

Official Magazine of

New Brighton Olympic

Athletic Club



June 2019

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RUNNING COMMENTARY



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Club Website:

The club website is <https://newbrightonolympic.wixsite.com/athletics>
Please send any photos, videos, results or items of interest / relevance to Tony Prisk at tony.prisk@outlook.com.

Articles

Do you have something interesting which could be included in our magazine?

If you feel that it is interesting we would love to share it with other members.
Articles for the next issue should be sent in by the middle of August.

A big thank you to those members who have contributed to this issue.

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any manner whatsoever, without prior permission from
the Club Management Committee.***

From the Editor:

As this magazine goes to print we will have launched our new website:

<https://newbrightonolympic.wixsite.com/athletics>

On behalf of the club I would like to thank Joolz Moore from Athletics Canterbury for setting up the website for us.



The new website will be maintained by Kara Marino (Track & Field), Jahan Miller (Cross Country) and myself. If you have got any suggestions on the format and content please let me know.

A few weeks ago I visited one of our life members Trevor Wood and he provided me with a copy the New Brighton Amateur Athletic and Harrier club 50th Jubilee magazine, which details the clubs history from 1928 to 1978.

Over the next few editions of Running Commentary I will publish some excerpts from this magazine. On the next page I have included an excerpt from 1978. Some of the names may be familiar to you.

Tony Prisk



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To see some of my work, check out the PDF versions of
Cant-A-Long, the Canterbury Master's magazine,
on the Canterbury Masters website.

Blast from the Past - New Brighton Athletic club - 1978:

The following members were selected to present the province in the N.Z. Championships at Tauranga:

Senior Men D. Greig, M. Radcliffe, A. McLaren, T. Birnie, T. Good and J. O'Brien
Junior Men N. Lowsley, A. Szentivanyi, P. Renner, B. Ballinger, T. Prisk
Women E. Baker, M. Hadley, S. Harnett and N. Evans

Congratulations to N. Lowsley for finishing second in the Junior Mens event.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP 1978

Senior Men	40	Veterans Men	40
Senior Women	14	Veterans Women	8
Junior Men	22	Under 16 Boys	20
Junior Women	7	Under 16 Girls	11
Under 11 Boys	21	Under 14 Boys	38
Under 11 Girls	26	Under 14 Girls	32
Under 9 Boys	20	Under 9 Girls	15

Total Club Membership: 314.

The strength of the Club is shown by the above membership, the influence and drive of all Club officers, Club coaches and team efforts, plus the dedication of parents and supporters to Club members during these last few years, have produced the results and successes you have attained this fifth decade.

In drawing this 50th Jubilee History to a close I leave you with these thoughts. Whether you have won a gold, silver or bronze, Club trophies or certificates or just a competitor or social member; you can be justly proud to have been associated with the New Brighton Amateur Athlete and Harrier Club. Your work and active participation will, I am sure, be the beginning of another 50 years of continued success.

Jubilee Historian,
H.O. SAVAGE.

CLUB OFFICERS 1978

Patron	Mr R. Comfort	Vice President	Mr D.R. Thomas, Mrs J. Fairlass
President	Mr G. Steffens	Treasurer	Mr C. McLaren
Secretary	Mrs M. Baker	Ass. Treasurer	Mr W. Rollo
Men's Club Captain	Mr R. Cockle	Deputy	T. Prisk
Ladies Captain	Miss M. Hadley	Deputy	Mrs V. Rollo
Committee	R. Scott, B. Keown, M. Pule, Mrs Muir, G. Shier, C. Wyber, I. Waters.		

- Current committee members Allan McLaren and Tony Prisk representing Canterbury at the NZ Cross Country champs.
- 40 Senior men and 40 Veterans Men!
- Dave Thomas - Vice President (also Chairman of the Cross Country section) and Tony Prisk—Deputy Club Captain.

Margaret's Update:

As we settle into the winter running season I am sitting down to write my last column to you as President of our combined Club. It is definitely time to pass the baton on to someone else who can bring new energy to the role as our club evolves along with the changing face of athletics in Christchurch.

I was an enthusiastic member of Olympic and since our merger with New Brighton, I have been an enthusiastic member of our combined Club. I have made new running buddies, discovered hitherto unknown connections with my late brother (thank you Ann and John), and discovered the joys and challenges of organizing children's winter running. I have enjoyed getting to know people like Dave Thomas who has a wealth of knowledge and experience and has given so much of his energy to our Club. I have been impressed with Allan McLaren's grasp of Club History and general running knowledge. I am grateful for Richard Young's exceptional memory of many events, some of which I was present at but have trouble recalling.

