made of how they returned. The following extract from Harrow school is somewhat typical of the responses elicited from the populace both during the early days of public school running and the early harriers clubs that were to follow. Evidently they were considered no more than a public nuisance.

‘... the run to Watford and back between the 2 and 4 bill, with the hope that the bill master would not detect the running-clothes beneath the overcoat, what delicious fun they were, and how we rejoiced in our youth. In the old days some of the farmers round had uneven tempers, and the two hares used to lay conspicuous tracks through the farms of those whose temper was the most pronounced, knowing well that the hedges would immediately be lined by the whole staff fully armed with forks and other weapons, and the hounds would fall into a carefully prepared ambush.’⁹⁵

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* P. 254.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Pp. 255-256.

The first English harrier clubs

The first club run was that of the Thames Rowing Club at Putney which ran over Wimbledon Common as a training run. Various sources put the first race as 1868, but Rye himself describes the first race between club members as being the end of 1867.⁹⁶ While the 1868 race is usually the first race referred to as the first club cross country race, it was in effect the first ‘open’ cross country race. For the sake of historical accuracy the first race by the club was in effect a ‘confined’ race of members. Known as Thames Handicap Steeplechase No.1, the race was conceived as a means of keeping fit for rowing during the winter months. Rye, a correspondent for the *Sporting Gazette*, is generally attributed as the ‘father of the sport’. He commented on the arrangements as ‘primitive in the extreme, and, indeed, the whole affair was treated more as a joke than anything else.’⁹⁷ Competitors were taken by horse drawn bus to a bridge by Beverly Brook on Wimbledon Common and raced a little over two miles in the dark dressed in a variety of garments. There were twelve starters. The ground by all accounts was very hard going since the Common had at this time not been drained.

From these rather self-conscious beginnings, a club sport emerged. The catalyst for this first crude excursion over common land, Rye attributes directly to the influence of Thomas Hughes who is the fictitious ‘Tom Brown’ of *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*. Indeed, Hughes was to be present at the first open race, Thames Handicap Steeplechase No.2, as a judge. This second race attracted some fifty competitors and also included public schoolboys from Eton, Marlborough and Rugby.

⁹⁶ Rye, W. (1888). Paper-chasing and cross-country running. In: M. Shearman (ed.) *The Badminton Library: Athletics and Football*. London: Longmans Green.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* P. 374.

Rye also acknowledged the Kingsley brothers, Charles and Henry. Profoundly influenced by the teachings of Charles Kingsley and his Corinthian ideal of the Christian man as well as his friendship with Hughes himself, Rye in a sense became a central character in the rhetoric and fiction that that were to play out as fact. The Kingsleyian influence extended to friendship, with Rye present at the wedding of Henry Kingsley.⁹⁸

The original Thames Hare and Hounds club was based on strict membership criteria and selection. Designed to ensure that only those men who subscribed to the particular ethos of the sport, there was a 'rite of passage' in becoming a member of this sporting club which possessed an evangelical zeal of the idealised image of the athletic gentleman. Rules for election included a clear subscription to the ideals of the gentleman as '... no one who wasn't what we thought a good fellow and an educated man could hope to be elected. The rule that no one could be balloted for [membership] until he had twice been produced for inspection at a club feed worked very well ...'⁹⁹ This approach to membership of the first harriers clubs, whilst not atypical of other sporting clubs, was to be rigorously enforced in defence of the amateur ideal within harrier running and the Thames Hare and Hounds club set the standard.

It was not until October 17th 1868 that the first inaugural run of the Thames Hares and Hounds club took place following the two previous 'experimental' runs. The first headquarters of the club was the King's Head at Roehampton. Steeplechases

⁹⁸ Rye, W. (1910). The inception of paperchasing. *The Athletic Field and Swimming World*. 12th February. P. 22.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 23.

issued from the Inn for a number of years over Wimbledon Common. The club gained permission of the Earl Spencer to run over the Common and drop paper; a singular right which was to persist even after Conservators and the Richmond Park authorities took control of the Common. Similarly, patronage of the first Scottish harriers clubs was a device used to obtain access to land of the landowner thus establishing patronage as a device for access.

Conservators of other commons and open spaces, for example Epping Forest, however prohibited the laying of trails. This considerably restricted the growth of clubs in these early days.¹⁰⁰ However, other clubs did follow, including Peckham Amateur Athletic Club (to become known as Blackheath Harriers), South London Harriers, Lea Harriers and Spartan Harriers. Thames Hares and Hounds also had races against the Gentlemen of Hampstead in November 1870. Interestingly, there is an account of a ten mile steeplechase in Sheffield in 1862 that opened the season of the Hallam Football Club but this did not seem to resonate strongly enough with the footballers to make the sport attractive enough to devote further time to taking it up.¹⁰¹ The Manchester Athenaeum Hare and Hounds club was formed in 1869 demonstrating the social standing and position of the sport amongst men of literary distinction. The club was to become better known three years later as the Cheshire Tally-ho Hare and Hounds. In the Midlands of England it was not long before Birchfield Harriers and Coventry Godiva Harriers started runs circa 1876, following the founding of Moseley Harriers.¹⁰² By this time clubs, often transitory, were coming into existence in various parts of the country.

¹⁰⁰ *Baily's Magazine*, March 1896. P. 187.

¹⁰¹ Hardwick, J. H. (1912). Distance and cross-country running. In: *Spalding's Athletic Library, Group XII. No.56*. London: The British Sports Publishing Company Ltd. P. 55.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* P. 56.

These early days of the sport were ones of experimentation and varying degrees of interest from the public who often viewed the enthusiasts with incredulity. Occasionally, in these formative years of the sport, jeering crowds would often chase the runners. However gradually larger, more orderly crowds gathered to watch and debate the winners. Ladies were known to have followed the packs of runners on horseback aided by the sound of a hunting horn carried by one of the running whips which would be sounded when the paper trails were picked up. The presence of women and the debates surrounding form and courses defined the transition from crude participation to more established forms of engagement at which it was seemly for young men and women to appear. Run distances varied from ten miles across country, which came to be the norm, to a remarkable twenty four miles. The countryside was taken very much as a problem waiting to be solved by inventive hares laying the trail.

‘The Country was taken very much as it came, rivers and all. I remember going hare with G.P. Rodgers, and, thinking to shake the hounds off at the back of the papermills by Wallington, we took the scent [the paper]over the deep part of the Wandle on a bitter cold, snowy day. Determining to have dry things to run home in, I stripped off jersey and knickerbockers and, packing them in my scent-bag which I weighted with a brickbat, flung them over the river, as I thought. But it fell about a foot short, and I had the pleasure (?) of having to grope under water for it, and then re-dress in very wet garments. I have often been cold before and since, but never so cold as I was when I ran home that day across the Common in the teeth of a N.E. wind. The worst of it was that the hounds found a plank bridge further up and never wet a shoe, and very nearly caught us, entering the courtyard just as we crept up the ladder.’¹⁰³

The sport had many permutations of team number and scoring systems. From teams

¹⁰³ Rye, W. (1910). *op. cit.* Pp.22-23.

of six runners through eight and more, cross country had its pack runs, challenges, squadron runs and individual handicap runs. Paperchases were quickly replaced by challenges which removed the requirement for paper. Scoring was often idiosyncratic but two methods were quickly established. Initially, and conventionally by today's standards, the summation of the places of the runners in each team with the lowest scoring team being declared the winner, was the preferred method.

However, Thames Hares and Hounds also used a method in inter-club races which took into account the fact that clubs finishing all but one of their team in the top ten could lose if the last counter was so far back that the next team could finish all counters. Instead, to take account of this they sometimes used an aggregate time method of all counting runners. This approach put some considerable strain on timekeepers and of course left clubs open to accusations of malpractice in their timing which was still, in any event, in its infancy as watches were far from perfect. Nevertheless, this practice was to re-appear in Scottish cross country some years later when Clydesdale Harriers put forward the same proposal.

Standard practice was soon established. The canvas bag carrying the paper was slung over the right shoulder of the hare with the mouth of the bag open under the left arm. Presumably there were no left-handed hares! The paper, cut into strips of six to eight inches, then shook down the bag as the hare ran. Laying false as well as true 'scents', the longer runs used considerably more paper than one bag which was usually sent on by horse and trap. As the paper finished, the hares laid the bag flat at that point of the scent and made for home whereupon the hounds would retrieve the

bags and head in pursuit of the hares. Dress was standardised ‘as canvas shoes with India-rubber soles, worsted socks, flannel knickerbockers, and white or dark blue watermen’s sweaters.’¹⁰⁴ A glass of port negus or ginger beer and gin seems to have been the preferred post-race warming tincture.

Walking and running over long distances seemed the key training regime and distances of 40 miles are recounted, clearly indicating that feats of stamina resonated as strongly with the amateur Harrier as it did with the Pedestrian. Pedestrian influence was a clear benchmark by which the new harriers measured themselves in terms of training and they took every opportunity to study the training methods of the day.

The concern over gambling was considerable. It was to lead directly and swiftly to governing bodies whose intention was not only to direct and govern in terms of the rules, but also to regulate. The ‘championships’ inaugurated by Thames Hares and Hounds in 1877 led inevitably to more clubs competing over the next few years. Following the formation of the various regional cross country associations, the National Cross Country Union was formed in 1884. It was formed without Thames Hares and Hounds who under the guidance of Rye opted out of an organisation which he claimed could not control professionalism, betting and ‘roping’. Thus the sport came under universal governance south of the border a year before the emergence of the first of the Scottish clubs.

¹⁰⁴ Rye, W. (1888). *op. cit.* P. 380.

Summary

By the 1870s cross country running had acquired a sporting form. It was based on a currency valued in Victorian society of men overtly engaging with activities that embodied the values of the amateur and the gentleman. Through this engagement many athletes were to acquire status as the activity gave a form of social consent. Sport itself moved from an ambiguous status of occasional public nuisance and waste of time to a vehicle for making a statement about what one's values were; a form of social mobility. Rooted in perseverance and tolerance to hardship, the sport was also one of the key forms and cornerstones of the Kingsleyan tradition. While the twin evils of gambling and professionalism were to nibble at the core of athletic endeavour in its varying forms, principally pedestrianism, the first cross country clubs steered a clear path through such vices and excesses, clinging unambiguously to the amateur ideal. They were aided in this regard by the attachment of the sport in its infancy to the public schools and the universities. These principles however, were to constrain the sport in later years and indeed were to create divisions within governance within a few years. The sport in Scotland, about to enter its own phase of developing clubs, was to have an altogether different feel about it from its English counterparts with less of a reliance on the guidance of public school ideology.

Chapter 5

First Clubs: the genesis of Scottish harrier running

Introduction

Despite the formation of a governing body for Scottish athletics in 1883, there were no clubs dedicated to the pursuit of athletics (defined today as track and field) or its other attendant forms such as cross country. The governing body with its essentially, although not exclusively, Edinburgh power base was a body set up to oversee the athletic sports days run by clubs of other sports as a means of raising revenue. Whilst the governance of the sport is dealt with in the following chapter, it is necessary to note that the sport of athletics between 1883 and 1885 had a governing body with no athletic clubs in membership. This hiatus in the sport lasting some two years was eventually filled in 1885 with the formation of the first clubs in harrier rather than athletic club form. The circumstances surrounding the formation of these first clubs are the focus of this chapter. It examines the way clubs were formed, the men who formed them and the early forms of club 'meetings' that characterised harrier running. In particular, this chapter documents the nature of harrier running through a focus on the claims the clubs made about their sport, about themselves through their participation in the sport and by locating the sport within an emerging sporting 'tradition'.

It was in response to the nature and composition of the governing body that led to the formation of the first harriers club. Indeed, it was a consequence of the actions of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association (S.A.A.A.) in promoting the sport for the benefit of the sportsmen of their various sports clubs in membership of the S.A.A.A.,

instead of pursuing the interests of athletes per se that led to clubs organising. Control of the S.A.A.A. (by mainly Edinburgh clubs) was challenged by sportsmen from Glasgow who felt they lacked influence. It was therefore the inactivity of the governing body in directing the sport for the benefit of athletes that led to the first club being formed. The first club provided leadership in directing the sport in this power vacuum. The new harriers clubs of 1885 were able to call upon models of organization of the numerous other sports clubs formed since circa 1860 and indeed the members of the first clubs were also members of a range of other sports clubs, in particular football, cycling, rowing, gymnastics and swimming.

Bilsborough in his work on the development of sport in Glasgow reminds us that sport generally was relatively organised in the major cities prior to the 19th century.¹ While accepting that there were distinctions in patterns of leisure engagement with working-class involvement in sport being in particular ‘irregular, spontaneous and informal’, he portrays sport as having a particular resonance with ‘wealthier sections of Glasgow society [who] played a variety of sports in a more formally organised manner and on a more regular basis.’²

The visibility of organised sporting clubs with the attendant trappings of office, structure and public status were not therefore just a 19th century phenomenon. Bilsborough uses the example of the Glasgow Golf Club formed in 1787 with a base at Glasgow Green by 1792 to demonstrate more formal early urban leisure organization.³ The developments of one city were often mirrored by those in others

¹ Bilsborough, P. (1983). *The Development of Sport in Glasgow, 1850 – 1914*. Unpublished M.Litt. Thesis, University of Stirling.

² *Ibid.* P. 5.

³ *Ibid.* P. 7.

and Bilsborough notes the adoption of the rules of the Honourable Company of Golfers of Edinburgh by the Glasgow club. This pattern was to characterise the development of the harrier clubs.

The growth in 'Athletic Sports' in the public schools led with some inevitability towards a greater diffusion of athletics generally - and cross country running in particular - in the wider community. The relationship between urban and rural leisure forms in the late 19th century can be demonstrated in the urban roots of the first organised harriers clubs in Scotland and the relationship with their immediate rural environs of the cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. This forms a clear theme of this chapter and develops the conceptual framework suggested in chapter three.

However, it is important to locate cross country running within a linear time frame as part of a new athletic 'tradition'. Whitton and Jamieson in their historical record of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association accord the formation of the new clubs to the permeation of interest that arose in the 'centres of learning of Oxford and Edinburgh.'⁴ Certainly the new found interest in athletics in the Glasgow and Edinburgh schools led to the sports days at George Watson's, Glasgow Academy, Royal High of Edinburgh, High School of Glasgow, Fettes and Loretto with similarly organised fixtures in the Universities. The faltering start of Edinburgh University's Sports Day and its subsequent popularity in the late 1870s and early part of the 1880s also helped popularise athletic sport.

⁴ Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) (1933). *Fifty Years of Athletics: An Historical Record of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association 1883-1933*. Edinburgh: The Association. P. 23.

However, a simplistic diffusion model of young men attending merchant school then university to then go back into a school setting and set about the task of advocating the virtues of a new sporting form, needs to be resisted. There is little evidence that the education system in Scotland was so centrally located in the genesis of the harrier running. However, there is evidence that the spread of new sporting forms elicited considerable press interest and the sporting press of the day were strong advocates of harrier running, taking their lead from stories carried by their English equivalents. Certainly by 1885 the varying and diverse nature of sports was well circulated amongst young men.

Clydesdale Harriers

The first club to form for the purposes of athletics and cross country running outside the sphere of influence of schools and universities, is generally accepted as Clydesdale Harriers. Formed on 4th May 1885, the club's principal remit was cross country running but it included in its activities other athletic events on track and indeed given the date of the formation of the club located at the start of the track and field season, its first activity was to organise a track meeting.⁵ The first run of the club over country was not until 21st October 1885 from the 'Black Bull' Inn at Milngavie. This however was not the first organised club cross country run.

On the 8th October the same year a group of men whose composition and background are undocumented, had organised a run in the Lenzie and Kirkintilloch area from Springburn on the north side of Glasgow over a distance of about 17 miles.⁶ From the limited accounts of the run it appears that this group, under the name Towerhill

⁵ McAusland, B. (1988). *Clydesdale Harriers: A Centenary History, 1885-1985*. Glasgow: The Club.

⁶ Shields, C. (1990). *Runs will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Official Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union 1890 –1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

A.C., did not appear to have followed the relatively accepted convention of a laid trail of paper with the pack of runners following, but rather simply ran over the countryside. Certainly the distance of 17 miles is considerable and quite probably with untrained runners, may account for its rapid demise. What came of this group is uncertain but it does not feature again under this name again. The venues of Lenzie and Kirkintilloch are however, of potential significance in the formation of the Clydesdale Club.

Clydesdale Harriers was formed by the partial influence of the McNeill brothers of Glasgow Rangers F.C.⁷ This connection to football clubs of the day is a key feature in understanding the way in which the clubs were to develop as a sporting force in 19th century Scotland. It is also however, a reason for their partial decline as a sport in the 20th century, as clubs seldom enjoyed the autonomy either in their own right or in base of operation. Without ownership of their own club rooms and grounds, they were dependent upon the largesse of other sports and in particular football. As specialisation and the move towards more discrete membership of sports clubs inevitably became more important as records, times, and results took hold of sport, the sporting polymath that characterised the earlier days of harrier running became more rare. The nature of clubs also shifted from a sporting and social focus to that of a more functional provision of training and competition.

Clydesdale however had strong connections for much of their first 25 years with Glasgow Rangers as well as with Partick Thistle F.C. The choice of name may in part be attributed to an area of Lanarkshire named Clydesdale where at least one of

⁷ Club archives uncatalogued, in the possession of Brian McAusland, Clydesdale Harriers.

the McNeill brothers lived for a period of time. The connection with Rangers Football Club was further emphasised in 1887 by the decision of members of Clydesdale Harriers to join Rangers; a union of mutual advantage since the promotion of cycling and pedestrian races earned revenue for clubs and the club track was accepted at the time as being of a good standard.⁸ There is no evidence available however to link the early run by the men of Towerhill A.C. to the Clydesdale club. The precise catalysts for the formation of the club are not well documented. It seems likely that several factors combined to motivate individuals to form the first club. Probably of most importance is the participation by footballers in athletic sports. Nearly all athletic sports days were run by sports clubs associated with football, cricket and to a lesser extent rugby. Additionally, the athletic sports of schools and universities increasingly allowed 'strangers' races. Footballers would as a matter of course engage in running as an adjunct to their football. Certainly W. Sellar of Battlefield F.C. and later of Queen's Park F.C. and T.G. Connell of Queen's Park F.C. were two examples of players who were noted for their prowess on the track in athletic sports. Willie Maley of Celtic F.C. was an example of a club secretary (Celtic F.C.) who as an athletics trainer, made considerable revenue for his club through the Celtic F.C. Athletic Sports over a number of years.

Secondly, while football clubs attracted young men into membership, the structure of the sport at this time was such that not all men could get games and in any event, the notion of specialisation in one sport was not yet a particular value. What was seen of greater virtue was evidence of ability over a range of sports, this being the hallmark of the gentleman amateur. Thus harriers clubs joined the range of other sports as one

⁸ *The Scottish Umpire*, 4th October, 1887. P. 8.

of a number of sporting opportunities open to young men. Football clubs were to be the common denominator and key catalyst in the formation of all three early clubs. In effect harriers clubs were sections of the football clubs although not centrally located within their organisational structures. This was convenient for the football clubs since their various membership categories needed to be catered for. Membership revenue was necessary for financial health and therefore it was in the interests of the football clubs that their less regular players were engaged in activity promoted by the club and the non playing members could be diverted to 'sections' of activity that came under the patronage of the football clubs.

In the case of Clydesdale Harriers, Rangers Football Club actively promoted the club and indeed were to do so again in their relationship some years later with Bellahouston Harriers, allowing the Bellahouston club to have their own key to Ibrox Park in order to train on the track. The relative footballing strength of the harriers clubs was consequently high. This was utilised to advantage in the formative years of the harriers clubs with challenge matches between harriers and football clubs. A Clydesdale Harriers team for example beat Preston North End and Celtic as well as playing other sides including Rangers.⁹ The formation of harriers clubs by football clubs was part of the diffusion of sporting form at this time and copied by clubs of lesser abilities as part of the general culture of football at this time and as a means of improving fitness.¹⁰

While athletics sports were seen as a general exemplar of athletic prowess which most sportsmen of even moderate abilities could engage in, harrier running was a

⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 10th December, 1889. P. 3.

¹⁰ See for example the formation of a harriers section of the Dalmuir Alpine Football Club of Old Kilpatrick. *Scottish Sport*, 25th October, 1889. P. 5.

particular genre which demanded a degree of competence. The first clubs were able to construct frameworks and motifs within their organisational and social structures as well as in the form of the sport itself that would successfully set it apart from other sports. Whereas athletic sports were the province of all sports to be used as an adjunct, harrier running was a clear form; distinct and with its own needs and abilities that set it apart from other sporting forms. It was precisely this distinctiveness that led the first clubs to root their activities primarily in cross country running rather than in track and field as this gave them a distinctiveness that set them apart. Being apart allowed autonomy from track activities, which other sports saw as part of their province or sphere of influence. This issue of influence and control is dealt with in more detail in chapter six on governance of the sport. By setting up harrier clubs as the first athletic forms of organised athletic activity, harriers clubs were set apart according them a standing and status; in effect to be a harrier was a distinguishing sporting marque. The new sport soon developed social structures and invented its own 'traditions' that established boundaries both within the sport as well as between the sport and other sporting forms. The influence and contribution made by clubs in England was also noted in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* and Clydesdale Harriers used established forms of club structures and run structures to enable them to develop a certain gravitas as the first club.¹¹

To establish this foothold however, it had to appeal to participants in other sports. The corpus of membership had to come from sporting forms already attracting young men. Clydesdale Harriers had links with varying sports clubs. It drew its initial membership from rowing with members from Linside Rowing Club; cycling through

¹¹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 4th October, 1887, P.17.

the Victoria and Caledonian Bicycle Club of Paisley, Larkhall Bicycle Club and East Stirlingshire Bicycle Club); football from clubs such as St Mirren, Abercorn, Dykebar, Greenock Morton, Arthurlie, Royal Albert, Hamilton West End, East Stirlingshire, Falkirk, Helensburgh, Dumbarton, Dumbarton Athletic, Vale of Leven, Ayr, and Motherwell F.C., as well as the volunteer movement through the 1st Lanark Rifle Volunteers.¹² These contacts were to provide Clydesdale Harriers with, at the time, a unique way of developing the club. By using their contacts in other sports clubs they were to form local sections of their main club in each of the outlying areas in, for example, Dumbarton, Falkirk, Ayr and Stirling.

The determination to form a club devoted to athletics also stemmed from a desire to challenge the handicapping system in place at the time. Controversy surrounding a group known as ‘The Co-partnery Ring’, a group from the Glasgow area whose interests lay in the handicapping of races in relation to betting syndicates, was a clear catalyst in the formation of the club. Clydesdale Harriers were formed to set up evening handicaps and inter club sports free of outside influence of groups such as the ‘Co-partnery’ thus taking the sport back into ownership of those who, as they saw it, had the true and pure interests of the sport at heart rather than those who sought to use the sport. By forming a harriers club as opposed to an athletics club, it was able to both at the same time engage with the issue of corruption and also allow itself a degree of distance.

The club’s formation was also a direct result of the inactivity of the governing body, the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association, who seemed to have neither the will nor

¹² *Ibid.* P. 13.

the capacity or power to deal with the issue of groups such as the 'Co-partnery'. In a sense therefore the men of Clydesdale Harriers were motivated as much by the genuine desire to set up a specialist club as they were in attempting to cleanse the sport of what they saw as an 'evil'. By forming a harriers club they were able to effect change within the sport without offering too direct a challenge to the governing body of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association who found difficulty in regulating their sport since their inception only two years earlier. Furthermore, the S.A.A.A. were controlled by the very interest groups, the sports holding clubs, that the Clydesdale men sought to challenge.

A harriers club therefore put them just beyond the control of a governing body who had no real vested interest at this time in the sport of cross country running, possibly even viewing this sporting activity as being outside their direct remit. This allowed the club to function in a sense *ultra vires*. Additionally, the very regulation of the track with its attendant problems of governance and vested interest meant that the relative freedom of harrier activity was an attractive counter to what some may have seen as over-regulation and control. Freedom from control in a society rapidly changing to that of increasing control in all other aspects of life was a clear value associated with the early literature and sermonising of the first clubs when it came to extolling the virtues of their sport. The space and freedoms of the countryside were clear selling points to young men feeling constrained by urban life. Escape from constraints of time, space and urbanisation in a manner that was to set them uniquely apart in sporting terms, was the hallmark of the harrier. This uniqueness is recorded by Shields in his centenary history of the sport. He notes that the press, although seeing the value, had also commented on its role more broadly within sport. Given

that at the time a measure of the athletic male was his all round capacity, Shields notes in the reporting that:

‘... the only fault with cross country running is its severe exclusiveness. Though having all the physical advantages it has none of the entertaining merits of football as it is a sport which gives gratification only to those who engage in it and must always suffer from a lack of public patronage for that reason.’¹³

The press generally supported the idea of harriers clubs. Many sports clubs had amongst their membership both social members and non-playing members and the *Scottish Athletic Journal* suggested that a lead role should be taken by Queen’s Park Football Club in forming another harriers club for their non playing members.¹⁴ However, the Clydesdale club based in Glasgow was to be followed in its inception not by another club in the west of the country but by the formation of the first club in the east, Edinburgh Harriers.

Edinburgh Harriers

Edinburgh Harriers was a different club in social composition and founding principle. Amongst its members were the former schoolboys of the Edinburgh merchant schools and those from the university now working in the city as writers to the signet, surgeons and doctors, as well as a social mix of bricklayers’ labourers, gardeners, iron moulders and retail stationers.¹⁵ David Scott Duncan, generally accepted as the ‘Father of Scottish Athletics’ and one of the leading officials of the fledgling S.A.A.A. was the key founder member of the new Edinburgh Harriers. Forming clubs for athletic purposes outside of the sphere of influence of the ‘old boys’ clubs of the public schools was still a relatively new venture since much of

¹³ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 4.

¹⁴ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 5th August, 1885. P. 10.

¹⁵ Census returns for Midlothian 1881 and 1891. Edinburgh Central Library.

athletics in particular was conducted through either the former pupils clubs or the larger cricket and football clubs now in existence. This new venture was to prove to some extent a litmus test of the ability of the sport to exist in its own right rather than as an adjunct and training medium to the already existing and more powerful football and cricket clubs of the day. Again however, the formation of a harriers club may be witness to the relative conservatism and hesitancy in forming an athletics club. The specificity of the genre of cross country activity set it apart from the sphere of influence and control of the S.A.A.A., a body controlled not by those who participated in the sport but those who had an interest in controlling it.

The reluctance of the larger sporting organizations to relinquish this influence and control on the new governing body for athletics can be suggested by the fact that of the presidents of the S.A.A.A. from 1883 to 1914, only seven of the thirty two who held the post are named in an affiliated capacity to an athletics or harrier club.¹⁶ The sports holding clubs, by placing their nominee at the very top of the governance of athletics was thereby able to influence policy and direction of the new sport. They were able to carefully define the nature and form of Scottish athletics especially in relation to its sphere of influence within the overall context of Scottish sport.

Edinburgh Harriers was founded by a mix of interested parties. At a meeting on the 30th September, 1885 at the Richmond Hotel, Edinburgh convened by St George's F.C., the club proposed the formation of a harriers section of the club. However, D.S. Duncan had convened a meeting the evening before between a number of friends and colleagues from university, from the Edinburgh schools and from sport

¹⁶ Keddie, J. W. (1982). *Scottish Athletics: The Official Centenary Publication of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association*. Edinburgh: The Association.

generally with a similar view to form a harriers club. It appears that no decision was taken at the meeting of the 29th but that Duncan was to attend the meeting the following evening of St George's F.C. Duncan was invited to speak at the point in the debate as to whether the harriers club should be a section of the football club or 'form one on a more liberal basis'.¹⁷ In the event the motion was carried on the basis that the new harriers club should 'embrace all clubs in the district' and the meeting adopted the name of Edinburgh Harriers.¹⁸

The press were clear in entreating the new club not to become a 'bigoted clique', a view directed at the composition and decisions of the governing body. They also stated the case for a club for those sportsmen who were in need of winter training such as cyclists and pedestrians since not 'all played football – very few of them do ... in the winter months.'¹⁹

Edinburgh Harriers' first club run was from the Harp Hotel in Corstorphine, Edinburgh on 17th October, 1885 and was held over a trail of some six miles commencing at 3.45pm, a relatively common time allowing the runners to finish work and arrive at the venue. As was usual in pack runs, the runners were 'collected together' for a final run in and D.S. Duncan arrived home first from W.M. Gabriel and J.W.L. Beck. While the Edinburgh club was to enjoy success and Duncan in particular was to perform at the highest level in Scottish athletics, it was the west coast clubs that were to become the dominant force in the organisation and development of cross country running in Scotland.

¹⁷ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 6th October, 1885. P. 11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 29th September, 1885. P. 11.

Clydesdale Harriers' first run over the country was the following week on Saturday 24th October at the Black Bull Inn at Milngavie.²⁰ Evidence of more than a passing knowledge of the subtleties of hares and hounds is evident from the fact that in this first run a 'false trail' was laid. The laying of false trails is the hallmark of experienced and confident 'hares' who also know the terrain well enough to be able to determine the relative advantage accruing to them. A false trail needs to be calculated in relation to the main trail in such a way as to cause maximum advantage to them in relation to the 'run in' time and distance. In this instance the hares returned home minutes before the hounds who were drawn up a mile from home for the final pack run in. These first runs were often the object of curiosity from local people who saw the fields and countryside from a more practical perspective of subsistence. However the harriers membership drawn from men who lived in the city, viewed their new-found freedoms with enthusiasm. *The Scottish Umpire* described this first run of one of the first clubs to run over country, and contained within the report of the run is not only the description of the course set, but the grounds, estates and policies of the principal landowners.²¹

The relationship of the harriers with the landowners was often tense. Two differing tension balances existed in a view of the countryside. On the one hand, agricultural production and land ownership was the province of landed elites, landowners with small-holdings and tenant farmers. For them the countryside was a utility. New recreations based on the countryside such as cross country running were often seen as an indulgence at best and a waste of time and criminal trespass at worst. In later accounts of club runs, it is evident from contemporary newspaper sources that the

²⁰ Both Shields (1990) *op. cit.* and McAusland (1988) *op. cit.* give the date of the first Clydesdale run as 21st October but this is unlikely as it was a Wednesday.

²¹ *The Scottish Umpire*, 28th October, 1885.

runners were often seen as a public nuisance. A way of overcoming the obstacle of alienating principal landowners was to invite them to become patrons of the club. Clubs enjoyed the privileges that patronage accorded and thus gained tacit approval from a powerful section of society that, having lent its name to the sport, accorded it status. The extensive list of patrons detailed in club handbooks represented a powerful political lobby for the sport in terms of its perception and acceptability. In this way cross country running was to become a wholesome, respectable activity for the young members.

The sport developed from the base of the two principal clubs, on either side of the country. Using his influence as Scottish mile record holder and mile champion as well as his position as secretary to the S.A.A.A., Duncan of Edinburgh Harriers encouraged the spread of the sport by ensuring that runs in and around Edinburgh throughout the winter enabled a wider audience to become aware of this 'new' sport. This was encouraged by a sporting and daily press, which, after each weekend, published detailed reports of not only the venues, but also accounts of the trails, names of the hares and hounds as well as accounts of the relative merits of the 'pack's' achievements.

Details were also carried of the social event after the run. These gentlemen harriers were clearly men of certain social standing, able to take trains to venues and to arrange for refreshments in the form of meals after the run as well as booking rooms at the venue for 'smokers' and talking. Nearly all these early runs were at inns or small hotels capable of taking up to twenty or so runners for changing and feeding after the run. Later the use of Public Baths became more frequent as numbers grew

and venues had to be changed accordingly.

In Edinburgh Harriers' first year their venues for running show the geographical inclusion of that first year. Having started on 17th October at Corstorphine at the Harp Hotel they followed with weekly runs from Morningside, (Volunteer Arms); Levenhall, (Mrs Crosbie's Inn); Duddingston, (The Sheep Head Inn); Eskbank, (Justinlees Inn) by train from Waverly station; Colinton, (Railway Inn); Musselburgh race course; Coltbridge, (Mr Clark's Inn) and Roslin, (The Old Inn). These weekly runs were only broken for the purposes of flat race handicaps held at the Royal Gymnasium, Edinburgh which attracted large crowds of several hundred who, in addition to watching the races, were presumably attracted by the bookmakers who were usually in attendance at these early meetings. The attention of bookmakers and betting even at these austere amateur gatherings were to tax both the S.A.A.A. and the eventual body for cross country running, the Scottish Cross Country Union.

Athletics had grown as a result of the use of running as training for other sports. However, the new harriers clubs emerging as separate athletic organisations were, to an extent, in the thrall of existing sports clubs for members. Existing members of the S.A.A.A. were exclusively clubs of former pupil organizations of public schools, universities or football clubs. No club in membership of the S.A.A.A. was set up exclusively for the purposes of athletics (track and field) until these first harriers clubs of 1885. Inevitably therefore, membership of these first clubs came from individuals operating from the culture of existing sports organizations. Indeed the affairs of the new governing body was in part a reaction to the growing 'menace' of betting at sporting occasions. Whitton and Jamieson's work attests to the struggle

the new athletic authorities had in clearing themselves of a practice that it viewed as the antithesis of its principles of athletic activity.²² This is dealt with more substantially in the following chapter on governance, but it was not until the ‘Streets Betting Act 1906’ that the sport felt more at ease with itself and its principles. This sense of comfort however, meant that with betting removed, so spectators drifted away and athletic sports days, handicaps and cross country meetings only attracted the smallest and keenest groups of followers.

During this first competitive season of 1885-1886 the first inter club fixture took place between the two clubs on 28th November, 1885 at Corstorphine, Edinburgh with 34 runners present; 26 from Edinburgh Harriers and 8 from Clydesdale Harriers.²³ The course is described as being a hares and hounds course with jumps over ten miles over Corstorphine Hill. The second inter club took place during the second half of the winter on 30th January, 1886 from the United Northern Cricket Club Pavillion, Ibrox with 32 runners over some seven miles.²⁴ Fourteen runners were from Clydesdale, thirteen from the Edinburgh club and a further five runners from the Lanarkshire Bicycle Club Harriers Section. The course covered just over 7 miles and was completed in 55 minutes by the pack.

The first cross country handicap run was held by Edinburgh Harriers at Musselburgh from Loretto School on 19th December over four miles. H.H. Almond acted as judge and gave out prizes.²⁵ Almond as headmaster of Loretto was a known advocate of physical training generally and the sport of cross country running in particular and

²² Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) (1933). *op. cit.*

²³ *The Scotsman*, 30th November, 1885.

²⁴ *The Scotsman*, 1st February, 1886.

²⁵ *The Scotsman*, 21st December 1885. Shields (1990) *op. cit.* however has this event as 12th December and from Duddingston.

served as honorary president of Edinburgh Harriers.

Both clubs finished their season at the end of March. This established the cross country season as being from October to March, creating the traditional split season of activity which now characterises track and field and cross country activity. Members of both clubs continued to run during the summer season at the various athletic sports held as part of the sporting profile of the various football clubs. These sports were proliferating and formed the basis of what was becoming a crowded sporting summer calendar. By the summer of 1886 for example, *The Glasgow Herald* carried many reports and announcements of sports days of football clubs (eg. Rangers, Airdrieonians, Arbroath, Morton, Abercorn, South Western, Queen's Park, Maybole and Vale of Leven).²⁶

In addition to these burgeoning sports days associated with sports clubs were the annual games around the country some attracting equally large crowds to the sports days of the sports clubs. While the sports days of Morton F.C. (4000 spectators), Larkhall Royal Albert (2000 spectators), Rangers (6000 spectators) attracted some substantial followings, so too did the annual sports, of for example, Rosewell Colliery and the annual sports at Delvine, both enjoying considerable patronage from owners and landowners alike.²⁷

The West of Scotland Harriers

The third club to emerge during this period was the West of Scotland Harriers, a Glasgow based club founded on 14th September 1886. This club was to become a

²⁶ *The Glasgow Herald*, 16th/23rd/30th August, 1886.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 16th/23rd August, 1886.

healthy rival to Clydesdale Harriers, not least because the formation of another harriers club in the Glasgow area represented a threat to Clydesdale's more embracing operational notion of what a club represented.

Clydesdale had until now operated by expanding membership of its club in various areas in and around Glasgow by the expediency of forming 'Sections'. These sections were in effect self-organised clubs but under the stewardship of Clydesdale Harriers and bearing their name. Thus when Clydesdale reported expanding membership, this expansion came from not only the main or 'Headquarters Section' but also from their other sections in Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and at Falkirk. The linking with other sports clubs provided many of the new members. The forming of new clubs was of vital importance to the development of the sport and the West of Scotland Harriers was to add a key additional direction to the development of harrier running in the west of Scotland.

The *Scottish Athletic Journal* was a key agent of the time in the dissemination of information to sports enthusiasts and the edition of 7th September, 1886 carried a circular which had been issued to sports and football clubs in the west of Scotland. The circular is important in that it reflects the nature and purpose of this new form of recreational and sporting activity and the aspirations and sporting political ambitions of the proposers.

