



Suzy and the Captain Are Presidential Winners



left: Colin Dalglish and Suzy Moriarty (images courtesy Jim Robinson)

AN IMPRESSIVE turn out of 57 took part in the 2008 renewal of the Presidents Cup. Suzy Moriarty (24:16) won the women's race - a great reward for the hard work and perseverance that she has shown at training in recent months. Meanwhile old favourite Colin Dalglish aka Captain Caveman (22:34) was burning up the tarmac to take the men's prize.

Sandra Houldsworth (22:28) and Debbie Ferns (19:52) were second and third ladies while Jim O'Hara (20:39) and Nick Forrester (20:50) took the minor placings in the men's race.

After the race club president Emma Birnie told the **BELLA BLETHER**:

"It was superb to see this event so well-supported. And also good to see a mix of new Bellas and old sweats among the prize winners. Special congratulations to Suzy who showed that she is making great strides with her running, and to Captain Caveman who is returning to form after a lean spell."

Emma also thanked the Bellas who had given up their chance to

take part in the event and volunteered for various time-keeping and marshalling chores. She gave a special thanks to Jonathan Slow for his organisational efforts and handling the thorny task of race handicapper so competently. Also praise for Oscar Wild for organising the pre-race warm-up and to Brendan Moriarty for laying on the post-race spread.

For the record Alasdair MacLeod (16:45) and Claire Thompson (19:00) were the fastest men and women over the course.



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August Date For Bella 5K

ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS of the Bella calendar is coming up soon. So make sure that Sunday, August 17 is marked in red and you get your entry for the Achilles Heel Bella 5k in as soon as possible. This key club championship event is limited to 300 runners so make sure you book your place to avoid disappointment.

Bella members are entitled to a reduction on the normal race fee. Instead of the 'normal' entry fee of £5 SAL/£7 non-SAL (plus £2 extra for entry on the day), Bella members' entry fees will be £3 SAL/£5 non-SAL (plus £2 extra for entry on the day). £3 entry for members has to be the bargain of the year considering that there is always a great goody bag and post-race refreshments at the Palace of Arts.

Race organiser Linda Kennedy told the **BELLA BLETHER**:

"Entries are starting to flood in but not many from Bellas! Can I stress again to get your entries in sooner rather than later? It makes life a whole lot easier on the day.

"Also I'm still hoping to recruit another couple of timekeepers and Andy Birnie, who is organising the course, needs a few more marshals. Please put your name forward and help out on the day."



Nikki Milligan powers for home in last year's Achilles Heel 5k (image courtesy Tony Munro)

Bella Trio Lift Prize



WHILE A BIG Bella contingent were flying the purple flag at the London Marathon on April 13, a smaller but no less determined group headed for Strathclyde Park and the Tom Scott 10 mile race. And it turned out to be a memorable day for Maddie Smillie (1:12:55), Tomoyo Fujiwara (1:14:21) and Karlyn Forsyth (1:15:26) who

made up the Bella Ladies team that finished second behind Kirkintilloch Olympians.

For Karlyn it was her first prize as a senior and for Tomoya her first ever prize for running (Maddie is a podium regular!) and thanks to Ian Goudie for submitting this photo plus details of the trio's success.

Hills Back In Favour

THE LAST edition of the BLETHER asked if the club's love affair with hill running was over, and suggested that given the declining number of purple vests in recent events that the answer was probably yes. How wrong can you be?

The revival stated at the Whangie Whizz in April when 15 Bellas toed

the starting line for this 7k race with a 240m climb. Iona Robertson was second woman and Dougal Ross fourth male but the real story was that, encouraged by coach John Milligan, a clutch of hill virgins experienced the joys of ascent and descent for the first time.

This group (John and Nikki Milligan, John Sandbach, Sandra Holdsworth, Bridget Fouhy and Chris Doak - soon to be joined by Jim O'Hara and his bus) then put in regular appearances at as-sorted hill races across Central Scotland over the next few months.

Meanwhile Dougal continued to figure prominently on the leader board in the Bog and Burn series. After 7 of the 10 rounds he was in second place behind Bob Wiseman (Ochil Hill Runners).