I'm glad I was around in time to enjoy Ann Henderson's delicious catering. Those minty, chocolaty slices were to die for. There are many more people I could acknowledge and I will do so at the AGM.

What these thoughts lead me to is recognition of the role that membership of a Club plays in a person's life. In the last few years I have often referred to "my running whanau" when talking about what I love about running. (And can I please say here that I am including all the Field Athletes I know in these comments.) It has given me a way to connect with a whole range of people whom I might otherwise have never met. It doesn't matter whether you are a gardener, an accountant, a chef, a teacher, a painter, a home-based parent or a salesperson. What matters is the joy you share in athletics. It is a powerful connector that cuts across all the stereotypes we might have about people and their occupations or background.

When you train regularly with a group of people you have very interesting conversations. I regularly worship at the Church of the Summit Road and during the long service many issues and situations are discussed. And the view is great.

You don't need me to tell you how beneficial exercise is for general wellbeing and my running buddies can tell you how much calmer I am after a 12k run round Hagley park if I have had a challenging day at School or as a parent.

The other gift that belonging to our Club has given me in the last 3 years is being able to encourage some of our young summer athletes to try running in the winter. 2 seasons ago, after speaking at the Junior prizegiving, I had 6 young runners who joined for the winter season. Last season it was 18 and this season it is the same. If you check our Facebook page you will see lots of shots of

smiling runners traversing courses that we older runners are not quite so smiley about. Their energy and enthusiasm is wonderful to see. Their enthusiasm for the tennis hockey game that Tony introduced into our training last year was also quite scary, as the parents who were at training can attest.

These young members are the future of our sport and we need to give them a structure within which to keep developing. This is where you all come in-runners, jumpers and throwers and parents. We need a strong administrative base to ensure our club survives.

At our forthcoming AGM, we need people to join the Committee. This involves a monthly meeting and any other duty you might volunteer for. What matters are your ideas and suggestions. We need a President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Those roles are more detailed. Those 3 are required by the Constitution of our Club. We are currently really keen to have someone step into the Secretary role.

Without the Committee our Club cannot provide the structure for both seasons, both Children and Seniors. Our parent clubs merged because there were not enough people willing to step up to these roles at that time. If we want to continue to grow as a Club we need new people to join the administrative arm now. I want to continue to train our winter juniors. I want to continue to wear my Club singlet at National Championships. I want us to continue as a club for all ages.

I want your help.

Margaret

Hagley Relay



Harriers - 70 years ago:

The clubs did their club runs from a hosts residence, where they provided after noon tea.

The runners would be divided into packs:

- Colts (under age)
- Slow
- Medium
- Fast.

At a later stage there was also a ladies pack.

Each group would have a nominated leader who would keep them at the speed of the slowest runner in that group until about 1/2 mile from home, when they could then sprint to the finish.

The Star Sun newspaper ran a column for Harriers on the Monday's sports page, with results for the weekend club runs. The names of place getters had to be delivered to the paper office by 10 a.m. to be included. All clubs published their results and sometimes fictitious names were used to make the club look stronger.

We followed a trail laid by a volunteer and usually he set out about an hour before start time. He used chalk on the tar seal footpaths and shredded paper every where else. The colts would have a short cut to home and the leader looking after the colts was supplied with a whistle, which he used if he could not catch them or if they got too spread out.

The club runs were mostly 2 weekly, in-between inter club runs.

Ron Growcott



Children's Section update:

Easter was a busy one for three of our young Grade 12 athletes, Armani Lemalu, Kavanah Lene and Holly Gray who were selected to be part of the Canterbury Inter-Provincial team. For those of you who don't know the Inter-Provincial Competition is for Grade 12 and 13 Athletes who participate in events to earn points for their province rather than focus on individual performance. This year 11 provinces took part and 361 athletes competed at Nga Puna Wai on Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st April.

