



Hakuna Matata—stunning running in Iten

the Bletha

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newsheet from Bellahouston Roadrunners

CAT NIPS PAST ROSS



Scottish Athletics: 'conditions which would inconvenience a Sherman Tank'

Catriona "Cat Mac" MacDonald brought the winter cross country season to a sensational end sprinting past Scottish legend Freya Ross - to earn a top thirty finish in the XC nationals in Falkirk.

XC coach Graeme Paterson called her the "outstanding athlete". Captain, Shona, Donnelly said it was a "terrific effort to pip Ross" Iain Burns captain said "must be a best ever performance at the club"

Coach Graeme said "A cracking day. Really pleased with the turn out. Super proud of the effort by everyone in difficult conditions. We recorded great results at a time when competition levels just get higher & higher. It was a privilege to watch everyone in action."

Susan Haddow, a first timer "loved it". Graeme McNay also said it was his "first XC since school. Not going to lie, it was brutal. I've seen hippos bathing in less mud. Now I know what to expect and I've got a target time so bring on next year!!!"



Cats sprint against legend Ross was talk of the curry night.

XC nationals were a three lap hilly 10k, in a mega-muddy Calendar Park, Falkirk. Many Bellas were XC first timers.



This was Susan's first ever XC race - she thanked Bellas for making her feel so welcome

Cat Mac led Bellas women's team to their best result since 2009, finishing 10th. Shona said it was a great result from eleven female Bellas including top placed **Louise Ross, Ann Robin and Caroline Turner**

Men's team were led in by **Bruce Carmicheal**, showing what a great athlete he continues to be. The men's team were in 17th place. Iain, team captain, remarked the standard gets tougher every year.

Days of rain meant it was a sludgy muddy course making the hills tough on the way up and slides on the way down.



Graeme McNay has mud bug

Roz lost a toe nail but finished with a sprint, **Keith** lost a shoe but carried it aloft as he crossed the finish line, **Maz** beat a Bella harrier in the final sprint, which bodes well for the Mob Match.

Bellas appreciated the home baking from Garscube Harriers and tiffin "to die for". **Thanks to Gordon Goldie for fantastic photos. From left to right: Louise, Catriona, Lynn, Chris, David, & Kenny**

Top Turn Out for Five Miler



The winter winners in Kilbarchan: 2nd female team (Ann, Louise, Katie); 2nd FV40 Louise Ross; 1st and 2nd FV50 - Shona Donnelly and Jane Wilde; 2nd MV50 Gerry Scullion; and many SB & PBs

Bella belly laughs



Henry Merryweather (HM)



Leanne McIntosh (LMc)



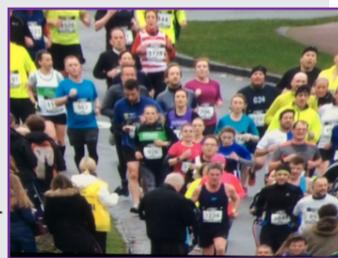
Kevin Queenan (KQ)

Bellas use Strava for motivational chat. This conversation was leaked to the Bletha:

Leanne (LMc): ABS Workout time!
Henry (HM): Crunch time!
Kevin (KQ): Don't listen to him he's a plank
LMc You 2 are ABSolutely hilarious
KQ That insult made him SIT UP and notice
HM You might say we're mentally ABSent
KQ Trust you to muscle in,
Can't STOMACH you sometimes
HM Such comments rock me to my CORE
LMc You both need a SIX PACK and chill
KQ Was going to swear but I'll use obliques
HM These workouts are a pain in the psoas.
LMc Stop getting ripped into each other
HM I need liposuction to get ripped **LMc**
KQ I've run out of puns. GUTTED.
LMc Probably best to tone it down anyway
HM This could run and run

Bella on the Telly

Now a regular *Bletha* feature - This month it's Roz Wilson. Again. Running the Great Winter Run over Arthurs seat, Edinburgh



Bellas benefit olympic Hawkins

COACHING UPDATE

Olympian Derek Hawkins is coaching Bellahouston Road Runners passing on skills and expertise. Bellas are reporting his insight is proving invaluable. Many say they are already feeling the benefits.

"We are delighted to have Olympic Athlete Derek Hawkins as part of our coaching team."
- Louise Ross, Coach



Joni (& sister Emma) Derek has improved their running

Bella coach, Louise Ross said "The coaches devote a lot of time and energy devising sessions and coaching plans but are all still runners themselves with a desire to improve, so find it difficult to coach on the

sidelines. It was partly for this reason that the club decided to employ Derek Hawkins and for him to help develop our athletes and coaches."

