

Barnsley 6 1981

The whole town's talking about the Jones boy, but glory goes to...

Aldershot and Farnham's Bernie Ford resisted a strong challenge from the emerging Terry Colton of Wolverhampton A.C. to win Sunday's Barnsley Six as thrilling a finish as one could wish to see.

Yet it came as something of an anti-climax, Steve Jones having already gate-crashed the party by racing across the finishing line in a new record time of 30 mins 9 secs.

Jones, the 26-year-old R.A.F. competitor from the Bristol club, arrived at the scene in the early afternoon intending to watch a friend, Alan Cole, from Swansea.

But he was swept along by the big-race atmosphere, and despite the reservations of the promoting club officials, he was eventually given permission to run by referee Stan Smith, on the understanding that he would not be allowed to compete for any of the prizes.

But it was obvious that an international of such quality – Jones outclassed the runners at Gateshead last month – was bound to be a strong contender even in such a competitive field, and there was no doubt that his unofficial success rubbed some of the gloss off Ford's win.

Ford himself was critical of Jones's decision to run when he spoke to the Chronicle after the race: "Steve's presence certainly took the edge off the race, and devalued it for me", he said.

"He must have known the deadline for entries before he came and should have accepted it. If he wanted to run he should have entered at the right time".

Jones, an inter-county champion, and third in the 3000 metres in the previous Friday's A.A.A. Championships at Crystal Palace, had no regrets about his decision to run, despite the fact that it was against the advice of his coach.

He commented: "It said in Athletics Weekly that there were no late entries and rules are rules, but when I arrived I thought I would like to run and the referee gave me special permission as a guest.

"I telephoned my coach and he said not to run, but I decided to incorporate the race into my training programme.

"I ran for 40 minutes prior to the start, and then came up for the race to finish off my training stint."

But Ford, who competed in the Moscow Olympic Marathon, can still reflect with pride on his performance. Despite recent injury problems he adopted a positive attitude from the start and led for a good deal of the race.

Then he showed what a strong competitor he is by holding off the challenge from Colton in the finishing straight as the spectators thrilled to the battle for the line.

It was so close that only one second separated the two, Ford winning in 30 mins 18 secs – just four seconds outside Steve Kenyon’s old record, set up in 1976.

Third was Barry Knight (Westbury) and fourth Birchfield Harriers’ Ray Smedley, who thus failed to make it a hat-trick of triumphs after winning the event for the last two years.

It was, in fact, Smedley’s lowest position in the race, his previous placings being 2nd, 2nd, 1st, 1st.

Fifth was Trevor Fieldsend, who also led Sheffield to victory in the team event, their other counters being Bill Domoney and Peter Rawnsley.



TERRY FINDS CHALLENGING ESCAPE FROM `BOREDOM`

Second-placed Terry Colton loves competing in the Barnsley Six because he regards it as a challenge.

“I come here because it’s always a hard race on a tough course and that appeals to me. This year it was even better because it was more competitive than ever, and there was a time when I thought I might win it.

“I came up that steep hill second time round tucked in behind Bernie Ford and at that stage I was in with a definite chance.

“But Bernie’s obviously a very good, strong competitor and I knew if I couldn’t take him on the hill he’d probably be able to hold me off”.

It was still a fine run by the 28-year-old sports promoter, who finished fourth last year in a time of 32 mins 56 secs. On Sunday he trimmed that time to 30-19 and that is indicative of the sort of form the Wolverhampton and Bilston athlete is in at the moment.

The previous week, for instance, he had won the Sale `15` in 1-12-17 – a triumph which he regards as his best performance.

He runs 5,000 and 10,000 metre races for his club on the track in the National League, but prefers to run on the roads. Track racing, he says, is `boring`.

Terry hails from Worksop, but now lives in Loughborough and works in Leicester.

And enjoys coming to Barnsley!

He told us: "It's a good, challenging course: there is always a splendid turn-out of both competitors and spectators: the race is well-marshalled: the changing facilities are more than adequate, and there's a marvellous atmosphere about the occasion."

KING GEORGE CROWNED

Local interest and rivalry played a big part in the race, with the re-introduction of the pub team event, eleven teams competing and all of the finishing the course.

Easy winners were the men from the King George Hotel, with 703 points, the victorious team being M. Brunt, R. Barraclough and W. Wallerton.

Brunt produced the best individual performance, taking 138th place in a time of 37-23 and Barraclough was 232nd in 39-29.

Dereck Hallas of Cutting Edge `A` was second-best placed pub team runner, coming home in 175th place with a time of 38-14.

The team from Worsbrough's Ship Inn, comprising M. Cooper, A. Barker and F. Davy were second with 1004 points and third was the Cutting Edge `A` squad of Hallas, Peter Schofield and Malcolm Fowler with a total of 1024 points.

Other pubs competing:-

Morning Star, Royston Pack Horse, Outpost, Cutting Edge `B`, Silkstone Red Lion, Wellington, Royal Arms, Star Hotel.

A RAY OF HOPE FOR EDDIE

Last year Eddie MacKenzie could do no wrong, setting up personal best performances at all distances.

But this year little has gone right for the former storeman who is now undergoing a probationary period with the South Yorkshire Police Force.

His training schedule has been decimated by injuries and he has been unable to find any sort of rhythm.

He told us, "Normally I clock up 50 to 60 miles a week on the roads in training. This year I've been unable to do more than 30 and sometime it's been even less than that.

I just haven't been able to get going, with one niggling injury after another, and I decided I'd just have to go for the `Six` and hope.

Thankfully I had no problems, and considering the amount of training I've been doing, and the sort of form I've been in, I was pretty pleased with my run."

MacKenzie, in fact, was the first Barnsley Road Runner home – the second time he had earned that distinction.