For Armani, Kavanah and Holly the weekend started on Thursday evening when they went into camp at Rangi Ruru Girls Boarding House. Friday was spent participating in team bonding activities before an early(ish) night. Saturday morning the Canterbury team arrived at Nga Puna Wai, immediately started making their presence known with an enthusiastic chant. As a parent, it is a proud moment to see your child dressed in red and black. The day is kicked off with a parade and small opening ceremony. It is quite something to see



all the young athletes from around the country chanting loudly trying to drown each other out. Not only is it parade of bright colours but also broad smiles and laughter.

Armani, Kavanah and Holly all completed exceptionally well on the first day, their results are as follows:

Discus - Armani 41.28m (2nd overall)
Shot Put - Kavanah 8.69m (12th overall)
100m Sprint - Holly 13.96 (16th overall)
100m Sprint - Armani 13.07 (4th overall)
High Jump - Kavanah 1.45m (7th overall)
400m Sprint - Holly 61.51 (4th overall)
Discus - Kavanah 30.46m (6th overall)
Shot Put - Armani 10.71m (5th overall).

Highlights of the day were seeing all three achieve personal bests, Armani in Discus, Holly in 400m and Kavanah in High Jump.

Sunday was a rather dreary day but that certainly wasn't the mood of the athletes. Once again all three competed well:

Long Jump - Holly 4.34m (6th overall)
200m Sprint - Kavanah 28.46 (23rd overall)
200m Sprint - Holly 27.65 (13th overall)
200m Sprint - Armani 26.27 (5th overall).

The competition wrapped up with the relays. Holly had been selected to run the 400m leg of the 12yr Girls Distance Medley, Kavanah 12yr Girls 4 x100m and Armani 12yr Boys 4x100m relays. Holly had a spectacular run overtaking 2 runners to give her team the lead, giving Canterbury their first relay win. Kavanah's team followed up with a second place and Armani's another win. Voices were raw from cheering but the Canterbury athletes and their supporters left with broad proud smiles.

The finale of the Inter-Regionals was the prize-giving and disco, where it was announced that Canterbury topped the points to become the overall champions for 2019. But certainly, the proudest moment came when we learned that Armani was the top grade 12 Boy for the competition. A truly amazing achievement. The young athletes made the most of their final night together, leaving parents to pick up some very tired but still smiling kids on Monday morning. An experience that Armani, Kavanah and Holly will treasure for the rest of their lives and one that the Lemalu, Lene and Gray families were pleased to be able to share with them.

Big shout to Tony McManus, Steve Anngow and Kara Marino who came to assist as officials in the Long Jump, even though they did not have children competing. This generous act meant that the parents of Armani, Kavanah and Holly could watch their child compete in their events, in between their own duties in the Long Jump.



Jane Paterson @ Rawhiti
Domain ... the track was
looking very green!





Josie Gray

RUN New Brighton:

Hi everyone. I have been looking at getting a social running arm of the club started. This group aims to encourage people in Eastern Christchurch to run more often and register with a club. All club members are also encouraged to participate as it would be a good opportunity to meet other club members and train together.

Currently, we are looking at having Wednesday evening group runs starting from the New Brighton Olympic clubrooms. The group would have four packs which cater for walkers, beginners, intermediate and competitive runners. This would be completely free for club members and members of the public.

I am looking for pack leaders for the beginners and intermediate runners and possibly the walkers. If anybody would be interested in being a pack leader or helping get RUN New Brighton off the ground, please contact haydenzervos@gmail.com or let the committee know.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Hayden Zervos



A Measure of Success - Olympic 1950s (Part 2 of 2):

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1951
Junior: John MacDonald 2nd
Team 1st
(John MacDonald 2nd, Clarrie Reece 7th, Charlie Dillimore 8th,
Kevin Richards 17th)

1952

In the Canterbury Cross-Country Champs, Clarrie Reece replicated his 7th place from last year but this time in the Senior race, which showed his rapid improvement. Christchurch won the Senior teams race with 35 points but Olympic were really starting to show their future with second on 57 points.

In the Junior race John MacDonald was once again second, this time to C McGuire of Presbyterian who won by 8 seconds. Another Olympic club athlete Ron Abernethy was third. They also convincingly won the team's race. In the Colt's race Brian Curle was 3rd with the team triumphant.

At Nationals Noel Smith was a member of the winning Canterbury team in the Senior grade. This was the first win for Canterbury, since they won the inaugural race in 1903. John MacDonald and Ron Abernethy ran in the Juniors.