'Dear Sirs,

The desirability of forming a Harriers club in Glasgow for the indulgence of cross - country running during the winter months having often been remarked, the undersigned have taken it upon themselves to call a general meeting of all athletes, cyclists etc., who are in favour of promoting such a club.

The meeting will be held in the Langholm Hotel, Buchanan

Street, Glasgow, on Tuesday evening the 14th. inst., at 8 o'clock, and all who are inclined to support the project are cordially invited to be present.

As the promoters have not the means of communicating individually with members of the different clubs who would likely support a Harriers Club, the secretaries of such clubs are respectfully requested to let the matter have as much publicity amongst their members as possible.²⁸

The signatories to this circular were from a variety of sporting interests. Among them were A.D. Finlayson of Queen's Park Football Club the foremost club in the country; C.C. Calder, Royal Scottish Bicycle Club; T. Skinner, Western Bicycle Club; A.S. Pettigrew, Clyde Amateur Rowing Club and Clydesdale Harriers; W.M. Walker, Clydesdale Amateur Rowing Club and John Meikle of Bellahouston Bicycle Club who acted as a *pro tem*. honorary secretary.

The *Scottish Athletic Journal* goes on to comment:

'This is one of the many clubs whose formation we have suggested again and again, and we are glad that at last our hints are to bear fruit. Such a club, properly managed, as this one is certain to be, is sure to succeed.'²⁹

Given that that promises were assured from other sports clubs as to the viability of forming a new harriers club, there appears to be a political issue underscoring the formation of this new club. A rival publication, *The Scottish Umpire* reported the new club in a different light preferring to comment on the existence of a:

'flourishing and healthy club' ... [and further added that] ... 'we are not in extreme need of such an addition to our harriers' clubs in the West ... the Clydesdale Harriers, Scotland's premier cross - country club, already covering the whole ground with conspicuous success.'³⁰

²⁸ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 7th September 1886. P. 13.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *The Scottish Umpire*, 7th September, 1886. P. 10.

The report goes on to comment on the fact that many of the signatories were once members of Clydesdale Harriers and that an ‘unfriendly rival should be condemned’.

The formation of the West of Scotland Harriers was to be a defining moment in the fortunes of cross country running in the west of Scotland. The new club presented an alternative to the single club multi-section approach that was growing rapidly with Clydesdale Harriers. The formation of a new club in the west of Scotland not directly connected with Clydesdale Harriers was to provide an example to others of a way forward in the following years when Clydesdale’s sections proved to be problematic in defining teams and club membership for Scottish Championship representation. The new club represented the nature of the new sport as a training medium for other sports as well as a new sport in its own right. Participants in other sports made cross country their principal activity. With membership drawn from cyclists, rowers, swimmers and footballers, the harrier club represented a particular type of male middle-class activity, giving its participants a degree of social and sporting identity. This identity could be considered as a form of ‘badge of belonging’.

In the same way that Clydesdale Harriers was formed with some of its roots in Rangers Football club and members drawn from the players, so the West of Scotland Harriers were to define a long and lasting relationship with Queen’s Park Football Club through the Lawrie family. While most harriers clubs in the formative years of the sport were to draw membership from across sports and to develop relationships dependent upon the use of facilities, these two clubs were particularly identified in their association with premier Scottish football clubs of the day. This relationship

between sports in the formation of the new harriers clubs, and the nature of the composition of the existing governing body, the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association, was at one and the same time, to develop and restrict the sport.

The fact that the sport grew quickly was in no small part due to the nature of sporting engagement of the day. The gentleman sportsman belonged to a number of clubs and his social circle and social contacts grew from this. In many senses this was his *curriculum vitae* of his social status and standing. It defined who his friends were, in what circles he mixed and also his means. Such a sporting commitment meant the means to be able to undertake the activities. It also identified a time when other major sporting forms were receptive to other sports as part of a brotherhood of activity that set aside their members from others. It identified the emerging need to train, as football in particular became more competitive with the formation of new clubs around this time with commensurate increasing public interest in their sporting heroes.

Urban pressures on living meant an increasing municipal and social focus on health and welfare. The issue of public health was a very clear concern at this time and with housing and the development of the city rising, there was a particular focus on the need for healthy recreation from amongst the middle classes. Glasgow's development of parks and open spaces and public baths and wash-houses combined with boat trips on the Clyde, generated an interest in health and welfare. In conjunction with a rise in sporting activity the local populace were encouraged to see activity in the outdoors not just as 'socially improving' but also influencing their health. The environs of Glasgow became public escapes as the value of the

countryside as a healthy alternative to town living took on a new meaning. The rural came to be idealised with activity on it and to it, part of a desirable lifestyle. Thus harriers were in the vanguard of rural sporting activity.

The West of Scotland Harriers were to be identified for some years as a club of mainly cyclists and rowing men. This label was to some extent a hallmark of the club and enshrined in the second section of its constitution where it states that ‘the Club shall be devoted to the promotion of Athletics and Cycling generally, and particularly to the prosecution of Cross Country Running during the winter months ...’,³¹

Principally drawing its members from the south side of Glasgow, the club inevitably self-selected from amongst the new residents of the expanding suburbs and adjoining villages. The influence of cyclists and the football clubs in harrier activity had been evident for some time with Dallas in his account of cross country running, reporting on the fact that in the winter of 1885 both the Lanarkshire and Langside Bicycle Clubs formed harrier sections and held several runs.³² Shields accounts for their demise in the conditions they encountered during that winter and the relative lack of enthusiasm for a sport that ultimately was secondary to the club’s stated existence.³³ The increasing emphasis on sporting regulation and results inevitably led however, to increased specialisation and the days of the sporting polymath were numbered.

The additional influence of the universities with new and different sporting forms meant that cross country running in particular had a form of respectability and

³¹ West of Scotland Harriers membership handbook, 1902-03. Property of H. Telfer.

³² Dallas, G. (1933). Cross country running. In: Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) *op. cit.*

³³ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

confidence in its formation. These new sporting forms, with an enthusiastic vanguard of members drawn from across the sporting spectrum, soon meant that certain sports, and particularly certain clubs, would define the nature of participation, sporting form and the governance and hence rules of the sport.

The success of the meeting called to form the West of Scotland Harriers is evident in its formation on 14th September 1886. The meeting itself caused considerable rancour amongst members of Clydesdale Harriers with the athletic press being equally divided in their allegiance. While the *Scottish Athletic Journal* reported favourably on the formation of the new club:

‘The West of Scotland Harriers Club will be one of the best in Scotland ere a month has elapsed. It already boasts 100 members, of whom 40 were enrolled on the night of the meeting. A letter was read at this meeting wishing the West of Scotland Harriers every success. The club will at once join the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association.’³⁴

The Scottish Umpire took a different and clearly polemic stance claiming:

‘We object to the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers club, which was consummated on Thursday evening last, amidst a show of enthusiasm, not because it is a rival club to an already existing one, of which the majority of the promoters were once professedly enthusiastic members, but because it is an *unfriendly* rival, and attempts to assume an air of social superiority, which would be contemptible, if it were not so ridiculous.’

It goes on to comment:

‘We are not specially retained by the Clydesdale Harriers, but we cannot refrain from saying that, if we were making the

³⁴ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 9.

choice, we should infinitely prefer the company of the Clydesdalers to the more pretentious, though less sincere, fellowship of some of the seceders, and we distinctly lay the blame of raising such invidious and false distinctions, which may yet bear poisonous and bitter fruit, at their door. Who are they or their father's house, we should like to know, that they ape such superiority, and presume to decry a body of men their equals in position and presumably their superiors in principle? Those of the new membership who, like ourselves, detest such snobbery - we believe there are not a few - should make an early and vigorous effort to set themselves right in this matter, for we believe that the success of the undertaking will depend more upon co-operating with than competing against that large and influential and *working* body the Clydesdale Harriers. Let them carefully consider the Edinburgh Harriers, in whose ranks are to found all classes and conditions of athletes, and who make it their boast that they know neither swell nor artizan, but all are one in the common and uniting cause of athletics.'³⁵

The West of Scotland Harriers drew gentlemen from rowing, swimming, cycling, football and rugby football as well as existing athletes and pedestrians. The *Scottish Athletic Journal* points to the standing of the newly appointed committee as 'the most influential athletic men in the west of Scotland' and that the 'want of a cross country club for non football men as a winter pastime has long been made apparent'. The article goes on to elevate the status of the members by referring to an '*omnium gatherum* institution' and that the club will be one 'in which gentlemen will find companions with whom they can associate both in the close and at the social board.'³⁶ This statement of social standing was to continue to be a source of discontent between the two clubs for some time and one which the 'Scottish Umpire' was to continue to challenge in its pages '...let it (W.S.H.) not dissipate its energies in setting class against class.'³⁷ Differences between the Clydesdale and the West of Scotland Harriers clubs therefore seemed to extend to perceptions of social standing with

³⁵ *The Scottish Umpire*, 21st September, 1886. P. 9.

³⁶ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 17.

³⁷ *The Scottish Umpire*, 28th September 1886. P. 9.

Clydesdale being viewed with less Corinthian ideals and values from the social status of its membership. While Clydesdale was to lead the development of the sport for a number of years, it always seemed to do so from a position of opposition to what it perceived as the 'establishment' of Scottish athletics.

The new club committee of the West of Scotland Harriers consisted of men already well known in sporting circles in the West of Scotland and therefore perceived by the Clydesdale club to be part of this establishment. Stewart Lawrie of Queen's Park Football Club was elected President of the new harriers club with other committee members drawn from Clyde Amateur Rowing Club, Queen's Park Football Club, Bellahouston Bicycle Club and Glasgow Academicals. Support was especially mentioned from bicycle clubs with specific mention of Lanarkshire Bicycle Club's own harrier section as well as the Athletic Club of Glasgow University.

Dictating terms: establishing independence

The clear frisson between the two clubs seems to have had its roots in the activities of W.W. Tait of Clydesdale Harriers. Tait was one the principal timekeepers of the day and a member of Clydesdale Harriers. During the summer of 1886, issues arose with regard to the ratification of records on the track at the various meetings around the west of Scotland. In particular, one key flashpoint appears to be the runs by T.G. Connell over 220 yards and 440 yards which Tait timed. The records were never ratified and Connell's run at Kilmarnock of 51 1/5 secs. for 440 yards was delayed for ratification and was subsequently rejected by the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association Records Committee in November of 1886.

The inter-relationship between sports in the formation of organised club cross country running meant that despite Connell's principal affiliation being stated as the West of Scotland Football Club, he undoubtedly belonged to other clubs (including at one time Queen's Park Football Club) and by this process the affair became a 'cause celebre' as the exact status of the athlete became difficult to establish. Tait's timekeeping was a debating point at this time and it is clear that the inference in this particular issue was an alleged bias and impropriety in undertaking his duties. The debate came to a head with Tait's nomination to the Records Committee of the S.A.A.A. set up in September at the same time the West of Scotland Harriers were formed. There seems to be widespread condemnation outside of the Clydesdale club, of Tait's appointment to this committee.³⁸ In certain quarters the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers was seen as a direct response to the hegemony of the Clydesdale Harriers Club of which Tait was member. Athletes saw the practices of the Clydesdale club as working only for the interest of the Clydesdale members and that the rules of the emerging disciplines of track and cross country being laid down for the benefit of one club at the expense of others. It was the actions of Tait that were an integral part of one of the key moments in the challenge to the governance of the sport detailed in the following chapter.

That a certain class-consciousness was working within this is also evident. Clydesdale were seen as a rather ordinary, working-class organization by some who clearly felt that the depiction of their status by association with this club was against their interests and that a new club, with a different ambience was needed. Members of the Clydesdale club were clearly offended by this as well as the slights against the

³⁸ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 12

integrity of their timekeeper and thus a war of words ensued that was to simmer for some time. The formation of the West of Scotland Harriers could be seen as a form of direct action against the practices of the Clydesdale club. The *Scottish Athletic Journal* makes this very point in its commentary, linking Tait's membership of the Records Committee with the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers stating 'His appointment ... universally disproved of outside a certain small clique' and they further comment on the fact that the 'formation of the West of Scotland Harriers Club is a protest against those practices of the Clydesdale Harriers, and the protest should be noted by the S.A.A.A.'³⁹

While Clydesdale encouraged the diffusion of the sport by its runs in and around Glasgow and the formation of 'sections' under their aegis, they nevertheless had a particular view linked to their status as the premier club of the country as to how the sport was to progress. This was to manifest itself in diverse ways from membership issues and selection for the club for the national championships, to attempting to set up a rival national governing body along the lines of rules of competition that Clydesdale saw as correct or in their interests. The sport was characterised by interest groups at this time, as was evident from the nature of control of the S.A.A.A. by those involved by other sporting agencies, and cross country running clearly showed the same predilection for internal warfare.

Clydesdale sent their honorary secretary Lawson, to the inaugural meeting of the West of Scotland Harriers on the 14th September but it is reported that he withdrew when he saw the numbers present. While the sporting press continued to report the

³⁹ *Ibid.*

events differently with the *Scottish Athletic Journal* reporting that fifty ‘gentlemen’ assembled,⁴⁰ the *Scottish Umpire* continued its attack on the newest club stating that ‘We hope the club may yet outlive the evil of its origin.’⁴¹

This period of rapid change was also characterised by accusations of ‘rigging’ in races. In addition to the organised syndicate the ‘Co-Partnery Ring’, Shields refers to betting at the early cross country championships.⁴² Betting was common in and around sport at this time and Clydedale Harriers athletics meetings held during the summer of 1886 became a clear defining moment in the struggle for the way in which the sport was to be conducted. The formation of Clydesdale Harriers in 1885 as an avowed amateur club was clearly a threat to organised betting. It is likely that organised syndicates would have preferred the status quo of the old forms of professional and pedestrian athletics where influence could be brought to bear upon the performers and trainers.

This new organisational form of athletics would have been more difficult to influence. Belonging to a governing body but at the same time distanced from it and with cross country running as a main focus but without a governing body, the club became *de facto*, its own governing body. It could at one and the same time call upon the S.A.A.A. as well as fighting the attentions of betting syndicates in their own right, beholden to no one. It is clear from McAusland’s account that the ‘Co-Partnery Ring’ continued a presence at Clydesdale Harriers meetings, resulting in adverse comment directed at the club.⁴³ *The Scottish Umpire* mounted a strong

⁴⁰ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 9.

⁴¹ *The Scottish Umpire*, 21st September, 1886. P. 9.

⁴² Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

⁴³ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.*

defence of the club claiming ‘The club has been in existence for about eighteen months and in this time a fierce war has been waged against them by the whole forces at the disposal of the ‘Co-Partnery Ring’’. The article goes on to comment on the improving health of the sport since the inception of Clydesdale Harriers as there had been ‘no evening handicaps, cross country championships, no interclub sports and no long distance races at sports.’⁴⁴

The role therefore of Clydesdale in developing the sport was acknowledged. Given that Clydesdale Harriers were in effect acting with Edinburgh Harriers as a *de facto* governing body for the sport, the control of the athletes within the sport was being wrested from the older forms of sports club membership of football, cricket and cycling clubs to the new harriers clubs. Control and controllability was therefore moving from established to new and less established and therefore less predictable and less controllable.

The inference of the article in the *Scottish Umpire* can best be summed up in the following extract:

‘‘The Co-Partnery’ were not slow to appreciate that one better qualified than they had framed the starts and, fearing to find their ‘occupation gone’, have ever since denounced the club and the gentlemen who have the interests of amateur athletics, pure and simple, at heart.’⁴⁵

It is implied from these comments that the handicappers nominated by the clubs and organizations previously taking part in organised track meetings were open to bribes to ensure that races went in accordance with the gambling syndicates, and that the

⁴⁴ *The Scottish Umpire*, 31st August 1886. P. 6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

evidence of finishes that were ‘straggling’ as opposed to tight and close was a clear indication that the standard of handicapping went beyond the mere careless.

The accusations directed at Clydesdale Harriers through the *Scottish Athletic Journal* also imply a concerted effort to break the control of handicapping of these new events and to create more acceptable means of handicapping. Tait was seen as problematic in this process. Undoubtedly certain athletes concurred since ‘The formation of the West of Scotland Harriers Club is a protest against those practices of the Clydesdale Harriers and the protest should be noted by the S.A.A.A.’⁴⁶

The West of Scotland Harriers also appears to have been a reaction to the wider issue of control of the sport generally by one individual club in the west of Scotland.

That there was a concerted campaign against Clydesdale seems evident from the further accusation in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* that Clydesdale were bankrupt and the club’s response requesting withdrawal and apology for the accusation is recorded in their Minute book.⁴⁷ The Minute book also records the fact that the club seemed to be discriminated against with regards to advertising, commenting that they will not pay the *Scottish Athletic Journal* until ‘they are charged on the same terms as the other clubs ...’⁴⁸

Growth, development and inter-club rivalry

The first cross country season of organised runs was during 1885–1886 with just the two original clubs. Both Edinburgh Harriers and Clydesdale Harriers drew up a calendar of weekly runs commencing in October of 1885. This inaugural season was

⁴⁶ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 12.

⁴⁷ Clydesdale Harriers Minute Book 1. Property of B McAusland, Clydesdale Harriers.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

marked by experimentation with the nature and form of the sport. The first run by either club to depart from the hares and hounds principle was the cross country handicap run by Edinburgh Harriers in December of that year, an important departure since it marked the first departure from packs to individual handicap. This event was preceded by two other significant athletic meetings. A two-mile handicap took place at the Royal Gymnasium on the 21st November. The owner, Lapsley a handicapper, had an interest in the newly formed club and the event drew some several hundred spectators who witnessed 25 competitors compete around the circuit of the Gymnasium. It is likely that some form of wagering or betting took place at this meeting which may account for the relatively large crowd. The winner was a former Loretto pupil, a keen cyclist, J.G. Paterson who won off 160 yards from D.S. Duncan the Scottish Mile Champion, off scratch.

The more significant event was the development of the inaugural inter club runs. The first of these was organised by Edinburgh Harriers on 28th November 1885.⁴⁹ The run at Corstorphine outside Edinburgh was a country trail, over ten miles with jumps based on the hares and hounds principle.⁵⁰ A return inter-club meeting was held on 30th January 1886 at the United Northern Cricket Club Pavilion, Ibrox, Glasgow where some 32 runners took part over 7 ½ miles.

These inter-club runs were to form the basis of a healthy cross country competition structure and complemented the runs that each club had within their own ranks. The practice in these early inter-club runs was to 'co-operate' rather than 'contest'. Hares would be selected one from each club who would co-operate in laying a trail. Packs

⁴⁹ Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) (1933) *op. cit.* in their centenary history incorrectly give the date of the first inter club as February 1886.

⁵⁰ *The Scotsman*, 30th November, 1885.

would be equally mixed with the respective standard of runner irrespective of club forming a pack of slow, moderate or fast runners. Thus the sport in its early days was characterised by sociability. The run was merely the vehicle for the experience. This did not stop the runs being competitive between hounds and hares. It was the practice in the early days of cross country running that the Saturday runs were fully competitive with prizes. Evidence of training runs were to emerge later with these additional runs held during the week in the evening, complementing occasional evening competition runs.

In order to stimulate further interest in these formative days, both clubs organised social events for their members. Smokers and concerts were popular and a 'Smoking Concert' of Edinburgh Harriers held on Boxing Day in 1885 after their run was held at the Richmond Hotel in the evening. This concert was well attended with some 60 present. One of the purposes of these concerts was to reward members who had won races with medals or other prizes such as watches or clocks, as well as to provide hospitality to members of other clubs. Other social events were organised around key events, for example inter-club meetings and major handicap meetings as well as club championships. The format of these occasions was to offer 'loyal toasts' to the club, the sport, as well as to the Queen, and to entertain with songs and recitations. 'Smokers' were to become a key feature of identity of a club and represented the social standing and health of the club through the support of its membership for such occasions and the status of its guest list. This theme of sociability is expanded in chapter eight as it was an important mark of the gentleman harrier.

Both clubs held inaugural club championships in the latter part of that first cross

country season. Both were over a distance of ten miles. Edinburgh Harriers and Clydesdale Harriers used the occasion to select their team for the first Scottish Cross Country Championships which in reality was to be an inter-club meeting between the two clubs.

The challenge race between the clubs but billed as a 'Championship' was held at Lanark Racecourse on Saturday 27th March 1886, and organised by the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association.⁵¹ The account of this first 'Championship' is redolent of romance and character with an Ayr stonemason, A.P. Findlay of Clydesdale Harriers taking the 'Title'. Findlay a footballer in Ayr, led eleven competitors through a downpour over ten miles and defeated Duncan of Edinburgh Harriers. Edinburgh Harriers was to win the team 'Title', calculated by adding the places of the finishing runners with lowest score winning. Shields' account of the occasion demonstrates the nature of the difficulties of transport and venue in these early days.

'When the news of Findlay's victory reached his home town of Ayr, preparations were made to meet him on the arrival of the Glasgow train at 9.12pm. He did not turn up and a still larger crowd met the 11.20pm train, but again there was no Findlay! The crowd dispersed and it was not until 7.40am the following morning that Findlay arrived, footsore and weary, having walked from Barrhead to Kilmarnock to catch the first train to Ayr on the Sunday morning.'⁵²

With the formation of the third club by 1886, the second cross country season commenced with a calendar of runs that allowed home and away fixtures between the three clubs as well as the usual club races and handicaps. The social fabric and structure was also developing. In a letter submitted to the *Scottish Athletic Journal*, a correspondent argued for a meeting place for athletes 'without having to resort to

⁵¹ Shields, C. (1990.) *op. cit.*

⁵² *Ibid.* P. 4

bars and public houses'.⁵³ In arguing the case for a separate meeting place, the letter goes on to make comparisons of facilities between the harrier clubs and the Conservative, Liberal and St Andrew's clubs. This proposed elevation of provision of harriers clubs akin to the conventional city gentlemen's clubs, was to enable those who lived outside Glasgow to spend time in comfort with friends.

Mention is made of the Langham and Lauder's Hotels which were seen at the time as the key meeting points for sportsmen. The provision of convivial recreation in the form of billiards, music with the facility to drink and smoke as well as to be able to acquire supper and sleeping accommodation was seen as a requirement for the gentleman harrier. Mention is also made of a fund of £600 to £700 as a sum to put down to refurbish premises with a rent of £80 to £100 for premises in the centre of the city. With the suggestion of raising shares and subscribed capital, plus the possibility of subscription by members on an annual basis, this gentleman's sports club was clearly seen as a means of elevating the status of the harrier above that of other sports. The acquisition of club rooms was to wait a further period of time until Clydesdale Harriers rented premises in 1890 at 33 Dundas Street, Glasgow for their members.

Status continued to tax the harrier clubs not only in terms of social position but also in their personal attire and club identity. With Clydesdale adopting the colours of a white vest and black shorts and club badge of a raised hunting horn and whip (motto '*Excelsior*'), the West of Scotland Harriers opted for colours of black and sky blue with a motif of a harrier hound leaping a five barred gate. Edinburgh Harriers took

⁵³ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 28th September, 1886. p. 14.

blue and white as their colours. Membership continued to increase and in 1887, Clydesdale had some 420 members, Edinburgh Harriers could muster 300 members with the West of Scotland Harriers showing a modest increase from their inaugural meeting to 111.⁵⁴

The new sport while clearly gaining a hold, was still perceived as a second sporting 'cause'. Different methods of attracting members were therefore attempted. The West of Scotland Harriers in particular sought to continue and develop their links with other sports and on one particular occasion combined sporting forms in one competition. In what must rank as one of the most interesting mixtures of competitive genres, the West of Scotland Harriers organised a 'paper chase on wheels'. In commenting upon the 'clannish' nature of cyclists and their reluctance to divert their sporting attention to newer forms, 'the West' came up with the novel idea of a 25 mile handicap paper chase on bicycle, as a means of interesting their cycling members to devote more time to paper chasing.⁵⁵ In the event, since an adequate circular route could not be found they resorted to a more simple handicap race on an out and back basis on the Kilmarnock road at Newton Mearns.⁵⁶ The race attracted a Belgian professional cyclist, Eole who raced on a new safety bicycle.⁵⁷ Such activities by harriers clubs were common, with challenges to gymnastic clubs, football clubs and especially cycling clubs. This often had the effect of attracting the best competitors drawn to the prospect of increased publicity.

The increase in membership however did not result in an increase in participation in

⁵⁴ For more detailed membership numbers see Clydesdale Harriers Handbook, Season 1887-88; Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 5 and *The Scottish Umpire*, 13th September, 1887. P. 9.

⁵⁵ *The Scottish Umpire*, 13th September, 1887. P. 9.

⁵⁶ *The Scottish Umpire*, 20th September, 1887. P. 3.

⁵⁷ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 27th September, 1887. P. 25.

the Cross Country Championships because they were still run on a selection basis by each club. The second 'Championship' was held at Hampden Park, Glasgow, home of Queen's Park Football Club and was held at the second venue of Hampden at Crosshill situated just east of the current venue at Mount Florida. This championship was characterised by the innovative challenge match at football between the East Harrier Clubs and the West Harrier Clubs involving those harriers who did not make selection for their respective teams. All three clubs had footballers of reasonable calibre in membership thus providing an attractive alternative for spectators. Admission of sixpence was charged and the public received the results of the international match, which coincidentally, happened to be played on the same day with the result telegraphed to the ground. The course was innovative in that it involved circuits of the ground as well as a course set across the open country around the stadium. Runners would appear between the laps of the country for a lap of the stadium before setting out again for another lap of the course over the country with four laps in total covered.

The dominance of Edinburgh and Glasgow as centres for organised cross country running was in a sense a defining characteristic of the way in which the sport was to be controlled and organised. The reliance upon the benefaction of more established sporting forms and the notion of status and standing by participation meant that the sport was seen as an adjunct of serious training and as part of 'acceptable' gentlemanly activity through its association with other clubs and former university men. Coupled with the social standing of countryside activities as being the province of gentlemen, the sport found that while it could not attract large numbers of adherents, it could attract certain 'types'.

Cross country running continued to expand its base in the major cities to include Dundee and Perth. The cities were the organizational hubs with country towns and villages the venues for the activity. This is in itself a key feature of the way in which the sport became diffused. Drawing upon a critical mass of young men, the sport was seen as selective. With the clamour for good housing and the need for acceptable activities to escape the rapidly expanding cities, rational recreation took on a variety of forms from seaside trips, the organization of team games in municipal parks and the formation of new clubs to cater for and organise this demand. The rural and the outdoor became sought after.

The clubs of Dundee and Perth

Dundee, as a city of some 160,000 population by the mid 1880 enjoyed the same sporting and recreational activities as both Edinburgh and Glasgow. With established football and rugby teams as well as cricket, and with the equally well-established Dundee Gymnasium, the city enjoyed an expanding market as a trading centre as well as good communication links with the central belt. By the start of the cross country season of 1887, both Dundee and Perth had established cross country clubs. The Perth club was instituted from the players of Perthshire Rugby football club and held their first run on Saturday 15th October 1887 when they could not play on the Inch. The first event was a run along the Scone road over 11 miles with 11 runners. The pack was out for 1½ hours and the race was conducted on a hares and hounds basis. The whip carried a horn that was sounded when he had the trail in order to keep the pack with him, which suggests that this form of running was something with which the runners were familiar and indeed had planned. The

diffusion of the sport therefore is likely to have been a combination of the product of an expanding economy of the region with greater mobility of people generally as well as greater and increasing publicity as a product of the generation of curiosity relating to diverse sporting forms. This diversity was in itself the product of the increasing emphasis on physical activity as a popular and desirable recreation and sporting form.

Dundee Harriers were formed at the same time as the Perth club with their first run on 29th October 1887 from Maryfield with the farmer giving changing accommodation. The trail, was a mix of road and country trail which, in addition to following open countryside on to Gallows Hill, also used the skating pond area of the city as well as private gardens. While both the Dundee and Perth clubs claimed relatively small membership, the proliferation of clubs in the Dundee area alone is remarkable. From the period 1887 to 1890 some 24 clubs were reported active by the Dundee Advertiser in their weekly cross country reports of Dundee and surrounding area, with the city having some 17 clubs alone active in this period. While undoubtedly some of these clubs would be the passing enthusiasm of a few, this level of club activity demonstrates the degree to which the new participants embraced the new sporting form. In addition to the 17 clubs in the city area of Dundee, two clubs were formed in Arbroath, with clubs in Forfar, Blairgowrie, Kirriemuir as well as a club in Aberdeen.

Clubs outside the major cities had low memberships and low levels of participation compared to the club activity of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Dundee Harriers seldom enjoyed club runs above 26 members and Perth Harriers in their formative years

could count on around 15 to 20 members for club runs. The first inter club run between the two clubs on the 6th February 1888 mustered a pack of 21 runners. Cross country outside of Glasgow and Edinburgh therefore, was a smaller and more homogeneous grouping of members. Perthshire Harriers were formed from rugby men.⁵⁸ Arbroath Harriers were formed from cricketers.⁵⁹ Lochee Harriers (Dundee), Airlie Harriers, Rosefield Harriers (Dundee), Blue Star Harriers (Dundee), are other examples of small clubs with membership drawn from existing sports clubs or in the case of Morgan Harriers from the local school. Clubs attracted local men occupying positions in the community to accept honorary positions. In the case of Forfar Harriers, the Honorary President and the President were drawn from the Union Bank and the British Linen Company Bank respectively. In this sense they replicated the pattern of organization and membership of the Glasgow and Edinburgh clubs.

The organization and diffusion of the sport differed outside Glasgow in one crucial respect however. Clydesdale Harriers by 1887 had a club structure that reflected the geographical distribution of their membership. Unique to this club was their network of sections which not only included the City of Glasgow (itself divided into districts), but the adjoining counties as well as areas of South Lanarkshire, Falkirk and Greenock.⁶⁰ At the commencement of season 1887-1888 club membership had significantly increased. Distribution of membership in this early period was centred on the Headquarters or City section of the club with 136 members, with the remaining sections sharing membership numbers of 20 to 33. Each section was effectively organised as a club within a club, with a secretary and later a treasurer,

⁵⁸ *Dundee Advertiser*, 17th October, 1887.

⁵⁹ *Dundee Advertiser*, 22nd October, 1887.

⁶⁰ Clydesdale Harriers Handbooks, 1887-1891.

president and representative to the main club committee. In this way, Clydesdale effectively sponsored the growth of the sport. Each section had some autonomy with their own fixture list and structure while Clydesdale enjoyed the benefits of a wide constituency for selection for key fixtures.⁶¹ By sheer weight of numbers however it also allowed one club to dominate the sport in the west of Scotland in terms of defining the way the sport was run, and it was this issue that was to lead to the schism in the new Scottish Cross Country Association formed in 1888.

As membership of sections grew so each section subdivided to create new constituent groups as, for example, the Coatbridge athletes became a constituent part of the South Lanarkshire section and eventually a section in their own right. Sections also split to form distinctive clubs and the Paisley and Greenock sections seceded from the club in 1890 and 1895 respectively to become Paisley Harriers and Greenock Glenpark Harriers.⁶² Membership of the club continued to grow during the period 1887 to 1895 to 837. Headquarters section was subdivided into five districts with each district having a 'Leader'. The districts themselves comprehensively covered the city of Glasgow and the club even listed overseas members as a separate membership grouping in their sixth annual report of 1891.

The sport itself was growing outside the influence of Clydesdale Harriers and by 1888, Shields records some 30 clubs in existence, although this figure is likely to be higher given the fact that many clubs formed, competed within a close geographical area although initially without direct competition with other clubs through the inter

⁶¹ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

⁶² See *Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette*, 19th April, 1890 and Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

club system.⁶³ The close control of the sport by one club was an inevitable consequence of the lack of governance of the sport at national level by one single representative body. There were parallels in other sports notably the M.C.C. Although the S.A.A.A., through its sub-committee of management, was nominally in charge of cross country, the centralised interest base was focused on the geographical central belt of Scotland and specifically on the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. While the location of venues for club runs were as much to do with pleasant countryside as they were with attracting recruits, the clubs of Clydesdale, Edinburgh and the West of Scotland Harriers kept a degree of detachment and exclusivity, while at the same time encouraging new clubs to engage in inter-club runs. These new clubs however never seemed to be able to 'join the club' governing the sport.

Patronage, office bearers and members

This exclusivity is best demonstrated by the nature and composition of club members, office bearers and patrons. Obtaining patrons for the new harriers clubs was seen by club officials as a hallmark of the status of the club. Tranter raises the issue of patronage of working class sports clubs stating that the evidence for 'active patronage' has not to date been found.⁶⁴ Harrier clubs were in fact a good example of one such sport. Patrons of clubs included not only the principal landowners, but also in the case of the West of Scotland Harriers, influential political figures such as Andrew Bonar Law M.P. and Sir John Ure Primrose, eminent figures in national and local politics.⁶⁵ Edinburgh Harriers' connections with Loretto School and Almond perpetuated the connectedness with the Edinburgh public and merchant schools. In

⁶³ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 7.

⁶⁴ Tranter, N. (1998). *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 8.

⁶⁵ West of Scotland Harriers membership handbooks. 1904-05.

the case of the Clydesdale club, their patrons included Sir James King, a former Lord Provost of Glasgow; A. Cameron Corbett M.P.; The Hon. Sir George Trevelyan M.P.; Hugh Watt M.P. and Colonel T. Glen Coats.⁶⁶ So important to the members were patrons, that in the case of the Clydesdale Club, even sections sought their own patrons with the Dunbartonshire section naming Sir James Colquhoun of Luss as their principal patron. Through the acquisition of men of suitable civic position, the sport was able to demonstrate its social suitability and was appropriated into the mainstream of popular and acceptable Victorian sport.

The ability to attract suitable support was a function of key individuals within the sport. In the case of Edinburgh Harriers, the influence of David Scott Duncan was instrumental in ensuring the success of the club as a socially acceptable institution as well as sporting club. Born into a farming family, Duncan was educated at Royal High School and Edinburgh University and graduated in law. A scholar of some standing, he was reputed to have good grounding in Latin, Greek, English and French and was '*proxime accessit*' for the India Prize.⁶⁷ Despite a good law practice in Leith, Duncan became a journalist with the *Field* and editor of the *Golfing Annual*. He was by contemporary accounts a respected figure of some diplomacy and was the official at the London Olympics of 1908 who broke the tape in the 400 metres race when the British competitor, Halswell was barged off the track by his American rivals in a pre-arranged attempt to prevent him winning, resulting in a 'no race' being declared.

The principal officials of the three original clubs played a significant role in

⁶⁶ Clydesdale Harriers Handbooks. 1890-91.

⁶⁷ Whitton, K. and Jamieson, D. A. (eds.) (1933). *op. cit.*

appropriating suitable patrons. John Mellish and Andrew Dick are both credited with much of the early success of the Clydesdale Harriers club. While McAusland records the merits of Dick as a club secretary as an ‘inspired choice’, both men were products of good education and occupational status.⁶⁸ While Dick was to eventually leave the club after only a brief spell as secretary, he left for a ‘highly lucrative and responsible post’ in the East India Company of Africa and was presented by the club with a fowling piece and two six chambered revolvers as well as a watch at a presentation in the club’s rooms in Dundas Street in 1889.⁶⁹ Dick’s ability to engage with others was instrumental in ensuring the sport, through Clydesdale Harriers, was able to exist alongside, for example football. Dick persuaded Willie Maley of the newly formed Celtic Football and Athletic Club to consider the merits of running that resulted in Maley’s long and distinguished career in the sport. The involvement of the Celtic club in these early years and in athletics in the wider sense was in no small part due to Maley’s influence and is encapsulated in their title of ‘Football and Athletic Club’. Maley was to become one Scotland’s principal promoters of athletic events in the formative years of athletic activity.

Given the more contemporary line of historical research into sport and sectarianism, the connections of the Clydesdale Harriers Club with both Rangers and Celtic Football Clubs is of interest in examining sport in the west of Scotland. Given the founding connections of the McNeill brothers with Glasgow Rangers Football Club and the Clydesdale Harriers Club plus the connections of John Mellish one of the early vice-presidents of the Clydesdale club in 1886-1887 and his nomination for presidency of Rangers F.C. in 1889, meant that the club represented a broad

⁶⁸ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.* P. 6.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* P. 7.

spectrum of backgrounds. Moreover, the club appeared inclusive in its representations in promoting the sport across all social divisions. Celtic Park was used to hold the club's athletic meetings as well as Ibrox Park for competing and training.

Mellish was educated at Glasgow Academy and was a talented sportsman proficient in cricket and athletics. Involved with the volunteer movement through membership of the 1st Lanark Rifle Volunteers, he became a secretary in the House of Commons to Scottish M.P.s. With connections to the Clydesdale Cricket Club, it is likely that he met at least one of the McNeill brothers who had membership of the cricket club and so further cemented the link between the harriers club and Rangers F.C. Residing in the Hillhead area of Glasgow and with a career formerly in law, Mellish was to be a key agent in the debate about the way in which the governing body of the sport was to operate.

