

Track and Field

International Cross-country



On March 20, 1878, the first eight in the British national championships met their French counterparts at Ville d'Avray, near Paris. The first Frenchman home, Touquet, finished ninth and collapsed on arrival after completing the 14.5 km course. This first international meeting, not without its satisfactions for the visiting team, was the

start of the International Cross-Country Championships. Yet when England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales founded the ICCU (International Cross-Country Union) and organized their first race on March 28, 1903 at Glasgow's Hamilton Park, for some peculiar reason, France was completely forgotten. The meeting allowed England to

Monza 1974: you have to sprint if you want to start at the head of the field

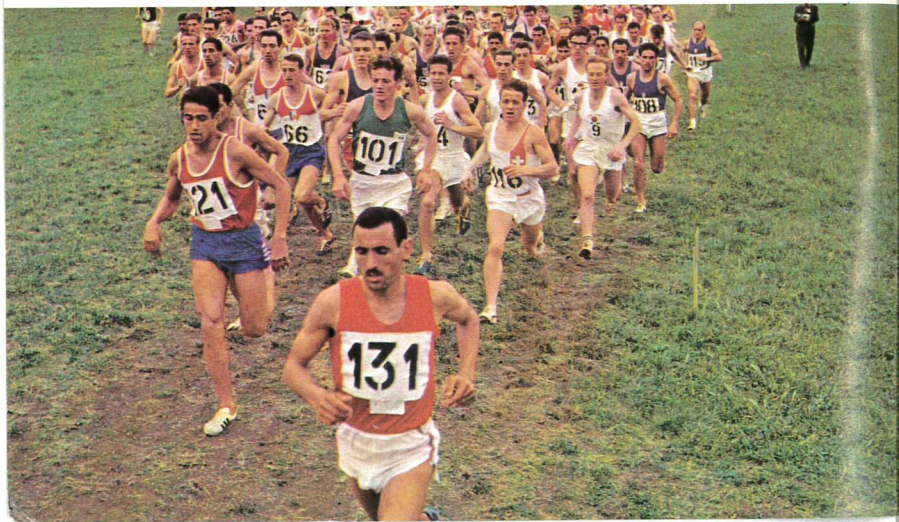


start record series of fourteen team victories. This was to be the first of forty-four wins, of which the most brilliant were obtained in 1924 and 1932, with a minimum total of 21 points: six Britons in the first six places! Although invited in 1906, France decided her team was insufficiently prepared and delayed acceptance for a year. France made a modest start in this 'international', which did not really merit its name until 1907, when she drew for third place with Ireland behind England and Scotland over a 10-mile course (16.094 km). In 1910, Jean Bouin put a stop to individual British successes when he won the first of his three victories. France, however had to wait until 1922 before taking

her first team event in Glasgow. The following year marked the first time Belgium participated in the event; the Belgians won their first individual and team events in 1948. Meanwhile, the holding of the championships in Paris in 1929 had permitted the scope of the race to be broadened, with Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Luxembourg all taking part for the first time. More and more countries gradually joined in the competition.

From 1903 onwards, the race has gone from strength to strength. In 1961, a 7-km event was added for juniors, and a women's race (4 km) was inaugurated in 1967. There have been some distinguished winners, including the Briton

Rabat 1966: B. A. El Ghazi (131) of Morocco who won the race after leading from the start





Brussels 1926: E. Harper (England), the winner over a relatively easy course

Holden (1933, 1934, 1935 and 1939), the Frenchman Mimoun (1949, 1952, 1954 and 1956) and the Belgian Roelants (1962, 1967, 1969 and 1972), who share the record for number of wins. The distance, which used to be the classic 9 miles (14.5 km), was brought down to 7½ miles (12 km) in 1962 on the insistence of France; the layout of the race has varied considerably over the years, depending mostly on which side of the Channel the competition was being held. In 1929, for example, it took on the strictly flat surface of the Hippodrome at Vincennes (France won the event). The following year, England produced a highly complicated course at Leamington Spa: the race involved crossing a gate