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1952
Senior: Team 2nd
Junior: John MacDonald 2nd
Ron Abernethy 3rd
Team 1st
(John MacDonald 2nd, Ron Abernethy 3rd, Kevin Richards 5th,
Jim MacDonald 9th)
Colts: Brian Curle 3rd
Team 1st
(Brian Curle, Dennis Sherlock, Ramon Farmer, R O'Connor)

1953

This is probably a good time to mention that at this time most of Olympics athletes ran for other clubs in the summer athletic season. For example, the MacDonald twins ran for Crichton Cobbers and Clarrie Reece for Technical. The exception appears to be the marathon runners with Lionel Fox winning the Canterbury title in a very slow 3:17:37. I am assuming the weather conditions were not agreeable. He then went on to win the bronze medal at the Nationals in Dunedin.

The Canterbury Cross-Country Champs were again in Cashmere and were a milestone in the club's history. Although they were unplaced in the individual section of the Senior race, their consistent team performance of 4th, 8th, 9th and 10th gave them a commanding victory in the team's race. Kerry Williams of Christchurch showed his dominance with over a minute to spare over Brian Dingwall of Presbyterian. Olympics points score of 31 was well ahead of Christchurch on 64. Take a moment to reflect on this, now the top club in Canterbury only four years after its inception.

In contrast, in the Junior race Olympics Ron Abernethy cleared out from the start to win by an impressive 200m over P Watson of Anglican. Although obviously a good start for the team, they were third on 64 points, behind Anglican on 31 and Technical on 39.

Like the Senior race the Colts did not place, with Ramon Farmer the best in 6th. The race was won by M Walsh of the Marist club. However, Olympic convincingly took out the team's race over Technical with 37 points to their 50 points.

Stan Jelley was our sole representative at Nationals.

New Zealand Champs Dunedin 1953 Lionel Fox: Marathon: 3 rd
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Canterbury Marathon Championship 1953 Lionel Fox 1 st 3:17.37

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1953 Senior: Team 1 st (Stan Jelley 4 th , Trevor Metcalfe 8 th , Charlie Dillimore 9 th , Clarrie Reece 10 th) Junior: Ron Abernethy 1 st Colts: Team 1 st (Ramon Farmer, R Sharman, A Abernethy, Paul Timms)

1954

A good start to the year when on January the 25th when Lionel Fox, Frank Stevens and Red Maddock took out the first three places in the Canterbury Marathon. Lionel's winning time was 2:44:02.

More success on the 7th August in the Canterbury Cross-Country Champs held at Motukarara. Kerry Williams of the Christchurch club once again cleared out, but John MacDonald showed he had made the transition to the Senior ranks with a fine second. Stan Jelley was once again 4th with Trevor Metcalfe up three places to 5th. Olympic retained the team's title with a very good score of 23 points but they needed to with Christchurch only five points behind.

In the Colts Ramon Farmer took out the title by 5 seconds from K Hay of Christchurch. We see the emergence of Doug Reece in 3rd. With Murray Curle in 5th Olympic easily won the team's title with 19 points with Anglican in second.

Olympic club representatives at Nationals were John MacDonald, Stan Jelley and Trevor Metcalfe.

Canterbury Marathon Championship January 25 1954. Lionel Fox 1 st 2:44:02, Frank Stevens 2 nd , Red Maddock 3 rd
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Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1954

Senior: John MacDonald 2 nd
--

Team 1 st

(John MacDonald 2 nd , Stan Jelley 4 th , Trevor Metcalfe 5 th , Clarrie Reece 12 th)
--

Colts: Ramon Farmer 1 st , Doug Reece 3 rd
--

Colts: Team 1 st

(Ramon Farmer 1 st , Doug Reece 3 rd , Murray Curle 5 th , G Meredith 10 th)

1955

This year's Canterbury Cross-Country Championship was an exacting test on the Rosewall course in Timaru. Especially chosen for the National Championship on August the 13th, the course was the truest test of harrier ability the province has had. Even with the very wet conditions prevailing, all types of terrain were experienced in fair proportion.

In somewhat of a surprise Clarrie Reece handled the conditions superbly to claim his first Canterbury harrier title. Three Timaru athletes, the Kennedy brothers, Peter and Paul and M Hutchings were the first to show out from the bunch, with Clarrie Reece and Jim Daly (Marist) who competed at the 1954 Empire Games, soon drawing level. Coming off the hills after a mile and onto the flat, Daly took the lead, but when they ran back onto the hills he was displaced by Bill Richards (Technical) who was later to compete in the marathon at the 1956 Olympics. After two miles Reece moved into the lead with Brian Dingwall (Baptist) steadily moving through the field. Starting the second lap they were together with Phil May (University) in third. Reece gradually asserted his supremacy across the flat for the second time and steadily opened the gap over the hills to be 150 yards clear of Dingwall at the finish, with May and Richards next. Ron Stevens (Olympic) was a further 9 seconds back in 5th.