Coach John powers his way through the bracken (image courtesy Chris Upson)

Men Behaving Well



A BIG CONTINGENT of Bella's finest lined up for the Men's Health Forum Scotland 10K on Sunday, June 15 and the purple vest figured prominently in the race. Colin McGill (33:57) and Alasdair MacLeod (33:58) finished 3rd and 4th in a field of over 2,500, while messrs Whittington, Ross (Craig)

and O'Donnell ran prominently. Around 20 club members competed in this race which is growing in popularity year on year and all were grateful to the support of the many Bellas babes who turned up to provide encouragement along the route.



CLAIRE THOMPSON retained her Mull of Kintyre Half Marathon title in May (image courtesy G.Glendingning)



AS SHODDY says himself this image is crying out for a caption.

Answers to the editor - best reply wins a £20 voucher for Achilles Heel.

Going Well



JIM O'HARA, seen here in action at Helensburgh, has made great strides since joining the club just a few months ago.

NUTRITION CORNER

Professional dietician Emma Birnie kicks off a new column with her thoughts on that thorny problem of 'runners trots' ...

DOES YOUR daily run leave you running for the toilet or the nearest vegetation? Do you hear and feel the swishing of your stomach contents as you bound along? Chances are you are not alone; many runners suffer with gastrointestinal problems of one form or another.

Possible causes are thought to include a reduced blood flow to the intestines, an increased transit time due to exercise and just the general 'jiggling' about of the guts during running.

Some dietary tips could help, so if you suffer with the trots then try these out.

- *Watch the amount of fruit consumed prior to running* – it may be better to eat fruit afterwards. Some fruits, especially apples and pears can ferment and produce excess gas which can cause bloating. Try a glass of fruit juice instead.
- *Avoid caffeine for 2 hours prior to running* - any fluid taken less than 2 hours before running will still be in your system and can cause the 'sloshing bucket' feeling. For good hydration drink 500ml isotonic or hypotonic fluid 2 hours before running which allows time for it to pass through the body.
- *Race day prep* - The day before a race opt for lower fibre, not fatty or spicy foods for example plain pasta with simple tomato sauce, tuna pasta, baked potato, omelette and bread.

If all that fails to help then remember to stash some loo paper and know where the handy al fresco toilets are! Happy trotting....

Emma Birnie



Emma advises keep clear of pears before a run (but they are great for refuelling afterwards)

CONTRIBUTORS WANTED:

The editorial team here at the **BELLA BLETHER** have noticed the high quality of personal website and blog information written by a number of Bellas. Any potential contributors to the **BELLA BLETHER** can contact PR advisor Terry Brennan through the website.

BELLAS

IN PROFILE

THE BLETHER sent ace reporters Sarah Dowling, Russ Whittington and Scott Kennedy to unearth the secrets of some of Bellas most glamorous characters. Here's what they found ...

Jackie O - First Lady Of Country

by Sarah Dowling

WHEN ASKED if there were times when Jackie O'Grady struggled with her motivation for running, she jokingly replied: "Mondays, Wednesdays and race days". Clearly, this funny lady is really into her sport!

In fact, Jackie has been running for some time, having started to plod the highways and byways of Cardonald 6 or 7 years ago. However, on the advice that she was 'too fast' for the Glasgow Women's Jogging Network and a word from the wise in the form of Dougie Lamont, persuaded her to join Bella in 2006 and really step up her training.

Jackie usually runs with Group B but is currently working with John Milligan's group (apparently because John is one of the highlights of joining Bella - I'm sure Nikki would agree!)

Of course, Jackie O is famed for her enthusiasm for cross country races, having taken part in her first race of this type only last September. As the first XC in the winter calendar, the Irvine course is renowned for its gently sloping hills and grassy surface – perfect to lure a XC virgin into the dark, murky depths of full blown bog and burn of later races! Jackie claims to enjoy these races as they're 'short and muddy'. And she's clearly in her element, as her team medal from a particularly mucky race at Inverkip proves!

“ One of her funniest recollections from that trip is seeing poor Marcos wear the 'Dress of Shame'. The Dress is normally given to those who don't wear their Bella vests whilst racing, but it's also useful to remind campers to turn up for their kitchen duty! Apparently, Jackie thought Marcos looked lovely!



Jackie O'Grady loved this year's training camp

Ms O'Grady isn't just the Queen of the Quagmire; she regularly takes part in the Club Championship road races (no further than 10K, please!) and enjoys the camaraderie of the road relay races. She also had a fantastic time at the Bella training camp in Aberfeldy earlier this year.