The connections between social standing within society, football and the harriers clubs are further exemplified in the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers and it is from the association particularly of this group with Queen's Park Football Club that a more considered view can be taken from the evidence available, regarding the relative status and relationship of the emerging harriers clubs to the more established football clubs. Crampsey's history of Queen's Park Football Club refers to the Lawrie family as one of the pre-eminent sporting families of the period.⁷⁰ From James Lawrie's membership of the club in 1868 to the brothers Thomas and Stewart, cousins both named John as well as cousins Charles and Harry, the family enjoyed a

⁷⁰ Crampsey, R. A. (1967). *The Game for the Game's Sake: The History of Queen's Park Football Club 1867-1967*. Glasgow: The Club.

relationship with the club over some twenty years. All played for the club but it was Stewart Lawrie who arguably made the most significant single contribution to the organisation and structure of Scottish sport in the 1880s. Having joined Queen's Park Football Club on the 23rd August 1880, Stewart Lawrie was to become immersed in the various popular sporting clubs and organizations of the day. He was elected to the presidency of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association for the season 1892-93 (Thomas was similarly elected in 1886-87); the presidency of the Scottish Gymnastics Association and the presidency of the Scottish Cross Country Association (1888-89). He was a founder member of the West of Scotland Harriers and served as their first president.

Stewart Lawrie demonstrates the nature of sporting involvement and the broad nature of participation. The culture of physical activity was complex with in the case of cross country running, a genuine enjoyment of the sport as a requirement as well as providing an alternative training form especially for footballers and cyclists. It is also clear that running was seen as healthy recreation.

‘It should be borne in mind that a goodly number of members of harriers clubs join not so much to excel in running as for a weekly run as a matter of health or achieving exercise and going with the slow pack is their only way of obtaining a breather over the country.’⁷¹

Establishing a base

As harriers clubs were being formed the notion of systematic training was beginning to take hold. As fixture lists grew and the national championships expanded to involve more clubs, so the prestige of winning became greater. Harrier clubs

⁷¹ *The Scottish Referee*, 13th April, 1890.

however missed one singular opportunity to establish their sport outside of the influence of other sports. Despite the popularity of the sport and its rapid growth, the clubs never cemented this popularity of growth with a stable base of premises from which to run. The very nature of the sport mitigated against this but also the pervading philosophy of taking the sport out to various venues to 'spread the word' and to seek recruits, meant that cross country running was always somewhat of a gypsy in terms of its stability of recognised venue. While the various clubs had particular venues that they would revisit, particularly in the villages surrounding the expanding urban sprawl of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee, the venues were limited by accessibility and ultimately, facility. Changing at inns and hotels was all very well while numbers were relatively low but as numbers grew, so did the need for access to good changing and training facilities.

The attachment therefore to swimming baths and football clubs as well as other sporting clubs with established facilities was of paramount importance. Even with established and regular venues on the run calendars of clubs at for example Chryston, Thornliebank, Dennistoun, Musselburgh, Duddingston and Whiteinch, the three major clubs constantly sought a more established base. While the Edinburgh club - to a degree - found stability in their relationship with the Royal Gymnasium in Edinburgh, connections were constantly sought with other clubs to share facilities or to rent on a more permanent basis. Even into the next century clubs were engaged in the search for more permanency but there appeared a reluctance on the parts of clubs to commit themselves to one particular sight by the very nature of the activity and indeed, some of the ventures into renting gives insight into the varied quality of facility available at that time. Clydesdale Harriers cultivation of Cathcart Cricket

Club in Glasgow is a good example of this:

‘... [the] secretary reported that along with Messrs Dick and McLaren he had met Mr. Thomas Greig the secretary and went to see the House which is situated a few minutes walk from the Car Terminus on the outskirts of Cathcart. They considered it a nice suitable place to run from the only drawback being the want of water which would need to be carried from the farmhouse near by.’⁷²

While the club resolved to hold an inter-club meeting at the venue, it was felt generally unsuitable and this issue was to determine ultimately the status of the sport. By its very nature cross country running was not an ideal spectator sport despite the attempts early in the championships to make it so, and therefore spectators would be unlikely to turn up, thus making any permanent venue only a changing facility. The cost of financing a club house for only ‘smokers’ and socials was a risky venture, and clubs were left as itinerants seeking different venues each year for their runs. It is possible that given the development of sporting clubs around this period, some form of joint venture may have been possible, but such was the development of the sport linked as it was with the football clubs in particular that cross country running became dependant upon the facilities of others in its development including the use of the expanding municipal provision of the cities. Relationships were sought therefore through members’ interests with other clubs at that time.

Clubs, allegiances and memberships

The relationship between members of the harriers clubs and the broader sport constituency in the period 1885 to 1900 especially, was characterised by diffuse allegiances. Membership of one club would open up the possibilities of membership to others and by this process and almost by invitation and ‘rite of passage’, athletes

⁷² Clydesdale Harriers Minute Book 1, entry of 21st January, 1903.

in the broadest sense would become known and respected. This visibility helped create the image of respectable achievement and the value was even greater when the athlete was seen to be in membership and performing within different sporting forms. Sport was, during this period, one of the essential elements of Victorian social respectability translated from public school ideology for consumption of the new middle classes of Victorian Scotland.

This social respectability and the consumption of various sporting forms in the pursuit of 'respectability' enabled sport to become a key vehicle as participants 'passed in a world that was [often] hostile to them' or indeed unknown to them in terms of expectations of behaviour relative to station and status.⁷³ The facility to migrate from one class experience and reality to another even if transitory for a few hours each Saturday (and perhaps a few more during a week day evening) through engagement in an overtly middle class pursuit by origin allowed people to experience 'the performed self' by passing themselves off as a participant within another world.⁷⁴ Gradually of course such engagement allowed for degrees of movement in social standing. Thus, although occupational status may be of one socio-economic classification, one's recreational habits allowed for brief and transitory elevation. Thus cross country running was one means for engagement in 'the performed self' and was one of the sports exemplifying new class and cultural values.

The clubs themselves saw little contradiction therefore in multiple membership by individuals and the early athletic achievers such as W.S. Sellar, T.S. Blair and D.S. Duncan belonged to a number of different sports clubs across a broad spectrum and

⁷³ Cousins, M. (2006) Sean's show. Edinburgh International Film Preview. *Sunday Herald*, 6th August, 2006

⁷⁴ Ibid

this new, though limited, socially mobile confidence was characterised certainly by the early membership of the West of Scotland Harriers.

The nature of this relationship between sporting forms was a feature of the emergence of organised clubs in Scotland. The histories of Queen's Park Football Club, both recount the multi-sport focus of the early days of the club, with athletic sports featuring strongly amongst the variety of sporting forms practised.⁷⁵ The importance of holding 'Highland Games' or athletic meetings was essential in maintaining the ideology of sporting participation. Performers were encouraged to participate across a broad spectrum of sports as a demonstration of their sporting superiority. The football clubs actively encouraged this by assisting in the formation of the harriers clubs seeing them as a useful adjunct to this philosophy of high athletic achievement. The clubs themselves sponsored association with the harriers beyond mere encouragement. Clydesdale Harrier's association with Rangers Football Club in the provision of midweek training facilities and for the use of the ground for sports meetings is well documented by the harrier club.⁷⁶ Likewise, the West of Scotland Harriers with Queen's Park Football Club.⁷⁷

Other harriers clubs were not slow to follow the example of the three more senior clubs. Motherwell Harriers had strong relationships with Motherwell F.C.,⁷⁸ and the Renfrewshire section of Clydesdale Harriers had strong ties with St. Mirren F.C.⁷⁹ The football clubs had numerous players running with harriers clubs and the evidence for the use of running as part of systemised training is further demonstrated

⁷⁵ Crampsey, R. A. (1967). *op. cit.*

⁷⁶ See for example Minute Book 1, entry of 3rd October, 1895.

⁷⁷ See the handbooks of the West of Scotland Harriers.

⁷⁸ Clydesdale Harriers Minute Book 1, entry of 21st February, 1896.

⁷⁹ *The Scottish Umpire*, 25th October, 1887.

by the building of gymnasia at football clubs' stadia. In the case of Queen's Park the gymnasium was built in 1889 at the second Hampden Park by the expediency of raising the pavilion one storey. The club also employed an instructor in the gymnasium.

Queen's Park prosecuted their involvement in sport across a broad range of athletic achievements with their members competing on behalf of the club in meetings. H.A. Watt a patron of Clydesdale Harriers played for Queen's Park second team and was a Scottish champion high hurdler. As mentioned earlier various harriers clubs such as Clydesdale were able to field teams that defeated established teams such as Preston North End and Celtic F.C. and 3rd Lanark Rifle Volunteers.⁸⁰ As early as 1887 Clydesdale proposed a team from amongst their membership to play established opposition from Scottish and English football teams demonstrating the utility of the harrier clubs in the training and conditioning of players. The proposed team encompassed a number of established clubs and included capped players. *The Scots Umpire* commented on the quality of the footballers in the Clydesdale club's ranks and listed the possible team as:

'Goal: Philips (Pilgrims); Backs: Gow and Vallance (Rangers), Cherrie (Queen's Park); Half Backs: Gow (Queen's Park), Auld (3rd. Lanark Rifle Volunteers), Cameron and McIntyre (Rangers); Forwards: Marshall and Thompson (3rd. Lanark Rifle Volunteers), McKenzie and Gow (Rangers), Cleland (Cowlairs) and Allan (Queen's Park).'⁸¹

There is a suggestion that the football clubs used the harriers as trainers of their teams and D.B. Donald is cited as a West of Scotland Harrier who trained the

⁸⁰ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.*

⁸¹ *The Scottish Umpire*, 13th April, 1887.

Queen's Park club.

'In the late eighties and early nineties there was a great influx to the club of athletic and cycling members, who found the conveniences of the Queen's Park track met a much felt want, and these took full advantage of the amenities ... Permits were issued for training on the track, with full use of the pavilion and trainer to non-members.'⁸²

Sporting interest therefore in its broadest form was a central tenet of most sports clubs. Clydesdale Harriers in addition to their track and field interests, cross country running and football, also encompassed cycling competitions, including a club championship on the Kilmarnock road; a swimming section of the club and a skating inter club with Edinburgh Harriers.⁸³ By 1889 club runs of significant numbers were being held and on 7th October 1889, the opening run of Clydesdale Harriers established a record attendance of 119 runners starting from the Victoria Baths at Whiteinch. The strengthening numbers gave the new clubs confidence in their own right in engaging in sporting competition outside of their main remit in the same way that the football clubs enjoyed athletic competition. The formation of a governing body was to exemplify this new found confidence from strength of numbers. This confidence was demonstrated by the attempt of Clydesdale Harriers of a show of strength of harriers of a 'great' meet on New Years Day 1890 of all harriers clubs, a feature well used in England to promote the sport.⁸⁴

Two further key issues were to dominate the development of cross country running in the first ten years of the sport; the formation of a governing body to organise and control the sport and the issue of amateurism, professionalism and betting.

⁸² Robinson, R. (1920). *History of Queen's Park Football Club*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbett. P. 334.

⁸³ See *The Scottish Referee*, 1st August, 1890; *The Scottish Referee*, 6th November, 1889 and Clydesdale Harriers Minute Book 1, entry of 7th November, 1895.

⁸⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 24th December, 1889. P. 4.

Control and early governance

Such was the degree of influence and control of the original three clubs over the sport, that they were able to enjoy a considerable number of years where the rules and character of cross country running were shaped in their image. From the format and structure of club runs the running of the Scottish championships; rules of the sport to defining club status, the three senior clubs had a continued run of influence over the sport until 1903, when the National Cross Country Union of Scotland was formed. A number of factors shaped the sport in its first fifteen years. While all of these factors are developed in the following chapter on governance, it is necessary to briefly rehearse the issues to develop an understanding of the key moments of this period immediately following the formation of the first clubs.

Firstly, the eligibility of runners was a critical concern. The sport divided into two interest groups with Clydesdale Harriers advocating a membership and qualifying status that favoured retention of the services of runners in their sections as counting for selection with others objecting on the grounds that the sections were in effect separate clubs and insisting on the adoption of the practice of a geographical radius for membership. This dispute led to two national championships being held over the next three years. One by the S.C.C.A. and the other by the 'rebel' Scottish Harriers Union, the body set up by Clydesdale Harriers.

Secondly, it took some considerable time for the respective arms of governance to be able to effectively control the three principal clubs. From the sub-committee of the S.A.A.A. responsible in the early years, through the S.C.C.A. to its successor the Scottish Cross Country Union, the three clubs enjoyed unparalleled control and

authority by virtue of their power on the governing body and through that body, to be able to effectively counter proposals that they saw as eroding their influence.

While it took time to wrest power from the sports holding clubs on the governing body, the three harriers clubs were operating as a *de facto* governing body in defining and applying rules for the governance of the sport which was asserting its right to operate autonomously and not as a junior partner to the more established sports of cricket, football and cycling.⁸⁵ John Kerr, President of the S.A.A.A. in 1905 in an open address to the jubilee dinner of the Association in 1933, stated that ‘... they [the founders] sought some unifying scheme which, without interfering with local initiative and control, would give sports meetings precision of method and a definite national character.’⁸⁶ The new association was never able to initially control the new athletic clubs involved in cross country running and was almost exclusively Edinburgh based. This in itself caused suspicion with Clydesdale Harriers who saw control being invested in a group whose affiliations were more to do with universities and schools than the clubs they were meant to work on behalf of. By 1887-1888 the clubs felt sufficiently confident to break away from the governance of the S.A.A.A. to form their own association and the Scottish Cross Country Association was formed on 11th December 1887 at the Royal Hotel, Glasgow.⁸⁷ It is worth noting that internal division still marked the new Association and Clydesdale suffered a set back to its ability to select from within its sections for the Scottish championships.

‘In passing, it may not be out of order to state that it seems ridiculous that clubs with perhaps a membership of thirty, springing up this season, and who probably could not even send up a third rate team to the cross-country championship,

⁸⁵ Records of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee. Scottish National Archives. Accession reference GD445/4/15.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* Scottish National Archives. Accession reference GD445/2/113.

⁸⁷ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 13th December, 1887.

should have the same power to alter the regulations for the management of the championship as clubs with a membership twelve times their number, and even to practically dictate to such clubs the form their constitution should take.⁸⁸

There is considerable evidence of loyalty to the club by the members from all the sections and as a result of this the club made a decision that was to split the sport.⁸⁹ Clydesdale refused to join the S.C.C.A. although they did participate in the 1888 championships winning the individual title and team title (having also competed in the English cross country championships at Manchester placing 6th team). They took the opportunity at the prize giving in the evening to further voice their objections much to the disapproval of the other clubs.

This acted as a catalyst for the formation of the Scottish Harriers Union. The new Union created an alternative version of deciding the team championship by aggregating the time of the first five home as opposed to the summation of the places of the first six counting runners with the winning team scoring the lowest points.⁹⁰

From this S.H.U. championship comes a key element in understanding the various groupings of runners in cross country competition. The S.H.U. decided to hold a junior competition in the December of 1889. A 'Junior' in cross country competition at this time, however, was one who had not been placed in a team competing in any championship of a cross country body. It did not indicate an age group of a younger runner. There was also a move to differentiate the relative strengths of the clubs by

⁸⁸ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 13th December, 1887. P. 13.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 20th December, 1887. P. 13.

⁹⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 11th December, 1888.

sending proportionately larger numbers of men and counters.⁹¹

It took until the season of 1890 to bring the two bodies together though over the period of the duality, they had held a series of meetings to attempt to resolve the issue. The sporting press of the day were largely instrumental in bringing pressure to bear on the two organizations to meet and resolve their differences. Affiliation to the S.A.A.A. had a strong bearing on the nature of the eventual resolution since the S.H.U. was not in membership of the S.A.A.A. and therefore had the status of a mere independent organization. Shields summarises the relative contributions of the two bodies in stating that the S.C.C.A. had confined itself to essentially running a championships while the S.H.U had done much to encourage the development of the sport by encouraging minor clubs and establishing the 'Junior' championship.⁹²

The changes in the championship, the creation of a new 'Junior' status, rules governing membership and growing democratisation of the sport issuing from the struggles for control and governance, are important to document in this chapter although they are developed further in the following chapter. They are critical elements in understanding the degree of control of the first clubs and demonstrate the way in which these clubs impacted upon the direction of the sport.

The issue of what to do with the growing number of clubs especially taxed the three senior clubs. Pressure was growing on the governing body to relax some of the rules of competition specifically in relation to the Scottish national championships. The smaller and most recently formed clubs wanted to be able to compete as of right and

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 26th February, 1889.

⁹² *Ibid.*

as befits membership of the governing body. Threatened with a split, the governing body had little option but to revise its rules for entry to the nationals. Given the stranglehold by the established clubs on entry, the sport clearly suffered from an exodus of runners unable to see a way for them to compete effectively at the highest level. The rule also encouraged 'poaching' by its very nature since if a runner of quality could not compete for his local club, he would therefore find another club to compete for. The controversy surrounding Duffus of Arbroath is an example of one such club move. Debarred from competing for Arbroath Harriers he competed and won the national championship with Clydesdale Harriers in 1897.

The period from 1888 to the turn of the century saw clubs emerging in greater numbers. Forming a geographically challenging area, clubs such as the Argyllshire Harriers (1889), Broughty Castle Harriers (1889), Lochee Harriers of Dundee (1889), Neilston Institution and Grammar School Harriers Club (1888), Falkirk Heavy Weather Athletics Club (1888), Forfar Harriers (1888), Celtic Harriers (1900) and Berwick Harriers (1888) all sought inter club competition and championship experience. It was pressure from the new clubs that changed the nature and control of the sport. The last remaining issue that would affect the progress of the sport was that of professionalism and betting.⁹³

Ever since the inception of cross country clubs in 1885, betting and professionalism were seen as twin evils of the sport and indeed of the amateur ethos. The 'Co-partnery' and the formation of Clydesdale Harriers in an attempt to prevent to remove the influence of the bookmakers from handicapping, was in large measure

⁹³ See Appendix 2 for further examples of clubs formed between 1885 and 1890 as well as a more detailed examination of club formation in Dundee.

successful. However, without properly regulated betting and gaming laws extended to public places, it was difficult to prevent betting at meetings of athletes and cross country races experienced betting at meetings over the years. During this period of development of cross country running, football was also experiencing difficulties regulating their sport in relation to payments to players. The issue of the nature of experience of sport in the first ten years of cross country running therefore was a changing experience with the emergence of clear boundaries in participation.

However, in addition to these issues of status and payment, the very fabric of cooperation of sporting forms within harriers clubs was to be challenged by the formation of a new governing body in cycling. Given that cyclists were among the key personnel to join and indeed form harriers clubs, and that many harriers clubs still had active cyclists amongst their membership, the cycling controversy was to cause difficulties in the sport. With cycling sections strong in many harriers clubs (eg. West of Scotland Harriers), the promotion of meetings and their governance was to be altered by the formation of the Scottish Cyclists Union in 1889. The existing body, the Scottish Executive of the National Cyclists' Union was the body however that cooperated with the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association in the promotion of meetings and indeed in 1889, a joint championship. The decision as to who governed the activities of cyclists at athletic meetings was raised since both groups, athletes and cyclists, claimed responsibility; the athletes since it was their meeting and the cyclists since it was their sport. It was eventually agreed that each sport should be autonomous of the other.

The remaining issue of open betting, 'roping' and the presence of professional

footballers at meetings was the last remaining matter to be dealt with. Keddie described the embarrassment caused to the amateur governing body regarding this issue and with which it had been grappling with for some time.⁹⁴ This is dealt with in more detail in the following chapter.

Summary

The influence of the three senior clubs was pervasive. Despite a strong hold over the development of the sport, cross country running progressed rapidly in the fifteen years from the first club to the turn of the century. Required to address assaults from betting and gambling syndicates, new clubs demanding greater access and a developing and increasingly sophisticated sport, governing bodies matured and changed to reflect the demands imposed upon them. That they were initially reactive is not necessarily a poor reflection of their abilities, but more of a reflection of the dynamic nature of change in the sport. The junior issue was a key catalyst. However, it was the lure of the sport as a desirable activity for young men. Within only a few years, standards were such that the multi talented sportsman could no longer compete as effectively against the trained cross country specialist runner.

⁹⁴ Keddie, J. (1983). *op. cit.*

Chapter 6

Governance, Power and Schism: The struggle for authority and control of Scottish cross country running

Introduction

Sport is often noted for its factionalism. Cross country running was no different. The early days of the sport were marked by different interest groups all claiming legitimacy for their views in their attempts to define the future direction and ethos of cross country running. In many respects the nature of governance and the various groups seeking power within athletics, mirrored that of other sports with some seven key changes of authority in cross country in Scotland from 1885 to 1902. This chapter examines the circumstances and events that defined the way in which the sport was governed during this period.

Control and resistance emerge as dominant themes. Governance of athletics was influenced by particular sporting forms and ideologies fostered in the early forms of the sport. The growth of athletics in Scotland, while influenced by these ideologies, developed its own character and form. The role of the varying bodies controlling athletics such as the Amateur Athletic Association (A.A.A.) of England; the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association (the S.A.A.A.); the National Cross Country Union (the N.C.C.U.) of England and the various bodies in Scotland that ultimately led to the formation of the National Cross Country Union of Scotland (the N.C.C.U. of S.), not only responded but re-shaped the nature and form of the sport. The further competing claims of leading clubs and other sporting bodies such as cycling are added to this examination of governance as part of the fabric of the factional claims

for authority to govern the sport.

Woven through this fabric of power and control, is the ideology of the amateur at the heart of the defining ethos of the nature of cross country running. This gave its governance a direction and social status that ultimately defined who governed and how. The shifting nature of acceptable behaviours within this ideology is also examined as the new harriers clubs set out to claim an athletic landscape of their own. Certain individuals emerge as central players in the various attempts to influence the future direction of cross country running. Some of these figures were advocates for change in the pursuit of the development of the sport. Others had a stronger sense of an underpinning tradition, seemingly embodying much of the original ethos of the sport from the early days of public school paper chases. The interface of these two competing perceptions of the sport determined its progression towards self governance. As each moment of conflict is confronted, so the sport moved forward and new power structures and control mechanisms were put in place. This chapter sets out the issues and factors that ultimately led to the formation of the National Cross Country Union of Scotland in 1903, the fourth and last body to control the sport from the inception of the first harriers club in 1885.

Control and resistance

The nature and practice of sports stabilised through experimentation and compromise generally through increasing inter club competition. Embedded in this for most sports was the tension between the experimental practices of individuals and clubs on the one hand, balanced against views of a 'tradition' held by others. This was often the interface for control of the emerging sporting form. Thus governance was

characterised by control by ‘traditionalists’, and resistance to such control. This resistance stems in part from the liberal values of the late 19th century that balanced the need for such order, control and stability within a rapidly changing society. The work of Joyce in particular, makes a strong case for the changing role and demands on the urban Victorian citizen. Liberal politics dominated the expanding cities and patterns of social life and the kinds of citizens inhabiting the cities, transforming notions of civil society and patterns of work and leisure.¹

Change and continuity therefore is a central theme that emerges in this chapter. The formation of clubs was in part an expression of the Victorian gentleman’s disdain for being constrained, usually by the rigours and tedium of work. Clubs allowed young men to pursue, under the banner of respectability, their social pleasures in the company of others. In the case of athletics in Scotland, the control of the sport was as much to do with the attempts of the earlier clubs to define the course of the sport and thus retain power, as it was in forming a socially acceptable body through which sport was advanced. It was in essence about young men making a claim on their social landscape through sport by loosening the grip of elders and re-shaping experience.

Ambiguities existed in this process. A principal ambiguity was the way in which athletics generally viewed professionalism and by now the almost moribund pedestrian activity. The tension on the one hand, between the need to protect athletics from the twin evils of professionalism and betting and on the other, to develop and grow from observation of accepted rules, was at the heart of control.

¹ Joyce, P. (2003). *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City*. London: Verso.

Linked to this was the need of the sport to adhere to some common lines of understanding of the values inherent within it which related to the Victorian amateur ideal; a desirable commodity for young Victorian males which marked them apart, different and better than 'others'. Thus, the very substance of the competing ideologies and the complex power structures of the sport became the central threads in the struggle for control of the sport between competing factions.

The history of the governance of cross country running in Scotland mirrors, in many ways, the struggle for control led by the principal clubs in other sports. Tranter defines this period as a 'revolution in organised structures involved in the formation of clubs on a scale never before experienced.'² The ability to influence the direction of the sport from within the governing body was an objective of most clubs. Thus, the first clubs of most sports were often able to define not only the club's standing, but also the club's name as synonymous with the sport.

In the case of cross country running, the paternalistic approach of the earliest harriers clubs towards their smaller and less well developed (organisationally) brethren in the new clubs, often created a resentment on the part of these developing clubs at 'being dictated to'. Moreover, the overt ambition of at least one principal Scottish harriers club in acquiring 'sections' spread throughout the Scottish central industrial belt, was to lead directly to challenge by other clubs who saw this acquisition of runners as naked ambition. It also brought into sharp focus the nature of cross country running as a new sporting form.

² Tranter, N. (1998). *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The early governance of athletics in Scotland was characterised by a lack of independence from other sports. Therefore, the new harriers strenuously embarked on achieving autonomy in order to not be beholden to any other sport, or a mere adjunct to an already existing hegemonic sporting structure, for example football. As a consequence, most clubs saw a moral remit to encourage other clubs to develop thus giving the sport strength in depth. Real influence was often therefore, in the hands of the first club entrepreneurs. There was a gradual shift in power and influence from the three principal clubs of Clydesdale Harriers on the one hand and Edinburgh Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers on the other, towards a more inclusive form of control even though the sport was still to be dominated by these three clubs until just before the turn of the century.

Athletics in England and early governance of English harrier clubs.

Many of the early athletic clubs in England, used the term 'athletic' to cover a number of sporting forms. The London Athletic Club (formerly Mincing Lane Athletic Club) and the Amateur Athletic Club, also a London club, defined the early nature of organised athletic competition with the first athletics 'championship' in 1866. Both clubs had their own grounds; the London Athletic Club (eventually) at Stamford Bridge and the Amateur Athletic Club at Lillie Bridge. This was to become a defining issue in the way in which harrier running emerged in relation to other athletic practices. Without ownership of a training ground as a stable base from which to train and more importantly, to raise revenue through holding athletic meetings, athletics and cross country clubs were at a disadvantage and dependent upon the good will of other sporting clubs in raising funds.

However, the two clubs found it impossible to co-exist and Shearman describes the final ‘rupture’ between the two clubs as occurring ‘over gate money arrangements’ in 1876 as the London Athletic Club used the Amateur Athletic Club track for their meetings seem essentially as the championships of England.³ It was this ‘rupture’ that was to lead ultimately to the inauguration of the Amateur Athletic Association in 1880. The attendance of university men from Oxbridge, plus representatives from the Amateur Athletic Club and the London Athletic Club, ensured the presence of present and former university men and the continuance of what were seen as the true principles of amateurism. The ability of these athletic clubs to attract members over a range of athletic events eventually overcame the narrower and more specialised harriers on the A.A.A. committee. Harriers were always more uncomfortable with a ‘governing body’ preferring instead to allow the respective club hierarchies in their sport to control direction. Moreover, there was also a strong anti-provincialism that embodied athletics at this time. Any developments outside of London and the influence of Oxbridge, were viewed with suspicion with regard to the enforcement of rules. Shearman notes that of the clubs in membership of the A.A.A. by 1887, nearly twenty five percent of them were harriers clubs devoted to paper chasing. Of the other clubs, many were sports holding clubs with the general title of ‘Athletic club’.⁴

The internal politics and issues dominating the English clubs as they organised their affairs under one organising body were to be replicated in an uncannily similar fashion in Scotland some years later. Not only were individuals named as problematic and partial but also the issue of control of the sport by the ‘sports holding clubs’. Similarly, challenges in the control and governance of the sport

³ Shearman, M. (ed.) (1888). *The Badminton Library: Athletics and Football*. London: Longmans. P. 216.

⁴ *Ibid.* P. 228.

reappeared in the form of the amateur definition. The issue of control of the sports meetings in relation to the National Cyclist's Union, the running of championships, the autonomy of clubs and, of course, handicapping and betting known more euphemistically as 'abuses', also challenged Scottish athletics. The amateur definition and status was a further issue.

Rye, the most influential figure involved in harrier running in England, was more blunt in his view of the right of autonomy of the harrier club, a view to which he was unshakeable in his conviction.

'The great thing to guard against is letting the management get into the hands of busybodies, who like to run the show for self-advertisement – men who were not and in some cases never could have been athletes themselves, and whose interfering antics the real runners cannot abide.'⁵

However, this autonomy for club harrier running was inevitably subsumed within a new governing body for cross country running. The benefits of a governing body were therefore ambiguous to the new harrier, and seemingly cut across the very essence of the activity of freedom from constraint in the open air of the rural environs of cities. The idea of 'controlling' was the very antithesis of engagement in harrier running.

The same concerns and issues addressed in the early days of governance in England including the formation of a separate governing body for cross country running would be replicated in Scotland. Harriers clubs in Scotland were, however, positioned more centrally in the affairs of organised club athletics. In England the

⁵ Rye, W. (1910). The inception of paperchasing. In: *The Athletic Field and Swimming World*. 12th February. P. 23.

‘athletics club’ was in the firm grip of former university athletes and therefore became the dominant organisational structure and form. In Scotland, harriers club membership was drawn less from university men, thus the organisational structure reflected its social base and membership with different expectations and experiences.

Governance of Scottish athletics

The first governing body for athletics in Scotland was set up to control the sport in the face of the burgeoning sports days that were becoming the vogue. ‘Sports holding clubs’ was the term used to describe those sports clubs usually in football, rugby and cricket but also gymnastics and cycling, that held athletic sports days in the summer. These were seen as a primary means of raising funds through gate receipts as the public became more interested in seeing the leading names in athletic achievement.⁶ An industry thus developed of athletes that did ‘the circuit’; bookmakers who moved in to the grounds overtly as well as covertly, and side shows which took advantage of the crowds at a sports meeting. The need to create a mechanism for control was seen as necessary by a small group of predominantly east of Scotland clubs, more connected with public and merchant schools than track and field athletics, in order to wrest back the nature of these sports days and to establish ‘true’ athleticism in the face of creeping professionalism.

Scotland generally resisted professional practices of wagering, betting and payments to players and athletes. Nevertheless, the same curious divisions permeated Scottish sport in much the same way as it did in England. There was a growing and thriving professional circuit of professional athletes not only on the track but also at special

⁶ See Appendix 3 for a list of sports holding clubs 1886 – 1887.

events held to break records. Additionally, the growth of football in Scotland was also by the mid to late 1880s, exporting significant numbers of footballers to England in response to professionalism south of the border. This relationship between football and athletics is worthy therefore of further comment.

Many football clubs were 'sports holding clubs', reliant upon the revenues associated with the entries and gate money, and to this end maintained a healthy and partial involvement in the various committees of the S.A.A.A. in order to protect their interests. The clubs also had a healthy profile of players as runners.⁷ The Presidents of the S.A.A.A., whose primary affiliation was listed as a football club, numbered no less than eight between 1883 and 1900 with only one President, coming from a Harrier club in that seventeen year period, the remainder listing their affiliation as a public school, university or 'Old Boy' club.

The sense of growing professionalism in sport is best exemplified by football and it was as a reaction to this that many other sports encountered a sense of moral panic. England had dealt with the professional issue in football in 1885 but it was to take until 1893 before the Scottish game would officially embrace professionalism. In the meantime the inextricable web of inter-relational connections that bound Scottish sport was steadily unravelling to create governing bodies more 'free standing' as they distanced themselves from the professional world of football as well as gaining self confidence and a discrete identity. Nevertheless, the ethos permeating Scottish sport as a result of the inter relationships between sports, was itself a consequence of

⁷ Probably the best known in the earliest days of Harrier clubs were A. P. Findlay, the first winner of the cross country championship in 1886 for Clydesdale Harriers who played for Ayr F.C.; T. Blair of Queen's Park F.C. the 220 yards record holder in 1887; W. Sellar of Batlefield F.C. and Queen's Park F.C. a leading sprinter for Clydesdale Harriers and Willie Maley who ran for Clydesdale Harriers but became more synonymous as the 'father' of Celtic F.C.

sportsmen involved in more than one sport. This was to generate division, and in the case of Scottish athletics, the issues of betting and 'rigging' more associated with the runners who were not specialist athletes, was to be the cause of much concern until the end of the century.

Crampsey in his brief work on Scottish football provides the details of the types of 'incentives' opening up to professional footballers.⁸ In his further work, specifically on Queen's Park Football Club, he identifies their position thus 'the club's role in this was that of Cassandra, to prophesy to a largely unheeding audience what the likely effects of the commercialisation of the sport would be.'⁹ This role of prophet was to extend to the member's interests outside of football, in attempts to maintain the veracity of Scottish sport generally. This was to play a key part ultimately in the compromise that eventually led to the healing of the rift in Scottish cross country running.

The committees of the various Harriers clubs were led by men with strong football connections. The most conspicuous example was the influence of the Lawrie family, for many years the backbone of Queen's Park Football Club, but also in leading positions in the West of Scotland Harriers with Stewart Lawrie as its first president in 1886. Lawrie was also President of the S.A.A.A. in 1892-93 following family member Thomas Lawrie who was President of the S.A.A.A. (1886-87). However, Clydesdale Harriers provided their own example in William Brown who, while club president, was also president of 3rd Lanark Rifle Volunteers F.C. (eventually known simply as Third Lanark F.C.). John Mellish, also of Clydesdale, was president of

⁸ Crampsey, R. A. (1978). *The Scottish Footballer*. Edinburgh: Blackwood.

⁹ Crampsey, R. A. (1967). *The Game for the Game's Sake: The History of Queen's Park Football Club*. Glasgow: The Club. P. 43.

both Clydesdale Harriers and Glasgow Rangers F.C. In the case of Brown, the relative status of the clubs was never in question as ‘The one [was] merely a football club, the other is an organisation which embraces every kind of athlete – footballer, cyclist, runner, cricketer, swimmer, rower etc.’ thus indicating a certain snobbery attached to the presidency of the athletic clubs.¹⁰

The establishment of the first governing body could be seen therefore as a response to the general advance of professionalism in sport in Scotland, as well as the involvement by the broader population in activities that had until now been the preserve of a particular social and leisured class. The S.A.A.A. was formed on 26th February 1883 and largely owed its formation to the A.A.A., viewed by many north of the border as the administrative model as it was based on similar challenges that had faced the sport in the south. The new association therefore, was largely an instrument of an educated elite and the various sports clubs with athletic ‘sections’ that competed at each other’s sports days.

The move was well timed in terms of maintaining a traditional ethos, as the sport was beginning to gain popularity outside the confines of the middle class, gentleman amateur. It was not until Clydesdale Harriers were formed on the 4th May 1885, that cross country running clubs took the mantle of the first exclusively ‘athletic’ clubs. Athletics and athletic contests until 1885 were practised by professionals on the Highland Games circuit and other sports clubs during the summer months of the various club sports days as well as in the public and merchant schools and universities.

¹⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 22nd February, 1889. P. 9.

Hindering the formation of a governing body and indeed many new, developing clubs, was the somewhat Corinthian attitude that no gentleman would lower himself to train. However the type of men attracted to the sports days of the athletic clubs were no longer from the exclusive preserve of the universities. Instead, at least in Scotland, there was a new social mix of athletes. The ambiguities therefore of acceptance of the 'form' of athletics in terms of etiquette as well as seeking to claim the sport as an emergent social form appealing to young men, meant that there was a process of assimilation of old and new values. Training and trainers so often at the boundaries of athletic practice were embraced by the new harriers clubs in their development despite their association with professionalism.¹¹ Sport, therefore, became a new 'habitus' of the young Victorian male; a distinguishing mark.

The training of leading athletes was scrutinised, secret regimes put in place and gradually training runs in the guise of social gatherings introduced in most clubs. The social aspect of the runs was greatly emphasised along with the 'pack' run ethos whereby no individual was to be at the fore but rather it was the interplay of the whole pack solving the puzzle of the trail thus emphasising the 'non competitive' in the activity. This made running more of a social function. It reinforced the general view that athletics and those who competed in athletics, were men of character who possessed natural prowess rather than that of carefully crafted ability based upon 'work' in the form of training. While the social nature of a club for men was acceptable, there was a general suspicion that greeted the new harriers clubs from the former establishment of the new governing body.

¹¹ Clydesdale Harriers used the services of Ross, a Clyde oarsman, in their preparations for the national cross country championships of 1887. *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 15th March, 1887. P. 13.

Control was the key issue in the development of the governing body and it is worth noting that of the list of initial signatories to the first meeting of the S.A.A.A., 11 of the 13 clubs were directly associated with schools or universities with only 2 clubs being less directly related to the Scottish educational establishment.¹² Inevitably all clubs had strong school links through former pupils networks. The first athletics championships on 23rd June 1883 held at Edinburgh's Powderhall Grounds, was dominated by university men and those sportsmen from rugby and football clubs demonstrating their athletic prowess during the close season. This mirrored almost exactly the conditions that prevailed in relation to the formation of the A.A.A. some ten years previously thus developing an ideological link in the way the sport was governed.

From the start there was dissent and Keddie in his centenary history of the S.A.A.A. records the commentary in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* of 25th January, 1883 as describing the call for a new association for Scotland from sports clubs in the west of Scotland as a 'hole in the corner meeting'.¹³ This east-west rivalry was to be but one dimension in the struggle for control of the sport. In reviewing the signatories of the inaugural meeting it is hardly surprising that the composition of the governing body should be perceived as a peculiarly east affair. However, clubs in the west of Scotland chose not to send representatives. This was in part due to the nature of the sport at this time.