The first time was three years ago, when he burst onto the scene with a superb run of 33 mins 33 secs which left some of the top athletes in the North trailing in his wake.

Sunday's performance did not quite live up to that sort of standard, but his 33 mins 38 secs was still sufficient to give him a comfortable margin over second-placed Road Runner, Keith Binney, last year's number one, who clocked 34-27.

Eddie, of Cockerham Avenue, finished 30th overall. Next year he hopes to bounce back into the top twenty!

INTERNATIONAL STAR SHATTERS OLD RECORD

Ann Ford, of the Borough of Hounslow Club, produced a devastating run to shatter the record for the Ladies' Race by almost three minutes.

She crossed the line in an incredible time of 34-58, beating the previous record of 37-55, set in 1977 by Carol Gould of Barnet, by two minutes 57 seconds.

Expectations for a new record grew after a very fast first lap when Kathryn Binns of Sale Harriers was in the lead.

But when the athletes were sighted on the final stretch of the course, it was a determined Ann Ford who was out in front and a record was certain. She had almost five minutes left in which to cross the line and it was simply a question of by how great a margin the old record would be destroyed. Such was the quality of the field that second-placed Kathryn Binns also beat the record by two minutes 23 seconds to finish in a time of 35-32.

And bringing up third place was Cathy Williams, of Port Talbot, whose time of 38-59 was the third fastest previous time.

It soon became obvious that the race would be a duel between the two international athletes, both of whom have excellent pedigrees.

Ann, the twin sister of Paula Fudge who is herself an international athlete, won a bronze medal in the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton. She competed in the recent A.A.A. Championships, but is now concentrating on road racing rather than track events.

Kathryn, the 1979 A.A.A. U.K. cross-country champion, is holder of the best times for the 5,000 and 10,000 metres. In 1980 she was the fastest woman in the world over 10,000 metres.

Ann arrived in town too late to take a look around the course and so contented herself with tucking in behind Kathryn through the first lap – just to make sure she knew the way!

But once the first lap had been completed – in 17-31 – Ann began to close, and in the long pull up Racecommon Road, she sensed that the Sale Harriers girl was tiring, and so made her break.

From that point all Ann had left to beat was the course record – which she did most convincingly.

Kathryn's clubmate, S. Simpkin, was fourth in 39-26 and Susan Gaskell of Longwood Harriers A.C. was fifth in 41-16.

It was a great day for Rockingham's Pat Hudson, who ran a marvellous race to take sixth place in a time that took her breath away more than the race had done – 41-41. She had set herself the target of 43 minutes and was overjoyed with her splendid effort.

Pat was there amongst the honours in three different categories. She qualified for a prize for being sixth home, she was the first local runner home and she also helped her club to third team prize.

Next year she could go one better – for she will be entered as a veteran!

Then she will have a tussle with fellow club member Shirley Pickering who won this year's prize for the first veteran. She finished in 21st place, returning 46-52. Second veteran home was Sylvia Wood, also of Rockingham, who was 23rd in 47-45 and third was H. Berry of Holmfirth, who was 28th in 55-45.

Teenager Angela School, enjoyed a at the Six. Angela, overall and second

Third local runner comes from place.

Longwood Harriers with two of the club Joining Susan (eighth) was J. of 43-52.

The second team first three members 42-18, Dawn Harris, 12th in 43-48 and Janis Marsden, 15th in 44-42.



Gibson, a pupil at Penistone Grammar magnificent performance at her first attempt who runs for Longwood Harriers, was eighth local runner home in a time of 42-07.

to finish was Janet Heeley (Unattached) who Barnsley. Her time of 46-23 gave her 20th

carried off the first team award, members in the first eight home. Gaskell (fifth) and Angela Gibson Scholes in 13th position with a time

prize went to Chesterfield A.C., their home being Karen Finney, ninth in



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY DOUBLE FOR ANN AND BERNIE.

It was definitely six of the best for Ann and Bernie Ford.



Not only were the couple celebrating their remarkable winning double in the day's two big races, but there were toasting six happy years together, as Sunday August 9 was their wedding anniversary!

And if that was not enough, Bernie celebrated his 29th birthday last Monday, August 3.

The day began brightly for the Fords when Ann stormed through a top-class field to take the Ladies' Six title and smash the previous best course record by two mins 57 secs, and it was made complete when Bernie beat Wolverhampton and Bilston A.C.'s Terry Colton in a sprint for the line for the Men's honours.

Of course, Bernie and Terry were technically the second and third runners across the line with the

RAF's Steve Jones first, but the latter was running as a guest, and as such, had no effect on the placings.

Congratulated by Ann and besieged by autograph hunters immediately after the race, Bernie was clearly pleased with his performance, and well he might be, considering that he is not fully fit!

He revealed that a recent injury has left him with arch trouble which is in turn affecting his knee.

"It's still there, but I've become resigned to it now and it doesn't seem to be getting any worse", said the Aldershot Farnham and District A.C. runner.

The injury has meant that Bernie, who competed in the Moscow Olympic Marathon, has been out of the international competition this year and has also gone for a long time without hard training.

"The break seems to have done me good and things seem to be coming right now", said Bernie. "But I'm still planning from week to week."

“I’m enjoying my running at the moment, but I may confine myself to road races in the future because of the uneven terrain of the cross country courses.”

Of Barnsley’s road race he said: “I enjoyed the race very much. It is rather hilly, but I seem to run well on hills. The trouble is you tend to lose speed a little because of the climbs.”

Bernie also admitted that he could not respond to Steve Jones’ challenge when the quest runner pulled away on the second lap.

“Steve left me down the long straight road on the second lap. I tried to go with him, but sensed that he was full of running and so I concentrated on keeping him in touch.

“I’ve done some sprint training on grass recently and this helped!”