One of her funniest recollections from that trip is seeing poor Marcos wear the 'Dress of Shame'. The Dress is normally designated for those Bellas who choose not to wear their Bella vests whilst racing, but it's also useful to remind campers to turn up for their kitchen duty! Apparently, Jackie thought Marcos looked lovely!

So is there a 'downside' to running? Definitely the longer distances - 'half marathons, yuk!' Guess we won't be seeing Jackie out on the roads on Saturdays for those long London and Edinburgh marathon training runs next year. Jackie favours shorter races, and like many runners, prefers the cooler weather. But she suggests that newly joined club members should try different types of running and races 'you never know what sort of running you may enjoy – give it a go! You only have to do it once to know'.

So, what are Jackie's goals for this year and beyond? "Beating my PBs of course, the winter xc races, oh and I did enjoy that Whingie/Whongie/Whangie Whizz thing – yeah, more of those hill races!" No doubt, our First Lady of the Cross Country will soon be conquering mountains – just as long as the races are nice and short!

Making His Marcos

by Russ Whittington



Marcos - not a dreamer

BELLAHOUSTON ROAD RUNNERS have a number of foreign nationalities represented amongst its membership. Marcos Sanz Gomez added his considerable presence to this list when the Spaniard joined the club.

Marcos was born in Barcelona in 1981 and came to Aberdeen to study the last year of his engineering degree in 2004. He moved to Glasgow in 2006 and decided to join a running club to meet people. Having never done any serious running before he showed good potential from the start.

His favourite race so far has been the Devil's Burdens hill relay race. He partnered Richard Wild for this race and went sprinting up the first hill. This didn't end up being a winning tactic as he paid for this early enthusiasm later in the race, but still managed to finish with a smile on his face.

Marcos entered the London Marathon this year and missed out on a ballot place. He was then 'fortunate' enough to 'win' one of the Bella club places. His approach to the race was typically laid back and the other members of the club were wondering whether he was taking the 26.2 mile challenge a little too lightly. Rather than join other members of the club on long training runs he decided that he would make up his own approach. This sometimes meant no running at all at weekends, but on one occasion managed an extra long run by getting lost. He set out to run to

Milngavie but ended up in Bearsden and then Dalmeir and who knows where else before getting back home about 4 hours later.

Training weekend gave Marcos a chance to showcase some of his other talents. One of which was glove darning. After spending a considerable length of time trying to repair his gloves Linda Kennedy came to his rescue to give him a sewing lesson. Timekeeping also proved to be a problem as Marcos got caught up in the party atmosphere too much and forgot to put his clock forward. This meant that he missed his allocated breakfast shift and was made to wear the dress of shame on the Sunday morning hill run. He looked surprisingly comfortable running up the hill in Brendan Moriarty's best dress.

Outside running Marcos has big plans to buy a piece of land and build and self sufficient eco campsite for backpackers. His plans include cows, sheep, a vegetable patch and compost toilet. I also misheard and thought he wanted a goat, but he actually said quote! The quote was "There are two kinds of people, people who dream of doing things and people who do things. I want to be one of the latter."



Raymond taking an easy pace (image courtesy N.McLeod)

SO WHAT brought you to Bella in the first place? 'Friend', colleague, and fellow Bella, Eleanor Walls...just good friends, honest.

And now you're well established at the club, how do you feel about having one of the biggest chests in the club?

I'm happy with my personal pursuit of pectoral perfection, but

I feel that as a club Bella should be forward-thinking in launching a recruitment drive for bigger-chested members. Forget these skinny Eritreans.

The Blether has also noted your curly locks and wonders if they're permed or natural? My mate and former flatmate Andy Worrell always jokes about how I used to knit a new hairdo before a night out, but I can state that this is a lie...I always relied on my GHD straighteners to get the look both I and others were after.

OK, you're known for your consistent 38 minute 10k times. But how else would you choose to pass 38 minutes? Having run 37 minutes-odd twice now for 10k, I'd choose to finish my own race, put my feet up with a good book, and wait for my 38 minute rivals to finish! Flash git.. Indeed.