¹² The Clubs were Edinburgh University, St Andrew's University, Loretto School, Blair Lodge School, Edinburgh Collegiate A.C., Edinburgh Institution, Watsonians, Edinburgh Academicals, Fettesian-Lorettonian Club, Edinburgh Wanderers, Glasgow Academicals, West of Scotland F.C. & Royal High School of Edinburgh.

¹³ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 25th January, 1883. Cited in: Keddie, J. (1982). *Scottish Athletics: The Official Centenary Publication of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association*. Edinburgh: The Association. P. 2.

‘Sports holding clubs’ were a predominantly west of Scotland phenomena. The inherent tension between the call for an association by the athletic men of the mainly Edinburgh sports clubs would be seen as a challenge to the interests of those sports holding clubs centred mainly in and around Glasgow. Ceding power and authority was not in their interests and their lack of representation was probably due to the view that any new organisation would not last, since it was the clubs in the west of the country who held most of the meetings. The interests and well-being of athletic sports were seen as the province of the clubs of the west industrial belt.

This self-interest in the formation of the new S.A.A.A. was viewed with even greater suspicion by the west sports clubs when it was clear that only one of the thirteen east clubs held sports and that membership of the new organisation was by subscription only without the need to have been involved in the sport at all. Given the composition of membership, social status and nature of the inaugural clubs of the S.A.A.A., the power structures and avenues of influence were clear.

First athletics sports days

The influence of other sports in athletic competition is central in understanding the early membership of the new harrier clubs. Athletics was a key activity of rowing, football, rugby and swimming clubs as well as educational institutions and the military. There were a number of these ‘sports holding clubs’ in the west of Scotland which pre-dated the 1880s in their interest in athletic competition. Apart from the military Volunteer regiments who held sports, and the ‘tradition’ of Highland Games, it was the schools and the universities who held the athletic events sports days.

The first of those was Edinburgh Academy in 1858 and the Royal High School of Edinburgh in 1864. Merchiston Castle School in 1866, Glasgow Academy in 1868 and Fettes College in 1874 were pre-eminent in the field of promoting athletics amongst their pupils. Some of this diffusion of an athletic ideal came from masters at the schools who had attended universities and who brought back the enthusiasm and organisational skills in promoting athletic sports days from their experiences in the universities of both Scotland and England. In the case of Fettes College, there was a clear association with athleticism of the English public school with Potts the Rector of Fettes and a former master at Rugby school, instigating a ‘...system [that was] framed on the lines of Rugby school.’¹⁴ However, it is important to note that in many cases the initial impetus came from the influence of former pupils on their respective schools in embracing the new fashion and ideology of athleticism. As outlined in chapter four, the development was essentially boy led and supported by masters in Scotland.

Nevertheless, the ideology surrounding athletic sports and contests was essentially English in creation. In this sense the proselytising message of Englishness and empire came to find a secure home in ‘North Britain’. The universities soon followed suit and Edinburgh University was the first of the Scottish universities in 1866 to hold a sports day and founded its university athletic club the same year followed by an intervarsity competition in 1871 in which ‘strangers’ would sometimes be allowed to compete.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 29th November, 1889. P. 8. Memoriam notice to Dr Potts.

¹⁵ Keddie, J. (1982). *op. cit.* P. 4.

In the west of Scotland the position was different, with athletic sports days being held by the West of Scotland Cricket Club and the St Andrews Rowing Club in 1870. Other sports such as cycling, held athletic sports (Edinburgh Amateur Bicycle Club) and a growing number of football clubs joined the new interest in athletics such as Airdrie, Greenock Morton, Cowlares, Queen's Park and St Bernard's. This number was to grow substantially throughout the 1880s and 1890s, with Celtic F.C. and Rangers F.C. sports becoming internationally renowned.

The response to the east of Scotland's clubs initiative in forming a governing body, was swift and immediate with the west of Scotland 'sports holding clubs' forming a rival organisation called the West of Scotland Amateur Athletic Association. A suggestion of the way in which the Edinburgh men were viewed and the subliminal class nature of the rivalry can be found in the fact that the west championship was held at Kilmarnock F.C.'s ground at Rugby Park rather than the sport grounds of one of the educational institutions of the west of Scotland. Although relatively underdeveloped compared to the institutions of Edinburgh, the new organisation clearly steered the venue of the new meeting away from any association with public schools or universities. The meeting was only open to 'Scotchmen, or those of other Nationalities who may have resided in Scotland three months prior to the date of the meeting'.¹⁶ This was in contrast to the championship meeting in the east of Scotland, which was not closed. While the standard was higher in the east and the number of athletes competing greater, the meeting in the west set one week earlier than that of the east, is considered to be the first representative championship for athletes in Scotland. The total number of clubs involved between the two championships was

¹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 2.

25; 13 from the east of Scotland and 12 from the west of Scotland.

Common sense and common interest eventually prevailed and by 1884 both bodies had merged with consensus as to alternating venues for championships, arrangements for the appointment of Presidents and equity in organising committee representation. New rules were agreed, and from 1885 the S.A.A.A. promoted their championships by agreement of those involved in athletics in Scotland. In 1885 Glasgow University Athletic Club tendered its resignation of the A.A.A. and joined the S.A.A.A. The first harriers club was formed the same year.

The Harriers Clubs and control of cross country running

Clydesdale Harriers must take much of the credit for the rise in popularity of the sport. In the formative years, they took their Saturday runs to various parts of the suburbs of industrial Glasgow and further afield to Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Dunbartonshire and Stirlingshire. It seemed natural for those wishing to take up the new sport to contact the principal club to seek advice. Invariably when this happened, the club would arrange a club run at the new venue in order to encourage participation on a regular basis and also to ensure the form of the event adhered to the hares and hounds principles. It also provided fertile recruitment to the club. In this way, by providing expertise and encouragement, the sport developed.

The Scottish Umpire commented on the way in which Clydesdale Harriers had promoted the sport:

‘The aim and purpose of the club has been to foster and popularise athletics in the West of Scotland, and their efforts have so far been very successful as previous to their

inception, we had no evening handicaps, cross country championships, no inter club sports and no long distance races at sports, only one handicapper and that not of the highest order – and to back all up, a very weakly athletic association.¹⁷

Clydesdale recognised the opportunities that this approach presented. The nature of athletics in Scotland was closely and particularly defined by the self-selecting elite of the S.A.A.A. Moreover, the officials involved in running the sports days tended to be the same ones. Furthermore, the sports days that existed tended to polarise the control base between the sports of the public schools and universities and those of sports clubs such as the football clubs. Thus, the sport was run for the benefit of only a few; was confined to track and field and through limited numbers of officials to run sports days, was open to accusations relating to bribery and event rigging as handicapping was in the hands of only a few men. The ‘Co-partnership Ring’, active in athletics meetings, were assumed to be in league with the major football clubs of the day whose players ran at the sports days. Thus, the sport through the new harriers clubs was able to wrest control from the more established sports holding clubs and deal with the creeping professionalism and betting in athletics.

Control of professionalism

Professionalism was to cause considerable concern for the sport for a number of years as the practice was widespread and, with a new and weak governing body, difficult to eradicate. The extent to which attempts were made to gain a professional foothold in athletics is generally exemplified in the formation of ‘bogus clubs’. The S.A.A.A. were to struggle for some years to ensure that clubs within its membership were *bone fide* clubs adhering to a clear amateur principle and set of rules. Indeed,

¹⁷ *The Scottish Umpire*, 31st August, 1886. P. 13.

they eventually charged William Sellar, their noted footballer and athlete, to work with both the Scottish Football Association and the S.A.A.A. in arriving at a suitable resolution of the 'professional problem'. In this he was given a 'free hand' in the comfort that he was:

'... one of the good old school of amateurs, and while not against change, he is certainly not in favour of clipping in any shape or form, the powers of the public schools which he regards as one of the healthiest, if not the healthiest, and purest element in Scottish amateurism.'¹⁸

Certain sections of society however were particularly unequivocal in their condemnation of professionalism. In a singularly vitriolic outburst even by the standards of the 19th century, the Rev. Smith of Aberdeen when visiting Free St Matthew's Church, Glasgow directed his congregation's thinking thus:

'Next to the sin of making gain out of our religion he knew nothing more Satanic than the sin of making gain out of our amusement. It was a prostitution of the most heinous sort; it was a poisoning of the wills. Of course, every great club needed its professionals, men who gained their livelihood by teaching or directing sport. But today we are threatened very alarmingly by the spread of professionalism among those who did not depend on amusements for a livelihood, who had no pretence to look to our sports for anything else than amusement and recreation. That bastard professionalism, that Jew braker, Houndsditch practice of reducing sport too often to dishonest methods of gain, which used to be confined to horse racing, was alas! Spreading in our day to other forms of athletics, till footracing and even cricket - those pure athletics of our youth - were being polluted by the unclean feet of men madly scrambling for gain.'¹⁹

The specific use of sport by proselytising clerics to set out moral and civic values was not uncommon. While the Rev. Smith singled out the Jewish faith with respect

¹⁸ *Scottish Sport*, 22nd January, 1897. P. 9.

¹⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 1st March, 1889. P. 10.

to professionalism, the issue of potential sectarian divisions within the sport while not apparently overt, may have been nevertheless, subliminal. Bradley in his second collection of studies of Celtic consciousness in Scotland relating to football, reminds us of the power of perception of the need to assimilate, which was a pervasive tenet constantly impressed upon the Irish Catholic diaspora of the west of Scotland of the late 19th century.²⁰ McMillan in his essay on the denial of Irishness also reminds us of the pervasive feeling of ‘are we doing anything that will offend them’ amongst Catholics.²¹ Therefore the socialisation processes of communities within and through sport was complicated and played out at different levels according to different versions of Scottishness.

The extent to which anti Irish views were embedded within cross country running is difficult to establish however, there was certainly a clear issue to do with P.J. McCafferty’s eligibility to compete in the 1903 national championships for the West of Scotland Harriers arising directly as a consequence of his decision to compete for his birth country of Ireland at the first international competition. His previous club affiliation of Celtic Harriers, his decision to compete for Ireland or his victory in the Irish championships the week before may have prompted officials to query his eligibility to compete, which caused the delay of some 45 minutes to the start of the championship. However he was eventually allowed to run and subsequently won by a clear margin. The case was referred to S.A.A.A.²² Celtic Harriers, while successful as junior club, never quite made its mark on the cross country scene despite some fine athletes and like a number of clubs of this period, it eventually went out of existence some years later.

²⁰ Bradley, J. (ed.) (2006) *Celtic Minded 2*. Glendaruel, Argyll Publishing

²¹ McMillan, J. (2006). *Irish in Denial*. Scottish Review of Books, Vol. 2 No. 3. Scottish Arts Council.

²² The Scottish Referee, 16th March, 1903. P. 4.

Inevitably there must have been a gravitation towards clubs that represented the cultural location of individuals including their religious beliefs. The extent to which clubs with an essentially Catholic membership were discriminated against within the sport of cross country is more difficult to establish, however the notion of omission, that is to say conveniently working to the social and cultural agenda of one civic group to the exclusion of others, no doubt existed within cross country as it did in any other walk of life.

Civic sensibilities clearly needed protecting. There was also in 1885, a concerted move to 'ban 'black chested' footballers from athletic sports' as professionals were euphemistically known, as well as keeping a watchful eye on the developing power struggle south of the border between the A.A.A. and the National Cycling Union (N.C.U.) for control of sports days regarding professionals.²³

It was for this reason that in the same year, the S.A.A.A. decided to make the first move and to issue permits for sports. This action in effect put the status of all athletes who ran at sports without such a permit, at risk. While it would be thought that clubs specifically for athletes would have been welcomed, it is clear that the Clydesdale Harriers' decisive approach to this state of affairs was predicated in part by the relative weakness of the S.A.A.A. at this time and, therefore in response, took it upon itself to act '*ultra vires*'.

Clydesdale Harriers: the membership 'issue' and control

The emergence of a group of men challenging the established position initially

²³ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 20th May, 1885. P. 11.

threatened the S.A.A.A. This accounts for the attempts to discredit the Clydesdale club during their first summer of 1885. The club organised their own handicap meetings using their own handicappers thus attempting to exercise some control of the sport. The club became a *de facto* governing body. McAusland²⁴ in his work on Clydesdale Harriers, details this early series of track meetings that the club organised just weeks after their formation. Held at Kinning Park in Glasgow, they were aided by Glasgow Rangers F.C. some of whose members were founder members of Clydesdale Harriers.

It was in cross country running however that the club were to be a pre-eminent force in Scotland. While previous chapters dealt with the nature of the early formation of clubs, it is worth re-emphasising that control of the sport dominated Clydesdale's thinking and vision for the development of cross country running. Within a few years they became one of the largest clubs engaged in harrier activity. Their approach to membership was to assure them of control of the sport for the first three years of cross country activity, and thus defined the nature of club development throughout the west of Scotland.

Clydesdale Harriers approach to seeking new members came through the simple expediency of setting up 'sections' of the club in many of the outlying areas. While the rationale for this is contained in chapter five, it is important in relation to this chapter on governance to identify that the first key step in controlling the sport of cross country was through the way in which Clydesdale Harriers secured recruitment. Thus, for example, visits to Lenzie in Lanarkshire for club runs would

²⁴ McAusland, B. (1988). *Clydesdale Harriers: A Centenary History 1885-1985*. Glasgow: The Club

not only popularise the sport, but also ensure new members for the club. Knowing that travel on a regular basis for club runs to other parts of the west of Scotland would be impractical, the club set up a sections of the main club (soon to be called 'Headquarters Section') as well as sections in various outposts around Glasgow and the west of Scotland. By the season of 1888/1889 the club could call upon 5 sections set up in Ayrshire, Falkirk, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Dunbartonshire, totalling just over 900 members.²⁵

This issue of the status of the sections in relation to the main or 'Headquarters section' in Glasgow, was soon to polarise the sport in terms of its governance. Clydesdale would count the total membership of the club as all members of their sections as well as the 'Headquarters section'. Thus, in the eyes of the other newly emerging clubs, monopolising the development of the sport.

Establishment of other clubs was invariably seen by Clydesdale Harriers as a threat to their hegemony. Indeed the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers was a direct response by some runners to break the control of Clydesdale Harriers and form another, distinct club. There is a suggestion in the work of Keddie that at least some of the membership of the new West of Scotland Harriers club were disillusioned members of the Clydesdale club, thus further heightening the tension between the two clubs.²⁶ Popular opinion relating to the formation of the new club was polarised in the press, with each of the two main sporting publications taking opposing views.

The *Scottish Athletic Journal* commented that 'This is one of the many clubs whose

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Keddie, J. (1982). *op. cit.* P. 2.

formation we have suggested again and again, and we are glad that at last our hints are to bear fruit. Such a club, properly managed, as this one is certain to be, is sure to succeed.’²⁷

The Scottish Umpire however, in a delightfully worded ‘put down’ to the hopes of the new club stated:

“Whether it be an indication of the advance of cross-country running in the West, or merely a spasmodic effort at decentralisation, we will not say, but this week we favoured with an indifferently worded circular, signed by one athlete, five cyclists, and two rowers, calling for a meeting in the Langham Hotel for Tuesday, 14th inst., for the purpose of promoting a “Harriers’ Club in Glasgow.” The preamble of the circular, conspicuous for its ignorance or disregard of contemporary history, runs thus-“The desirability of forming a Harriers Club in Glasgow for the indulgence of cross-country running during the winter months having often been remarked, the undersigned have, etc.” We are rather afraid that such a bald and, we must add, inaccurate reason for promoting *another* harriers’ club in Glasgow will not be acceptable by the general body of Western athletes, who are already attached to a flourishing and healthy club, as at all satisfactory. We are not in extreme need of such an addition to our harriers’ clubs in the West as the above would imply-the Clydesdale Harriers, Scotland’s premier cross-country club, already covering the whole ground with conspicuous success. If the new start is not conceived in the spirit of opposition, we should advise that the chief promoters of it should lend their newborn energy to further the interests of the already existing club, of which, if we are not mistaken, they were once-and may be yet, for aught we know-burning and shining lights. But if it is to be launched as an unfriendly rival, we have little hesitation in condemning the project.”²⁸

Control through governance defined the nature and form of the sport. This control centred around the role and place of the sport within a developing range of sporting opportunities. Achievements of Scottish performers and teams became an increasing

²⁷ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 7th September, 1886. P. 11.

²⁸ *The Scottish Umpire*, 7th September, 1886. P. 10.

measure of the status of the sport within the growing interest and diverse uses of leisure time. As greater numbers involved themselves in physical recreation, so the dilution of the gentleman amateur ideal came to concentrate the minds of those governing the respective sports. Organised athletics was late in the market place in competing for the time of working men. This had both a positive and negative effect on the development of the sport insofar as it allowed the sport to present itself to greater numbers who were, by the mid 1880s, keen to sample the new organised sporting clubs.

However, the difficulty of this was the social station of the participants. Although embracing this sporting form, many were still viewed as 'in need of control' by those who considered themselves their social betters. Clydesdale Harriers appear to have fallen foul of this view. While a section of the press may have dismissed the new West of Scotland Harriers as non athletes by definition of their principal affiliations with other sports clubs, their great asset was that they were perceived as gentlemen.

Given that the signatories of the circular included Stewart Lawrie of Queen's Park Football Club, one of a family with long connections with the club whose reputation was still intact as one of the great bastions of amateurism, and C.C. Calder, a member of the Royal Scottish Bicycle Club, the credentials of the new Harriers club seemed impeccable. The other signatories were recognised men within their own sports, thus presenting a powerful lobby and attracting and appealing to a certain 'type' of sportsman.

The Clydesdale Club was seen as the new face of Scottish sport with less upbringing

in the values of sporting tradition of participation. The relative position of the two clubs represented the tension balance of the sport, with a new breed of sportsmen who eschewed what many saw as an old boys network. However, just as Clydesdale Harriers had dealt with the 'Co-partnery', they found themselves involved in further disputes of a similar nature this time directed at themselves, involving time keeping and handicapping.

Handicapping and timekeeping were fundamental to the practice of the sport in these early days. Records and the establishment of champion athletes were an essential currency of a sport establishing itself in the mind of the public. Standards and benchmarks were therefore central in determining the health of any sport. These standards were to exemplify the prowess of the amateur and the preservation of an amateur tradition and thus represented the governing body and the sport and its central values. Amateurism and its associated values therefore became one of the key concerns. The control for what Huggins and Mangan call a 'code of the mainly middle-class amateur' was engaged at the outset.²⁹

This implicit class distinction was to surface in the war of words played out in *The Scottish Umpire*, which consistently adhered to the view that Clydesdale Harriers should be supported in its attempts to set the developing standards, describing the West of Scotland Harriers after its inaugural meeting as 'an *unfriendly* rival' and its 'attempts to assume an air of social superiority' as 'contemptible, if it were not so ridiculous'. Despite protesting that the journal was not specially 'retained' by Clydesdale Harriers, it nevertheless delivered a withering attack upon the new West

²⁹ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (eds.) (2004). *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play*. London: Cass.

of Scotland Harriers Club by stating ‘that if we were making the choice, we should infinitely prefer the company of the Clydesdalers to the pretentious, though less sincere fellowship of some of the seceders ...’ and followed this with:

‘Who are they or their father’s house, we should like to know, that they ape such superiority, and presume to decry a body of men their equals in position and presumably their superiors in principle? Those of the new membership who, like ourselves, detest such snobbery - we believe there are not a few – should make an early and vigorous effort to set themselves right in this matter, for we believe that the success of the undertaking will depend more upon co-operating with than competing against that large and influential and *working* body of the Clydesdale Harriers. Let them carefully consider the Edinburgh Harriers, in whose ranks are to be found all classes and conditions of athletes, and who make it their boast that they know neither swell nor artisan, but all are one in the common cause of athletics.’³⁰

The divisions were clearly visible, whether real or imagined, between the two clubs, and social standing was to be the key division between them during the formative years for control of the sport.

The West of Scotland Harriers made great play of their connectedness within sport ensuring that the success of the club rested upon the sporting credibility of its office bearers. In addition to Stewart Lawrie as President of the new club, Queen’s Park Football Club provided J.D. Finlayson as club Vice Captain and D.C. Brown as a committee member. Supporting these men of sporting connections was A.C. Symington of Glasgow Academicals and several leading oarsmen, cyclists and footballers. Lending further weight to the new club, were members from Glasgow High School and W. H. Higgins from Airedale Harriers in England. However, within a matter of weeks, the first attempts at resolving differences were made with

³⁰ *The Scottish Umpire*, 21st September, 1886. P. 9.

the suggestion that the new club should ‘not dissipate its energies in setting class against class.’³¹ The role that Edinburgh Harriers played in the resolution of the positions of the two Glasgow clubs was important. The personal status of David Scott Duncan as an informal broker was crucial in the speedy resolution of a potential problem.

First governance: the S.A.A.A. sub-committee for cross country running

The new clubs had created opportunities for participation in the sport. Until 1885, the sport of athletics was essentially to do with track races with a few excursions over the country by university students and the merchant and public schools. With the formation of the three Harriers clubs of Clydesdale, Edinburgh and the West of Scotland Harriers, athletics was now a year round sport. The S.A.A.A. to whom all three clubs were affiliated, formed a sub-committee of the main body to deal with the affairs of harrier running. This sub-committee concerned itself primarily with the organisation of the championship and establishing rules. The S.A.A.A therefore had put in place a clear marker that it was they who governed all aspects of the sport. Clydesdale challenged this, since they were in the vanguard of the development of harrier running they felt that it should be them, through sheer presence of numbers, leading the sport. Since the sport had been developed by the clubs, it should be run by the clubs and cross country running was distinctive enough as a sporting form not to warrant imposition of governance by an organisation which was still seen as removed from its constituent members.

Those appointed and elected to the main committee of the S.A.A.A. seemed as

³¹ *The Scottish Umpire*, 28th September, 1886. P. 9.

remote from grass roots sport as they could be. The office bearers and committee men of the S.A.A.A. of 1887 listed not one athletic club in their pedigree. Even D.S. Duncan saw fit to represent his affiliation as the Royal High School of Edinburgh rather than Edinburgh Harriers. Clearly a harrier club background was still not seen as fitting for the duties of office and was perhaps even an impediment.³²

It was this remoteness in governance that was to lead to the first of a series of challenges to the authority of the S.A.A.A. in the governance of the sport. The consequences were to resonate within the sport for some time. Given the role, position and numbers commanded by Clydesdale Harriers, they never saw this translated into senior positions within the S.A.A.A. in the 15 years to the turn of the century. It was not until 1909 that Andrew Hannah was elected to the presidency of the S.A.A.A. following his appointment as president of the Scottish Cross Country Union in 1897. The only other officer of Clydesdale Harriers to serve as President of the S.C.C.U. was A. McNab in 1893. It took some time for rifts to heal.

The governance of the sport was now in need of more specialist attention in relation to the rules governing membership. Combined membership of the three principal clubs by the second Scottish championship in 1887 now exceeded 750 members. Eligibility for teams, scoring systems and various bye-laws relating to the more general running of the sport became central in discussions regarding membership and eligibility to compete in championships. In 1887 the first moves were made to relieve the S.A.A.A. sub-committee of its responsibilities for running the sport of cross country despite clubs being in membership of the S.A.A.A. This first clear

³² See the *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 29th March, 1887 for a full list of office bearers of the S.A.A.A. as well as the respective committee members of the East and West of Scotland committees.

split was to lead to the formation of the Scottish Cross Country Association (S.C.C.A.), a move first suggested by D.S. Duncan of Edinburgh Harriers at the social after the first inter club cross country run of the season of 1887-88 on 5th November. There was also mounting pressure on the three leading clubs by new clubs to be admitted to decision-making.

The Scottish Cross Country Association (S.C.C.A.)

The first governing body for cross country running the S.C.C.A. was formed on Saturday 10th December, 1887 at the Royal Hotel, Glasgow. In addition to Clydesdale, Edinburgh and the West of Scotland Harriers, Kilmarnock Harriers and Hamilton Harriers were also represented with Dundee Harriers and Perth Harriers sending letters of support.

Shields indicates that one of the first tasks of the S.C.C.A. was to standardise the rules and regulations of the sport which formed the key areas of disagreement between clubs.³³ The first national championship organised by Clydesdale Harriers at Lanark Racecourse in 1886 had received particular criticism, with the press describing the race as 'woefully managed'.³⁴ The club was further depicted as 'blundering ... when the Clydesdale Harriers bossed the show'.³⁵ While the second championship of 1887 held at Hampden Park and organised by the West of Scotland Harriers was generally more kindly received, there remained outstanding issues relating to the rules of the championship and eligibility to compete that had yet to be settled to the satisfaction of all clubs.

³³ Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Cross Country Union 1890-1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

³⁴ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 22nd March, 1887. Pp. 23-24.

³⁵ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 15th February, 1887. P. 21.

In addition, and in part relating to the rules of the championship, there was the strategy of Clydesdale Harriers in opening sections of the club as opposed to encouraging new, independent clubs. This process of developing sections called into question the legitimacy of allowing runners to run for a club when they lived a considerable distance from what was considered the club's geographical headquarters. Nevertheless, by this process Clydesdale could by 1887 call upon almost 400 members in selecting a team for the national championships. Given the membership of both Edinburgh Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers was at this time around some 100 members each, there was concern that the championship would forever be decided by sheer force of numbers of one club. Some smaller clubs also felt threatened by the dominance of Clydesdale Harriers with a member of Ayr F.C. Harriers section writing to express the view that 'there is no sympathy with the Clydesdale Harriers ... in assisting them to win the cross-country championship.'³⁶

There were three further issues acting as catalysts for change. The first of these was the continued presence of betting and the attendant issues relating to handicapping. Since the inception of Harrier running, the bookmakers had shown a healthy interest in the sport. The presence of bookmakers 'whose presence is not in any way likely to popularise amateur athletics in the district' was noted at the third track handicap meeting at the Edinburgh Gymnasium on 16th of January, 1886.³⁷ This influence was developing apace throughout 1887 with the police being called to the St Mirren spring sports meeting of 1887 to eject bookmakers who had been recognised in the

³⁶ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st December, 1886. P. 11.

³⁷ *The Scotsman*, 18th January, 1886. P. 4.

crowd trying to do business.³⁸

The Betting Act of 1853 in England was not extended to Scotland until 1874. Within this Act lay the question of what constituted ‘a place’ where betting could not be permitted. The Henretty case of 1885 (in which the defendant had been convicted of betting at the Shawfield sports ground but had his sentence subsequently overturned by the Court of Session), made the issue of betting all the more difficult for sports clubs at this time.³⁹ The issue only started to resolve when Queen’s Park Football Club in 1897 started proceedings with the Town Council of Glasgow and later in 1902, in conjunction with the S.A.A.A. The process was slow therefore, and never fully satisfactorily resolved.

The association of betting and handicapping and bookmaker and handicapper, came under inevitable scrutiny. A leading handicapper for sports days was R. Robinson who worked for *The Scottish News* and who was, by popular acclaim of athletes and clubs, fair and honest. On his retirement in 1887 a void was left with a concern that W.W. Tait of Clydesdale Harriers would join the other main handicappers of Messrs. Lapsley, a handicapper from Edinburgh, and Livingstone an employee of the *Scottish Athletic Journal*. There appears to have been considerable concern about Tait’s abilities as a handicapper giving rise to allegations of ‘scandals’ as well as the fact that ‘He lowered the office by touting for employment.’⁴⁰

The partisan reporting of the *Scottish Athletic Journal* and the *The Scottish Umpire* is

³⁸ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 19th April, 1887. P. 21.

³⁹ See Crampsey, R. A. (1967). *op. cit.* Pp. 335-337 for a summary of the issue of betting at sports clubs grounds in Scotland.

⁴⁰ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 4th January 1887. Pp.17-18.

therefore partly explained by the fact that Livingstone's employment was with the *Scottish Athletic Journal* who essentially adopted an 'anti-Clydesdale and pro-West of Scotland Harriers' approach. However, Tait was seen not only as poor at his duties but also actively involved in touting for business. This called into question his probity and the implicit suggestion that he could possibly be 'bought'. This was not helped by the publication of a letter in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* by an athlete using a pseudonym, pointing to the fact that Tait, who was elected to the committee of Glasgow Rangers Football Club in 1885, gave his fellow club mates 'more than a look in.'⁴¹ Of three races that Tait had the responsibility for handicapping, six of the nine prizes went to members of Rangers.

Secondly, Tait of Clydesdale Harriers was also one of the leading timekeepers. The relationship between timekeeper and handicapper is a crucial one since the handicapper relies upon the timekeeper to inform him of accurate times in order to accurately calculate handicaps for athletes. This of course compromised Tait and led to further allegations of impropriety. Since information on times was much sought after by press, spectators as well as athletes and clubs in the demonstration of athletic superiority, there was considerable debate about the accuracy of watches, rules governing the degree of timing as well as the veracity of officials. Reports of 'faking' times were common knowledge. In one report, a race official commenting upon the lack of standards amongst other officials when a watch had stopped, noted that the official had 'struck an average for the last lap or two' thus the 'time given would have made a record had I not challenged it at the moment.'⁴²

⁴¹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 15th July 1885. P.10.

⁴² *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 4th January, 1887. P. 27.

The demand for greater accuracy was accompanied by greater requirements for higher specifications on watches and led directly to the introduction of the Kew chronograph and the 'Kew Test'.⁴³ Timekeepers now needed watches certified to A and B level under the 'Kew Test'. The use of chronographs in Scottish athletics calibrated and functioning to this required 'Kew Test' level was put in place during the summer of 1887. A.G. Rennie, an active cyclist member of the West of Scotland Harriers as well as the Northern Cycling Club, placed an order with Duncan's the jewellers of Buchanan Street in Glasgow for two new chronographs of the required specifications.⁴⁴ Rennie thus became one of the most sought after timekeepers in the sport and in so doing, created a further rift between the two clubs of the West of Scotland Harriers and Clydesdale Harriers who saw Rennie as undermining 'their man'.

The position regarding Tait came to a head during the championships of 1887 with allegations that his watch seemed incorrect to a Kew tested certificate watch. Given that A.G. Rennie had the only Kew tested watch, it appears that Rennie was monitoring Tait's watch throughout the race. Tait's watch recorded some five seconds ahead at the half way point in the race and then at the finish, was fifteen seconds slow. When challenged, Tait dismissed the claims.⁴⁵ By the following week, Tait had been removed from membership of Clydesdale Harriers. With Tait having severed his membership of the Clydesdale club, he also came under pressure to give up his seat on the S.A.A.A. committee on behalf of the club. Thus, the club lost influence at governing body level, the seat being allocated to the West of

⁴³ Electronic timing was first used shortly after this in athletics at the City of London School Sports at Stamford Bridge in June 1887.

⁴⁴ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 15th March, 1887. P. 23.

⁴⁵ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 22nd March, 1887. Pp. 23-24.

Scotland Harriers.

A third factor was the relative position of the West of Scotland Harriers as a 'mongrel' collection of 'other' sportsmen and not true harriers in the eyes of the Clydesdale club. Given the fierce loyalty to the sport and the fact that their existence was owed in part to the need to break free of the other sports who controlled athletics through the S.A.A.A., the fact that 'the West' men were viewed as a collection of mere cyclists and rowers, simply added fuel to the concerns of the Clydesdale Harriers. Clydesdale regarded governance of the sport and the need, through their sections, to keep it free from outside influences as paramount. It did not help that the members of the West of Scotland Harriers used their connections to their advantage. The notion of men with a good sporting pedigree made them by definition 'respectable' and exemplars of the Corinthian ideal. It also helped that the men of the West of Scotland Harriers had strong associations with the premier football clubs of the day especially Queen's Park, Rangers and Battlefield football clubs.

The references to the West of Scotland Harriers as an 'unfriendly rival' already indicated that Clydesdale Harrier's position was under threat from a club established by runners who did not share the outlook adopted by the Clydesdale club. The continued positioning of one section of the athletic press the *Scottish Athletic Journal*, in championing the case of the West of Scotland Harriers as exemplars of the amateur gentleman, merely served to further open a divide already evident to many.

The use of words such as 'duty', 'genial', 'decisive temperament' and expectation of

‘much good’ are all indicative of a sense of serving which is so much associated with the gentleman amateur. The standing of being associated with rowing, swimming, football and harrier clubs (and indeed in the case of John Meikle, secretary of the West of Scotland Harriers, also yachting), was to further highlight the differences in values between the specialist and the sporting polymath. The emphasis was definitely upon participation and enjoyment rather than achievement. The West of Scotland Harriers catered for its cyclist members by, for example, attempting the 25 mile cycling paper chase as well as handicap tricycle races on the track.⁴⁶ This is further emphasised by the investment of the members of the West of Scotland Harriers in multiple sport club subscriptions, purchase of cycling equipment (members had single seaters, tandems, racing tricycles and some had purchased the new ‘safety bike’), and assistance in travel to venues.

The Clydesdale club however, was not without allies and *The Scottish Umpire* championed their cause. Critical of the West of Scotland Harriers for forming and attempting to develop the sport in seeming opposition to the Clydesdale club, there were two specific allegations made against the ‘West’. Firstly, the mere title inferred that their intention all along was to be a club that encompassed the whole of the west of Scotland and not merely a Glasgow club, and that the club had not been honest in depicting itself as such.⁴⁷ Secondly, that as a club with a large number of members not specifically dedicated to the exclusive pursuit of athletics, it could not nor should it assume any moral high ground in relation to the direction of the sport. Thus this view rekindled what appears to have been the original rift in membership that led to the formation of the West of Scotland Harriers. McAusland confirms this pre-

⁴⁶ *The Scottish Umpire*, 20th September, 1887. P. 3.

⁴⁷ *The Scottish Umpire*, 21st December, 1886. P. 9.

eminent position of Clydesdale Harriers by observing that it had ‘taken over Scottish athletics.’⁴⁸ In quoting the athletic press that the Clydesdale club was a ‘pioneer athletic club’ it emphasised its primary position in Scottish athletics.

‘So powerful had the club become that, in September 1887, it announced that it would send a team to the national championships in England, but felt that ‘the Scotch harrier clubs should have more control over an event properly designated as national.’ This attitude showed a sense of its own importance on the running scene and illustrated the extent to which CH *was* Scottish athletics.’⁴⁹

All these events coalesced to create the position by the start of the cross country season of 1887-1888 where tensions could no longer be kept as gentlemen’s disagreements and the climate was ready for further challenges to the Clydesdale club. This first came in the *Scottish Athletic Journal*.

‘We do not require to show the sections that they are pandering to an injustice – that fact is apparent on the very surface. If the Clydesdale Club *in toto* refuses to make reparation for their mistake, the other clubs should appeal to the S.A.A.A. to form a committee for the management of cross-country affairs – we are not exactly far enough advanced in the sport to warrant us in forming an independent association. This committee, we are certain, would look at the matter as we do, and would burst up the sectional business, and thereby place all clubs on a footing of equality.’⁵⁰

This was followed one week later with a call to form a ‘Cross-Country Association’ challenging the Clydesdale club with the assertion that as ‘...one of its first duties ... be to say whether the stamp of the new Association is to be set to the new

⁴⁸ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.* p. 2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 4

⁵⁰ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 1st November, 1887. P. 17.

propaganda sent forth by Clydesdale Harriers.’⁵¹

The new Association created at the meeting in Glasgow on 10th December 1887 was under the direction of two prominent Edinburgh Harriers. Both J.M. Bow, an Old Lorettonian and cyclist, elected as its first President and David Scott Duncan elected as its secretary, indicated that an attempt was being made to drive a buffer between the two clubs of the west of Scotland. Duncan’s position within Scottish athletics was of critical importance. Active at all levels of the sport, his former school noted his presence in Scottish athletics as being characterised by ‘his remarkable memory’ and ‘... his judgement.’⁵²

The Scottish Championships and rules of qualification

Given Clydesdale Harrier’s numerical dominance, it would seem logical that the club would have featured more strongly in the new Association. However, the reluctance of the club to become involved seems to have stemmed from the fact that the rules governing the championships were under review. At the centre of this debate were two key issues; the requirement to live within a specific radius of the club to which the athlete was in membership and secondly, the requirement to ‘qualify’ for the championship by completing a requisite number of Saturday runs for the club thus making oneself ‘eligible’. This called into question the legitimacy of Clydesdale’s sections as *bone fide* members of the club since they could not comply with the requirement to live within a certain radius of a club’s defined ‘headquarters’.

The *Scottish Athletic Journal* noted that:

⁵¹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 8th November, 1887. P. 17.

⁵² *Schola Regia, The Royal High School of Edinburgh*. Edinburgh Central Library. Edinburgh Historical Society. Accession No. B35337.

‘There are now nearly a dozen harriers clubs in Scotland, while some football, cycling and athletic clubs have cross-country branches. There are at the present time several burning questions agitating the cross-country world, and these can only be settled by a governing body. Therefore to delay the establishment of an association is calculated to aggravate the situation. We know from personal knowledge that the leading harrier clubs look with a very jealous eye on the latest move of the Clydesdale Harriers in forming sections in the counties contiguous to Glasgow.’⁵³

At the inaugural meeting of 10th December 1887, the Clydesdale delegates walked out of the meeting at the point where the key rule for qualifying to run in the championships of the new Association was defined and carried by twelve votes to three. The motion was in favour of the ‘number of qualifying runs to be five, and in the case of clubs having country sections only runs with headquarters to qualify.’⁵⁴ This was combined with a further rule that only athletes within a twenty mile radius of the club’s headquarters could be members of that club. This effectively started the process of loosening the grip of Clydesdale Harriers on the sport.

