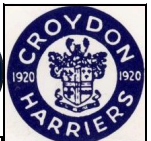




# The Harrier 2009



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*Track & Field Season - A year in review*

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## National Young Athletes League

**Managers: Paul Weston & Mike Fleet**

**2009: 8th out of 16 clubs (S Prem Div)**

**2008: 9th out of 16 clubs (S Prem Div)**

Croydon Harriers began their Southern Premier League campaign with a bang when they made the short journey to Sutcliffe Park, Eltham to take on three teams including Enfield & Haringey, one of the McCain National Young Athletes League's big guns. Never quite on a par with the North London club, the young Croydon athletes did not give them a chance to relax, finishing a good second in the four club match.

A difficult match then followed at Reading, with Croydon slightly depleted due to exams and up against extremely tough competition (all of the opposition would go on to the finals), the Harriers still valiantly fought on gaining valuable points in their 4th place finish that would make difference later on.

Much to their credit, the team bounced back with a stunning win at Basingstoke, fending off some high quality opposition and put themselves back in the hunt for an end of season cup final berth. The team surpassed the magical 400 points total for the first time in their campaign to place just outside of cup final places.

With two home matches rounding off the season, Croydon's push for those elusive cup final places became ever more frantic, with severe congestion taking hold at the top of the table. Their 2nd place finish in their penultimate fixture to City of Norwich, would help further their cause, making for a tense finale heading into the final round.

Placed in 9th and needing results to their way elsewhere in order to qualify, Croydon knew they needed a good result at home in order to propel them into the mix. And that's exactly what they got thanks to a 2nd place finish on a day where rain was certainly the order of the day. But with results elsewhere not falling into place, the Croydon team ultimately had to settle for 8th place for their excellent efforts throughout 2009.

With thanks to everyone who competed throughout the season, and to all our officials. Also a HUGE thank you to Paul Weston and Mike Fleet who did a splendid job once again.

**Message from the Secretary:** As Matthew Kiernan has detailed in his excellent report, 2009 was another year of impressive achievement by Croydon athletes. The Harriers are very fortunate to have, in Mike Fleet, Chris King, Clarence Riley and Paul Weston four highly experienced coaches who deserve all our thanks for their dedication and commitment in helping members achieve their full potential. Thanks are also due to team managers for their efforts in coordinating the various Harriers teams during the year. In our first full year as a registered charity, the Committee has worked hard to ensure the health of the Harriers. There will be more to do in the coming year to develop new fund-raising activities so we can plan for even greater success in the future. But once again, huge thanks go to Linda Harrison and her willing team for the enormous contribution that cakes and refreshments have made to shore up the Club's financial position during the year. **Peter Roberts (General Secretary)**

## The International Scene

**Martyn Rooney** claimed his first senior international medal of his career after anchoring home the men's 4x400m relay team to silver at the World Championships in Berlin. Last year's Olympic finalist has not enjoyed a summer to remember, battling with injuries which derailed his hopes of individual success in Berlin.

But his final leg of 44.83s was good enough to hold off Australia and earn a silver lining from his 2nd World Championship appearance.

"After all the problems this season it feels great to get this medal," he said.

"I was disappointed with my individual performance but to contribute to a team like this makes it worthwhile. We were always in control, the guys set this one up really nicely. I had the easy job at the end. As I crossed the line I was thinking how many times I've been involved in relay teams that have run sub-three minute times and not won a medal." He rounded off his season with a 2nd place finish at the British Grand Prix in Gateshead.

This summer has also seen the emergence of talented sprinter **James Dasaolu**, who finally broke into higher echelons of the senior ranks this season over the 100m. A long time member of Paul Weston's group, the 21 year-old's time of 10.09s in Geneva was a new club record and the third fastest time by a Briton this year. Unfortunately his season was cruelly cut short by a hamstring injury soon afterwards and we all wish well as he continues his rehabilitation.

**Tasha Danvers'** season was also sadly cut short after sustaining a hamstring injury at the inaugural Super8 event early in June. The Beijing bronze medallist over the 400m Hurdles showed promising signs early on in the season with a 55.19s clocking in New York. The time remained the quickest in the UK for 2009. We wish her well as she continues her road to recovery.

## Retiring on top - Donna Fraser

After spending more than two decades at the top of international athletics, Donna Fraser brought down the curtain on her illustrious career at the British Grand Prix in Gateshead. The 36 year-old was unlucky not to be included in the 4x400m relay team in Berlin and had an emotional home farewell race at Crystal Palace. She hopes to be fit to compete on a few occasions for Croydon Harriers in 2010, as she did earlier this year at the Southern Women's match in Eton and continue to be our official ambassador at Lexus Croydon 10k events.

### **Fraser's major medals table:**

1990: World Junior Championships, 4x100m **silver**.

1991: European Junior Championships 400m **gold**, 4x100m **silver**.

1998: European Championships 4x400m **bronze**.

1998: Commonwealth Games 400m **bronze**, 4x100m **bronze**

2005: European Indoor Championships 4x400m **bronze**.

2005 & 2007: World Championships 4x400m **bronze**.