In the team's race Olympics reign came to an end with University dominating on 29 points, their first open team's championship, with Olympic second on 44. Charlie Dillimore who finished 7th was now running for Technical.

In the Junior race, the early leaders were B Scott and J Keenan both (Timaru Presbyterian), Brian Curle and Roman Farmer both (Olympic) and J Foley (Timaru). There was excitement for Olympic at the mile and a quarter mark, when Farmer took the lead from C Wiseman (Christchurch), Denis Sherlock (Olympic) and Foley. Towards the end of the flat with a mile to go, Wiseman broke from Farmer to win by 40 yards. Scott just pipped Sherlock by one second to finish 3rd. With Curle and Doug Reece in 7th and 8th, Olympic easily won the team's race over Christchurch, 29 points to 43.

With the National Championships on the same course, there was high hopes that Clarrie Reece would feature. Unfortunately, he had a disappointing day, the last of the Canterbury runners in 37th place. Ron Stevens also made the team.

Kerry Williams (Otago) made his break in the first mile and revelled in the rugged undulating course. He never looked like being caught winning his first title by 41 seconds over team mates Ron Cain and Pat Sidon.

A young Ramon Farmer, with two years to go in this section, showed a glimpse of what was to come in the following years. Whilst fading in the last part of the race to finish just outside the top ten, he really gave it ago and was in 8th position well into the race. The race was won by B Stanniford (Otago) from Barry Everitt (Wellington). Denis Sherlock also competed in the race.

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1955

Senior: Clarrie Reece 1st

Team: 2nd

Juniors: Ramon Farmer 2nd

Team 1st

(Ramon Farmer 2nd, Denis Sherlock 4th, Brian Curle 7th, Doug Reece 8th)

1956

The Olympic club established itself as Canterbury's leading harrier club with one of the most convincing wins ever recorded in the Canterbury Senior Championship, when the titles were decided at Motukarara. Filling the first three places, with the fourth man finishing 11th, giving it 17 points a whopping 26 clear of the second club Christchurch.

The course was made slow by heavy rain during the week. In a very fast start Paul and Peter Kennedy (Timaru), Don Greig (Technical), John MacDonald and Clarrie Reece (Olympic) were the early leaders. Coming off the hill about a mile from the start, MacDonald was leading with B Dingwall (Christchurch) and J Daly (Marist). Brian Curle and Ron Stevens (Olympic) were disputing the next placings. MacDonald steadily increased his lead and at the end of the first lap of the two lap course the placings were MacDonald, Dingwall, Daly, Curle, Stevens, Phil May (University) and C Dillimore now running for Technical. While MacDonald consolidated his lead over the second lap eventually winning by 40 seconds, the other leading runners changed places several times. Determined runs by Stevens and Curle took them into second and third ahead of Daly.



L to R Brian Curle 3rd, John MacDonald 1st, Ron Stevens 2nd.

In the Junior Race, B McStay of University ran a confident race for the title. He forced the pace on the hill at about halfway and gradually drew away to win by 30 yards from J Dean of Timaru Presbyterian and B Porter of Timaru. Ramon Farmer was only 10 seconds behind the winner but was only 4th, but with consistent performances Olympic won the team's race two points ahead of Christchurch. As you will see later, although Ramon Farmer did not place in his own province, he ran a blinder at Nationals to take out a medal.

Bill Kennedy of Christchurch easily accounted for the Colt's field with the best of the Olympic club David Clements in 4th. Olympic were second in the team's race to Technical, who I note contained one Alex Cook.

We then move to the New Zealand Cross-Country Champs on August the 11th in Taradale, Napier.