Now you've finally found Suzi, the woman of your dreams, we understand she'll be heading off to Canada for a while. How will

The Great Raymondo

by Scott Kennedy

you entertain yourself of an evening while she's away? I've not put in place any specific schedule yet, but I'm fairly certain it'll include a high proportion of upper body exercise (including a lot of arm work), with a smattering of hard cardio

And you'll be able to indulge yourself listening to your renowned and eclectic collection of music...perhaps you'll tell us more about that? Bryan Burnett was recently truly disgusted to learn that I never actually listen to music, though my back catalogue does have some notable inclusions. One of these is a collection of Simple Minds albums ... as a teenager I was trying to impress a girl who I found out liked the latest single from the band, so I thought it may be prudent to buy their entire back catalogue. Anyway, she knocked me back and I was landed with a pile of albums which have never seen the light of day!

I understand your most recent (!!!) CD purchase was an uplifting musical masterpiece, inspirational to any runner? Well, if that's how you wish to regard When You Get There by the wonderful P Diddy, then so be it ... that said, I'm not convinced I actually bought this, but the aforementioned Andy assures me I did. It was a wonderful accompaniment to many a night in our flat.

So we've established that your musical taste is truly criminal...in your line of work, you must also have some criminal connections? I must trot out the legal line and maintain client confidentiality. The nearest I've recently come to making criminal connections was when I was 'escorted' home by Strathclydes' finest on Christmas Eve. I'll say no more.

You mean you couldn't outrun them? ...



the nick of time

SO HERE WE are, another Blether is upon us, and once more I'm wondering where the year is going. When I wrote my last ramblings for the Blether, we were in the right in the middle of the cross country season, which is hard to even remember now in these long summer evenings. Also beginning to be a (hopefully!) happy memory for lots of

Bellas now are the various spring marathons the club was represented at, most notably London and Edinburgh. Having attended both (but thankfully only ran the one!) I was amazed and very proud of the level of commitment of the athletes right across the club, and the great club spirit evident on both weekends. Very well done to everyone involved, whether you were an athlete competing, a supporter shouting your lungs out, or a coach watching someone reach the potential you knew they've always had. Special mention to Brendan and Gavin for great runs on a tough day at Lochaber, showing that you don't need the big city glamour races to hit outstanding PBs.

With the marathon's out the way and you're looking for something to put a spring back into your tired legs ... happily it's now summer playtime! The variety of different challenges the club's athletes are now taking on is staggering. The more conventional spring/ early summer activities were of course the raft of 10ks on offer, kicking off with Troon in early May with a huge 45 Bella runners taking part. The Purple Posse representation has continued ever onwards throughout the Polaroid 10k race series, with again PBs all over the place.

Bellas have also been turning up in some of the less well-trodden paths early this summer too, with an excellent performance from Stuart Mathieson in the Scottish Islands Peaks Race (team placed

3rd), rising star Grant Edmonson popping up in the Mull of Kintyre half marathon (a week after completing the Copenhagen Marathon!), and Dougal Ross maintaining (at time of writing) his lead in the Bog and Burn hill running series. (Speaking of hill running, its been great to see the increasing presence of John Milligan's training group at local hill races over the last few weeks...and yes I am still jealous of your team bus!)

Looking forward over the next few weeks and months, the range of options open to athletes for racing is pretty varied. As well as plenty of 10k's, there is some shorter sharper fun to be had with some nice fast 5k's, we've already had the President's Cup and the Bella 5k. The President's Cup proved especially exciting given that in theory any club member can win it - congratulations to Colin Dalgleish and Suzi Moriarty who lifted the coveted silverware. Also around this time of year some nice scenic island half marathons start to appear in calendar, which make great preparation runs if you're targeting a PB at the Glasgow half...I can heartily recommend the Isle of Mull half marathon as great Bella weekend away if you're looking for inspiration!

Just to reiterate slightly my parting shot from last time, if you're reading this and not sure how to get involved or what races are available, I'd once again urge you to chat with either Claire or myself, or any of the coaching team. Every athlete in the club has a different goal, but I'm willing to bet there's someone else somewhere in the



cap'n claire's soapbox

THE LAST FEW months have been jam-packed with races, covering all sorts of distances and terrains, and it has been great to see so many Bella Babes getting stuck in!