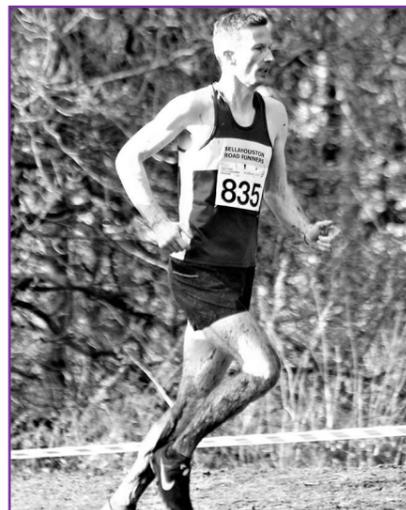
"We have had very positive feedback and hope this will continue for our current members and entice new members too."

Derek Hawkins has a bag of honours, he was the highest placed British athlete at London Marathon 2012, he competed in the 2016 Olympic marathon in Rio, and he the Scottish cross country championship in 2011 and 2012.

Joni Lindsay said "Derek's session are excellent, I really enjoyed running against the stop watch, he helps you to keep a consistent pace.

He also gives great advice on technique and was happy to answer all my questions! Can't wait for the next one."

Bruce & Bruce Still Boss



Bella's Bruces - Carmichael and Carse continue to boss it with a season of sensational running.

Bruce Carmicheal was first Bella to finish men's senior XC nationals.



Bruce Carse was second senior man for Bella. Men finished 17 out of 42. Bella mens top places included **Greg Glendinning, James Montgomery, Andy Campbell and Russell Whittington**



Derek pacing Bellas on a track night



Buggy Battle Bella Banter

A Bella buggy battle is set to spice up Harriers vs Road Runners Mob Match on 4 March.

Bella champ and international runner, Graeme Paterson was challenged by Harrier Stephen Prentice

Graeme and son Joseph are parkrun regulars. Their highest ranking is 2nd place

However, Harrier Stephen suggested that Graeme had "no chance" of beating him.

Both dads are now playing it cool. "You know what its like with small children" said Graeme "I won't be able to confirm attendance until 9.28am on race day"

"Snap" said Stephen "I'll be running if small boy gets in the buggy". Road Runner, Andy Campbell, said "My money's on Graeme"

Flagging Bellas



Meeting Bella team mates just got easier.

We now have two sail flags which can be staked into the ground. At XC - first outing - they looked great.

JOIN THE MOB

Mob Match fever is spreading. Scottish Athletics called the Harriers vs Road Runners mob match "an example other clubs could follow - in the spirit of friendly rivalry"

This Bella mob match is masterminded by Road Runners president, Richard Leyton and social secretary Kevin Queenan.

Its as much a social event as it is a race.



Godfather of the mob, the masterplanner, warms up for mobmatch training

Other clubs have taken to social media to express their interest in this event. "I really like this idea" says a runner from Springburn Harriers - who has suggested



Poster by Lucy Wilson, Scottish schools project designer of the year 2016

they "take on North Kirky or Garscube"

Kevin said "I've been amazed by the interest in the Bella Mob Match, there's been a lot of friendly banter going on between rival members.

Remember all you have to do is beat the harrier in front while making sure the one behind doesn't catch you. Just as importantly, please come to the after party at Cartha, it's just as much a social event as it is a race. Remember to wear your vest too!

There's been a lot of interest from other clubs in either running against us or holding their own local mob matches. I'd love it to become an annual event."



Richard, Roadrunners President, called on all Bellas to "Get yourself to parkrun. We need a good turn out. I know we will. Roadrunners bragging rights are on the line. Remember: you do not need to sign up for mob-match just pitch up at Pollok parkrun on 4th March. It will be fun, but we want to win"

Bletha with Nicola...



So Nicola... why do you run? I miss it when I don't. I started for stress relief when I worked in retail, but now I can't imagine not running.

Best run ever? The final 20 mile training run for last years marathon. It was a beautiful, cold, sunny morning on the Clyde & I could finally start tapering!

A sport you'd like to be good at? I'd love to get back into horse-riding again, but I just don't have the time.

What do you do when not running? Drinking! No..umm.. probably sleeping if I'm honest

Your mantra on a tough run? "You got this"

Best advice from a Bella? Many have said - "go at my own pace & don't get disheartened when I have a bad run." This may just be sinking in!

What don't we know about you? I do sometimes stop talking.

Bucket list event? NYC Marathon. I didn't run it when I lived there as I only ever broke a sweat when I thought I'd lost my travel pass. I now deeply regret not taking that chance, so if my numbers come up I'll be over like a shot!

What do you eat to fuel a long run? Porridge with banana and a coffee before I start & then gels and sultanas when I'm on the move.

Any recovery techniques? Lying face down on floor whimpering for about 20 minutes, whilst half on a foam roller has its benefits.