What followed over the next two years amounted to civil war within the sport. The championships of 1888 signalled the start of a peculiar relationship that Clydesdale Harriers was to have with its own sport. Having walked out of the inaugural meeting, it nevertheless complied with the new rules of the S.C.C.A. and entered and won both individual and team titles of the first S.C.C.A. championship in 1888. Nevertheless, this did not serve to abate the war of words. The press were only too keen to make public the differences: ‘Again, you talk of the ulterior motives of the majority of the delegates ... and insinuate that the Clydesdale Harriers were

⁵³ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 8th November, 1887. P. 17.

⁵⁴ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 13th December, 1887. P. 12.

conspired against by all the other clubs who were represented.’⁵⁵ Much of the rhetoric that was to ensue generated a siege mentality in the Clydesdale club.

First Scottish Cross Country Association Championships: 1888

The first championships were entrusted to a sub-committee of just three people, Messrs. Bow and Duncan of Edinburgh Harriers plus John Meikle of the West of Scotland Harriers. This committee was given only five weeks to make the necessary arrangements from the date of the first meeting of the S.C.C.A. on the 4th of February in Edinburgh. Meanwhile, Clydesdale Harriers became the first Scottish team to compete in the English cross country championships held in Manchester on the 2nd March the same year. The club finished a creditable sixth in the team competition behind the harrier clubs of Birchfield, Salford, Worcester, South London and Burton. The highest placed individual was R. Graham, with Clydesdale’s leading runner Andrew Hannah placing a disappointing 30th suffering from a head cold.

Kilmarnock Harriers competed for the first time in a Scottish national championship, although on the day, failed to finish a team, with only five finishing the course. The history of the championships to date was one of mixed fortunes for the Clydesdale club. They won the individual titles in 1886 and 1887 but Edinburgh Harriers took the team titles on both occasions. The West of Scotland Harriers competed for the first time in 1887. Only these three clubs had contested the championships to this point since individual runners could not compete in what was essentially a team event. Thus new and developing clubs needed considerable strength in depth and

⁵⁵ *The Scottish Umpire*, 27th December, 1887. P. 13.

competency to compete.

Clydesdale were to win both individual and team titles of the 1888 S.C.C.A. championships emphatically, taking the first six individual places winning the team title by thirty nine points from Edinburgh Harriers. The 'tradition', started at the previous championships in 1887, of a football match being played during the race to pull in and entertain the crowds, was again a feature.

At the presentation of prizes, Shields records the feelings of the Clydesdale club despite being the new national champions.

'Clydesdale Harriers antagonism and opposition to the new Association was voiced at the Prince of Wales Hotel that evening. Mr Mellish, Secretary of Clydesdale Harriers, stated that his club was determined not to change the position which they had already taken up against the restrictive laws of the S.C.C.A. This statement was received with marked signs of disapproval by the majority of the company including those who were members of his own club.'⁵⁶

This result of the championship merely served to reinforce the view of Clydesdale Harriers that a great injustice had been done, as they had clearly demonstrated their pre-eminent position within the sport in the only way acceptable; by sheer force of talent. As the sport continued to grow in the number of clubs being formed, Clydesdale pressed ahead with plans to form an opposition governing body that challenged the S.C.C.A. and forced a potential split in club affiliation to the respective governing bodies.

⁵⁶ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 7.

At the first annual meeting of the S.C.C.A. on 30th November 1888, the radius of residence for club membership from club headquarters was confirmed as 20 miles. A letter from Clydesdale Harriers was read to the meeting expressing a willingness to meet the committee of the Association and this was accepted with a view to seeking reconciliation. However, one week later, the Scottish Harriers Union was formed by Clydesdale Harriers at a meeting on Saturday 8th December at the Bath Hotel, Glasgow.

Schisms and splits were the stuff and substance of late-Victorian sport as governing bodies wrestled with the fabric and shape of the sports they governed. Emergence of new sporting forms with differing approaches at their core and differing views on (re) defining themselves made governance of sports difficult. To be able to say what the sport was not, as much as what it was, occupied the minds of officers and athletes alike. The struggle for control was multi-layered across all sports encompassing club status, protectionism, sport politics and control, defining rules in relation to self interest and sporting and social status.

The Scottish Harriers Union and the Scottish Cross Country Association

A central figure in the formation of the Scottish Harriers Union was W.W. Tait. Partially rehabilitated from his earlier misdemeanours, it was clear that Tait was determined to find some means of repatriation in his struggle to protect his reputation following the previous ‘scandals’ of time keeping and handicapping. It was his motion that called upon Mellish of Clydesdale Harriers to take the chair at the meeting on the 8th of December 1888 and it would be naïve to think that this was not in some way orchestrated prior to the meeting. Attendance at the meeting was

by county affiliations, an intelligent device in ensuring that the various sections of the Clydesdale club were represented. The 'counties' were Ayrshire, Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Stirlingshire all of whom were sections of the club.

An examination of the county representatives at the meeting with the records of membership of Clydesdale Harriers reveals that seventeen names were recorded.⁵⁷ At least thirteen were members of the Clydesdale club.⁵⁸ Letters were also received from the Harriers clubs of Kilmarnock, Hamilton, Edinburgh and Ayr opposed to the new body with further letters from Alloa, Arbroath, Forfar and Motherwell Harriers clubs in favour of the new organisation. The motion was proposed and seconded by Clydesdale men and carried by the meeting. The new officers of the SHU were exclusively from Clydesdale Harriers.

Tait was clearly intent upon a programme of radical change. A new set of rules for the sport was designed and set the new Union apart from its predecessors. It would endeavouring to 'carry out competition on new and improved lines' in order to 'foster cross-country running, and have the competitions carried out with as few restrictions as possible consistent with pure amateur sport.'⁵⁹

The new rules included the county championships being open to sections of clubs in counties and within this, an individual championship open to all amateurs who were Scottish and in residence in Scotland and who were eligible to compete in their respective individual county championships. The rules governing numbers in teams

⁵⁷ *Scottish Sport*, 11th December, 1888. P. 7.

⁵⁸ McAusland, B. (1988). Appendix B. *op. cit.*

⁵⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 11th December, 1888. P. 11.

were changed from the existing 12 to run and 6 to score, to 10 to run and 5 to score. However, the major challenge to the nature of the sport was the departure from the conventional scoring system of adding up the places of the individuals to calculate the team result (the team scoring the lowest points wins), to a system of averaging the times of the first five men home. This new scoring was clearly influenced by the Thames Hare and Hounds experiment some 20 years earlier.

The general feeling of the Clydesdale club was that the parent body, the S.C.C.A., was intent on damaging the club and Clydesdale club's handbook stated: 'Your committee could not see their way to support a body whose policy was apparently aimed at its – the CH – dismemberment, if not actual destruction ...'⁶⁰

Clydesdale however had in John Mellish one of its most respected advocates. Mellish, with colleague Andrew Dick, ensured the continued success of Clydesdale Harriers in challenging the authority of Scottish athletics. Mellish was educated at Glasgow Academy and epitomised the athlete of the day with abilities in cricket as well as athletics. Known for his literary and artistic talents, he became President of both Clydesdale Harriers and Glasgow Rangers F.C., holding both offices at the same time, as well as accepting the Presidency of the Scottish Harriers Union. As a barrister, Mellish was well positioned to guide the political resolution to the crisis in the sport before leaving for a career in politics in London.

The SHU wasted little time in forming links with appropriate bodies and opened correspondence with the English National Cross Country Union with a view to

⁶⁰ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.* P. 4.

affiliating and holding championships ‘this side of the border’ during the following season of 1889–90.⁶¹ This was clearly designed to lead to confrontation with the S.C.C.A. Arrangements were made by both organisations to hold their respective versions of the Scottish cross country championships. The S.C.C.A. set the date of 10th March at Hamilton Racecourse with the S.H.U. championships at Celtic Park on the 23rd February.

There was one clear benefit to the schism and that was the interest now generated in the sporting public by two national championships. The S.H.U. championships elicited interest from separate clubs as well as the various sections of Clydesdale Harriers.⁶² Additionally, Clydesdale followed the ‘tradition’ of staging a football match between themselves and Celtic F.C. following harrier club’s success in defeating Preston North End F.C. The football matches generated considerable revenue and allowed the governing body to adequately cover the championship expenses.

The status of the championships of the respective governing bodies would become the locus for the control of the sport. While inter-club runs continued in apparent harmony, it was championship results and placings that gave the clubs their position within the sport. Both governing bodies therefore vied with the other to organise and manage the most successful.

The championships of the S.H.U. were a success. Despite Andrew Hannah having to stop through injury, this was to be the start of a long run of superb championship

⁶¹ *Scottish Sport*, 1st January, 1889. P. 2.

⁶² *Scottish Sport*, 12th February, 1889. P. 8.

runs by Hannah who was to be champion five times over seven championships, a total only exceeded in the history of the sport by Nat Muir of Shettletston Harriers (8 championship wins between 1979-1987) and equalled only once by J. Suttie Smith of Dundee Thistle Harriers (1928–1932). Interestingly, the new scoring system of average time would have confirmed the old system of points total. Prior to the championships, the S.H.U. also confirmed the inauguration of the new Junior championship for the end of the year for season 1889-1890.

The championships of the S.C.C.A. followed two weeks later in the grounds of Hamilton Palace, and was a fiasco with the field following an old trail that had been laid and not the championship trail. The result was declared void. While this was not an unusual occurrence in cross country running, it was essential that these championships were conducted without controversy given the success of the S.H.U. event some weeks before. Clydesdale competed but threatened to withdraw their team for the re-run at the end of March as did Hamilton Harriers who, with local knowledge, had followed the correct trail laid by Motherwell Y.M.C.A. Harriers and came home first with Thorburn their first counting runner leading 12 other runners home although no club finished a full team.

Hamilton Harriers did not compete in the re-run in protest. The runners of Clydesdale Harriers forced their own club committee to rescind a decision not to run, and by contacting runners through telegrams including reserves, the club competed and despite the non-availability of six of their key runners including McWilliams (the winner of the S.H.U. event two weeks prior), the Clydesdale club won the individual title through C. McCann and lifted the team title by over twenty points

from the nearest rival, Edinburgh Harriers. Shields notes that Thorburn's time recorded over the first run was faster than McCann's time in the re-run.⁶³

Clydesdale Harriers had, for the moment, the moral high ground in terms of premier position in club athletics. However, it needed to solve the position of isolation of its 'own' S.H.U. championships being seen as merely an extended club championship with other clubs being politically disinclined to attend, especially Edinburgh. Equally, the S.C.C.A. had to attend to the fact that its most successful club was at odds with it and was seeking to establish its own rules, regulations and championships.

The press summarised the season somewhat phlegmatically commenting that the 20 mile radius clause of the S.C.C.A. was '... calculated to injure the sport.', while also noting that the six new clubs which formed after the inauguration of the S.H.U. preferred '... to wait till next year...' in order to effect change to the rules.⁶⁴ While the position in relation to membership and running strength was in favour of Clydesdale, the power balance was still with the S.C.C.A. and its clubs.

The following season of 1889-1890, the second of the two years of the 'civil war' in cross country, started with an enormous show of strength from Clydesdale Harriers with the largest club run recorded in Scotland of 119 runners on their opening run of the season from Victoria Baths in Glasgow. A further 40 members were also present for the club photograph.⁶⁵ However, Andrew Dick left the club for a business posting in South Africa and with this departure a great deal of impetus was lost from their

⁶³ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 29th March 1889. P. 9

⁶⁵ *Scottish Sport*, 5th October 1889. P. 7.

endeavours to maintain control of the sport. Dick would perhaps be reminded of the cross country hostilities in exile from his native country through the fowling piece, two revolvers and a specially made silver watch with which he was presented to mark his departure.

The annual general meeting of the S.H.U. was notable for the suggestion that the counties championship should be opened up to England and Ireland thus effectively generating the creation of a British Inter County Championship. This however was never realised but demonstrated the confidence of the S.H.U. With new clubs applying for membership of the S.H.U., there was a critical mass of clubs and club membership developing. The first Junior Championships of the S.H.U. were held at Ibrox Park on 21st December 1889, and the rules governing this event were specific:

‘open to all amateurs resident in Scotland ... not placed in the first six men of a placed club in any championship or amongst the first five men of a placed county in the S.H.U. championships. Also excludes winners in said races. Course to be not exceeding 8 miles and entry to be 10/- per team and £1 for non affiliated clubs or sections’⁶⁶

There was continual pressure on all sides however to end the dispute and both sections of the press pursued the view that ‘The present position of affairs that tolerates two separate and distinct championships of Scotland is a false and stupid one.’⁶⁷ It was in this climate of demands for reconciliation, that the S.H.U. Junior Championships took place. This drew the largest gathering of athletes at a championship event in Scotland to date. With 11 teams and over 100 athletes, the event was an outstanding success. Designed to promote the sport, the rules debarred

⁶⁶ *Scottish Sport*, 8th November, 1889. P. 4.

⁶⁷ *The Scottish Referee*, 25th November, 1889. Cited in: McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.* P. 4.

members of the first three teams from further Junior competition thus effectively 'promoting' them to the main championships. Arrangements for changing, running and the awarding of medals as well as the social after the event were considered to be exemplary. With arrangements being made for 'cars' to transport the runners from the centre of Glasgow to Ibrox as well as a boat down the Clyde from Jamaica Bridge to Highland Lane Wharf, the race was conducted in an organised manner. The social was held in 'Macs' in Union Street afterwards, a well-known venue for club socials. The event attracted clubs who made extraordinary efforts for the journey to Glasgow such as Argyle Harriers who left at seven in the morning and could not return until Monday due to the lack of ferries and adequate Sunday transport.

The response by the S.C.C.A. was to make a recommendation to lower the qualifying runs from five to three thus amending rule 10, a compromise of a sort, which in the event was defeated by the casting vote of Stewart Lawrie in the chair. However, at the meeting of 27th November, the A.G.M. of the S.C.C.A., the feeling hardened against the Clydesdale club. The S.H.U. was a *de facto* club by virtue that it was almost exclusively a governing body of one club with only one other club (Strathblane Harriers) in exclusive membership.⁶⁸ The meeting's view was that the recommendation to lower the qualifying runs had been made in good faith in response to a letter by Clydesdale Harriers that they wished to meet. In the event the Clydesdale representatives failed to appear. Instead a further letter was sent intimating that they had joined the S.H.U. and not the S.C.C.A. thus explicitly stating that they did not recognise the S.C.C.A. as the national body. They also

⁶⁸ Motherwell Harriers had membership of both bodies.

referred the S.C.C.A. to the S.H.U. in matters relating to cross country running. This deliberate and direct challenge to the authority of the S.C.C.A. was characterised by John Meikle of the West of Scotland Harriers as ‘absurd’.⁶⁹ With 9 clubs in membership of the S.C.C.A., it was felt that action was required. The secretary, D.S. Duncan, was instructed to write to the Clydesdale Harriers club ‘that the Association could not enter into negotiations with the Harriers Union, and general regret was expressed that they should have so unexpectedly withdrawn from the conciliatory attitude they had adopted by agreeing to send delegates.’⁷⁰ The response from Clydesdale was immediate and unequivocal and made in a letter to the editor of *Scottish Sport*.⁷¹

The S.C.C.A. followed their action with application to join the S.A.A.A., a move calculated to consolidate their position as the principal organisation for cross country within a parent organisation. Effectively Clydesdale Harriers were in dispute with two larger governing bodies. The powers of governance, now in the hands of the S.C.C.A. on behalf of the S.A.A.A., included being able to proclaim a competition of which it disapproves invalid, and could seek the S.A.A.A. to rule accordingly. In addition, through the parent body, it had the power to suspend athletes. The stakes were now considerably higher.

The Scottish Cross Country Union

The conclusion to the divide in the sport came within a few months but not in sufficient time to render the need to hold two championships obsolete. A meeting was held on Saturday, 1st February 1890 between the two organisations. It was clear

⁶⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 29th November, 1889. p. 3.

⁷⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 29th November, 1889. P. 9.

⁷¹ See Appendix 4.

to both parties that as the Clydesdale club's membership approached 1,000, they were by far the strongest club in Scottish athletics. They were also contemplating inter-club competitions with English opposition such as Airedale Harriers of Bradford. Clydesdale's isolated position relative to the majority of clubs who were in membership of the S.C.C.A., meant that a serious impasse was developing in the sport. The meeting called by the S.H.U. was small, with only four delegates from each body. Conspicuous by his absence was W.W. Tait. John Mellish of the S.H.U. proposed J.M. Bow for the chair and then introduced the issues item by item. On the question of the counties championship, the S.H.U. conceded that it had served the purpose for which it was established and that it would be happy to revert to the S.C.C.A. position of a senior, individual and club championship but wished to retain the junior championship as well as their definition of amateur eligibility. This was agreed. D.S. Duncan put the view that three qualifying runs was sufficient to qualify a man to run in the championship and this was agreed by the delegates from the S.H.U. They also consented to the twenty mile radius stipulation and despite reservations from the S.C.C.A., both parties agreed to trial the 'average time' method of deciding the team competition.

One further decision was agreed in relation to club representation:

'That each affiliated club be entitled to send a representative to the annual general meeting, and clubs with a membership of over one hundred shall be entitled to an additional representative for every fifty members, or fraction thereof, with a limit that no club shall be entitled to more than three representatives.'⁷²

⁷² Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 11.

A new organisation was also agreed with the title of the Scottish Cross Country Union (S.C.C.U.) to be constituted at the end of the current cross country season for the following season 1890-1891 with D.S. Duncan as interim secretary. While the experiment with average time calculation for the team competition was quietly forgotten, this effectively ended the schism in the sport that had lasted for the best part of four years.⁷³ As Shields comments 'it is important to realise that both the S.C.C.A. and the S.H.U. were dissolved to allow the formation of the Scottish Cross Country Union.'⁷⁴ This did not represent a 'take over' by either organization.

The strengths of the rival associations were different. The energies of the Clydesdale club in building the base of running in Scotland were recognised, especially with regard to the Junior race and in the general high quality of organisation of their championships. The new arrangements gave the interim secretary time to put in place up to date rules more in keeping with the rapid development of the sport and reflecting the wishes of clubs in terms of fostering the sport more appropriately. The sport was now able to focus on the rising numbers of clubs who were challenging the three established clubs of Edinburgh, Clydesdale and the West of Scotland Harriers.

The last championships for both bodies were run at Cathkin Park in February in the case of the S.H.U. and at Tynecastle Park, home of the Heart of Midlothian Football Club, in the case of the S.C.C.A. in March. Clydesdale, and Andrew Hannah in particular, dominated both championships with Hannah finishing a creditable ninth in the English Cross Country Championships the same year.

⁷³ See the report in *Scottish Sport*, 4th February, 1890. P. 9.

⁷⁴ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 11.

The rift between the two factions, while being satisfactorily resolved, nevertheless left a lasting impression. The evidence suggests the original schism was a deliberate act of social and sporting discrimination against the Clydesdale club at the height of their achievements in cross country. If a measure of standing and esteem are encapsulated in the views of ones contemporaries, then Clydesdale Harriers and their officials never quite seemed to earn the trust of the rest of the cross country fraternity. The earlier examination of the records of office bearers of Scottish athletics reveals a paucity of Clydesdale men serving as office bearers, an unusual position given their commanding presence in the sport. Clearly there were forces at work to exclude the club either through political vindictiveness or simply through fear of the possibility that they would 'take over'.

Forces within the sport of athletics and cross country running obviously felt that the approach of the Clydesdale club was not in keeping with the image of the sport and that it was safer that the custodianship of sporting values would be more secure in the hands of others. The control that the West of Scotland Harriers seemed to be able to enjoy in the west of the country was extraordinary and is testament both to their political acumen as well as their standing in the eyes of most of their peers. This position continued to the formation of the next new governing body in 1903 and up to and beyond 1914. In all, only two out of fourteen Presidents came from outside the existing controlling power base of the three original clubs plus Edinburgh University and Watsonians clubs, and only three of six honorary secretaries from

1885 until 1960.⁷⁵ The ethos of the sport therefore was inherently conservative and traditional and given to values associated with ensuring continuity rather than change. These values were to surface again in the next challenge to the governing body as early as 1894.

The ‘Juniors’: the silent majority

The focus of the governing body now switched to the growing gulf between clubs labelled as senior over those assumed to be junior. The degree to which the sport had grown within the first three years from the formation of the new governing body, the S.C.C.U. in 1890, meant that new clubs inevitably classed as ‘Juniors’ were creating a ‘head of steam’ on being able to access the competitive structure of the sport at championship level. It was the championship occasions that gave status to a club rather than inter-club competition. The rules of the Union effectively created a barrier to participation at this level by holding only one championship at junior level, the National Junior Championships inaugurated in 1891, at which junior clubs and runners could break through by virtue of their placings. This was an effective control mechanism of the sport, in that it emphasised a pecking order of club hierarchy and by virtue of status and position, allowed a few to control the majority, despite apparent voting rights at the annual general meeting. This small caucus of senior clubs with the ability to attract and maintain quality runners, numbered only six of the growing number of almost 50 clubs. They were Clydesdale, Edinburgh, West of Scotland, Edinburgh Northern, Watsonians, and Motherwell Y.M.C.A. Harriers clubs.

⁷⁵ The individuals and clubs outside the main power base who held the Presidency of the S.C.C.A. or the new S.C.C.U. between 1887 and 1903 were A. Forrest of Dalkeith Harriers in 1894-95 and G. Hulme of Berwick & District Harriers in 1898-99.

The key issue of how to engage the Junior clubs more actively in the championships was important for the sport, since the only way a talented runner in one of the Junior clubs could compete was to join one of the Senior clubs, thus effectively damaging the development of the Junior club. Stewart Duffus was an example in this respect leaving Arbroath Harriers after winning the Junior title in 1893 to join Clydesdale Harriers, where he went on to win the individual Senior title in 1897. The championships of the Juniors and Seniors alternated in venue each year between the east and west of the country.

As new clubs formed, demonstrating the popularity of the sport more widely, the hiatus caused by the lack of ability to access or progress to the senior championship came to be a major fault line in the development of the sport at a crucial time in its development. Just at the time when the sport was required to be responsive and sensitive to the nature of its growth, it effectively dragged its heels by failing to recognise the issues arising from the lack of opportunity for new clubs and, by and large, younger competitors. This hesitation allowed the impetus gained from the development work generated over the previous years to slip from the grasp of the sport and to render it unattractive and unnecessarily hierarchical to anything other than the most ardent follower. Given the competing attractions of other sports at this time, especially the growth of football, the governing body were slow to capitalise on the expansion of its club base and the commensurate numbers of runners. In this respect, Clydesdale Harriers were ahead of their time in the establishment of Junior competition. It may be that this remoteness and relative inability of the sport to further their position led a number of clubs that had been formed, to cease activity. Certainly by season 1892-1893, Hamilton Harriers one of the earliest clubs, were

reported to be in a serious position regarding membership.⁷⁶

The issue of a Junior championship was eventually addressed when clubs in the west of Scotland formed a Western District Junior Cross Country Association. The use of the word 'Association' was perhaps most important in establishing the ethos and quality of the organisation given the differences of some four years previously. The organisation was formed under a degree of mounting pressure from Junior clubs in order to gain quality competitive experiences. A race for Juniors had been organised on 17th February, 1894 at Cathcart on the south side of Glasgow and was billed in the press as a 'championship'. The first official Western District race is not recorded by the SCCU until the following year. The evidence of the formation of a Western District Junior Cross Country Association is in itself ambiguous.

While Shields gives the formation of the Western District Junior Cross Country Association as September 1894, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the roots of this body were sown as early as February 1893, just a mere three years since the inception of the new Scottish Cross Country Union.⁷⁷ It is known that the Arbroath Harriers team competing in the National Junior Championship were aged between 16 to 20 years of age.⁷⁸ This was the team of which Duffus was a member when winning the title that year prior to changing clubs, emphasising the need to recognise the relative vulnerability of the sport in terms of protecting its younger runners and keeping them involved. In particular, there was apathy within the sport in attending SCCU meetings, presumably because many of the clubs felt disenfranchised in being able to effectively advocate their positions. This led in turn to renewed calls for

⁷⁶ *Scottish Sport*, 10th February, 1893. P. 12.

⁷⁷ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 16.

⁷⁸ *Scottish Sport*, 10th February, 1893. P. 11.

representation commensurate with numbers. Further, and more importantly, *Scottish Sport* noted:

‘In its present financial position the governing body is precluded from giving assistance to the minor bodies that are springing up throughout Scotland, and those who blame the Union for their seeming disinterestedness on this score are not cognisant of the difficulties such a step would entail.’⁷⁹

Thus clubs would find themselves in a double bind. Unable to get assistance from the governing body to develop the sport for the benefits of its members, it would also run foul of the governing body when it set up organisations in order to come together to effect change. The financial position also became a concern when the accounts of the S.C.C.U. showed a mere balance of £8 for season 1893-1894 compared to the club accounts of Clydesdale Harriers for the same period of over £80 pounds.⁸⁰ The issue surfaced at the start of the 1893-1894 season, when expenses for travelling to one major championship were raised and the suggestion of a championship available to Juniors who had yet to compete in the National Juniors was mooted.⁸¹ This was quickly followed by a meeting of club representatives at Ancell’s restaurant on 30th November 1893 with the express ‘view of instituting a championship for such clubs as are unable to enter teams for any of the existing championships.’⁸² Further reporting indicated that it was not the intention to form an association ‘but if the S.C.C.U. refuse to legislate for bone-fide juniors, we doubt not but that the numerous young clubs will form themselves into a body and hold annual championships.’⁸³ The signs were ominous for the governing body who were slow to react. By the

⁷⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 31st March, 1893. P. 7.

⁸⁰ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 16.

⁸¹ *Scottish Sport*, 3rd November, 1893. P. 12.

⁸² *Scottish Sport*, 17th November, 1893. P. 13.

⁸³ *Scottish Sport*, 24th November, 1893. P. 10.

following month the new grouping was being openly accorded the title of the Western District Junior Cross Country Association whose first race was now billed as a 'championship'.⁸⁴ The first championship for Juniors in the west of Scotland was due to take place on February 17th 1894 from Cathcart, Glasgow with tea and smoker following.

The S.C.C.U. Junior championship held on the first Saturday of February 1994 attracted entries from eleven clubs as well as individual entries, while the new Western District championship had entries from seven clubs and one individual. The position of junior clubs and their runners was the focus of the A.G.M. of the S.C.C.U. later that same year. On this occasion it was the radius rule for membership to which junior clubs objected, feeling that the twenty mile radius unreasonably favoured the senior clubs in attracting new members. This would allow senior clubs to encroach on the catchment of smaller rural clubs from neighbouring villages thus depriving them of their best local talent.

The following four years saw a slow but inevitable rise in affiliations to the junior association since by definition, clubs could not compete in the senior competition due to their status and the requirement to be able to demonstrate competence at senior level prior to admission to senior ranks. In 1895 the numbers competing in the Western District championships exceeded that of the National championships.⁸⁵ 1896 saw a further escalation by a change in title of the Western District Junior Cross Country Association to the Scottish Junior Cross Country Association, a title that lasted a mere twelve months whereupon it changed to the Scottish Cross Country

⁸⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 15th December, 1893. p. 13.

⁸⁵ Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 17.

Association (Western District). By 1898, the S.C.C.U. had less members in affiliation than the new association. Despite repeated requests by the junior clubs to the S.C.C.U. that it should oversee the championships, a refusal was always forthcoming. The S.C.C.U. it seems, either saw itself as a senior elite body or simply had no funds to support further competition.

However it could not ignore the events of 1897. Such a challenge contained in the title of the new body was a distinct threat to the authority of the S.C.C.U. Meanwhile, the parent body the S.A.A.A. was also experiencing difficulties with the formation of a Scottish Amateur Athletic Union (S.A.A.U.) in 1895. This new organisation was a result of the conflict between cyclists and athletes and their respective rights over cycling races at athletic sports days. Not unexpectedly, the new S.A.A.U. organised its own championships. The rift however only lasted two years whereupon the S.A.A.A. resolved the outstanding issues.

The new Scottish Cross Country Association (Western District) meanwhile had made a request for affiliation directly to the S.A.A.A. in September 1897, thus circumventing the S.C.C.U. and ‘for a guinea the Association would be entitled to a seat on the committee.’⁸⁶ While this outcome was not achieved, the challenge was real. They followed this up at their 1897 A.G.M. by deleting the word ‘Junior’ from their title thus becoming the Scottish Cross Country Association (Western District). The S.C.C.U. quickly responded by opening a dialogue with the S.C.C.A. with a view to reconciling differences. By now they were critically aware of the strength of the new organisation which had assembled powerful patrons in Lord Belhaven, Sir

⁸⁶ *Scottish Sport*, 1st October, 1897. P. 6.

John Stirling-Maxwell and two members of parliament, J.G.A. Baird and J.H.C. Hozier.⁸⁷ The SCCU issued a statement in which they made it clear that they were to accept the championships of the S.C.C.A. for this current year with a view to seeking a resolution.

The resolution came only after a considerable amount of confrontation. After their respective annual general meetings in October 1898, the S.C.C.A. broke off relations with the S.C.C.U. Instead, they again sought affiliation to the S.A.A.A. directly. The response of the S.A.A.A. was to refer them to the S.C.C.U. as the body for cross country in Scotland. This brought to a head the confrontation, since although now almost twice the size of the S.C.C.U., the S.C.C.A. could not operate without a permit from the ruling body the S.A.A.A. through the S.C.C.U., as they would in effect debar all runners from the sport if they pursued such a course. There followed a war of words in the athletic press, a usual precursor to muscle flexing prior to settlement.⁸⁸ Having eventually applied, and received, a permit from the S.C.C.U., the S.C.C.A. agreed to hold a meeting after their championships in February 1899 and it was at that meeting that affairs were satisfactorily concluded.

Had it not been for the action of the S.A.A.A., the S.C.C.U. would have faced their greatest challenge to date as the S.C.C.A. were numerically stronger with 27 clubs in affiliation to the S.C.C.U. of 21. This was also a test of the power of the S.A.A.A. in governing the sport through its affiliated organisations and came only a few years after it had faced similar challenges to its governance by the S.A.A.U. However, there was one last throw of the dice in the nomenclature of governance of cross

⁸⁷ *Scottish Sport*, 3rd December 1897. p.6

⁸⁸ see *Scottish Sport*, 21st October, 1898, p. 6 for an example of the discourse.

country running in Scotland.

The National Cross Country Union of Scotland

A period of relative calm ensued for about two years. Both bodies continued in their own way to control and run their respective interest areas within the sport. Engagement behind the scenes however was considerable with *ad hoc* conferences arranged in order to move the position towards a resolution. Both bodies recognised the unsatisfactory position for the sport. Agreement was reached at a conference on 27th December 1901, resulting in an announcement at the A.G.M. of the S.C.C.U. in September 1902 that this would be the last annual meeting of the S.C.C.U.⁸⁹ No office bearers were elected. Clubs in affiliation were asked instead to vote on a committee motion for amalgamation with the Scottish Cross Country Association (Western District) with a view to forming a new governing body. The clubs adopted the proposal. One week later the same proposal was put to the membership of the S.C.C.A. with a similar outcome. A meeting of all clubs in Scotland was called with the provision that each club should have two delegates each. *The Scottish Referee* called this meeting ‘The New Parliament’ and urged clubs to think in terms of the new Labour movement’s slogan ‘unity is strength’.⁹⁰ The circular to clubs sent by the interim secretary to this conference is specific in its position and aims:

‘At a meeting of delegates representing the Scottish Cross Country Union and the Scottish Cross Country Association (Western District) held on 27th December last, it was resolved ‘To form a new ruling cross country body in Scotland, in order to cope with the changed aspect of cross country

⁸⁹ Shields C. (1990). *op. cit.* records the year incorrectly as 1903.

⁹⁰ *The Scottish Referee*, 29th September, 1902. P. 6.

running, as compared with the period when the rules presently in existence were framed.’

I have to inform you that a meeting of the representatives of cross country clubs will be held in the North British Station Hotel, George Square, Glasgow, on Saturday, 11th inst., at 4pm prompt, for the purposes of drawing up constitution and rules.

Your club is entitled to send two representatives, who will be admitted to the meeting on production of a warrant from the club authorising them to attend.’⁹¹

The meeting on 11th October 1902 ended almost 17 years of struggle to find an acceptable body to govern the sport of cross country running in Scotland. Almost 70 delegates attended from various parts of the country and the first resolution of name was unanimously accepted as ‘The National Cross Country Union of Scotland’. Constitution and rules were adopted with devolved authority to district associations to establish radius qualification issues within the new ‘ten mile of headquarters’ resolution. The sport appeared to be able to move forward to its next challenge: to organise the first international cross country event the following year.

Summary

Governance of the sport was vicarious. At the whim of fashions and fads and a degree of serendipity with regard to future developments, events tended to happen to the respective governing bodies, rather than a planned approach to manage change. Cross country running was no different from other sporting organisations. From the strong and relatively hedonistic club base, the sport felt it needed to draw round itself an administrative and legislative shield from which it could protect itself from professionalism. Linked to this, was its ‘twin evil’ of betting. The sport of cross country also attempted to preserve a running ‘tradition’. Birley calls this early period

⁹¹ *The Scottish Referee*, 6th October, 1902. P. 6.

of organisation ‘Die-hards under pressure’⁹² and to a degree this encapsulates the prevailing view that the sport was under some form of assault. New social structures meant that the opportunity to engage in cross country running became available to ordinary men. This was certainly true of harrier running in Scotland.

The ethos of the sport, constructed by schoolboys and kept as a form that marked them apart, became more socially malleable. Within this ethos lay the values associated with them. Social aspirations of ‘getting on’ in society and the subsequent broadening social base of sport meant that putting the sport in the hands of these new aspirants was a risk. Clubs therefore, built their own hierarchies with office bearers who had other sporting connections to give them further credibility. These clubs were quickly able to form governing bodies, thus creating the administrative and positional hierarchies that defined the nature of the sport to the present day.

The autonomy of the clubs was a key aspect of the struggle for governance. The hand of Walter Rye was clear upon the sport. Scottish cross country running, developed unevenly with a more dynamic west diaspora than east. Clubs in rural areas were treated literally as junior colleagues unable to compete effectively due to the size and power of the urban clubs. What emerged at the start of the 20th century was a more confident governing body, more egalitarian and more able to meet the challenge of internationalism.

⁹² Birley, D. (1993). *Sport and the Making of Britain*. Manchester, Manchester University Press. P. 222.

Chapter 7

Scottish Cross Country Running and International Competition

Introduction

International competition is a litmus test of the strength of any sport. It also serves as a measure of the sport's self-confidence and relative maturity. In developmental terms, it often defines the nature and rate of growth relative to other sports. Scotland's cross country runners not only competed at international level within 20 years from the formation of the first club, but hosted the first international cross country championships. This commitment of Scottish cross country running to international fixtures including a championship, was a major factor in establishing cross country within the emergent framework of Scottish sport, and was significant in positioning the sport as one of the main sporting activities of Scotland in the 1890s and early 1900s. Colonial expansion during this period also ensured that the new physical reformist movement, responding to the crisis in recruitment to the armed forces, adopted the sport as a strategic activity to meet their aims of improving the physical well being of young men in meeting the needs of an expanding Empire.¹ Thus, the needs of Empire as well as a developing sporting internationalism, combined at a crucial time for the development of cross country running in Britain.²

This chapter explores Scotland's contribution to cross country running at international level as well as locating its competitive successes. Early forms of club competition are investigated as they served as a precursor to international

¹ *The Scottish Referee*, 4th April, 1902. P. 6.

² See also the *Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) 1903* of the Board of Education, Scotch Education Department.

representative team competition, as well as the role that Scottish émigrés played in the development of the sport abroad thus consolidating the sport internationally.

The focus of the chapter is the inaugural international championships of 1903. This is examined in detail to gauge the nature, character and impact on the sport in Scotland. The fact that the inaugural championships were contested only by the four home nations of Great Britain should not lead to the assumption that the sport had no adherents outside of this domain. Other European nations had developed similar forms of the sport. In addition, the émigrés of the British Empire ensured that cross country running was at least known, if not established, in most parts of the empire and in particular Australia, Canada and India.

The chapter further charts Scottish progress internationally to the outbreak of war in 1914, locating the relative strength of the sport compared to other competing nations. Whilst never quite achieving the comparable status in the eyes of the Scottish sporting public to that of association football or rugby union, cross country running contributed to a developing international sporting consciousness. This was especially the case when measured against international competition with Ireland against whom Scotland had a relatively more developed set of fixtures across sports than with other home nations. The development of cross country running in the context of the emerging modern Olympic movement is also briefly addressed.