At the Smokies (ladies-only) 10 mile race in Arbroath, way back in wintry March, Bella won the team prize for the first time ever, with myself, Shona Donnelly and Sarah Dowling being the first three to count. In the same month we had a great turnout at the Balloch to Clydebank Half Marathon, with PBs aplenty! There was a really special atmosphere after this race with so many happy faces, and due credit was paid to the coaches for guiding us through those tough but rewarding winter sessions.

Back to the short stuff and Clydebank 5K was well attended with Bridget Fouhy making her race debut in the Bella vest! Another key event was the National Road Relays in Livingston, where the two Bella girls teams finished in 3rd and 24th places, a fantastic result at a Scottish fixture! Another great result were Madeline Smillie, Tomoyo Fujiwara and Karlyn Forsyth (on her debut race for Bella) winning the ladies team prize in the Tom Scott 10 mile road race in

Strathclyde Park. On the same day we had several girlies running the London Marathon, and in Edinburgh Marathon soon after. Well done to everyone for all your hard work and great performances, including Louise Gray making her marathon debut at Edinburgh.

The 10K season kicked off at Troon on 7th May, which was one of the hottest and sunniest days of the year so far! The Womens 10K in Glasgow was another special event, with many fantastic runs and new PBs, including Mary Senior breaking 46mins for the first time! The Polaroid series has been popular again with Bella Babes turning out at all four events. The Clydebank 10K was another roaster of an evening and while there were a few casualties, the Bella girls were made of sterner stuff. Elke Schmidt defied the heat and was 1st lady across the line, (Bella also finished 1st female team).

Dumbarton 10K was to remind us that we do live in Scotland, and we were welcomed on the start line with a torrential downpour that continued for the whole race, with thunder, lightning and ankle-deep puddles thrown in for entertainment!

Elke, Emma and Iona Robertson have been doing great in the hill races, and



*Alasdair MacLeod
(image courtesy N. McLeod)*

club who can share a pearl of wisdom or two regarding your plans. Its your club – make the most of it! Hope to see you all out racing again soon...

Nick

John Milligan has also been leading his group out onto the Hills recently, with a great result at the Cairn Table Hill Race in Ayrshire, where Nikki Milligan and Sandra Houldsworth finished as first and second ladies! Sandra has also made fantastic progress on the roads recently, steadily reducing her 10K time. As have all the girls in his group! Well done!

Finally...many congrats to Linda Kennedy who, shortly after running two marathons, completed the Dirty 30, a thirty mile event at Lochalsh where she beat off tough competition to win the prize for 1st lady!

The final batch of Club Championship events are approaching soon and there are still points up for grabs, so I would like to encourage everyone to take part! The Jog Scotland 5K takes place in July and August is choca-block with the Helensburgh and Mull half marathons as well as the Bella 5K, and in September are the final events – the Great Scottish Run half marathon and 10K!

Happy running!

Claire

THE SLOW WAY

IT HAS BEEN really gratifying for all the coaches to see some of the great performances people have given over the last couple of months. I have no intention of stealing the captains' thunder, but the level of performance across the variety of races is no mean feat. Oh, and that doesn't just mean PBs.

My only word of caution: pick your races carefully to avoid a combination of over-training/racing. Performances that either exceed or don't meet our expectations can both lead us to try harder. It is easy to then get caught in a vicious cycle which can end in injury or illness. Listen to your body and rest when you need to before you have to!

As a coach it's great to see people developing, growing in confidence, and striving to be the best you can be. This is down to your effort, hard work and consistency. Of these probably the last has the biggest effect. The role of the coaches and group leaders' is to provide a framework and support along the way.

However, we can all do more, and as this may be my last chance to do so I should really take the opportunity to mention a few things. So, here goes...

Firstly, some thanks (well many actually!) In addition to the coaches we already have taking groups, we have recently introduced a group leaders' rota. This is a trial until the end of July to have designated people leading groups, working with coaches. Ideally, this will allow smaller groups, one of the things people asked for in the recent survey.

Thanks to all those of you who have offered your services, it is really appreciated. There is always room for more, especially as we get to the holiday season, so have a word if you would like to help out. Thanks also to everyone who trains hard and the constructive comments you make. These don't disappear into a black hole ... watch this space (well, below actually) for more details!