After finishing 4th in the Canterbury Champs, Ramon Farmer ran an absolute blinder to finish third in the Junior race, Olympics' first cross-country medal at National level. J Dean and B McStay of Canterbury and A Treadway of Auckland were the first across the jumps at the start. Barry Everitt of Wellington the eventual winner fared badly, and was not amongst the first dozen. Farmer fared even worse in about 30th. Everitt soon moved through to dispute the lead with McStay and Treadway. On the first long climb, Everitt drew away from McStay and Farmer moved into third. Everitt continued to move away and eventually won by a substantial 59 seconds. Farmer moved into second on the steep downhill stretch and held that for two thirds of the race, but was pushed back to third when he left his finishing sprint too late. After a slow start, P Hitchens of WCNI moved steadily through the field prevailing by one second over Farmer. On top of all that, Canterbury won the team's race in a thrilling contest with Wellington.



New Zealand Cross-Country Champs Napier 1956
Junior: Ramon Farmer 3rd

Olympic Club athletes in the Senior race did no fare so well with Ron Stevens in 20th, the only one to complete the course. It was hoped that John MacDonald would feature after his Canterbury title. Both MacDonald and Brian Curle were initially up with the leaders, but withdrew from the race, MacDonald suffering from a stomach complaint. Kerry Williams (Otago) retained his title after fighting off a number of challenges, prevailing over Jeff Julian (Auckland).

New Zealand Cross-Country Champs Napier 1956
Junior: Ramon Farmer 3rd

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1956
Senior: John MacDonald 1st, Ron Stevens 2nd, Brian Curle 3rd.
Team 1st
(John MacDonald 1st, Ron Stevens 2nd, Brian Curle 3rd, Clarrie Reece 11th)
Junior: Team 1st
(Ramon Farmer 4th, David Reeves 7th, Doug Reece 8th, Syd Payne)

1957

The Canterbury Championship was held very early on the 22nd June with a selection trial in July when the Champs were usually decided. Strange indeed, with no real obvious benefits seen. John MacDonald won both races, so his selection was easy, but it did cause some unnecessary headaches for the Selectors. Ron Stevens tells me that the Canterbury Cross-Country Committee all too aware of Canterbury's recent poor showing in at the National team event, set a new date two weeks early to enable runners to recover from the provincial champs. The idea was stymied when a "selection" race was added at the normal time for the champs. Thankfully, sanity was restored the following year.

After only a mile covered John MacDonald (Olympic) already had a five second lead over team mate Brian Curle, followed by two Technical athletes Charlie Dillimore and Don Greig. In the middle stages of the first lap, while MacDonald was increasing his lead, Dillimore and Greig moved into second and third, with Jim Daly (Marist) and J Purcell (University) next in order. With the team's race at stake, Curle, Ron Stevens and Clarrie Reece were not too far away.

By the end of the first lap MacDonald had built up a substantial 43 second lead over Dillimore with Daly and Greig running together. There were a lot of changes in the second half of the race with Bill Richards (Technical) passing Daly and Greig on the hill. Stevens then passed Daly on the back of the course, with Richards, Greig and Purcell also dropping away. At the same time Curle and Reece began their bid, also passing Daly, with Curle sneaking past Stevens by four seconds at the end to finish 3rd and 4th with Reece 5th. With a score of only 13 points Olympic were convincing winners over Technical on 36 points.

There was little to choose between the leading Juniors for almost three quarters of the race, with Doug Dixey (Methodist), Doug Reece and Ramon Farmer both (Olympic) and John Williams (Christchurch) vying in the early stages. Gradually Dixey, Reece and Farmer sorted themselves out with J Herrick (Timaru) working through steadily into 4th. Coming back onto the racecourse Dixey outjumped the other two leaders. Farmer and Reece fought back gamely, but it must have been discouraging to them, as every time they bridged the gap, Dixey would outjump them again, with his long stride carrying him away. Meanwhile Herrick came through with a furious sprint over the last stages to overtake Farmer and Reece and missing the winner Dixey by three seconds. Reece held on for 3rd, but Farmer faded to 5th being overtaken by Bill Kennedy (Christchurch). I find Ramon Farmer somewhat of an enigma, winning a medal at Nationals last year, but unable to place in his provincial champs two years running. With Syd Payne in 8th, Olympic easily won the team's race with 28 points, with Christchurch second on 44 points.

Although Olympic was not represented, it is interesting to note, this was the first time a championship had been held for women. Unfortunately, the first three competitors were disqualified when Fay McBeath (Pioneer), Robin Hames (Technical) and Alison Kinvig (Anglican) mistook the trail on top of the hill and cut off a section of the course. Although there was no denying that they gained an advantage, Miss McBeath's margin of a full two minutes over the eventual winner G Williams (Pioneer) was so substantial that her shortcut could not have affected her first placing.

