



History of the St George District Athletic Club

Compiled by Michael Gentle

1928

The Season of Dominance

In 1928 the club surpassed all previous season's results during the distance season.



Alleyn Gainsford won the State 10 Mile and 15 Mile Championships and established State Records for 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 Miles as well as Australian Records for 10000m and 15000m.

Albert Blyth won the State Novice Cross Country Championship.

St George teams won every State Championship - Novice Cross Country, 10000m, 10 Mile and 15 Mile Championships.

Above: 1928 Undefeated Cross Country Team

Back Row: R. Kelleher, A. Blythe (Novice 1928), E. Giles (Hon. Treas.), A. Longhurst.

Front Row: B. Button, A. Gainsford (10-mile Champion 1924-25-26-27-28; 15-mile Champion 1926-27-28), W.J. Hasler (Hon. Sec.), R. Wright (Novice 1926), S. Gainsford.

Absent: E.J. Brooke (Novice 1927), E. Baker, R. Chadwick, N. Gillard, C.B. Weekes (Senior 5-mile 1925).

The club's State championship winning results were:

- Novice Championship - A. Blyth (1st), N. Gillard (3rd), B. Button (6th), R. Kelleher (19th).
- Senior Cross Country - A. Gainsford (2nd), R. Wright (3rd), S. Gainsford (8th), E. Baker (11th), R. Chadwick (12th), E. Brooke (13th).
- 10 Miles Track Championship - A. Gainsford (1st), S. Gainsford (5th), R. Chadwick (6th), R. Wright (7th), B. Button (8th), E. Baker (11th).
- 15 Miles Championship - A. Gainsford (1st), R. Chadwick (3rd), E. Baker (4th), S. Gainsford (5th).

The annual report for 1928-29 states that "contrary to previous years, we began rather shakily, narrow victories being the case, but at the end of the season Saints stood head and shoulders above all other clubs". The club's teams won the inaugural Chas. Winn Cup over 4 miles at Canterbury and S.M. McAlister Cup over 2¾ miles in the East Sydney Open, as well as winning the Proud Cup for the third year running.



Above: NSW Novice Cross Country Championship start on Bondi Beach

Bert Button joined the club and saw success in his first season, winning the club distance point score on top of his great results shown above. Club events were mainly held on the cross country course at Hurstville rather than the road courses of previous years.



Above: Albert Blyth winning the NSW Novice Cross Country Championship

The track season saw State Records for our junior athletes. Bert Sheiles set a new Javelin record of 144ft 6½in; and Len Brennan set a record in Hop Step & Jump of 44ft 11½in. The success was shared by senior athletes who gained places at the State Championships:

- Oscar Matson, 3rd Javelin Throw
- Albert Blyth, 3rd 1 Mile
- Harold Bennett, 3rd 440 yds.

Harold Bennett's 3rd placing in the 440 yds was the first time a St George athlete had gained a podium

placing in a sprint event (100, 220 and 440 yards).

The Ladies' Club launched with immediate success. Miss N. Gould was second in the State Junior 50 Yards, Miss Edith Robinson was third in the Senior 50 Yards, and the team of Misses Robinson, Gould, Phillips and Stapleton won the State 880 Yards Relay in record time.

University Oval No 1 was the scene of a successful challenge for the State 10 Mile Record by Alleyn Gainsford on 4 September 1928. With pacing assistance from his club mates, in an event staged for the main purpose of lowering H.L. Sheaves record of 54m 2s for 10 miles, Gainsford set new State record times for 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 miles as well as 10000m and 15000m. Gainsford's time of 32m 58s at 10000m was also an Australian Record.

Ladies' Club

The St George District Women's Amateur Athletic Club was formed in 1928 under the leadership of Nell Gould, Gladys Phillips and 1928 Olympic representative Edie Robinson. The girls met with immediate success when they won the 4x 220 yds State Relay in record time.



*Australia's first female Olympic sprinters:
Edith Robinson (left) and Eileen Wearne.*

Edith (Edie) Frances Robinson was the first Australian female track & field athlete to compete at an Olympic Games.

In the 1928 Amsterdam Games, the first to feature women's athletics events, Robinson was run out in the semi-finals of the 100m and the heats of the 800m.

Though Robinson had never before competed in an 800m race, she was urged to run by her male Olympic colleagues.

The Ladies' Club operated as a division of the St George District Amateur Athletic Club until in September 1932 a motion was passed at the club's general meeting to pass complete control to the Ladies' Club.

During the four years the Ladies' Club was a part of our club, Nell Gould had been responsible for the revival of Women's Athletics in the St George District.



Above: Edie Robinson training aboard the ship to Amsterdam Olympics

Club Champions

Senior

100 yds	Edward Groves	10.4s
880 yds	Albert Blythe	2m 01.5s
440 yds Hurdles	Harold Bennett	1m 01.4s
3 Miles	M. Maloney	17m 66.4s
1 Mile Walk	M. Maloney	7m 48s
3 Miles Walk	M. Maloney	27m 24s
Javelin Throw	Bert Shieles	148ft 0in
Discus Throw	William McKenzie	102ft 3in
Hop, Step & Jump	Len Brennan	42ft 2in

Junior

220 yds	Len Brennan	26.0s
880 yds	Bert Shieles	2m 23.2s
1 Mile	N. Young	5m 12.4s
120 yds Hurdles	Len Brennan	20.2s
Shot Put	Len Brennan	34ft 5in
Javelin Throw	Bert Shieles	148ft 0in
Discus Throw	Len Brennan	67ft 11½in
Hop, Step & Jump	Len Brennan	42ft 2in

Further Reading

The club website has many documents pertaining to the history of the club available for download in pdf format: <http://www.sgdac.org/documents.php>

The club website has detailed results of club events, open handicap events, track & field events, and State, National and International Championship events featuring club athletes from 1921 onwards: <http://www.sgdac.org/results.php>

Please contact the author via webmaster@sgdac.org with feedback, suggestions, additional information, results or resources to help expand and improve these history documents.