Britain, internationalism and sporting expansion

The diffusion of the sport abroad, especially to the British Dominions, helped cross country running grow as part of the general milieu of sporting development at this

time. Emigration and more temporary labour migrations meant that the sport was taken abroad as part of the British 'experience' and Scots played their part in this general development. Tranter refers to this as a sporting 'revolution' attributing it to the expansion of the range of sports available, and to the changing social and geographical foundations of most sports.³ As sports moved from relatively parochial affairs to an international arena, the differing nature of their diffusion across social class, economic status and national borders presented a picture without general consistency.

With regard to cross country running, there were overt statements about the selectivity of the clubs despite the egalitarian nature of membership. It is difficult therefore to draw a definitive conclusion as to the nature of the sport's diffusion other than to clearly outline what the sport exported in terms of ideology epitomised by its governing body. Huggins and Mangan remind us of the dangers of analysis that is too rooted in class explanations for the expansion of sport at this time.⁴

Two key principles governed the status of cross country running between clubs of other nations as well as between the nations themselves. Firstly, the main principle of the purity of amateur sport embodied through, as some saw it, the athletic male of the athletics and harriers clubs. Secondly, the notion of Britain's place in the developing world of sporting contest which was located within a political context of industrial expansion and the jockeying for position for global political influence. This went further however than mere industrial and commercial power. The very

³ Tranter, N. (1998). *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴ Huggins, M. and Mangan, J. A. (2004). *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play*. London: Cass.

ethos of the primacy of British expansionist interests lay in the hegemonic principle of the nature of the distinguishing qualities of the British male embodied through his education and training which imbued him with a 'character' that would mark him out as different, unique and even superior.

These character marks defined how Britain saw her position in the world of sport, seeing her role as benefactor, protector and purveyor of the true moral code of sport which it claimed from within the foundations of the origins of the games and activities of the public schools; the *sine qua non* for participation was the amateur ideal. Already under attack by professionalism within Britain from the game of football and with other sports too easily succumbing to the bookmakers, certain sporting forms were seen as the very benchmark of the amateur ideal. Athletics and cross country running embodied these ideals. International competition in both track and field as well as cross country epitomised the strict amateur code controlled by respective governing bodies who policed their sport with zeal.

Gradual improvement in the means of communication also contributed to the development of cross country running. Letters home from expatriate harriers and the advent of for example cine film and telegraphy enabled quicker and more visual forms of communication to contribute to a growing awareness of the sport abroad. Combined with a growing body of athletics literature, ranging from commentary and training to reporting in the specialised press, the sport rapidly developed beyond the confines of the British mainland.

One example of the power of developing and improving communications was the

development of the first harrier clubs in the United States. This is attributable to correspondence between W.S Vosburgh of Harlem Athletic Club and C.D. Evitt of South London Harriers in 1878. The search for new winter activities for their members led the Harlem Athletic Club to pursue this new, curious and at the time, quintessentially English public school activity. This led directly to the formation of the Westchester Hare and Hounds, the first cross country pack in the United States.⁵ This example is indicative of an alignment of interdependent factors which led to the development of athletics internationally.

Mangan reminds us that the study of diffusion of essentially English sports is as much about 'ethnocentricity, hegemony and patronage, with ideals and idealism, with educational values and aspirations, with cultural assimilation and adaptation and most fascinating of all, with the dissemination throughout the Empire of a hugely influential moralistic policy.'⁶ This is also true of the international development of cross country running, which although contained within a tight European prism of competing nations dominated in the early years by the home nations of Great Britain, nevertheless displayed all the characteristics defined by Mangan. Perkin supports this view, citing sport as a natural player in Britain's aspirations not only within its expanding empire but also how it perceived its position within Europe.⁷

The ascetism of cross country running embodied all the characteristics of the outward face of Victorian society, representing self denial through training character.

⁵ Baynes, E. H. (1894). The history of cross country running in America. *Outing Magazine*, Vol. XXIII, No. 6. Pp. 484-490.

⁶ Mangan, J. A. (1998). *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal*. London: Cass. P. 17.

⁷ Perkin, H. (1992). Teaching the nations how to play: sport and society in the British Empire and Commonwealth. In: J. A. Mangan (ed.). *The Cultural Bond: Sport, Empire, Society*. Cass: London.

The use of the physical, to develop within young men the characteristics of courage, endurance and self-control, meant that the sport - in its broadest form - served a key utility in moulding a mindset. This mindset was a critical dimension in understanding the notion of duty within the context of imperial expansion whether that be militaristic or economic. That a sporting form quintessentially English - or more broadly British in origin or invention - should be influenced by cultural forces other than British, was anathema. In this sense sport, through international competition, became more politicised. International competition allowed the stage to expand, thus generating a greater currency for its sporting heroes, whose appeal became elevated by virtue of diffusion. As the prizes both symbolically and materially became more sought after, so the hero became more elevated in relation to the prize. Holt and Mangan write persuasively of this claiming 'the fame of sporting heroes spread like ripples in a pond, seeping into the national psyche, touching the individual imagination and the collective sensibility.'⁸

While this export of sporting activities may have been natural in ensuring a sense of the role and place of Britain in the world, it also developed in its own right as a barometer in a developing world of sporting exchange. The role of economic and imperial emigrants is of critical importance in this respect. While emigrants took their sports overseas either in the service of their country or to seek new fortunes, so other developed nations specifically the United States of America and France (in the case of athletics and cross country running), developed their own structures as new leisure time impacted upon society.

⁸ Holt, R. and Mangan, J. A. (1996). *European Heroes: Myth, Identity, Sport*. London: Cass. P. 9.

The development of competition in cross country running within and beyond Scotland at representative level can therefore be conveniently split into the three distinct forms: inter club competition, international competition and the development of the sport through the endeavours and persistence of émigrés. In the case of inter club competition, in the early days of the sport, it was a form of litmus test of the strength of the sport in Scotland by comparison principally with English opposition. It was also an opportunity to develop the running strength of clubs and the social infrastructure and ‘traditions’ (often invented) of harrier running as a form of socially acceptable behaviour of the Victorian male. Secondly, club competition at a more formal level, for example at governing body championships, allowed a clear mark of achievement to be claimed, serving in the early days as a form of ‘mini international’ competition with clubs carrying the sport’s (if not the nation’s) aspirations further afield from the familiarity of domestic competition. Thirdly, there was the development as a consequence of the first two, of formal international fixtures following the practice of other sports. This was an expected development of the time given that other Scottish sports (e.g. cricket, hockey, rugby, swimming and gymnastics) had a set of annual international fixtures. The Scottish sporting press of the day also thrived on the cut and thrust of the relative merits and strengths of Scotland’s teams, especially against opposition from the other home nations

These activities often served as an expression of surrogate nationalistic fervour both within the sport as well as the press. The extent of being British, as opposed to being Scottish, was blurred. However, a sense that ‘Britishness’ was often seen as English made the other home nations of Scotland, Wales and Ireland define the national representative sporting occasions as containing more symbolism for them than it may

have done for their English opponents. Certainly, the more mature English athletics organisations and structures had more time to develop, often leading to a difference in perception as to the relative importance of such contests. In the case of association football the sense of tribal rivalry that surrounded the annual Scotland versus England encounter seemed to be either a case of English self effacing superiority or a determination by the Scots to claim a nationalistic high ground through sporting prowess. Stating that the English view of the ‘Scottish International as a secondary affair’, an English correspondent in the *Scottish Sport* of 1900 claimed that ‘the English public regard the match pretty much in the light of a friendly, for when the figures were posted up at a league match in Liverpool, the cheering was general.’ He went on to comment ‘But to a thoughtful observer the idea occurs that it is a pity so much coolness and indifference exists South of the Tweed over this event. Win or lose, the average Englishman is equally self satisfied and apparently contented.’⁹ This professed apathy could have been a consequence of the Scottish victory but the measure of importance of Scottish sporting victories to the Scots over the English, is well documented.

In cross country running it appears that taking the contest to the English was more of an enduring objective for the sport than has been previously acknowledged. The relative haste with which the first Scottish club sought to compete against English opposition is an indication of the value ascribed to the fixture. It also ensured that a Scottish presence in the sport helped to develop and define the strength, direction and ultimately the governance of the sport at British level. This became more important as athletics responded to the growth in international competition both within the

⁹ *Scottish Sport*, April 13th 1900. P. 3.

sport, as well as the new Olympic movement.

Cross country, Empire and émigrés

Émigrés played a significant role in the global expansion of cross country running. In particular the British Empire and its dominions benefited from the social and economic traffic of runners as they moved to take up new employment even of a temporary nature. Receptions and smokers to mark these impending departures of eminent harriers from their clubs are well documented. From the departure of Andrew Dick, secretary of Clydesdale Harriers, for a post with the East India Company in Africa in 1889, to the departure of the Walker brothers of the West of Scotland Harriers to Australia, the records of clubs and the sporting press contain detailed accounts of their departure and their successes while abroad.¹⁰ The sport was therefore an export with its rules and regulations and often its social and organisational structures, thus developing a harrier diaspora.

This British export assisted in the formation of governing bodies. The records of the International Athletics Federation show that the development of athletic and cross country governing bodies took place mainly in Britain and its Empire. For example the governing bodies of sport for athletics and cross country were constituted in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa before such European countries as Germany, Finland, Sweden and Belgium. Clearly, the sport, internationally, had a strong anglo-centric perspective in its development and form. This was no different to the expansion of other sport and new leisure forms in the late 19th century.

¹⁰ See for example McAusland, B. (1988). *Clydesdale Harriers: A Centenary History 1885-1985*. Glasgow: The Club for an account of Andrew Dick's emigration.

As the Empire grew and consolidated, so Britain used this growing Empire as a means of exporting and indeed, imposing its own brand of cultural imperialism through sporting form. The émigré harriers also ensured that other sports from their home country were exported. In the case of D.S. Walker of the West of Scotland Harriers, his contribution to the local rugby union club of Burwood in New South Wales and also as a player for the Inter-colonial fifteen against Queensland demonstrates the point.¹¹ There was a seamless link in the nature of sporting activity and experience with athletes and players continuing the pursuit of a variety of sports thus transporting a sporting culture. There were teams touring in Scotland from Australia and Canada in cricket in 1887 - one of the formative years of the sport of cross country running. The athletic press eagerly commented on the strength of the English athletics team to visit the United States Championships that same year.¹²

Cross country running was easily 'transportable' with its form malleable enough to be adapted to climate and locale. One example was the adaptations made for the Indian Empire. The public school roots of the sport as a substitute hounds activity was amply demonstrated in the form that the sport took. Since the climate mitigated against the sort of runs over the country the public school boy would have been used to, the solution was to remove the physical exertion from the individual and replace it on horseback and thus in this form, 'Paper-chasing' was continued as part of the games of the Empire. This variant of the sport also allowed women to compete for the first time. Fraser's description of the sport in India reveals an ingenuity in pursuing the sport, and since horses were in abundance, this seemed a reasonable

¹¹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, November 29th, 1887. P. 21.

¹² *Scottish Athletic Journal*, July 20th, 1887. P.19.

alternative.¹³ Paper on the other hand, which was in general short supply, was acquired by tearing monthly reports of district officials into tiny pieces. The ‘season’ was a social measure of time on most colonial outposts and ‘Paper-chasing’ contributed to the social scene in much the same way as other activities of the British abroad.

‘Hunts’ were arranged in Calcutta, Dibrugarh, Shillong, Lucknow, Rawal Pindi, Poona, Secunderabad, Agra and Madras. The key centres with properly organised ‘hunts’ being Calcutta, Poona and Lucknow. The military involvement is clear. ‘Battery sergeants, having previously helped to find the course, ride out with bags of paper and lay the trail. They make frequent blinds, and occasionally leave a hundred yards or so entirely blank.’¹⁴ Usually timed to start late in the afternoon, it also enlisted the Battery brake to collect spectators and both the men and women riders. The meeting had the usual trimmings of horn for rallying the pack; packs of varying abilities and ‘whips’ often with the women in the first pack, usually riding side saddle. While there appeared to be concern about injuring horses which were much needed for weekly duties, the sport seems to have been part of the quintessential image of the British abroad. The essence of colonial life was the continuity of life at home. The transportation and diffusion of cross country running as a sporting form appears, at least from this example, to have been much in evidence prior to the more formally organised ‘Meetings’ and at least dating from the early 1870s.¹⁵

Individual members of Harrier clubs often maintained their membership of their

¹³ Fraser, D. (1902). Paper-chasing in India. In: A. E. T. Watson (ed.). *The Badminton Magazine of Sports and Pastimes Vol. XV*. London: Heineman. Pp. 49-61.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* Pp.50-51.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 49.

home club and kept in contact with colleagues while abroad. During the earliest days of the sport letters to the club secretaries was one way of keeping contact. In the case of W.P. Grant writing from St Louis to D.S. Duncan of Edinburgh Harriers it is clear that the sport developed according to new customs and practices of the recipient nation. Grant seemed to find it difficult to engage with his sport due to all sports being held on a Sunday 'the training of my youth is still too strong to permit me to partake of such frivolities on a Sunday.'¹⁶ He appears equally at odds with the offering of 'trifles such as \$100 dollar gold watches' instead of the rather less ostentatious but much more acceptable medal.¹⁷

Early international contests

The first international in association football between Scotland and England in 1872, followed the first rugby football match between the two nations the year before. Both these fixtures helped established international sporting contests in both men and women's field hockey and across most sports by the end of the century. Athletics and in particular cross country running, was no exception. However, in the case of athletics more broadly there were pedestrian links with Europe since the 1820s.¹⁸ There were links with France from the 1820s to the late 1880s as France had a strong and developed pedestrian sporting culture in parallel to that of Britain with Paris its main centre. International fairs and exhibitions, very much in vogue by the late 19th century, hosted a variety of types of sporting contests including athletic track and field contests. The Paris Exposition of 1889 was one such early international

¹⁶ *Scottish Umpire*, 25th October 1887. P. 4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ For an overview of early competition see Gouldstone, J. (2000). The pioneering years of international athletics. *British Society of Sports History Newsletter No. 11, Spring*. Pp. 25-33.

meeting between France and athletes drawn from other nations in attendance.¹⁹ Since these early contests were attached to exhibitions it is unlikely that the competitors were anything other than vicarious entrants drawn from the delegates attending as opposed to formal representative teams. However, one of the earliest overseas teams to represent England in any form of athletics contest was that selected to compete in the United States track and field championships in 1887.²⁰

While Scottish clubs competed in the National Cross Country Union championships in England, principally Clydesdale Harriers, challenge matches between the university clubs of Scotland and Ireland started in 1892 with Dublin University Harriers challenging Edinburgh University Hare and Hounds. An indication of the stage of development of the university clubs can be gauged by the fact that the fixture was not finally put in place until February 1897, the Edinburgh University club deciding that they were not strong enough to fulfil the original fixture.²¹ International challenges between university athletics clubs existed in England from 1894, with the Oxford versus Yale Universities' track and field match inaugurated on 16th July 1894 leading to the first Oxford-Cambridge tour to the United States in 1901.

In the case of Scottish track and field athletics however, the origins of international contests were between Scotland and Ireland, with the first international match held at Celtic Park in 1895 the same year as the inaugural Ireland versus England fixture that

¹⁹ *The Scottish Referee*, 30th August, 1889. P. 5.

²⁰ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 20th July, 1887. P. 19

²¹ *Scottish Sport*, 26th February, 1897. p. 7.

took place in Dublin.²² Indeed, it was the catalyst of Irish intervention both at university and at governing body level in athletics that ultimately laid the foundations of the inaugural international cross country championships in 1903.

The strength and development of the home nations was a key determinant in the organisation of international competition. England was initially reluctant to enter into any form of international competition whether it was track and field or cross country. Given the strength of athletics in England, they regarded such contests irrelevant especially after a cross country contest with France in 1898. In this first recorded international between two nations in cross country, the N.C.C.U. of England accepted an invitation from the French Association (Union des Societies Francaise de Sport Athletiques) to mark its 10th anniversary, for a two nation international. They selected a team comprising of the first eight finishers in their national championship. One of the primary motivations in accepting the French invitation was the French offer of a contribution towards the expenses of the English team.²³ All eight English runners finished before the first French competitor who collapsed unconscious at the finish line some two minutes behind the winner. The clear imbalance in ability reinforced England's view of its superior talents and internationals between representative national teams were, as a consequence, delayed a further four years.

Scottish interest in athletic competition more broadly, was built upon the foundations of a number of factors. Firstly, the developing interest by Scottish clubs in inter-club

²² For a detailed resume of Scottish international competition see Keddie, J. (1982). *Scottish Athletics: The Official Centenary Publication of the Scottish Amateur Athletic Association*. Edinburgh: The Association.

²³ *Scottish Sport*, 11th March, 1898. P. 5.

contest normally through the auspices of the English championships to which clubs from other home nations were encouraged by England to participate thus rendering the need (in the eyes of the A.A.A.) for a separate international, pointless. The results of the national championship thus served as an indicator of relative merit. A second factor was the development in other sports of international competition, with pressure placed upon athletics to undertake a similar fixture alongside other sports such as association football, rugby football union, field hockey and cricket. Scotland by the late 1880s was receiving visits from numerous touring sides.²⁴ For example association football in Scotland received visits from touring sides, usually from the Empire.²⁵ Finally there was the growing interest of the Scottish sporting public in all forms of international sporting contest, and sports without an international profile were inevitably relegated in the sporting press to a few column inches. Thus the pressure on sports to seek competition, at least with other home nations, was significant.

It was however, the sporting relationship between Scotland and Ireland that was to influence Scottish athletics in particular. The tradition of games players using athletics as a means of keeping fit and as a competitive summer sport, a practice highlighted in earlier chapters, ensured that those who remained within the sport preferring to specialise put pressure on the governing body to develop international contests in common with other sports. The nature of social and economic ties between the Celtic nations were also strong, with labour migrations related to the growing industries of the west coast of Scotland and the province of Ulster. It was

²⁴ For example the Canadian and Australian cricket teams toured Scotland in 1887. *Scottish Athletic Journal*. 20th July, 1887. P. 19.

²⁵ For example a Canadian association football team played Heart of Midlothian FC at Tynecastle on Saturday 15th September, 1888. For more detailed information see *The Scottish Leader*, 17th September, 1888.

not unnatural therefore that Ireland should seek a match with Scotland, especially since England viewed its strength in the sport as being without equal both in track and field as well as cross country.

Competing beyond Scotland

The expansion of club running through both inter-club contests and the entry of Scottish clubs to the English national championships, seen as the principal competition of the sport, was a critical factor in the development of international contests. Open to clubs in membership of the governing body irrespective of home country, placings in the English 'Nationals' were to play an important role in defining the relative strength of the sport. The 'open' status of the English championships further emphasised the view of the National Cross Country Union of England, that their championships were *de facto*, an international stage and that a separate international competition was unnecessary.

Competing at the English championships was a critical development, in that it made clear the intention of Scottish clubs to test not only club strength, but also to carry the flag for Scottish harrier running beyond the domestic agenda. It also allowed for dialogue with English clubs on a range of issues from fixtures to training methods. In this sense, it was no different from other sporting forms. The desire to represent their country through sport was strong even at this stage in the Scottish sporting psyche and while Scottish cross country running was relatively under-developed compared to their English counterparts, there was no questioning their resolve to put in place an international fixture. The invitation by the Irish in setting up such a fixture for the season 1902-1903 was therefore timely in establishing on a more

formal footing the preliminary skirmishes at both club and national level in athletics in the 1890s.

The English National Championships

The early years of inter club running were dominated by just three major clubs and in the case of Clydesdale Harriers, their sections. By 1887, two years after the formation of the first Harrier club, there were some 30 clubs established. The dominance of the three premier clubs (Clydesdale Harriers, Edinburgh Harriers and The West of Scotland Harriers) inevitably however, led to greater challenges being sought beyond domestic competition. The experiences of other sports were templates for the new Harriers clubs especially since many of the new harriers were predominantly footballers, rowers and cyclists bringing the experiences of their previous sport allegiances to the structure and organisation of their new sport.

Cross country running benefited from the experiences of the early internationals of other sports giving a degree of confidence to the first race of a Scottish harrier club outside Scotland. Despite only being in existence for 2 years and 10 months, Clydesdale Harriers became the first Scottish club to compete in the English National Cross Country Championships. In the 12th Championships, held at Manchester in 1888, Clydesdale finished sixth out of eight clubs. The Scottish champion of 1887, James Campbell of Clydesdale Harriers finished in 47th place with the highest placed Clydesdale Harrier, Graham finishing in 15th place. Clydesdale Harriers finished all six of their counting team of a total of eleven in the first 40, their team total being 177 points to the winner, Birchfield Harriers' 73 points.²⁶

²⁶ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 5th March, 1888. P. 28.

The appearances of the Clydesdale club at the English 'Nationals' was to establish the reputation of Scottish harrier running. Clydesdale competed twice at the English 'Nationals' within the first five years of being formed finishing 6th in 1888 and 7th in 1890. On neither occasion however did the club achieve the expected potential they believed they possessed. A number of runners did not perform well due to colds, 'stitches' and one who 'quite broke down insensible and was left ...' despite all members of the team undertaking 'special training' for the events.²⁷ Clydesdale on both occasions returned from the English championships and performed well at the Scottish championships serving to highlight the disparity of standard between the two countries. It was the appearance of what various sections of the press called 'the Scottish Champions' at the English championships that was to set the tone for what in effect was no more than Scotland's strongest club competing in their own right.

The strength of the sport in Scotland was to be gauged against English opposition in the English championship for the next decade until a French invitation in 1898. The absence of a strong and resourceful governing body during this period inevitably meant that in harrier running, as was common with most sports in the early stages of their development, the more able clubs assumed a role in directing the sport. In this respect Clydesdale Harriers role in the development of domestic policy in the first years of the sport was a significant marker. Additionally, the power struggles emerging between clubs as well as between the west and east of Scotland district committees of the Scottish Amateur Athletics Association for control of the sport, also meant that the presence of a strong governing body for the sport was distinctly

²⁷ McAusland, B. (1988). *op. cit.* P. 5.

absent, allowing stronger clubs to dominate and set the agenda.

The importance of these contests therefore grew as the sport developed. As cross country running in Scotland became more confident of its abilities, so horizons at both club and international level broadened. Cross country running took its first steps 'abroad' through these club contests with the runners as sporting ambassadors not only for their sport, but for their country.

Scottish cross country running was measured by these contests, which were in the hands of the earliest clubs. This gave to Scottish sport, and cross country running in particular, a sense of identity; of 'who we are'. Scotland was emerging from years in political and cultural limbo. Victoriana, industrial wealth, the expansion of its cities and a new political self consciousness competed with a new found cultural sense of self determination through its social institutions. In this sense sport generally mirrored institutional social and civic forms and developed organisational systems akin to its sister governing bodies in England. At the same time it managed a particularity of its own when it came to local and national practices that it had developed.

Much of this particularly in athletic terms was embodied in the romanticism of the wild and 'ancient' forms of the Highlander so much in vogue as a constructed image of the new Scottish muscularity. Indeed so much play was devoted to the re-creation of the romantic Highlander as an image of the modern athletic Scot, that the symbolism of Scottish competition with other nations, especially England, took on an importance that was to define the nature of sporting encounters for years to come.

Athletics as a form of competition came to form the backbone of the proliferation of Highland Games meetings. Sporting contests came to be one way of separating out the Scottish sense of being British without threatening, in any real sense, the developing nature of the overall fabric of English sport which passed for British. At the same time these contests teased out the conditions of the Scottish sporting experience as reinforcing a certain aspect of national identity through sport.

It was these initial links with English cross country running that was to give cross country running in Scotland an added impetus over the following years as the club base expanded and standards improved and runners moved between clubs with change of employment as well as to seek opportunities to compete in better teams.

Inter-club competition

The first incursions to the English 'Nationals' encouraged competition between Scottish and English clubs at inter-club level. The press were keen to promote such events and characteristically offered exaggerated claims relating to the merits of Clydesdale Harriers in relation to for example London Athletic Club, Liverpool Harriers and Birchfield Harriers.²⁸ Clydesdale had built upon their contacts developed at the English championships by proposing matches against Salford Harriers in 1889.²⁹ The following season, Airedale Harriers suggested an inter club match but the fixture, originally proposed for the following February, came at a critical time for both clubs in their respective preparations for their national championships and was abandoned.

²⁸ *The Scottish Umpire*, 6th September 1887. P. 9.

²⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 26th March, 1889. P. 4.

The strength of the Clydesdale club, in numbers as well as the degree of control over the sport until 1891, meant that other clubs in Scotland would always find difficulty in matching their achievements. Nevertheless, Edinburgh Harriers in a New Year's Day meeting with Teviotdale Harriers (Hawick) in 1895, helped developed inter-club contests between Scottish and English clubs with a match with Newcastle Harriers.³⁰

Ease of access by train down the east coast allowed links to be made with clubs such as Berwick, Morpeth and Newcastle while the New Years Day fixture in 1895 established inter club competition between Harriers clubs across the border for a number of years. The movement of runners around the country for employment purposes ensured that cross country running established links between clubs, thus the beginnings of competitive edge through social and economic mobility started to develop in the sport. One of the key issues highlighted in the establishment of a Junior competition (i.e. those runners not placed in championship competition) was the recognition that championships extended beyond the senior championship of Scotland and included the English and Irish championships.³¹ The clear implication of this was to cover both those runners who were 'exiled' or who returned home to compete in their native 'National'.

Clydesdale Harriers' links with Salford Harriers continued until at least 1893. What was then described as an 'International Cross-Country match between the Salford, Belfast and Clydesdale Harriers' was announced (in the absence of a national team), but with the codicil that 'The Clydesdale cannot see their way to fix a date inside of

³⁰ Coltman, J. (1988). *First Hundred: Teviotdale Harriers Club Centenary 1889-1989*. Hawick: The Club.

³¹ *Scottish Sport*, 26th February, 1889.

four weeks, as several of their men are not in anything like order.’³²

The first international championship

While the first home nation’s international was in 1903, the first steps towards international representation had taken place some years earlier in Paris 1898 when the team representing England, overwhelmed the French.³³

The strength of the four home countries was, to say the least, variable. While English cross country running was undeniably the strongest of the home nations due to its more developed club infrastructure and ‘tradition’, both the Irish and Scots had runners of reasonable stature tested against English opposition through more regular competition at the English championships as well as inter club contests such as the proposed club ‘International’ of 1893.

Arrangements were made between England and Ireland in 1902 for a match at the Cork Exhibition. This match did not materialise.³⁴ Nevertheless, this particular initiative prompted the three Celtic nations to pursue a Home Nations contest. There appeared to be considerable ambivalence by the National Cross Country Union of England as to the merits of what they perceived as a one sided contest given their experiences some years previously against the French. Indeed, England insisted that their National championships should be the appropriate place for such a contest given its status as the oldest and with the most competitors.³⁵ The attempt to elevate

³² *Scottish Sport*, 8th December, 1893, P. 11.

³³ For a detailed record of the finishers of this race see Richardson, L. N. (1954). *The History of the International Cross Country Union 1903-1953. Jubilee Souvenir*. Ambergate, Derbyshire: The Union.

³⁴ Rainbow, W. T. (1933). The International Cross-Country Association. In: J. B. Kerr (ed.). *The Jubilee Souvenir of the National Cross-Country Union*. London: The Union. Pp. 23-30.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

the English championships to a *de facto* British Championships was not well received by the other home nations.

The development of meaningful international competition however, could not be considered without the presence of England. Their sheer domination of the eventual international competition played a defining role on the development and direction of the sport internationally. England were to win all but seven of the thirty two team championships at international level between 1903 and 1939 and twenty five individual titles in the same period. This proved a mixed blessing for the sport. With such force of available talent, England dominated the sport in its international infancy and also impacted for example, on cross country running in the Olympic Games, a theme developed later in this chapter.

The argument shifted to a more general discussion of English sport and the perception that it was determining the future direction of British sport generally. The pre-eminent position of English sport in terms of policy setting, form and content as well as its success, came under attack. As various sports were taken up by European countries and in the developing Empire, so challenges were mounted to the hegemonic position of English governing bodies in setting the agenda. Shields encapsulates this in his remarks regarding 'England's arrogant opposition to the proposal [of an international].'³⁶ The reporting by *The Glasgow Herald* on the same proposal and position of the English Cross Country Union is significantly direct in its tone:

'England cannot dominate matters as she once did, and by

³⁶ Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union*. Edinburgh: The Union. P. 26.

degrees the Rugby Union, the Football Association, the Cross Country Union, the Swimming Association and the Amateur Athletic Association are gradually being cut down to their proper level in the national administration of sport. It is only right that these bodies should be deprived of their arrogant appropriation of the international significance which each claims for its special event and at the same time it is appropriate that England should be reminded from time to time that she does not possess a monopoly of administrative talent and legislative wisdom.³⁷

Of significance is that England saw different merits in competition initially against European opposition as distinct to competition between Scotland, Ireland and Wales.³⁸ Sport was seen even at this early stage as a form of expression of international relations. To persist with competitions against nations who were of no benefit in sporting terms (in the case of cross country running, France), was to accept that benefits of other kinds accrued. England's position in relation to France and Germany, in industrial, commercial and global political ambitions, undoubtedly impacted upon, and framed, sport as another form of national and political aspiration.

Ireland, had runners of note but the structure and strength of cross country running in Ireland was relatively unknown. However, there was a university and former English public school presence supporting and developing the sport in the country thus giving the sport a certain 'colonial' feel to it. Certainly the main strength of Irish cross country came from the University of Dublin and the oldest Irish club, Haddington Harriers as well as Clonliffe Harriers.³⁹ Belfast Harriers club added to the metropolitan nature of Irish cross country as a sport centred in and around the cities of political influence.

³⁷ Cited in: Shields, C. (1990). *op. cit.* P. 26.

³⁸ The international referred to was due to take place in Paris on the same date as mooted for the Home Countries International – 21st March, 1903 see *The Scottish Referee*, 23rd January, 1903. P. 5.

³⁹ *The Scottish Referee*, 30th January, 1903, P. 5.

The situation in Wales was clearer. The Welsh Cross Country Association, was formed in 1896 making it the youngest of the governing bodies of the home nations. The strength of Welsh cross country centred upon the industrial cities of Newport, Cardiff and Swansea. Newport Harriers operated in a similar manner to that of Clydesdale Harriers with sections of the club in and around the city and its suburban villages.⁴⁰ Roath Harriers and St Anne's Harriers of Cardiff, Swansea Harriers and St Helen's Harriers of Swansea and Pontypool Harriers, were essentially the strength of Welsh cross country running along with Newport Harriers who won the Welsh championship on five successive occasions to 1903.⁴¹ Many of the Welsh team were Anglo-Welsh with dual membership of both their Welsh and English clubs, predominantly Salford Harriers.

England were already involved in international club cross country competition in 1903 with a contest at Bois de St Cloud, Paris against French, German, Belgian and Swiss club teams. The date, 21st March was also the same date suggested for the first international which subsequently therefore, was postponed by one week.⁴² The strongest French runners of the day came from their principal club, Racing Club des Paris. The move of date by the home nations was to accommodate the arrangements of the English team and to ensure that their principal runner, Alfred Shrubbs, would be able to compete in their home nations international.⁴³ He was without question the foremost endurance athlete of his day and the current English cross country

⁴⁰ Collins, J., Currie, A., Currie, B., Walters, M. and Williams, C. (2002). *The History of Welsh Athletics*. Llanelli: Dragon Sports Books.

⁴¹ *The Scottish Referee*, 23rd March, 1903. P. 6 and *The Scottish Referee*, 27th March, 1903. P. 5.

⁴² Hadgraft, R. (2004). *The Little Wonder: The Untold Story of Alfred Shrubbs World Champion Runner*. London: Desert Island Books.

⁴³ *The Scottish Referee*, 23rd January, 1903, P. 5.

champion. Shrubbs was entering one of the most fruitful periods of his athletic career which was to elevate him as one of the greatest athletes in the history of the sport. A runner of substantial training capacity, Shrubbs was a considerable attraction to the sporting public.

The initial correspondence between A. Ross Scott, secretary of the Scottish Cross Country Union and his counterpart, H. Dudley Fletcher of the Irish Cross Country Association, established the organisation of the event in the latter part of 1902 and brokered a position that England felt was in their interests to compete. While the first suggestion was for a match between Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the invitation put considerable pressure on the English Association to participate. Given the strong position of English cross country and the desire of the English governing body to set any agenda relating to the sport, the suggestion that the first international between home nations should not have representation from the strongest nation in cross country running made the merit of such a fixture questionable.⁴⁴

The venue for the match was the subject of much debate. While the eventual venue of Hamilton Racecourse was familiar with runners, the international was needed to publicise the sport amongst the wider public and led to an alternative suggestion of the grounds of the Glasgow Agricultural Society at Scotstoun, which at the time could be accessed by electric car and rail.⁴⁵ There was concern that the venue at Hamilton, some twenty to thirty minutes walk from the nearest railway station and well outside Glasgow, may not attract the anticipated crowds the race deserved. There was the further advantage of Scotstoun in that it was the venue for that year's

⁴⁴ *The Scottish Referee*, 31st October, 1902. P. 6.

⁴⁵ *The Scottish Referee*, 29th December, 1902. P. 6.

Scottish championships, thus allowing a degree of preparation and local knowledge to both Scottish officials and athletes. Additionally, the nature of the course caused debate. The course at Hamilton was relatively flat. A further decision was taken to seek permission to run through the adjoining policies of the estate to add a more definitive cross country element to the course. This also had the advantage of allowing spectators to watch more of the race at close quarters.

Following the respective championships of all four countries, teams were announced and the Scottish team comprised of an interesting and not uncontroversial selection of runners. Patrick J. McCafferty of the West of Scotland Harriers, winner of the Scottish championship (and the Scottish ten mile title of that year) had earlier won the Irish cross country championship and elected to run for his birth country. This decision was possibly pre-empted by an impromptu committee meeting at the start of the Scottish championships, which delayed the start of the race by 45 minutes, to determine his eligibility to run for the West of Scotland Harriers having formerly been a member of Celtic Harriers. The inclusion of the Anglo-Scot T. Johnson of Highgate Harriers, London (11th in the English championship) and the recently reinstated runner William Robertson of Clydesdale Harriers demonstrated then as now, that the question of eligibility weighed heavily in the selection of the strongest team.⁴⁶

In the week prior to the event, talk of ‘a good supply of Scottish perseverance’ and the quality of the English team containing ‘such a galaxy of talent that no team in the world could with any degree of confidence hope to defeat’ dominated the discourse

⁴⁶ See Appendix 5 for the full Scottish team.

in the popular press.⁴⁷ The Irish selection was strong with the Dublin clubs represented as well as clubs from Munster and Ulster.⁴⁸

The Welsh team was supplied almost exclusively from the one club, Newport Harriers three of whom were also named as Salford Harriers.⁴⁹ The rather limited selection led to an assertion that their strength lay in the fact that they would know each other's strengths as well allowing them to run effectively as a team. However, the presence of the Salford Harriers athletes ensured that the experience of racing against strong English opposition would benefit the team.

The English team was formidable. It contained all the district champions of the South, Midlands and North of England as well as a former holder of the national championship and included Shrubbs.⁵⁰

Arrangements for team accommodation were made in characteristically grand style with all three visiting teams separated in different hotels in the city centre of Glasgow. The English team accommodation was the North British Hotel in George Square; the Irish at the Victoria Hotel, George Street and the Welsh team were accommodated at the Old Waverley Hotel in Buchanan Street. Interestingly, and importantly, arrangements, were made between the West of Scotland Harriers and Shrubbs that he become the house guest of Sydney Cornish of the club for the following week with a view to joining the club on their final run of season at Helensburgh. This arrangement established the basis of the relationship that Shrubbs

⁴⁷ *The Scottish Referee*, 23rd March 1903. P. 6.

⁴⁸ See Appendix 5 for the full Irish Team.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 5 for the full Welsh team.

⁵⁰ See Appendix 5 for the full English team.

was to have with the West of Scotland Harriers beyond his running career and laid the foundations for his visit the following year to the West of Scotland Harriers' November track race, in which he set eleven world records, becoming one of the seminal moments in track history. There is certainly the view that Shrubbs was attracted to the club's position in Scottish athletics and became a club member. A £3 guinea medal was sponsored by the owners of the Clarendon cafe for the first Scot home, while the costs of the Scottish team outfit was defrayed by Bartleman & Sons of Edinburgh.⁵¹

The race itself was something of an English demonstration of team running, six of their counting runners taking the first seven places and eight of their runners finishing in the first twelve. Shrubbs won by over thirty seconds while the last position was taken by Kinnaird of Scotland. The magnitude of Shrubbs's victory, and that of the English team in dominating the race, can be gauged by the time margin of 6 minutes 37 and 3/5th seconds between first and last, well over a mile at international level. The weather was poor and the ground very heavy for the race over the four 2 mile circuits.

The Scots were comprehensively beaten by both the English and Irish teams in the team race, with Daly of Ireland in particular running a superb race to take 3rd place. McCafferty in finishing 20th was in fact the 6th placed member of his team to finish. The first placed Scot was 10th with the last counting man in 23rd place. Nearly all the Scottish athletes performed below par (with the exception of Ranken) with various reasons of age, illness and late replacements being given for what was seen as under-

⁵¹ *The Scottish Referee*, 27th March, 1903. P. 5.

achievement and post-race commentary was subdued. At the race banquet in Glasgow, Shrubbs commented upon Daly's run but also offered advice that he would run better by staying quiet during a race as it appeared that Daly kept up a stream of 'constant chatter' during the race with Shrubbs.⁵² It was at this banquet that Fred Lumley, a noted Edinburgh sportsman and businessman, intimated that he would provide a shield for annual competition. The Lumley Shield, as it became known, was valued at 65 guineas in 1903 and was of solid silver in *repousse* with the national emblems of the original competing nations in enamel. The shield came enclosed in an airtight oak case with bronze mountings. This was one of the most expensive sporting trophies in existence at the time.