## English Schools Championships @ Birmingham

Several Croydon Harriers contributed significantly to help the victorious Surrey cause at the English Schools Championships at Sheffield. Proven senior sprinter **Twinelle Hopeson**, an Archbishop Tenison's student, added to her string of ESAA successes with a fine fighting second in the 200m in 24.55sec, a personal best. Senior pole-vaulter **Ned Quiney** cleared a near best of 4.70m. The 18 year-old, a student at Wilson's School in Sutton, only missed gold because he succeeded at his second attempt. The already well established junior **Omari Carr-Miller** ran superbly for his personal best in the 400m in 50.20sec, only finding a huge Manchester boy setting an astonishing 48.90sec record ahead of him. Trinity boy Carr-Miller also made a major contribution with **David Pratt** in the 4x100m relay in which runners-up Surrey clocked a sharp 44.80sec. St Joseph's boy **Faraz Rafi** shone in the junior discus, winning silver in a keenly contested competition. Leader at one time he had to settle for second with a first class throw of 42.43m which was over 5m better than the next boy achieved. Exuding raw talent, Intermediate Trinity School long jumper long jumper **Elliott Safo** produced a highly competitive final leap of 6.79m to win his bronze by a centimetre. Junior sprinter **Josh Atille**, a Beacon School pupil was disqualified in the County 100m but showed his resilience by bouncing back with a 200m bronze in 22.86. Intermediate sprinter **Cleo-Patrice Barbour** played her part in the Surrey 4x100m bronze medal success with a powerful leg two run. Earlier she had placed seventh in the 100m final in 12.50m.

Other finalists were:

- 1500m Junior **Peter Chambers** (Trinity), fourth in 4.10.71.
- Discus Senior **Lawrence Okoye** (Whitgift), fourth with 50.70m.
- 100m Intermediate **Andre Gibbs**, fifth in 11.13.
- Discus Senior **Kariym Irving** (John Fisher), sixth with 46.91m.

## Surrey County Championships @ Kingsmeadow

With a record breaking tally of forty four Surrey Championship medals to their credit Croydon Harriers athletes were well ahead of any other club at the county competition. It was the highest total by Croydon in the club's history.

## National Junior League

*Managers: Matt K & Terry Lapins*

**2008: 6th out of 8 clubs**

**2009: 6th out of 8 clubs**

The Junior team can feel proud of their efforts in matching last year's 6th place in the National Junior League, albeit with limited resources.

Croydon's campaign featured many high points, amongst them having two athletes winning the NJAL "Athlete of the Match" award. Recipients included **Twinelle Hopeson** who won the 100m (12.2s) and 200m (25.2s) at Croydon Arena. **Ned Quiney** also won the award at Ashford with a 4.61m vault and 1.93m high jump, while **Kariym Irving** (who competed in all four meetings) took the spoils at Tonbridge thanks to a 46.30m discus effort. Thanks to: **Scott Fanner, Terry Lapins, Mark Plackett, Harry Rogers, Ben Savill, Owen Thomas, Elliot Welch, all officials & many more :-)**

## Rosenheim League

*Manager: Andy Del Nevo*

**2009: 4th out of 8 clubs (Final)**

The mid-week senior men's team finished 5th in the league and 4th in the Kingsmeadow cup final. **Kariym Irving** (Discus) and **Oweka Wanogho** (200m) picked up the wins, as Croydon fell an agonising 1 point behind 3rd placed Belgrave Harriers.

## SCVAC League (Managers KC & JC)

The Ladies Vets Team did well to come 3<sup>rd</sup> in their final league match at Croydon to secure third overall. Meanwhile their male counterparts came agonisingly close to beating local rivals Epsom and Ewell, falling short by a mere two points to be runners up.

## Ebbisham League (Managers PW & MF)

The U15 & U13 boys team finished the season on a high by topping the standings in the Ebbisham League. The team secured the trophy narrowly from rivals Guildford & Godalming.

## Southern Men's League

*Manager: Chris King*

**2008: 20th out of 25 clubs (Div 2)**

**2009: 16th out of 25 clubs (Div 2)**

Heading into the last match of the season only one place above the relegation zone, the senior men's team were in a metaphorical dogfight of epic proportions. Knowing that only 2nd place or better would suffice in order to avoid the drop, the Harriers went out all guns blazing in a formidable showing at Hemel Hempstead.

The 20 strong team produced seven A string wins and four B string wins to ensure they would claim the runners up spot and preserve their 2010 2nd division status.

**Oweka Wanogho, Kariym Irving, George Thatcher** and **Paul Ogun** picked up the wins while the 4x400m relay team excelled in ending the day on a victorious note for **Chris King's** final match at the helm

## Surrey Road League

*Manager: Mike Caudwell*

**2009: 19th out of 27 clubs**

Croydon's long distance runners had a busy summer not only on the track but also on the road as they finished 19th in the Surrey Road League. Croydon's star performers were **Colin Oxlade** and **Keith Brown**, who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively in the M50 age group. **Gill Lightfoot** was 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the W45 standings, while **David Brown** completed all but one of the fixtures.

## Southern Women's League

*Manager: Anna Campbell*

**2008: 3rd out of 16 clubs (2nd Division)**

**2009: 12th out of 16 clubs (1st Division)**

Having enjoyed considerable success 12 months ago with a promotion winning season, Anna Campbell's team continued at apace in 2009 when they began life in their new division back in April.

A successful opening trip to Devon, saw Croydon narrowly miss out on victory by just four points, and followed this up with a runners up finish at Tonbridge.

However, disaster struck at a difficult day out at Ipswich, which plunged the team into a relegation dogfight. But the team responded valiantly with a tenacious 2<sup>nd</sup> at Cambridge in their penultimate fixture and a plucky performance at Crawley ensured their 1st Division status.

**Other result:**

**Lily B League** (U13/17 Girls): Plate finalists