We've also offered a couple of race



prep sessions in the run-up to Troon and Dumbarton. The idea has been to test with a couple of races, where a large Bella presence was planned, the benefits of our experience. A number of people have taken us up on this and we've covered issues as diverse as the course, pacing, pre-race warm-ups, pre-race nutrition, and hydration strategies on a warm evening. Again, this is an outcome from the survey.

The Presidents' Cup was a highlight in June. As a handicap race, this in theory gave all club members an equal chance of winning. In practise it provided a great evening of fun and high spirits.

Finally, I've been told to look back, and forward. I would like to think that coaching within the club has developed a lot over the last 3 years. I don't have enough space to pick out specific examples but I must pay credit to the coaches who give up their time to assist, use and develop their own qualifications and experience to help us all. However, as a club we must also look forward.

Coaching is first and foremost athlete centred. For this reason, if there is demand, I would like to organise a session after a run one evening soon to look at where we can go next. Since the survey earlier this year we have been working to introduce some new ideas (see above) and others are planned. But I'm sure there are other ideas out there. The aim of the session will be to get some of these ideas on paper and work out if/how they could be implemented.

Coaching can then develop further in order to support these ideas wherever possible. I will post more details on the website so, watch look out for detail.

If there is anything here you want to chat to me about, please find me on a club night or through the message board.

Thank you for all your continuing support and enjoy your running!

JONATHAN SLOW



The Social Whirl

A BIG PART of life as a Bella is the fantastic series of social events that takes place over the course of the year. From the prestigious Gala Awards evening to the Women's 10k curry night there's always something going on. Current social convenor the effervescent Brendan Moriarty has been doing a cracking job since he took on the role last September ...

WHEN BRENDAN MORIARTY took over the mantle of social convenor at last year's AGM he expected to have a busy year and he's not been disappointed. The **BLETHER** caught up with Big Bren soon after the successful Corrieyairack Race Night which had taken up much of his time in May and June:

"The race night was a brilliant success even though it pee'd down and that meant the BBQ was an indoor event. Despite the rain there was plenty of scran for everyone and a large race crowd really got into the spirit as they exhorted the horses they had backed to greater efforts.

"Winning owners included Marcos, now neatly kitted out in top of the range Pearl Izumi gear and Lynsey Munro's mum who is heading for Gleneagles and a very special meal for two. Thanks again to everyone who helped out on the night, donated prizes and to all Bellas and their family and friends who came along and supported the occasion. We raised £1,500 which goes to the Speyside Trust."

and getting the provisions for the post-Presidents Cup spread. And really that's been the story of the social convenor's year since he was thrown in at the deep end with the Bella Award's Night at Cafe Source in October.

Christmas time saw a glut of activity with the Bella Xmas Night Out, the Sledging Night and the Festive Fancy Dress 5K all in quick succession. Big Bren was making his mark with his hard work and good ideas. The Sledging Night was a new event on the social calendar and all who attended had a great time. Andy Birnie summed up the general consensus: "Thanks to Brendan and Oscar for organising this evening of utter juvenile fun! What a laugh. Best screamer of the night award must go to Lynne, with Lynsey a close second!"

The Bella Christmas night out at the Thistle Hotel saw around 40 Bellas strut their stuff in the Grand Ballroom after an excellent meal. No casualties reported despite some strange looking moves to the Abba back catalogue!

Brendan found time amid his

organisational responsibilities to turn up at the Festive Fancy Dress 5K in a fetching costume. Despite his sterling efforts the prize for best dressed entrant went to Andy Birnie, Stuart Mathieson and Ali Robertson who turned out as Santa and Rudolf.

Spring was a relatively quiet period for Brendan which was just as well as he prepared for the Lochaber Marathon at the end of April. The big fella took 33 minutes off his PB to finish in 3 hours and 7 seconds. Sensational stuff!

Although Brendan spent most of early May hobbling about he still found the energy to organise the Women's 10k Curry Night. Again a horde of hungry Bellas turned up at the Ski Club on the evening of May 18 to celebrate a lot of great performances earlier in the day.

The last official engagement of the club's year is the post Great Scottish Run feast and again an expectant purple posse will be in full attendance and looking to be well provisioned. If the performance of the social convenor so far this year is a guide they will enjoy another great night. Well done, Mr Moriarty!

The BLETHER is reliably informed that the main picture consists of Andy Birnie, Stuart Mathieson and Ali Robertson