The race came at what was a crucial moment in the organisation of Scottish cross country running. Further difficulties in the governance of the sport at this time had meant that the S.C.C.U. had been replaced by the N.C.C.U. of Scotland and this international was the first test of the robustness of harrier running standards under their stewardship. However strong it seemed from within Scotland, it was clear that it could not stand the test of standards from outside. It was perhaps fortunate therefore that the final runs of the cross country season took place the following week foreclosing the racing season.

International competition from 1904 to 1914

The competition encountered financial difficulties. The rules of the competition ensured that the host nation absorbed any loss while any profit was equally divided

⁵² Shields, C. (2003). *Official Centenary Programme of the 10th European Cross Country Championships*, European Athletics Association. P. 31.

between the competing nations to defray costs. Medals were replaced by certificates in the case of the team competition and only the individual winner received a gold medal.

Scotland's achievements in the first four championships were muted with only one second placing in the team contest in 1905. The strength of the Irish team usually meant the Scots had to settle for third team place. The competition in 1907 included a French team with Scotland again playing host, the competition having rotated between the home nations. The 1907 course was challenging even by the standards of the day. Hosted at Scotstoun, at the Glasgow Agricultural Society's grounds over a demanding course that included fences and water, the four laps were designed to meet spectator needs in following the ten mile course. John Ranken of Watsonians Cross Country Club completed the fifth of six successive international appearances for Scotland, establishing him as one of the most recognisable names in Scottish athletics at the time. The emergence of Tom Jack of Edinburgh Southern Harriers in 5th place in the 1907 championships ensured that at least one Scot achieved a top ten position. Jack was to compete for Great Britain the following year in the marathon at the London Olympics. His selection in 1907 was the first of five international cross country appearances for Scotland. There were two athletes however that dominated Scottish representation in the international event from 1903 to 1914.

George Wallach of Bolton United Harriers and Greenock Glenpark Harriers was the first Scottish medallist in 1911 and again in 1914 and represented Scotland on nine occasions from 1910 until 1924. This was an outstanding achievement given that his first 'vest' was at the age of 28 in 1910 and the championship was suspended for the

duration of the First World War.

Wallach's international athletic career was eventful. Arguably his finest run was in his first international championship in Belfast in 1910. Wallach, an Anglo-Scot having lived the majority of his life in the north of England, elected to run for Scotland where he was born. Having achieved 3rd place in the English championships in 1910, he was selected by Scotland to run in Belfast. Approaching the final run in at Belvoir Park, Wallach was forcibly removed from the international race by the police while in first place. Police officers had noticed that his shorts had been substantially torn while negotiating the barbed wire fences of the course and on grounds of public decency, removed him.⁵³ He was forced to watch Wood of England and Essex Beagles run past and win the individual title, a result that cost him the title and the Scottish team a certain second placing in the team contest.

Wallach went on to represent Great Britain in the inaugural 10,000 metres at the Stockholm Olympics of 1912. He was never selected for the cross country events at any Olympic Games. His outstanding cross country achievement was second place in the international cross country championships of 1914. Despite leading for most of the race at Chesham, Wallach fell at the final water jump and could not catch Nicholls of England who had overtaken him. In his history of Scottish cross country running, Shields gives a brief account of the life of George Wallach, especially the fact that his final representative honour was gained in 1924 at the age of 42 when the average life expectancy of the time was between 45 to 50 years of age.⁵⁴ The twelfth of eighteen children, he died aged 96 in 1979. Wallach's achievements for Scotland

⁵³ Shields, C (1990). *op. cit.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Pp. 42-43.

in the international cross country championships were outstanding with one silver, one bronze, two fourth placings plus a further two top ten places spanning his nine representative appearances over fourteen years.

George McKenzie of the West of Scotland Harriers was the other athlete who achieved remarkable representative status with nine runs from 1904 until 1914, only missing the international championships of 1906 and 1911. To achieve such consistency in international selection, demonstrated the unique quality of this athlete. McKenzie however, never achieved the results of Wallach. His highest placing in the international event was 12th in his ninth appearance in 1914. He twice placed 16th in 1905 and 1910. McKenzie never won a Scottish cross country championship unlike Ranken (1904 and 1905), Jack (1907, 1908 and 1912) or Wallach (1914). Nevertheless, McKenzie as a former junior champion of Scotland epitomised the Scottish harrier. Consistency and commitment over a range of track and cross country events demonstrated that McKenzie was the archetypal harrier with a strong amateur ethos. He led the West of Scotland Harriers team in the first of their four Scottish cross country championship titles in 1905 and was a team member in all others. Opening a sports retailing business in Edinburgh, McKenzie worked for the War Ministry at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 training recruits on Musselburgh beach.

Only Wallach and McKenzie achieved this level of consistency in international competition in the period between 1903 and 1914. James Flockhart and Duncan (Dunky) Wright gained 11 representative honours between the wars (J Suttie Smith achieved 10 appearances), while in the more contemporary period from 1945, only J.

L. (Lachie) Stewart (10 appearances), A.H. Brown (12 appearances) and Alistair Hutton (10 appearances) have achieved representation of the same magnitude.

In addition to Shrubbs and Wallach, both of whom had second claim membership with Scottish clubs, there were Scots who chose to compete for their adopted countries. The most notable, in this initial period of international competition being Arthur J. Robertson who won the international title in 1908 running for England. While born in England of a Scottish father but raised and educated in Glasgow, Robertson chose to represent England. From a cycling background initially, he went on to represent Great Britain in the 1908 Olympic Games in London.

Two further athletes contributed significantly to Scotland's developing international profile between 1903 and 1914. Tom Johnston and Sam Stevenson, both of Clydesdale Harriers, made important contributions to the status of Scottish harrier running. Johnston represented Scotland six times in cross country internationals while Stevenson not only represented Scotland three times at international level but also represented Great Britain at the Olympic Games of 1908 in London in the 5 mile track event.

Scottish cross country running developed considerably during this period. The international championship gave the sport much needed impetus. From relatively parochial affairs, international cross country competition helped develop domestic competition by integrating émigrés into the fabric of the national team with representation taking account of those Scottish runners who could not compete in domestic competition. Their contribution to domestic Scottish cross country running

undoubtedly helped to expand elite club membership through second claim affiliation. The experiences of engaging with athletes of other countries also expanded the network of harrier running.

One of the further benefits of the international competition on the domestic health of the sport was the gradual development and recognition of clubs other than Edinburgh, Clydesdale and West of Scotland Harriers clubs. The stranglehold these clubs had on domestic competition is evidenced by the fact that from 1886 until 1914 only three other clubs had succeeded in wresting the national team title from the three premier clubs. Watsonians Cross Country Club in 1899 and 1900, Motherwell Y.M.C.A. Harriers in 1908 and Bellahouston Harriers in 1913 and 1914. In all, a total of 26 out of 31 championship titles (from a number of 'governing bodies') had been won by just three clubs.

The international championship returned to Scotland for the third time in 1912. At the request of the other nations, Edinburgh hosted the competition. The race and its organisation merited comment from Shields who notes the relatively leisurely way in which arrangements were made, this included the start being some thirty minutes late.⁵⁵ Jean Bouin of France won the second of his three successive titles, with Scotland finishing second to England in the team competition.

The advent of international representation allowed some of the best individual runners to achieve distinction in their sport through selection in their own right for

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* Pp. 39-40.

the international team. Scotland was represented by a diverse number of clubs from different geographical locations such as Falkirk Victoria Harriers, Larkhall Harriers, Greenock Glenpark Harriers, Teviotdale Harriers, Dundee Thistle Harriers and Motherwell Harriers. All contributed to the Scottish teams as well as developing their own reputations and building on the success of their international athletes in future domestic competition.⁵⁶ Without international representation it is doubtful if the sport at club level would have developed as it did, the strength of the three major clubs effectively limiting the ability of other clubs to mount an effective challenge.

Cross country running and the modern Olympic Movement

Richardson, in his history of international cross country running commented ‘for a runner to secure his cross country colours is considered as great an achievement as gaining Olympic honours.’⁵⁷ The modern Olympic movement was still in its infancy. While Richardson may well have been correct with the benefit of hindsight, the first Games of the Olympic movement were underdeveloped in scope and form. The first three Olympic Games of 1896, 1900 and 1904 were all, in different ways, struggling to develop the independence characterising the Olympic Games of today. While the interregnum Games of 1906 attracted interest in Britain, it was not until London hosted the Games of 1908 that the Olympic movement resonated with the British public. The Olympic movement helped foster a sense of internationalism within sport by the furtherance of sporting contest as an extension of a physical ideal. This emerging credo of ‘Olympism’ sat comfortably alongside the strong amateur principles of the athletic ‘gentleman’ that prevailed in all branches of amateur athletics.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 6 for a full list of these clubs and athletes.

⁵⁷ Richardson, L. N. (1954). *op. cit.* P. 9.

There was a strong Franco-Anglo centrism within the movement's organisational structures and in their choice of events which supported the early Games of 1896 to 1908. Even the calendar of events for the interregnum Games of 1906 in Greece had a distinctly British and French feel about them. This is hardly surprising however given the relative development of European sport at this time. Mangan reminds us of the attempts to set up various 'Anglo-Saxon Olympiads' and 'Pan-Britannic contests' in the 1890s as a means of consolidating the British economic and strategic military presence in the Empire with a cultural presence.⁵⁸

Given the strong amateur ethos of cross country running as well as the influence of both British and French delegates within the new International Olympic Committee, it seemed inevitable that cross country running would be included in the calendar of events given the earlier internationals between the two countries. The sport was introduced for the first time at the 1900 Games in Paris as a 5000 metres team race won by a joint British Australian team. This team was a composite team from those who happened to be present and volunteered to run rather than from selection. The 1904 Games of St Louis was again a team race but on a club basis and not competing nations. Only New York Athletic Club and Chicago Athletic Association competed. At 1908 Games in London the event was limited to a three mile team race of three runners. Three nations competed; Great Britain who won the event, the United States of America who were second and France. It was not until the 1912 Games of Stockholm that cross country events expanded to include an individual race of 12000 metres, a short team event of 3000 metres as well as another team event of 12000

⁵⁸ Mangan, J. A. (1998). *op.cit.* Pp. 52-53.

metres. Five nations were represented in the cross country events in Stockholm, evidence of the growing interest in the sport. By the 1920 Games of Antwerp, seven nations were competing although mainly Scandinavian or English speaking nations.

The 1924 Olympics in Paris saw the demise of the cross country events. The individual race was subsumed within the team competition. With the event run on one of the hottest days of the year, only fifteen competitors of the original thirty eight starters finished the race. Athletes returning to the stadium collapsed. Some sustained head injuries on striking the ground while others were hospitalised. Runners collided with each other or simply ran in the wrong direction, delirious in the heat. Despite Paavo Nurmi winning, the full devastation is evidenced by the fact that only three nations could finish a team in the team competition. Cross country running has not appeared since at an Olympic Games.

The only Scot to have competed in the Olympic cross country event was James Wilson of Greenock Glenpark Harriers in the Antwerp Games of 1920 who achieved 4th place in the team competition leading the Great Britain team home in the 8000 metres event. No Scot represented Great Britain in cross country in the period 1900 to 1914.

The importance therefore attached to the international cross country championship assumed even greater significance as the sport grew and became increasingly specialised. Undoubtedly the impact of the events in Paris in 1924 had an effect on the popularity of the sport in later years. Without Olympic status as an event, the sport struggled to achieve the recognition it thought it deserved and from 1924, was seen primarily as a small, specialist activity.

Summary

This was an important period for the sport in Scotland. It lifted the sport from a parochial, club based activity to a more sophisticated level interacting with clubs and nations from around Europe, the United States of America and the Empire. It also created a new tier of elite runner within the sport. The general public could now follow the fortunes of the nation in another international sporting arena. The elevation of harriers as sporting icons alongside the international performances in other sports developed a stronger awareness in the sporting public of the nature of the sport. Standards rose and smaller clubs were able to feel part of a structure, which until 1903, was the province of only three major clubs. A further eleven clubs were to contribute to Scotland's international presence by 1914.

The consolidation of the sport was further emphasised by the development of inter-club competitions and growing club memberships of first and second claim members as runners now specialised in athletics as opposed to the sport merely used as an adjunct to training for games. In a sense the sport came of age. In his history of Shrubbs, Hadgraft commented 'Cross country was a nineteenth century English invention which subsequently matured into a truly international sport, with a distinguished record of egalitarianism, openness and freedom from politics. In the early days, cross country – unlike track – never fussed about social rank.'⁵⁹ While the war of 1914-1918 halted the development of the sport, as it did with nearly all sports, sufficient progress had been made in establishing cross country running as a strong sport on the international stage.

⁵⁹ Hadgraft, R. (2004). *op. cit.* P. 69.

Chapter 8

Ludism, Laughter and Liquor: homosocial behaviour in the late Victorian harriers club

Introduction

Within sport there has always been a tension between the importance of serious sporting competition and the wish to take part for straightforward pleasure. In late-Victorian Scotland the pursuit of sporting pleasure provoked powerful polarities and cross currents. On the one hand, sporting rhetoric provided elevated, serious and purposeful reasons for participation. Sport was presented as respectable and as a constructive force, and wherever possible, arguments for its rational and improving nature were marshalled to support it. On the other hand, as Richard Holt has indicated, ‘conviviality lies at the heart of sport.’¹ In part this was a broader sense of camaraderie and companionship, but in the case of many sports clubs, including the harriers’ clubs, elite male conviviality, the social activities and general clubbability were certainly as great an attraction for many members as the manly and virile images of the sport itself. The complex relationships between sociability and the social pleasures of ludism, laughter and liquor on the one hand, and the more ‘rational’, ‘respectable’ or religious reasons for sporting participation are examined in this chapter.

While the origins of cross country running in the form of hare and hounds lay in the English public schools, and as such it could be portrayed as clearly respectable, the Scottish harriers clubs of the late 19th century re-established this connection with respectability. Many aspects of the sport, including its patterns of organisation and

¹ Holt, R. (1989). *Sport and the British: A Modern History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. P. 347.

participation, and its sociability, could be represented as either respectable or unrespectable depending on circumstances and audiences. Indeed images of the sport could sometimes be used to depict social, political and economic tensions in society in satirical ways.

This chapter examines some of the factors which could be exploited to give the sport a more respectable image. These include the socially constructed nature of much of the membership, links with other 'respectable' sporting institutions, the police, military or churches, and examples of good works. Yet not all views were positive. There were concerns over a number of issues, including trespass, littering, cheating and betting. The social functions that supported and sustained the majority of Victorian sports clubs and those less respectable activities – the humour, noise, and the sheer fun which they often generated in the evenings, well after the sporting competition itself - were also ambiguous, open to different interpretations. The often under emphasised but important role of alcohol, smoking and similar activities in harrier sociability is also explored. The extensive calendar of homosocial 'smokers' and 'socials', with their drinking, smoking, entertainment and revelry, was far more of an attraction than the relative sobriety and propriety of the Grand Annual Dance where women were permitted.

Select image

The harriers clubs were one of a number of new organised sporting organisations spawned in the late 19th century as part of the tide of new leisure. A distinguishing mark of the new clubs was the number and status of patrons that a harrier club could encourage to give their name in supporting the club. This support while usually

serving as an expedient for access to estates for running also served to elevate the club as a civic institution. It was an acquired status. In the case of the West of Scotland Harriers, patronage lent the club the slightly effete air associated with gentlemen amateurs. Those who organised the club, the '*omnium gatherum* institution', as the *Scottish Athletic Journal* called the West of Scotland Harriers, were thus seen as 'the most influential athletic men in the west of Scotland'.²

Patrons were drawn from the 'great and good' of society. Clydesdale Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers vied with each other to create the most impressive list of patrons for the club's yearly handbook. In the 1889-1890 season Clydesdale Harriers could boast 5 members of Parliament, the Lord Provost of Glasgow and two knights. By 1903/04 the West of Scotland Harriers had caught up, with 7 members of Parliament (including Andrew Bonar Law), 2 knights and the then Lord Provost of Glasgow, Sir John Ure Primrose, who was to further his sporting connections as chairman and director of Glasgow Rangers F.C.³ Other clubs attempted to replicate the pattern of the leading Glasgow and Edinburgh clubs. In the case of Forfar Harriers, for example, the Honorary President and the President were drawn from the Union Bank and the British Linen Bank respectively.

The press of the day depicted the actual membership of the Scottish harriers clubs as being rather mixed, but largely drawn from socially superior middle class groups. Most were in professional occupations or were small businessmen but a number were skilled working-men. However a general aspiration for social status through respectable activities bonded members. Club rules assumed that members would

² *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 21st September, 1886. P. 17.

³ Club member yearbooks of Clydesdale Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers.

know how to behave and therefore there was not the same need to control club activities. In the new harrier clubs, 'belonging' was taken to mean identification with values associated with aspiration, class and social standing. Enjoying life without fear of criticism was the construct that was ascribed to the social activities of the clubs. In this sense the harriers clubs were different from some of the football clubs, where religion and local community were more important.

Other connections could also confer respectability on the sport. The hare and hounds tradition had strong roots in English public schools. The sport offered a way to realise Montague Shearman's definition of a sportsman as 'A man who kept his engagement, never mind under what difficulties, and accepted defeat without a murmur, and success with becoming modesty.'⁴ Even so, private and merchant schools in Scotland varied in the emphasis they placed on harrier activity. A good example of a school that organised hare and hounds clubs in open competition was George Watson's College, Edinburgh (Watsonians). In the 1890s Fettes had numerous packs that ran in the fields around Barnton and Cramond in Edinburgh. By contrast, as *Scottish Sport* noted, Dr Almond of Loretto had relatively little success in instilling some sort of enthusiasm for the sport amongst the boys of his school, although he was a keen advocate of cross country running as Loretto had donated a cup for competition as early as 1888.⁵

The harriers clubs also tried to justify the service they provided by associating it with ideals of authority, discipline, militarism and public service. They did this in a variety of ways. One was to use relevant facilities, such as the military barracks at

⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 18th October, 1895. P.17.

⁵ *Scottish Sport*, 27th December, 1895. P. 13.

Maryhill or the gymnasium facilities of the Govan Police, both in Glasgow.⁶ Another was to forge links with the recently established Boys' Brigade, which attached great importance to the role and function of physical training for boys, as well as other forms of physical activity. General Chapman's exhortation to have more physical activity based on the merchant schools policy of recruiting former N.C.O.s from the Army inspired attempts to link schooling, the Boy's Brigade, the military, and physical activity and drill.⁷ In linking the role and place of forms of physical activity to militarism, the Boys' Brigade provided the strong muscular (and Scottish) Protestant *raison d'etre* for the use of physical activity for the betterment of self, country and empire. By 1890 the Boys' Brigade at Airdrie just outside Glasgow was using cross country running as one of a number of regular activities for its members.⁸

Football, rugby and other team sports often organised charity cups, as a way of establishing their respectable credentials and giving something back to the communities that supported them. It is therefore, perhaps, not surprising that another example of harriers' respectable sociability was activity in connection with charity and 'good works'. For example, in an attempt to emphasise the social status of the club, and to reinforce the inherent 'good' of the club and its activities to the citizens of Dundee, Dundee Thistle Harriers provided more than 500 poor children of the city with a treat of 'a substantial tea, a bag of fruit and a couple of half pennies'.⁹

⁶ There were strong connections with venues that were associated with the military by harriers clubs in Dundee and Edinburgh as well as in Glasgow. Public Baths were used extensively as were Masonic Halls.

⁷ *Scottish Sport*, 6th January, 1899. P. 6.

⁸ *Scottish Sport*, 17th January, 1890. P. 12.

⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 10th February, 1899. P. 6.

Less respectable aspects

Despite its emphasis on ‘muscular Christianity’, the role of the Church as an arbiter of manliness and virtue was something of a mixed blessing in Scottish sport generally, and for running in particular, as not all clergymen saw harriers as entirely respectable. Some clubs did enjoy the patronage of Ministers of the Church of Scotland. Paisley Harriers, for example, recruited the Rev. W.E. Lee of Greenlaw Church, who clearly saw the activity as a wholesome distraction.¹⁰ More generally, the temperance leagues, the evangelical associations, the Reccabites and the various Sabbatarian movements were always dubious of the value of sport, despite the strong advocacy of physical activity by the armed forces and schools in relation to disciplining and moulding youth for manly service. Baillie Chisholm of the United Evangelical Association of Glasgow, for example, denounced football as ‘a temptation to youth leading many into habits of foul profanity, to intemperance and gambling.’¹¹

There was certainly a less respectable side to harriers’ sporting behaviour. There is, for example, evidence to suggest that their activity over the countryside was sometimes seen as a public nuisance. Littering was occasionally reported and must have been a constant problem. Packs of runners descending on estates every Saturday afternoon raised issues of privacy and challenged the status of landowners. In some cases there were reports of harriers being beaten or shot at by estate managers intent on keeping them off the lands of their masters.¹² Reports of runs are peppered with occasional glimpses of the hazards of running over private land, and

¹⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 10th September, 1897. P. 6.

¹¹ *Scottish Sport*, 24th February, 1899. P. 5.

¹² See Appendix 7 for a cartoon depiction of the relationship between harrier and estate manager. Published to mark the national cross country championships of 1908. *The Scottish Referee*, 9th March, 1908. P. 1.

confronting gamekeepers, barbed wire and dogs. The following extract is typical:

‘Greenhead Harriers’ run on Saturday was abruptly terminated on Aitkenhead estate grounds by the appearance of a brutal gamekeeper armed with a formidable stick, and accompanied by a ferocious-looking dog. After using very threatening and abusive language, he brutally assaulted one of the members who had become detached from the pack, by knocking him down, kicking him, and causing blood to flow freely from his mouth. As this is not profitable for defenceless harriers, clubs intending to cover this district should take note.’¹³

Usually the club would attempt to use the simple expedient of making the landowner a club patron, thus removing the obstacle.¹⁴

On occasions the ‘Corinthian’ values of the clubs were compromised from within their own ranks, rather than by perception of public nuisance, with reports of more clearly unrespectable, if not dishonest, behaviour. After one incident *Scottish Sport* carried a somewhat indignant report of a run on the outskirts of Glasgow:

“... a runner, who knew the country, cut the trail by a couple of miles, ferried himself across the canal and thus easily won the handicap. When the result was made known, a pal, who had been in the same boat, but was unplaced, split, with the result that he too was disqualified, and rightly too.”¹⁵

Some groups were intent on making the sport into an opportunity for profit based on self-interest. Cross country running fought off early attempts by betting syndicates to use the sport for betting purposes. At this time athletics in the broadest sense

¹³ *Scottish Sport*, 26th February, 1897. P. 14.

¹⁴ The West of Scotland Harriers made Sir John Stirling Maxwell a patron of the club. He owned large estates on the south side of Glasgow including what is now Pollock Estate, an area that was used by the West of Scotland Harriers for club runs.

¹⁵ *Scottish Sport*, 4th February, 1898. P. 6.

suffered from a degree of corruption, with betting syndicates essentially defining the outcomes of races where they existed at football clubs' sports and at more local events. The advent of organised clubs posed a threat to this lucrative business as the new clubs set about controlling and defining the conditions under which they would train and race, thus effectively wresting the racing calendar away from the syndicates.

Sociability and respectability

For most Scotsmen, sporting sociability had long provided a potentially cathartic outlet, an escape from the seriousness of work, from household and family affairs, and from the potential prison of 'respectable behaviour'. Pure pleasure, enjoyment and sociability have always played key roles in promoting participation in sport. In his study of the evolution of the many and varied club and sporting organisations in England, Neil Wigglesworth shows that in the first half of the 19th century many clubs styled themselves as 'societies' to reflect this emphasis. His research into these early 'societies' shows that many were formed by small groups of friends seeking diversions and that there were a host of 'societies' whose purpose was essentially social.¹⁶

A similar early Scottish example was the Edinburgh based 'Six Foot High Club'. Scott himself wrote in his Journal on 5th March 1829 the importance of the club to his social standing:

'What a tail of the Alphabet I should draw after me, were I to sign with the indications of the different societies I belong to,

¹⁶ Wigglesworth, N. (1996). *The Evolution of English Sport*. London: Cass.

beginning with the Presidency of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and ending with Umpire of the Six Foot High Club.¹⁷

A similar emphasis on Scottish sociability could be found throughout the 19th century. Tranter's work on the sporting organisations of Stirling shows that a number of sports clubs, such as the Borestone Bowling Club, founded in 1858, and events, such as the Callander Highland Games of 1888, were inaugurated 'solely to provide amusement'.¹⁸ Sociability was central to the sport of hare and hounds too. Social standing, and the role and place of masculine ideals, were lived out in the runs and in the exclusivity associated with the structured nature of the sport. There was clear demarcation in the allocation of roles as 'hares' or 'hounds', with fast and slow packs, as well as 'whips'. In addition, each 'pack' had a pace runner and the run was regarded as a pack affair rather than as a matter of racing between individuals. The strong emphasis on packs functioning together created a bonding within groups of runners who preferred to run with certain friends, emphasising the social and manly ideal of the 'selfless man', and the co-operative nature of the club runs. One example of a club run of the West of Scotland Harriers illustrates these qualities when the fast pack caught sight of the slow pack and 'seeing their mistake as to time, took shelter from the rain beneath some trees till the slows had gained their proper start.'¹⁹ This created an image of the harriers as young Victorian gentlemen capable of co-operating with each other, and of accepting the values and aspirations of the 'right' club, while still allowing runners to see themselves as heroic individuals striving to make their way over natural countryside. The 'heroic' is captured superbly in an account of the hares of Clydesdale Harriers, a club run from Ibrox

¹⁷ Skilton, C. (1979). *The Story of Old Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: Publisher unknown. P. 102.

¹⁸ Tranter, N. (1989). The patronage of organised sport in central Scotland, 1820-1900. *Journal of Sport History*, 16 (3), P. 243.

¹⁹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 30th October, 1888. P. 13.

Park (the home of Glasgow Rangers F.C.), laying a trail for the hounds:

‘Valour and discretion were exemplified by the hares on Saturday. Two of them, when the paper went down, plunged into the River Cart, which was then in high flood, and swam to the other side, thus saving fully two miles, whilst the third hare, when the water reached his neck, scrambled back and walked home. Good old ‘discretion’! Good old ‘valour’! The pack preferred taking the longer route, and crossing by the bridge.’²⁰

Occasionally the heroic nature of endeavour could end in disaster for the harrier as in the case of the Perth Harrier who in a seventeen mile run failed to return with the pack and was discovered around midnight, unconscious.²¹ The nature of competition generally emphasised the club rather than individual endeavour in these early days. In addition to pack runs there were squadron runs, as well as the inter-club competitions and national championships. Few spectators attended. Collaboration and sociability were far more important than competition. Yet at the same time, members wanted to improve their levels of fitness and endurance. This could mean some compromise with strict amateur ideals. There were occasional examples of clubs that enlisted the services of professional trainers to supervise training. Edinburgh Northern Harriers replaced Geordie Wood with a younger trainer in 1897.²² He brought to the club some of the training practices of the professional circuit such as the use of a ‘punching ball’²³ and Dennistoun Harriers employed a trainer in January 1898.²⁴

Sociability was reinforced by the recruitment of members from similar social backgrounds. In the case of the Scottish harriers, social activities and cross country

²⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 31st January, 1890. P. 10.

²¹ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 29th November, 1887. P. 13.

²² *Scottish Sport*, 15th January, 1897. P. 7.

²³ *Scottish Sport*, 14th January, 1898. P. 6.

²⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 28th January, 1898. P. 6.

sport both formed part of the fabric of club identity. Wholesome fresh-air activity with friends of similar social standing, coupled with convivial social activity, lay at the heart of the sport. In 1886 the *Scottish Athletic Journal* reported on the arrangements to form the 'West of Scotland Harriers'. It commented upon the arrangements to consider every application for admission and added: 'Their aim will always be to have in the West of Scotland Harriers a club in which gentlemen will find companions with whom they can associate both in the close and at the social board.'²⁵

The accommodation used by the clubs could be more ambiguous in its message. Football, cricket, rugby and rowing clubs each had their own club rooms at their sporting venues, which served both sporting and social functions. Inevitably these club houses were at the fairly basic level associated with the rough and ready early provision of sporting facilities. In contrast, many gymnastic clubs and private swimming clubs had the luxury of providing both members' lounges and refreshments, as well as the sports facilities themselves, all under one roof. The harriers clubs, lacking any such permanent base for either social or sporting provision, set about hiring rooms in 'reputable' hotels, with lounges and facilities for members, such as food and newspapers, as well as, in some cases, provision for overnight accommodation to satisfy their social aspirations. They also set about establishing their sporting bases at notional 'headquarters' by using inns, public swimming baths and the new football grounds. Initially, therefore, the new harriers sought accommodation at both sporting and social levels. In the case of Edinburgh Harriers this was achieved through a relationship with the Royal Gymnasium in

²⁵ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 23rd September, 1886. P. 17.

Edinburgh, which provided both types of facility for some time.

While no harriers club initially had its own grounds, pavilion or social rooms, the clubs nevertheless came to be associated with not only the premier sporting venues but also the premier meeting places. Even in the earliest days of the clubs the provision of convivial meeting and recreational facilities was seen as a key requirement. Hotels, relying on the publicity that attended the associated social events, vied to offer the best rates and facilities, and to be regarded as the focal point for harriers' functions, often putting aside rooms for their exclusive use. The Langholm Hotel in Glasgow was known for its 'handsome' rooms, and for providing newspapers, comic weeklies and sporting papers such as the *Graphic*, the *Illustrated London News*, *Punch* or *Bell's Life*. Most other harriers clubs tried to secure a base with good meeting rooms, such as public baths or a good inn. The summit of ambition was to acquire separate 'rooms' in a city where 'gentlemen' members could live out the ideal of their acquired status.

All clubs had notional 'headquarters', and clubs' meeting rooms and hotel venues in city centres soon came to represent the epitome of the Victorian middle class ideal, and assumed key importance. Their aim was to take on the aspect and appearance of 'gentlemen', so the more select the venue the better. Clydesdale Harriers acquired club rooms in the centre of Glasgow for the benefit of members.²⁶ The more peripatetic West of Scotland Harriers favoured the Langholm Hotel, although rooms at the Conservative, Liberal and St Andrew's Clubs were also used, while Ingram Harriers secured the Parkhead Masonic Halls as 'headquarters'. The Langholm and

²⁶ McAusland, B. (1988). *Clydesdale Harriers: A Centenary History, 1885-1985*. Glasgow: The Club.

Lauder Hotels in Glasgow, both used by harriers, were also used by other sports clubs.

The perceived need to emulate the respectability of gentlemen's or political clubs was highlighted by a correspondent who wrote to the *Scottish Athletic Journal* in 1886 to argue for a meeting place that athletes could use 'without having to resort to bars and public houses'. The Langholm Hotel was 'adequate', but in his view it was 'not ideally suited to men of active dispositions':

'How much more satisfactory would it be if they could resort to a comfortable club – practically a home for the time being – where there would be a certainty of meeting friends; where a game at billiard, a hand at whist, a little music, together with the concomitant drink and smoke, could be comfortably and temperately indulged in; where, for those who require it, a comfortable tea or supper could be had, and where for country members comfortable and reasonable sleeping accommodation could be secured.'²⁷

When Edinburgh Harriers began offering the complete gentlemen's service of 'rooms', in October 1899,²⁸ it completed the creation of an elite grouping of pre-eminent harriers clubs, comprising Clydesdale, West of Scotland and Edinburgh Harriers. Harriers living in 'digs' in cities during the week would have welcomed these club rooms as a place of convenience and conviviality.

This sometimes grated on contemporary commentators, who saw aspiring gentleman 'toffs' continuously pleading poverty in other contexts. In 1897 an article in the *Scottish Sport* commented on harriers' 'impecuniosity' by pointing out that:

²⁷ *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 28th September, 1886. P. 14.

²⁸ *Scottish Sport*, 13th October, 1899. P. 6.

‘In the main, the expenses of harriers are comparatively small. Their outfit is not difficult to maintain; yet it is a humiliating fact that many of the clubs are continuously pleading poverty and appealing for subscriptions to gentlemen who are known to look with kindly eyes on every sort of legitimate effort in the direction of physical education and recreation. Were this a case of mere boys or apprentice lads appealing for aid, no one could grudge them a little support, but when we find clubs, many of whose members are tradesmen, in fairly prosperous circumstances, appealing for aid, then, we say it is time to call a halt.’²⁹

The article went on to accuse the clubs and their members of attempted blackmail, and rebuked them, exhorting them to ‘apply their hands to their own pockets’. Clubs were clearly reluctant to dig too deep. Even Clydesdale Harriers were unwilling to purchase rooms outright, taking the view that the financial risks were too high, and decided to rent rooms instead. If there were no rooms available, meetings for the purpose of organising club activities were generally held at hotels of good social standing. As we have seen, this became the norm for the sport.

Much of the harriers’ sporting life revolved around the winter calendar of runs at set venues. The locations of these winter Saturday runs changed regularly and there was no regular sporting base, although more favoured venues were sometimes used for the weekly post-run social activities. Identity and social class seem to have been emphasised in the hiring of complete train carriages and ‘brakes’ to take the harriers to their Saturday venues, as well as in the quality of the hotels booked for changing and socialising after the event. The social exclusiveness of these sportsmen may well have helped to reinforce their sense of order within a rapidly changing and industrialising Scotland, emphasising that the boundaries in sport were perhaps not as clear as they were elsewhere in society. With venues for Glasgow runs as far-

²⁹ *Scottish Sport*, 5th January, 1897. P. 10.

flung as Bothwell, Helensburgh, Chryston, Kirkintilloch, Beith, Renton, Kilmarnock, Hamilton and Paisley, up to 40 miles from the city centre, it required some considerable organisation to assemble up to 60-80 men for a run, a meal and a social. Advertising train times, hiring railway carriages dedicated to club members only and hiring special 'brakes', in addition to making arrangements at suitable venues, ensured that the activities of the harriers clubs were welcome elements in the new leisure economy. Many venues became popular with the clubs and runs became integral features of the economy of certain hotels and inns. Fixture calendars bore names that soon became familiar to harriers, including the Queen's Hotel, Helensburgh (the West of Scotland Harriers); The Bull, Milngavie (Clydesdale Harriers); Mather's Hotel, Broughty Ferry (Airlie and Broughty Harriers); and Gemmell's Restaurant, Govan (Bluevale Harriers). For Edinburgh Harriers the inns and hotels surrounding their city became favourite venues, replicating the form of the sport in the west of the country. The Harp Hotel at Corstorphine, the Volunteer Arms at Morningside, the Sheep Head at Duddingston, the Old Inn at Roslin and Mr Clark's Inn at Coltbridge were a few of the venues that catered for the new harriers.

The relationship that sport enjoyed with the licensed trade is encapsulated in the study by Collins and Vamplew who noted the symbiotic relationship between the development of sport and the licensing trade and in particular, in the case of Scotland, licensed premises 'hosting after-match entertainments or meetings of clubs

...³⁰

Gentlemanly standing was enhanced not only by the selection of venues for runs but

³⁰ Collins, T. and Vamplew, W. (2002) *Mud, Sweat and Beers: A Cultural History of Sport and Alcohol*. Oxford: Berg. P. 21.

also by the nature and quality of the social functions by which each club was judged. The small but elite grouping of sporting polymaths that led the harriers clubs used their connections and backgrounds to great effect in publicising their events. The harriers clubs tried to represent late 19th century sportsmen as healthy, well-connected and leisured through events such as gatherings for card games (Dundee Harriers), socials in the rooms of the Co-operative Society (Bellahouston Harriers), *conversazione*s in the Town Hall (Motherwell Harriers) or grand dances (West of Scotland Harriers).

Smokers and socials: less respectable pleasures

The harriers' social structure essentially revolved around the socials after their cross country runs and the smokers held during the week. The subtle complexities in the ways in which behaviour was defined, regulated and controlled within the social fabric of sports clubs are exemplified in these events, which were enthusiastically engaged in, often reported on and understood to be the main attractions offered by the clubs. Additional events – such as the dinner held to mark the International Exhibition in Glasgow in 1888 – provided further excuses for collective enjoyment. There were also occasional inter-club socials, including dinner dances, which ladies were permitted to attend.