At the National Championship in Fielding, Kerry Williams (Otago) won his third consecutive title over future legends of the sport, Murray Halberg, Neville Scott and Jeff Julian. There were many high jumps on the course which gave Williams a distinct advantage over Halberg, who had difficulty negotiating the jumps with his handicapped left arm.

The newspaper article I read was very scathing towards the Canterbury team and I quote, "The best that could be said for the Canterbury team was that it was consistent, finishing second to last again." John MacDonald actually ran pretty well in 11th, with Ron Stevens in 38th. Brian Curle and Clarrie Reece were our other representatives.

The Junior race which was a real coup for Canterbury as they absolutely dominated the team's race, which include two Olympic Club athletes in Ramon Farmer and Doug Reece. Doug Dixey (Canterbury) lead the field over the first half-mile, but was displaced by M Sexton (WCNI) who got out to a 50-yard lead. In a very exciting race, R Wheeler (Wellington) challenged Sexton on the hill with only half a mile to go, with a good break to J Herrick (Canterbury) who was having a close tussle with Dixey, followed by Farmer with Reece 8th. Dixey and Herrick made a determined run down the last hill and with only a quarter of a mile to go, had taken the lead a few yards over Sexton and Wheeler. Just like

the Canterbury Champs Herrick finished fast outsprinting the bunch to win by 50 -yards from Dixey. That man Farmer only 5th in the Canterbury Champs was 6th, with club-mate Reece 7th one second back. With a point's score of only 16 points, they were way ahead of Auckland on 47 and Wellington on 51.

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1957

Senior: John MacDonald 1st, Brian Curle 3rd.

Team 1st

(John MacDonald 1st, Brian Curle 3rd, Ron Stevens 4th, Clarrie Reece 5th)

Junior: Doug Reece 3rd.

Team 1st

(Doug Reece 3rd, Ramon Farmer 5th, Syd Payne 8th, Wayne Richards 12th)

1958

The Canterbury Cross-Country titles were again at Motukarara, this time back to the later date of the 2nd of August.

In the Senior race, Kerry Williams now back in Canterbury running for (Christchurch), cleared out from the start, but the big surprise was Doug Dixey (Methodist) a first year Senior who was runner up. Former Canterbury Champion Clarrie Reece (Olympic) was 3rd, with D Taylor (University) 4th. Ron Stevens (Olympic) came from a long way back to grab 5th. With George Wilson, Jim MacDonald and Brian Curle all (Olympic) the next three places, the team's race was a formality, 21 points over University on 60.

In the Junior Race, Syd Payne surprisingly tried to run John Williams (Christchurch) the brother of Kerry and J Herrick (Timaru Anglican) off their feet. Unfortunately, this had the opposite effect and he did not finish in the top six. Herrick a noted finisher beat Williams for the first time this season.

In the Women races I can see names that would later grace our club, but as was the time, most ladies were running for Ladies Pioneer.

In the Senior race, Kerry Williams now back in Canterbury running for (Christchurch), cleared out from the start, but the big surprise was Doug Dixey (Methodist) a first year Senior who was runner up. Former Canterbury Champion Clarrie Reece (Olympic) was 3rd, with D Taylor (University) 4th. Ron Stevens (Olympic) came from a long way back to grab 5th. With George Wilson, Jim MacDonald and Brian Curle all (Olympic) the next three places, the team's race was a formality, 21 points over University on 60.

At the Nationals in Invercargill, the Canterbury brothers, Kerry and John Williams gave brilliant displays to win the Senior and Junior titles, achieving the first family double in the history of the race.

In the Senior Race Kerry Williams was never challenged to win his 4th consecutive title, 35 seconds over Jeff Julian (Auckland). Olympic club athletes did reasonably well with Brian Curle 15th, Ron Stevens 27th, Clarrie Reece 28th and Jim MacDonald 33rd.

In the Junior race the defending champion J Herrick (Canterbury) was soundly beaten by John Williams (Canterbury), a reversal of the placings in the Canterbury race. This time Williams did not make the same mistake of setting out to fast in the first mile. With a mile and a half to go, but with most of the obstacles still to come, Williams made his effort gaining at every fence. Herrick was soon in difficulties and Williams won by 120-yards. Although not a counting member of the victorious Canterbury team, club member Syd Payne ran very well for 12th.