.....Thanks, Nicola :)

COUNCIL SEE LIGHT OF BELLA CAMPAIGN

Following priority billing in The Evening Times for Bellas light up our parks campaign, Glasgow Council have agreed to repair Mossspark Boulevard and consider improving the area with new LED lighting.

This comes as runners have been pledging their support to our campaign.

Springburn Harrier, John Owens, said "Great campaign Bellas! With you all the way. It is same issue for us in Springburn Park. All year round fear and hassle free access is worth fighting for."

Cumbernauld runner, Andy Lindsay, said "I'm with you. I had a nasty fall in a poorly lit park and have badly sprained

my ankle. Haven't run since. It's such a simple thing, light up the parks and everyone benefits. People feel safe, dogs get walked and we can run."

Parks should be safe all year round to encourage more to take up an active lifestyle

Bellas wrote to the council to ask "what can be done to improve the surface of Mossspark Boulevard walkway and street lights. The walkway has tree roots pushing through the tarmac and the area is badly lit"

The council say that following our request they have inspected for tree



Our campaign to make Scotland's parks safe at night is gaining support from runners and dog walkers

root heave and dangerous areas will be repaired they will also consider a larger resurfacing scheme"

They also said "The existing road lighting on Mossspark Boulevard will be included in a business case to upgrade lighting stock.

They also confirm that when the existing street lighting is replaced it will be with new columns incorporating LED lanterns, taking into account the footway running parallel with the park".

Light up our parks campaign continues.

Cat Mac, Eat Run Mac, & David de Hair

Cat Mac won Forfar Multi Terrain Half, in a stunning time of 90.57.



Catriona "Cat Mac" MacDonald, was a member of Morpeth Harriers in Northumberland until recently joining Bellas.

Bella's new star said, "Forfar run was, a wee bit muddy, not too hilly and a great atmosphere. Post race massage and food were great too"

David Hulse had a great winter season across all distances



David ran the Seville marathon in his target of under 3 hours. He also ran 3k on the green in under 10 mins. Coach Graeme Paterson called it 'stunning running. with no a hair out of place'. David is well known for worrying about his hair mid race.

Grant MacDonald won the Barcelona 24 Hour Track Race. He says "This is a simple niche: step on track, run for 24 hours. The person who does most laps is patted on the back and declared the winner"

Eat & Run, Eat & Run is the key. I ate enough calories to cover 239.791 km and sneak a win. - A Finnish man called Jari nearly caught me. A 24 hour race came down to a sprint finish. I use the term "sprint" loosely. In my last lap I resembled a drunk pensioner. Would I do it again? Yes, I'm doing another one at Tooting Bec in September.

BWANA BELLA HITS KENYA'S TRAINING HEIGHTS



Scotland internationalist Sand Bella Roadrunner, Russell Whittington, recently returned from high altitude training in Kenya.

Russell travelled with Harrier, Colin Thomas, to Iten - the town of runners - where world greats like Kip Keino, David Rudesha and Edna Kiplagat train hard. Russell's goal is to complete the London Marathon in under 2:40.

Russell said, "I started with steady runs to adapt to the altitude, running a minute a mile slower for the same effort. Then we ran on the

Kamariny track - 5x1km with 200m jog recovery - it was my hardest run for a long time, but the locals cruised past like I was jogging. I really struggled to get my breath in between reps.

We took part in the famous mass fartlek runs with locals and runners from across the world. 30x1mins minute with 1mins recovery on a very hilly route. The lead group were out of sight in minutes. I settled into a group towards the back. I was just glad not to be last. The session was tough, but that was my favourite run.

My longest run was 16.7 miles on my last day.

Kenya kicked my training in the right direction. If you ever get a chance, go. You won't regret it, it's a runner's paradise."

The Bella boys also visited St Patrick's School, home of famous Brother Colm, to watch a cross country race

Russell said "the standard was great to see close up, if anything is going to get my running back to my best, it's this inspiring trip to Kenya."

Bella the biggest club in Scotland?

Bella membership is now 226 registered members. The biggest question is, are we the biggest running club in Scotland?

Membership secretary, Camilla Sims, poured cold water on the claims "We just don't know. Our membership is still pretty good, I reckon."

New members are always encouraging, but it's also important we have a good retention rate, which we do. Something Scottish Athletics

regularly highlight. If you need to pay your subs please go the website. Thanks!"



Bellas out in force on windy track night

theBletha is written & designed by Danny Phillips. It's printed on behalf of Bellahouston Roadrunners. Thanks to Gordon Russell, Grant, Roz, Kevin, Maz, Cat, Camilla Nicola Henry, Iain, Shona & Richard for contributions.