Smoking and the drinking of alcohol were problematic, especially when they were carried out by members of the working class. Within Scottish sport more generally there was a variety of attitudes to both these activities. The alehouse where the Six Foot High Club met typified the importance of alcohol in almost all sports in the early 19th century. By the later 19th century a tiny minority of sportsmen, many of

them Methodists, Nonconformists or secular political reformers, opposed the convivial, pleasure-seeking pub-based culture, which they saw as harmful. Finn's work on John Hope's Edinburgh based movement in sport in general and football in particular, which was committed to evangelicalism, radical Protestantism, temperance and 'no Popery', illuminates the issues that such critics raised.³¹ The strong temperance movement in sport was mainly associated with ensuring the respectability of working class participants. Hope's devotion to the cause of providing respectable leisure to the citizens of Edinburgh was based on maximising the appeal of the temperance cause through the game of football, as this was 'the game of the masses'.³² For a short while he was successful in his attempts to provide a wholesome activity whose practitioners did not succumb to the sinful pleasures of drink. Through his position as a city councillor, by the donation of a sizeable area of land for a public park and through the volunteer movement, Hope moved the agenda of sport and drink firmly into the minds of the citizens of Edinburgh. Using the volunteer movement, Hope founded the 3rd Edinburgh Rifle Volunteer Football Club, which was to enjoy early success in winning the Edinburgh Cup; the club also embodied Hope's abstemious anti-Catholic crusade through sport.³³ The early association of football with the temperance movement was exemplified further in the activities of both Hibernian in Edinburgh and Celtic in Glasgow, both of which had strong associations with the Catholic Young Men's Society and the League of the

³¹ Finn, G. T. W. (1994). Faith, hope and bigotry: case studies of anti-Catholic prejudice in Scottish soccer and society. In: G. Jarvie and G. Walker (eds.). *Scottish Sport in the Making of the Nation: Ninety minute patriots?* Leicester: Leicester University Press.

³² The Temperance cause was further enhanced at this time by teams from temperance movements taking part in sport. Both football and cross country running had clubs formed from total abstainers. Coupled with the overt (at least in public) message of individual sports for total abstinence, the temperance cause was one which had some little support for a while.

³³ Finn, G. T. W. (1994). *op. cit.*

Cross, a Catholic temperance movement.³⁴

However, trying to present an image of respectability by disassociation from the world of drink was extremely difficult when changing rooms were in inns, pubs and hotels. The temperance leagues were quick to point to the evils of drink in relation to wholesome athletic activity. In 1898, for example, the *League Journal* carried an article powerfully condemning strong drink in relation to sport. It cited as supporters of this view W.G. Grace and Prince Ranjitsinhji in cricket, George Orton, the US mile champion, Hanlon the sculler, J.G. Clegg of Sheffield and others, perhaps surprisingly including the Newport Rugby team of 1891 and 1892. The article specifically stressed the bad effects of alcohol:

‘We know what the medical men say about the effect of alcohol upon parts of the body – how its action overworks the heart, and therefore decreases the staying power; how it renders the muscles flabby, thus taking from them their snap and spring; how it upsets the stomach, lowers the temperature, muddles the brain, and generates nervousness when coolness is essential ... alcohol not only decreases the staying power, but it also weakens the nerve or will power.’³⁵

The article exhorted readers to remember that the function of athletic exercises was to develop the athletic man, whom it characterised as a better citizen, with higher mental attainment and strength of character, and as the epitome of ‘physical, mental and moral manhood’. Intelligent athleticism was therefore predicated on total abstinence, whatever the sport, a point consistently emphasised by the Rev. W.W.

³⁴ Murray, W. (2002). *The Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland*. Edinburgh: John Donald. P.88. For further examples of issues of Protestant popular culture read the excellent work of Walker, G. and Gallagher, T. (eds.) (1990). *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

³⁵ *The League Journal*, 8th January, 1898. Pp. 25-26.

Beveridge a former Scottish champion sprinter in his numerous public addresses on the subject.³⁶ However, the appeal of certain sports was rooted in cultural values of clubbability and camaraderie within the developing sporting culture.

A further example from the wider world of sport in Scotland, in 1889 was a sketch in the *Scottish Umpire* exploiting the ever-increasing public interest in the background to football matches. It gave an account of the Scottish Cup Final between Celtic and Third Lanark Rifle Volunteers and included a vignette of the pavilion dressing room, where beef tea, sherry ‘fzip’, nettle beer and brandy were all in evidence.³⁷ After match celebrations were sometimes periods of heavy drinking and club officials were not immune. At the dinner that followed the Scottish Football Association’s match with England in 1890 the bill included a conspicuous £33 for champagne alone.³⁸ Once professional football clubs became incorporated it was even more difficult to preach temperance, as the drinks trade was soon heavily involved. In the case of Celtic F.C., for example, its committee was dominated by publicans, and publicans numbered some 23.3 per cent of the club’s shareholders.³⁹

There was a similar ambiguity in relation to smoking. In a brief but pointed commentary *Scottish Sport* remarked in 1897 that:

‘A question that is a thorn in the flesh of all the masters of our schools is smoking ... All the methods adopted by schoolmasters seem to be of no avail to stop the evil, and

³⁶ Beveridge was one of the best known proselytisers on the subject of abstinence. See for example *The League Journal*, 15th November, 1898. P. 101 and *Scottish Sport*, 20th January, 1893. P. 9.

³⁷ *The Scottish Umpire*, 4th February, 1889. P. 10.

³⁸ Keevins, K. and McCarra, K. (1985). *100 Cups: The Story of the Scottish Cup*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing. P. 42.

³⁹ Vamplew, W. (1988). *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain 1875-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

we think that the best and only way is to appeal to the good sense of the boys themselves. We do not speak as anti-tobacco leaguers. We smoke ourselves; but what we earnestly ask boys is to smoke only when they have become men. It stops growth and spoils training. A boy smoker will never play football so well as he otherwise would.’⁴⁰

The article went on to depict the dangers of inhalation as a pernicious habit and depicted the dangers of the craving once acquired. It encouraged the use of pipes as an alternative, a sure sign that the assumed audience was public school boys and pupils at the ‘senior secondaries’. At the same time, however, the extent to which the smoking rooms of hotels and inns were frequently advertised in the athletic and sporting press, with an emphasis on the provision of facilities for sporting clubs, suggests that little notice was taken of such strictures.

In some circumstances the harriers positively exuded the mores and fashions underpinned by middle class respectable values. Yet many harriers appear to have felt that exhortations to abstinence were meant for others less capable of controlling their alcoholic intake, implicitly because of their lower social standing. Convinced of their relatively high social station, harriers copied the customs, values and rituals associated with the other sporting clubs to which they belonged.

Some individual harriers occasionally took a stand on issues such as smoking and drinking. Andrew Hannah of Clydesdale Harriers, arguably the pre-eminent harrier of the day, having won the national championship five times between 1890 and 1896, was an outspoken advocate of total abstinence and was noted for advising up-and-coming harriers on the virtues of a good diet, plenty of sleep, and avoidance of

⁴⁰ *Scottish Sport*, 5th February, 1897. P. 6.

cigarettes and alcohol.⁴¹ Yet such opposition rarely prevented abstainers from attending the social occasions that characterised the harriers clubs. Harriers' smokers were hugely popular occasions, and tickets for these and the *conversazioni* were in great demand both among club members and among members of other clubs, who saw these occasions as providing opportunities to develop links with other harriers. Thus the relaxed conviviality of a smoker in a good location embodied all the pleasures of Victorian clubbability.

Smokers were not the exclusive preserve of harriers, but were associated with most sports clubs. The breakaway Scottish Amateur Athletic Union held a successful smoking concert at Ancell's Restaurant in Glasgow in 1895, with guests from the Scottish Cyclists Union, on the occasion of the Union's medal presentations. The local press reported such occasions with enthusiasm. However, the harriers' smokers appear to have been more frequent and, perhaps, more important.

As the harriers clubs grew, so too did the pressure on the venues they used to receive larger numbers for Saturday runs and the social events that followed them. This meant that the socials acquired even greater significance, becoming planned events catering for upwards of 100 participants. It was the smokers and the 'socials' that gave the clubs their distinctiveness. Often the social was the event that gave the edge to the occasion, rather than the quality of the run, and clubs vied with each other to hold the most enjoyable and distinctive gatherings. Detail of the 'socials' was emphasised in the information that the clubs gave to the press.

⁴¹ See the small but illuminating article on 'Training for Distance Races' in *Scottish Sport*, 7th February, 1896. P. 13.

The first inter-club run, between Edinburgh Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers in 1886, mustered some 53 runners. The social after the event was held not at the venue of the run (the Sheep Head Inn, Duddingston) but at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Edinburgh. In addition to speeches and toasts, the piano was featured as singing and recitations carried on until 9.45 in the evening. In the case of one 'at home' held by the Clydesdale Harriers, the evening finished at 2 a.m. The Royal Hotel on George Square, Glasgow, was a favoured post-race venue for the West of Scotland Harriers when entertaining other clubs at inter-club competitions. On the return match with Edinburgh Harriers in December 1886, for example, the club ran from the Victoria Baths on the south side of Glasgow, retiring to the Royal Hotel at 5.30 p.m. for tea and ending the evening at 9 p.m. It was not uncommon to invite officials from other clubs as guests on such occasions. Usually there was a ham and eggs tea followed by toasts and cigars, as well as singing and recitations.

According to one particularly enthusiastic piece of reporting in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* on 1 February 1887, the West of Scotland Harriers club run at Erskine Ferry the previous week seems to have contained all the elements of carnival. The late arrival of the harriers, due to the horses overheating, meant a two hour journey, with the run commencing at 4.30 p.m., when it was getting dark. The proprietor of the hotel had not been forewarned that some 30 runners would arrive, but given one hour his staff had managed to prepare a meal. The social after the run, with recitations, singing and toasts, was well received, and the club dog indulged in a fight with another dog under one of the tables, which caused the members to get up onto their chairs. Departing at 8 p.m. did nothing, it seems, to ensure the safety of the journey home, for the driver of the coach left the road and landed the coach in a ditch more

than once. They arrived back in Glasgow at 10 p.m.⁴²

At a Bellahouston Harriers club smoker in October 1895 the revelry included conjuring acts by a 'Professor' Lawrie, 'who fairly brought down the house'; a performance by the Maxwell quartet; and a reading by T. Robb Lawson. Gifts were awarded for long service and included silver-topped umbrellas, gold badges and a gold Albert watch. In most harriers clubs impending marriages were celebrated with a gift to the groom but much more rarely, to the bride. Such awards and exchanges of gifts became potent symbols of the exclusiveness of the clubs, enhancing the desire to 'belong' and marking recipients as individuals who had served with distinction; service being the valued commodity of Victorian club gentlemen.

A sense of burlesque was not always confined to smokers. The harriers were noted for the often innovative and enthusiastic ways in which they engaged in their sport. Activities on New Year's Day had long been a feature of Scottish cultural life and inter club races were organised to celebrate the occasion. On New Year's Day 1897, the harriers of Dundee took part in traditional 'bun racing', 'cookie shines' and 'dumplin' fechts'. On New Year's Day 1898, Elderslie Wallace Harriers met Cambuslang Harriers for a day trip to Ayr. It was reported that local men joined in their celebrations, which included the playing of bagpipes. Edinburgh Northern Harriers frequently held 'Benedicts versus Batchelors' races. In all these cases the social after the event was an eagerly anticipated gathering. In dealing with the excesses of these runs a Clydesdale Harrier, a chemist by profession, manufactured the ideal antidote in an embrocation called 'Anti-stiff' which was 'well suited to

⁴² *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 1st February, 1887. P. 13.

carrying in the pocket.⁴³

Whether the ‘socials’ were grand affairs or involved relatively small numbers gathered in the snugger of hotel kitchens, it was these occasions that gave the harriers’ sport its character and its emerging form as a liminal activity. The homosocial nature of the occasions was evident from the start, with the virtual exclusion of women as participants and even as spectators. Women, or rather ‘ladies’, were allowed to attend the clubs’ grand annual dances, but these were occasions of relative sobriety and propriety compared to the all male smokers.

It was the smokers that gave the harriers the edge over other sporting forms because of their sheer sociability. While Queen’s Park F.C. could boast that its annual dance was the ‘dance of the year in football circles’, the harriers transformed convivial gatherings from planned and formal annual occasions into weekly and monthly events, encompassing the spectrum of entertainment from grand balls, period dress balls to post run revelries.⁴⁴

At one of the first smokers held by the West of Scotland Harriers in Glasgow there were ‘gold medal’ singers, comics and general recitations, while at the Edinburgh Harriers’ ‘smoking concert’ on Boxing Day 1885 the Richmond Hotel saw some 60 members attend, with prizes being presented to race winners as well as general entertainment, singing and toasts. Edinburgh Harriers also held a popular annual billiard tournament. To be included on the guest list of a smoker as an invited member representing another club became a much sought after honour. In addition

⁴³ *The Scottish Referee*, 23rd June, 1890. P. 6.

⁴⁴ *Scottish Sport*, 23rd December, 1898. P. 6

to the smokers, clubs held 'at homes' to which members of other clubs were invited. Essentially less boisterous but no less convivial, these 'at homes' came to be the hallmark by which clubs expressed their status as purveyors of good taste.

The services of proven entertainers became a feature of smokers. Professional entertainers invited to perform for harriers clubs included the infamous 'Herr Iff', but there were also turns from members noted for their skills in singing, recitation, comedy, conjuring and music. Dundee Harriers were noted for the quality of the cigars provided at their smokers, which were usually lit at 7.30 p.m. prompt. Word got around as to the relative merits of the performers and professional entertainers doing the circuits of the sports clubs. For one particular smoking concert held by the West of Scotland Harriers on 28 December 1886, the services of a musical association were engaged as well as a comic vocalist who had 'served his time' at the socials of Rangers Football Club.⁴⁵ By the turn of the century films were beginning to be a feature of clubs' social activities. In October 1898, for example, the Edinburgh Harriers used 'cinematograph photo.' at a club run and showed the result at an 'at home' a few weeks later. Teviotdale Harriers became known for their Burns Suppers.⁴⁶ These smokers and gatherings were popular with other clubs and served as key entertainment for young sporting men, who did the rounds of club smokers, hoping to be seen, and to have chances to talk and influence the direction of the sport. The clubs themselves relied upon the income generated by these events. Edinburgh Northern Harriers declared a profit of two hundred pounds from smokers

⁴⁵ For a synthesis of the social and sporting achievement of the West of Scotland Harriers at this time see Telfer, H. (1994b) *Of Trails, Whips and Smokers – Gentlemen Harriers of the Late 19th Century*. In: Access to Active Living, Proceedings of the 10th Commonwealth & International Scientific Congress. Victoria: Canada. Pp.93-95.

⁴⁶ Coltman, J. (1989). *First Hundred: Teviotdale Harriers Centenary 1889-1989*. Hawick: The Club. P. 10.

and dances in 1897, and announced a diversification into picnics as a new venture to augment its ever-popular annual fish supper at the Peacock Hotel, Newhaven.

The patterns of sociability and the distinct character of each of the clubs were evidenced through the structure of their social events, which provided rites of passage and a gradual process of socialisation into the world of Victorian sporting manhood. Modelling the harriers clubs on gentlemen's clubs provided a respectable veneer for what might otherwise have been condemned as frivolous and sinful pleasure. Enjoying life without being criticised was apparently one of the greatest challenges facing young middle class males. Respectable club activity centred on the way in which runs were organised rather than on the quality of the run itself, although great pride was taken in the quality of trail-laying by the 'hares'. By focusing on the process of the sport and inventing its 'ethos', the clubs were able, by and large, to navigate through the difficult waters of respectability by virtue of the social background of their members, the attachment to respectable rituals and also their association with other forms of social activity. The quest for acceptable leisure activity was exemplified more through the structure and organisation of the clubs, and their constructed sense of respectability, than through their sporting activities. Indeed, sport served as an instrument for change, with the image of the sportsman and the image of the club interacting dialectically.

The sport therefore claimed a moral foundation, despite being based on somewhat hedonistic pursuits that combined the simultaneously individual and collective nature of the run with the camaraderie of the socials. These occasions emphasised both the sensual and the masculine, celebrating the ostentatious virility of the all male club.

The sport offered a healthy image of youthfulness and the open air, while the socials and the smokers kept up traditions of indoor socialising (in both senses of that word).

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Cross country running in Scotland was relatively late in its development as an organised sporting form. While there is some evidence that the practice of athletics in its various forms existed prior to 1885, the formation of specialist athletics clubs reflected the emphasis of membership of clubs representing team games rather than sporting activities of a more individualistic nature. Even more surprising is that cross country running should be the first organised club form of athletics as opposed to the more popular running, throwing and jumping forms of the sport already practiced through the various sports days of other sports clubs. The study identified the key factors that account for this.

Engagement with team games was closely tied into the fabric of civil society. Team games were therefore a socially constructed experience with an attendant ideology implicit within such engagement. To be a sportsman brought with it a cachet. However, as the base of organised sport penetrated further into society, specifically urbanised forms of living, so a greater variety of sporting experiences were sought. The quickening pace of urbanisation meant that for some, the prison of time with its constraints meant that escape physically, emotionally and spiritually enabled them to counter the increasing constraints of the city. One of the reasons offered in this study for engagement in, and growth of, cross country running is that it was an attempt at personal rediscovery; as much of a statement about the sportsman as it was personal reaffirmation. This self-centredness of the harriers clubs was at one and the same time its strength as a sport in the formative years as it was a weakness, leading to

clubs and individuals operating in ways which regarded the sport as less than the sum of its constituents. The first harriers clubs operated with little or no constraints, defining the sport in their own likeness with little opposition from those who organised athletic competition in track and field.

Athletics had been appropriated by other sports and the new harriers were initially not seen as central or indeed threatening, due to the different form of athletic engagement. Further, the membership of the early clubs reflected interests in other sports, principally football, rowing, cycling and swimming. Harriers clubs were formed at the cusp of the move towards sporting specialisation thus the cross country running clubs moved rapidly from serving a training function for other sports to specialist interest within a very short time. This generated a fierce independence within harrier running, with the club rather than the sporting form as the focus of the individual. This closeness in sporting community broadened to encompass social activities very much in accord with the construct of a 'gentleman'. Indeed, there is clear evidence in this study that the harrier clubs set themselves apart in this respect. Cross country running became a bedrock of respectability both sporting and socially. As the popular base of sport broadened, harrier clubs set about being distinctive and select as the very antithesis to the trend of broad and popular sporting engagement.

Perceived freedoms and autonomy were therefore jealously guarded. Stable governance as a consequence took some 18 years to establish. The independence of clubs as well as the lack of initial control by a young athletics governing body controlled by other sports, was compounded by a strong paternalistic view that new clubs needed guidance and direction from a self-selected, senior club elite.

Throughout all of this was the tension balance of the cult of the sporting individual and the status of the gentleman amateur. The origins of the sport, so deeply rooted in the activities of the English public schools and responsive therefore to its pervading and evangelical adherence to 'athleticism' and the Corinthian ideal, were associated with amateurism and thereby the elevation of social status by engagement. Indeed, it should be noted that oarsmen both in England and Scotland were to the fore in sermonising and practising the sport of cross country running thereby ensuring that some of the Henley stewards' ideological vision of an amateur was central to the ethos of a harrier runner. This social standing however caused difficulties in the formation of the first Scottish clubs, with a clear social distinction being drawn as to the social composition of, for example, Clydesdale Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers.

The sport developed despite, rather than because, of its form. Harrier clubs were essentially of 'no fixed abode'. The lack of a distinctive base suited the freedom that individual engagement in the sport gave, but also restricted the growth of the sport. International competition helped establish the sport as one of a number of Scottish sports engaged in determining the domestic sporting health of the nation as well as identifying its sporting 'heroes'. International competition also developed a healthier organisational club base as the 'Junior' clubs gradually broke the dominance of the small elite grouping of senior harrier clubs.

This study also highlights the ambiguous nature of respectability. The 'Corinthian' harriers engaged in activities which involved drink, risqué behaviour and rowdiness. Considered by some as public nuisances, their social and civic connections through

their patrons as well as their active self-publicity as the epitome of sporting values, usually managed to win over sceptics that they were eccentric and harmless sporting idealists thus the activities accrued a form of sporting and social cultural capital.

The study contributes to a broader understanding of the origins of organised sport in Scotland. It identifies the position of cross country running as a sport within a growing Scottish sporting engagement. It also identifies the nature of cross country running as an urban form of activity essentially engaged with rurality as a form of counter in part, to the changes to urban civic society. Engagement in the sport elevated social status thus being seen to be a 'wee bit better than we are'. The sport therefore was a form of social gatekeeper. The role played by clubs in governance of the sport defined *sine qua non* its future, resulting in a rigidity to change and an adherence to an ideal. The clubs and their activities were also the habitus for liminal behaviour, a safety valve but, also a purveyor of taste.

Future studies could develop the nature of the tension between the urban development of sport and the nature of sport as freedom from urban constraint. Additional studies could also develop the role and function of the clubs both with regard to the growth and development of the sport in addition to the less well recorded homosocial behaviours. These additional studies could build upon the social meaning of sport and its engagement as part of a broader understanding of sport as a cultural convention and indeed as cultural capital.

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Appendix 1

Examples of age, sporting affiliations and occupational status of club members

West of Scotland Harriers

Surname	Forename	Club role	Date of Birth	Age on Joining	Occupation	Other affiliations
Lawrie	Stewart	Founder member - President	1859	27	Insurance Clerk	President & Secretary of Queen's Park Football Club; President of S.A.A.A.; President of S.C.C.U.; President of Scottish Gymnastics Assoc.
Meikle	John	Founder member - Hon. Secy.	1857	29	Commercial Traveller	Bellahouston Bicycle Club
Walker	W. M.	Founder member - Captain	1862	24	Clerk	Clydesdale A.R.C.
Skinner	T.	Founder member - Vice President	1865	21	Wine Merchant	Western Bicycle Club
Young	A. J.	Founder member - Treasurer	Not known		Not known	Dennistoun C. C.
Finlayson	John Donald	Founder member - Vice Captain	1855	31	Insurance Clerk	Queens Park Football Club
Brown	Donald Campbell	Founder member - Committee	1861	25	Not known	Queens Park Football Club
Symington	A. C.	Founder member - Committee	1864	22	Not known	Glasgow Academicals

Source: Census returns 1881 and 1891, No 644. City of Glasgow.

Edinburgh Harriers

Surname	Forename	Club role	Date of Birth	Age	Occupation	Other affiliations
Duncan	David Scott	Founder; Hon. Secy. & Treasurer Scottish Cross Country Association	1861	24	Writer to the Signet	Correspondent for The Field; Royal Musselburgh Golf Club; Royal High School of Edinburgh; University of Edinburgh
Bow	John M. C. K.	Founder member	1864	21	Writer to the Signet	Loretto School
Donaldson	Alexander	Founder member	1868	17	Retail Stationer	Royal High School
Hotchkiss	J. N.	Founder member	1864	21	Writer to the Signet	Royal High School
Mossman	James	Founder member	1864	21	Manufacturer	Royal High School
Gabriel	W. M.	Founder member			Doctor	University of Edinburgh
White	F. W.	Founder member	1864	21	Bricklayers Labourer	
Caw	J.	Founder member	1865	20	Book keeper	
Luke	A. M.	Founder member	1864	20	Scholar	
Luke	J.	Founder member	1866	19	Scholar	

Source: Census returns 1881 and 1891, No. 685. Midlothian.

Appendix 2

Club Formation and Development 1885 – 1890

Year	Club	Location	Year	Club	Location
1885	Towerhill A.C.	Springburn, Glasgow	1888	Alloa Harriers	Alloa
1885	Edinburgh Harriers	Edinburgh	1888	Dennistoun Bath Harriers	Dennistoun Glasgow
1885	Clydesdale Harriers	Glasgow	1888	Motherwell Harriers	Motherwell
1886	Lanarkshire Harriers	Milngavie Glasgow	1888	Falkirk Heavy Weather Athletic Club	Falkirk & Stenhousemuir
1886	West of Scotland Harriers	Glasgow	1888	Dunstane Harriers	
1886	Lanarkshire Bicycle Club Harriers Section		1888	Berwick Harriers	Berwick upon Tweed
1887	Perth Academy Harriers	Perth	1888	Teviotdale Harriers	Hawick
1887	Fernbank Harriers	Dundee	1889	Argyllshire Harriers	
1887	Hamilton Harriers	Hamilton Lanarkshire	1889	Dalkeith Harriers	Dalkeith
1887	Hamilton Academy Harriers	Hamilton Lanarkshire	1889	Ibrox harriers	Ibrox, Glasgow
1887	Perth Harriers	Perth	1889	Bathgate Harriers	Bathgate Midlothian
1887	Kilmarnock Harriers	Kilmarnock Ayrshire	1889	Blairstown Harriers	Blairgowrie Perthshire
1887	Penicuik Harriers	Penicuik	1889	Edinburgh Northern Harriers	Edinburgh
1887	The Falkirk, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, Paisley, Dunbartonshire, Lanarkshire and Falkirk sections of Clydesdale Harriers		1889	Strathblane F.C. Harriers	Strathblane, Stirlingshire
1887	Dunfermline Harriers Club	Dunfermline	1889	Kirriemuir Harriers	Kirriemuir
1888	Musselburgh Harriers	Musselburgh	1889	Dunstane Harriers	
1888	Forfar Harriers	Forfar	1889	Aberdeen Harriers	Aberdeen
1888	Neilston Institution & Grammar School Harriers	Neilston Renfrewshire	1889	Bluevale Harriers	Carntyne/Rutherglen, Glasgow
1888	Ayrshire Harriers	Irvine Ayrshire	1890	Falkirk Victoria Harriers	Falkirk
1888	Arbroath Harriers	Arbroath	1890	Kilbowie Harriers	Clydebank
1888	Dennistoun Harriers	Dennistoun Glasgow	1890	Carluke Beagles	Carluke, Lanarkshire

Sources:

Scottish Athletic Journal; Scottish Umpire; Forfar Herald; Scottish Sport; Scottish Leader; The Scotsman.

Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union 1890-1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

Micro study of club formation and development – Dundee

While the above record is in part an example of club development and not in itself exhaustive but illustrative, the following is a more detailed examination of club development related to one city and its environs.

The following clubs were formed in and around Dundee within a five-year period. Some of the clubs formed soon disbanded but the detail is in itself of value insofar as it gives an indication of the rapid rise in interest in the sport at the time. The dates are not necessarily the definitive date of formation but indicate first runs.

Dundee Harriers, 29th October, 1887

Fernbank Harriers, 10th December, 1887

Lochee Harriers (Harefield), 27th January, 1889

Broughty Ferry Harriers, 1889

Airlie Harriers, 25th January, 1890

The City Harriers, 15th February, 1890

Hawkhill Harriers, in existence by 14th February, 1890

Rosefield Harriers, In existence by 14th February, 1890

Muirpark Harriers, 1st March, 1890

Lyndhurst Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Melrose Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Blue Star Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Woodland Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

West End Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Morgan Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Balgay Harriers, 22nd March, 1890

Dundee Thistle Harriers, 14th March, 1890

Added to this list should be the clubs within travel distance of Dundee such as Roselea Harriers of Arbroath, Arbroath Harriers, Kirriemuir Harriers (already mentioned in the previous table) and Forfar Harriers (formed on 16th November, 1888).

Appendix 3

Sports Holding Clubs

<u>Examples of clubs advertising 'Athletics Sports' in 1886</u>	<u>Examples of clubs advertising 'Athletics Sports' in 1887</u>
<p>Abercorn Football Club Airdrieonians Football Club Albion Rovers Football Club Ayr Football Club Clydesdale Harriers Dumbarton Athletic Football Club Edinburgh Harriers Edinburgh University Athletic Club Greenock Morton Football Club Greenock Wanderers Maybole Football Club Partick Thistle Football Club Port Glasgow Athletic Football Club Queen's Park Football Club Rangers Football Club Southern Athletic Football Club Vale of Leven Football Club</p>	<p>Abercorn Football Club Ancient Order of Foresters Ayr Academical Athletic Club Bellstane Birds Football Club Cambuslang Football Club Clyde Football Club Clydesdale Harriers Daniel Stewart's College Dollar Institution Cricket Club Dumbarton Football Club Dunfermline Football Club East Stirlingshire Football Club Edinburgh Harriers Edinburgh Northern Cycling Club Edinburgh University Falkirk Football Club Fairfield Athletic Club Free Foresters Glasgow Academicals Football Club Glasgow University Athletic Club Greenock Clubs Greenock Morton Football Club Heart of Midlothian Football Club Irvine Academicals Athletic Club Kilmarnock Football Club Kings Park Football Club Larkhall Thistle Football Club Lochee Football Club 1st Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers Amateur Athletic Club (1st L.R.V.A.A.C.) Maybole Football Club Motherwell Football Club Our Boys Football Club Perth Amateur Bicycle Club Pollockshields Athletic Club Queen's Edinburgh (Yeomanry) Rifle Volunteer Brigade Queen's Park Football Club Royal Albert Football Club Rangers Football Club St Bernard's Football Club St George Football Club St Johnstone Football Club St Mirren Football Club Vale of Leven Cricket Club Watson's College Athletic Club West of Scotland Cyclists Meeting West of Scotland Harriers Evening Meeting</p>
<p>Source: <i>Scottish Athletic Journal</i>, 17th August, 1886. Pp. 6-7.</p>	<p>Source: <i>Scottish Athletic Journal</i>, 19th April, 1887. P. 21.</p>

Appendix 4

Editorial Letter, *Scottish Sport*, 6th December, 1889

Scottish Cross Country Legislation

To the Editor of Scottish Sport

96 Gray Street, Parkhead, Glasgow, 2nd December, 1889.

Sir, - It is to be regretted that each successive attempt at a settlement of our cross-country difficulties seems to be fraught with misunderstandings, and that the latest has proved to be no exception to the rule. From the report of the annual general meeting of the S.C.C.A. , and from your "Echoes" of last Friday on the subject, the Clydesdale Harriers would appear to be guilty of one or both of two very serious charges, viz., the most weak minded vacillation, or the most contemptible duplicity. With your permission, I shall show that they are guilty of neither.

It is stated that Mr. Duncan gave notice of the proposed alterations in Rule 10, *in consequence of the receipt of a letter from me*. That an error has crept in here you will readily understand when I say that my *first* letter to Mr. Duncan on the subject was in *reply* to one from him, in which he said, "I intend moving that the number of qualifying runs be reduced to three;" and, speaking of the meeting, "*I* would like your club to take part in the proceedings." My reply was meant simply as an expression of *my* personal desire for a speedy settlement of the questions at issue, with thanks for Mr. Duncan's evident attempt at conciliation, and a request for particulars regarding the date and place of the S.C.C.A. *Committee* Meeting. Having received the latter information, I immediately called a special meeting of my committee to consider the position of affairs; and, as the result of their *unanimous* decision, I was instructed to write the official letter to the S.C.C.A., in which we refer them to the S.H.U.

I have no intention of discussing her the various points at issue; but I may state on behalf of my club that our decision is not meant as a refusal to come to terms, but is the result of the conviction which you, sir, seem to have arrived at, viz., that the question of Scottish Cross-Country Legislation is one that should now be settled, not between the C.H. and the clubs which form part of the S.C.C.A., but between the latter body and the only other Association that aspires to make laws for the guidance of the sport in Scotland –The Scottish Harriers Union. –Yours sincerely,

James Erskine, *Hon. Secy. Clydesdale Harriers*.

Appendix 5

International Teams: 1st International 1903

Scotland - Blue jerseys with a white thistle on the left breast; white knickers	
John Ranken (14 th)	Edinburgh Harriers
D. W. Mill (selected – did not run)	Greenock Glenpark Harriers
James Reston (22 nd)	Clydesdale Harriers
J. Crosbie (10 th)	Larkhall Harriers
T. C. Hughes (21 st)	Edinburgh Harriers
Arthur Pitt (selected – did not run)	Maryhill Harriers
James A. Ure (17 th)	Greenock Wellpark Harriers
Robert Frew (DNF)	Clydesdale Harriers
Thomas Mulrine (23 rd)	West of Scotland Harriers
A. Kinnaird (41 st)	Edinburgh Harriers
F. Wilson(30 th) (replaced Pitt)	Larkhall Harriers
T. Johnstone (34 th)	Highgate Harriers
William Robertson (DNF)	Clydesdale Harriers
J. M. Butters (40 th) (replaced Mill)	Maryhill & Garscube Harriers
12 ran – 10 finishers	

Ireland - Dark green jerseys; white knickers	
F. Curtis (18 th)	Haddington Harriers, Dublin
T. Muldoon (26 th)	Haddington Harriers, Dublin
P. J. Whyte (16 th)	City and Suburban Harriers, Dublin
P. J. McCafferty (20 th)	Clonliffe Harriers, Dublin
J. J. Morrissey (selected – did not run)	Galtymore Harriers
H. O'Sullivan (selected – did not run)	Cork Harriers
J. Creedon (13 th)	Cork Harriers
J. Duggan (DNF)	Cork Harriers
J. J. Daly (Captain) (3 rd)	Cork Harriers
T. Hynes (8 th)	Galway Harriers
P. Hehir (31 st)	Galway Harriers
T. T. Hamilton (DNF)	Gorben Harriers, Ulster
10 ran - 8 finishers	

Wales - Prince of Wales' feathers on a red jersey; white knickers	
A. Turner (Captain) (25 th)	Newport Harriers
J. D. Marsh (12 th)	Newport Harriers
A. Palmer (27 th)	Newport Harriers
R. B. Pugh (35 th)	Newport Harriers
R. Davis (28 th)	Newport Harriers
W. Davis 37 th)	Newport Harriers
A. Rees (36 th)	Newport Harriers
T. Baggs (39 th)	Newport Harriers
W. Craill (38 th)	Newport Harriers
E. J. Thomas (29 th)	Newport Harriers
T. W. White (selected – did not run)	Roath Harriers
D. G. Harris (19 th)	Reading Athletic Club
R. Evans (32 nd) (replaced White)	Roath Harriers
12 ran - 12 finishers	

England - White jerseys with a red rose on the left breast; white knickers	
Afred Shrubbs (1 st)	South London Harriers
S. J. Robinson (5 th)	Salford Harriers
W. A. Mercer (6 th)	Farnworth Harriers
J. Hosker (24 th)	Farnworth Harriers
Faulds (selected – did not run)	Birchfield Harriers
J. Thomas (9 th)	Birchfield Harriers
H. Lawson (7 th)	Leeds City Harriers
T. Edwards (2 nd)	Manchester Harriers
G. Smith (11 th)	Derby Harriers
A. Aldridge (4 th)	Kent Athletic Club
C. S. Silsby (15 th)	Hampstead Harriers
A. G. Home (33 rd) (replaced Pearce)	Highgate Harriers
G. Pearce (selected – did not run)	Kent Harriers
11 ran - 11 finishers	

Sources:

Richardson, T. N. (1954). *Jubilee History of the International Cross Country Union 1903-1953*. Ambergate, Derbyshire: The Union.

The Scottish Referee, 1903. (various)

Appendix 6

Scottish clubs represented in international selection

The majority of athletes selected to represent Scotland were from Clydesdale Harriers, Edinburgh Harriers and the West of Scotland Harriers. Athletes from these clubs amassed a total of 63 international appearances in the period 1903 until 1914, half of the total.

The table below identifies 16 other clubs and their athletes who represented Scotland from 1903 until 1914.

Falkirk Victoria Harriers	1904 & 1905	G. Arnott
Maryhill Harriers	1903	J. M. Butters
Garscube Harriers	1904, 1905 & 1907	S. Kennedy (1904, 1905), S. Carson (1907)
Larkhall Harriers	1903	J. Crosbie & F. Wilson
Greenock Glenpark Harriers	1903, 1904, 1905	W. D. Mill (1903, 1904), S. Elliott (1905)
Teviotdale Harriers	1907	A. J. Grieve
Dundee Thistle Harriers	1908	J. S. Matthews
Hamilton Harriers	1906	W. Muirden & D. Cather
Monkland Harriers	1913	A. McDonald
Greenock Wellpark Harriers	1903 & 1904	J. A. Ure
Motherwell Harriers	1904 & 1905	J. Barrie (1904), T. S. Young (1905), J. A. Sommerville (1905)
Bellahouston Harriers	1905, 1906, 1910 - 1914	P. C. Russell (1905, 1906), J. W. Templeman (1910, 1911, 1913, 1914), G. R. Stephens (1912, 1914), A. Kerr (1913), A. Craig (1913, 1914), J. Lindsay (1914), G. Cummings (1914),
Watsonians C.C.C.	1904 - 1908	J. Ranken (1904 - 1908) P. J. Melville (1907, 1908)
Edinburgh University Hare & Hounds	1906	A. M. Mathews
Edinburgh Southern Harriers	1907 – 1910 & 1912	T. Jack
Motherwell Y.M.C.A. Harriers	1908, 1911 - 1913	T. Miller (1908), A. Kerr (1911, 1912, 1913)

* George Wallach, an Anglo-Scot, represented Scotland 5 times from 1910 until 1914 with both Bolton United Harriers and Greenock Glenpark Harriers named as his club affiliation.

Compiled from:

Richardson, T. N. (1954). *Jubilee History of the International Cross Country Union 1903-1953*. Ambergate, Derbyshire: The Union.

The Scottish Referee, 1903-1914.

Shields, C. (1990). *Runs Will Take Place Whatever the Weather: The Centenary History of the Scottish Cross Country Union 1890-1990*. Edinburgh: The Union.

Appendix 7

Illustration relating to the National Championships and depicting the natural hazards of the cross country runner.



Source: *The Scottish Referee*, 9th March, 1908. P. 1.