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1958

Senior: Clarrie Reece 3rd.

Team 1st

(Clarrie Reece 3rd, Ron Stevens 5th, George Wilson 6th, Jim MacDonald 7th)

1959

In 1959 the Canterbury Cross-Country Champs were back on the rugged Rosewall course in Timaru. Although greasy in patches, it was in remarkably good order after heavy rain, but those running in later races were fortunate in having a path pounded firm for them to cross the soft plough. An alteration to previous courses, they left out the first hill with an excessively steep downhill section known as the 'chute'. Although it did little to alleviate the severity of the course, it did at least give the competitors a better chance to settle down before running onto the hills.

That man Ramon Farmer (Olympic) only 20 years of age won the Canterbury Senior title by a clear quarter of a mile. Only two weeks before he had failed badly in the Halswell races, but redeemed himself with a surprising confident win. John Williams (Christchurch) the winner at Halswell was clearly not up to the occasion finishing 17th. G Smith (Technical) who was 5th in the National Champs last year running for Otago, tried to spread-eagle the field from the start. At the creek a few hundred yards from the start he had built up a small lead over John Williams (Christchurch), Bill Richards (Technical) R Smyth (Christchurch) and G Wyatt (University). Farmer was handy and not far away was a strong Olympic bunch.

By the half-mile Farmer had moved into second 20-yards behind Smith, but by the one-mile mark had taken the lead. By two-miles J Foley (Timaru) had moved into third, ahead of Jim MacDonald, Doug Reece and George Wilson, all (Olympic). Then followed Smyth and yet another Olympic man in Kevin Richards, D Taylor (University) and the ever reliable Ron Stevens (Olympic). Farmer steadily increased his lead and with four-miles covered Smith was still second but looking tired, with MacDonald only 7 seconds behind and Reece and Foley together another 10 seconds away.

On the last hill 800-yards from the finish, MacDonald raced into second place and gained a 30-yard break on Smith. At this point Farmer was never in danger 58 seconds ahead. Not far away, Richards, Stevens, Reece and Foley were disputing the next places.

At the finish Farmer had increased this to 77 seconds over MacDonald, the twin brother of John who was now coming into his own, after John had moved to Wanganui for work. Smith held on gamely for third over Foley, and then an Olympic Club benefit with Richards, Stevens, Reece and Wilson occupying fifth to eighth. As you have probably already guessed, Olympic were convincing winners of the team's race on only 12 points, well ahead of Technical and Christchurch.

Although Olympic did not feature in the Junior race, it intrigued me that J Herrick, originally from Timaru and now running for University could only finish 8th after taking off too fast. Still a Junior this is the gentleman who had won and finished runner-up at the last two Nationals. He recovered from this set back to run another great Nationals finishing 4th after being in a winning position for most of the race.

Anyhow, this year the Nationals were in Hamilton and there were high hopes that Ramon Farmer would have a good showing after his brilliant run in the Canterbury Champs. The sensation of the race was the eclipse of Kerry Williams now running for Wellington because he lived in Nelson, attempting to win his fifth consecutive title. He was in the leading bunch for two-miles, but drifted and came in very tired in 19th place. Ron Stevens told me that Kerry was a fearless and magnificent jumper which helped him to win four titles. He says a somewhat unsporting blocking in the 1959 race spoiled his fast start tactics and ended his tremendous sequence.

After being runner-up twice before, Jeff Julian (Auckland) finally prevailed by 20-yards over Pat Sidon (Otago) who had spread-eagled the field at the start and at half-way had a 100-yard lead. A young Peter Snell was fourth. Ramon Farmer made a courageous attempt to keep close to the leaders. At half-way he was in 10th, but a long stretch of flat going had him struggling to hold his place against his longer striding opponents. He finished 21st. Club member Ron Stevens who was the Canterbury Team Captain ran well in 14th place, his best placing in five

trips to the Nationals. Other Olympic Club runners were Kevin Richards 22nd, Jim MacDonald 31st and Doug Reece 49th.

Canterbury Cross-Country Champs 1959

Senior: Ramon Farmer 1st, Jim MacDonald 2nd.

Team 1st

(Ramon Farmer 1st, Jim MacDonald 2nd, Kevin Richards 5th, Ron Stevens 6th.)

Allan McLaren



Action shots
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