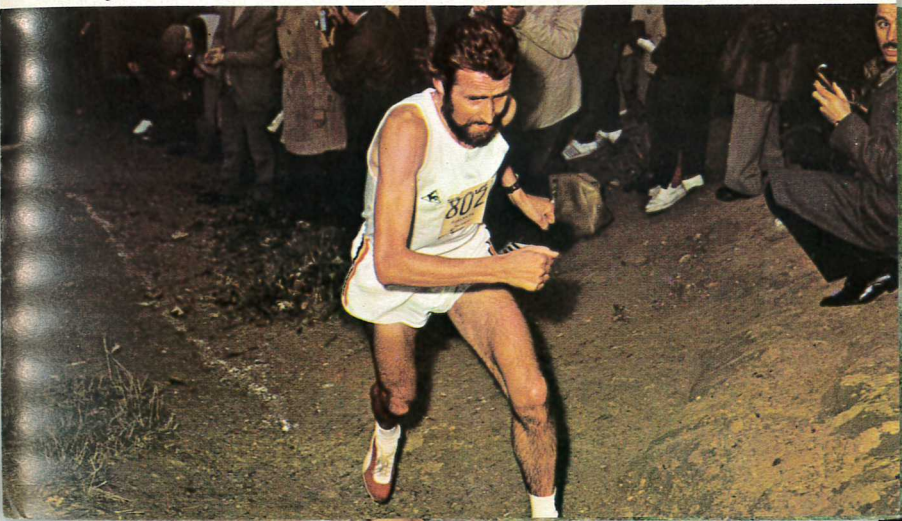
7¾ ft high, a water hazard, 300 yards of ploughed land, tree trunks, ditches and steep slopes (1st: England, 31 pts; 2nd: France, 80 pts).

In order to participate in the International Cross-Country Championships, you simply had to ask. To join the ICCU, you had to take part in the team event six times in a row. Britain, with the strength of its five votes (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic) has always strenuously resisted any alteration which was not to its liking. A two-thirds majority was necessary, and as the other member nations amounted to only eight (France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Tunisia and Morocco), Britain was always able

to veto proposed changes. At the same time, there existed in the International Athletics Federation (FIAA) a cross-country committee which held no real power, and in which attempts were made to overcome the British stranglehold. A decision was reached in London in 1972 on the occasion of the International Cross-Country Championship run in Cambridge, when the FIAA held a special meeting. It was agreed that from then on the FIAA's cross-country section should have real power of decision and should no longer be merely a consultative committee. The event would become a genuine international championship, no longer under the authority of the ICCU.

Britain were stripped of their privilege of being allowed to send several teams to compete. After Glasgow in 1978 and Limerick (Ireland) in 1979, Great Britain will have to send only one team, that of the United Kingdom, drawn from the four countries. As for the event's official name, it is now the FIAA Cross-Country Championship, as decided by the FIAA council meeting in Nairobi in 1974. One thing is certain: the Lumley Shield, offered to the ICCU by a Scottish dealer in sports gear in Glasgow, of that name, and engraved with the names of the winners over the years, is now nothing more than a museum piece.

The Belgian Gaston Roelants, four times winner of the race





Paris 1923: Duquesne, Mauhes and Vandembroke taking the hurdle at Maison-Lafitte

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS

Year	Venue	Individual	Team	Year	Venue	Individual	Team
1903	Glasgow	A. Shrubbs (ENG)	ENG	1938	Balmoral	J. Emery (ENG)	ENG
1904	St. Helens	A. Shrubbs (ENG)	ENG	1939	Cardiff	J. Holden (ENG)	FRA
1905	Dublin	A. Aldridge (ENG)	ENG	1946	Ayr	R. Pujazon (FRA)	FRA
1906	Newport	J.C. Straw (ENG)	ENG	1947	Paris	R. Pujazon (FRA)	FRA
1907	Glasgow	A. Underwood (ENG)	ENG	1948	Reading	J. Doms (BEL)	BEL
1908	Colombes	A. Robertson (ENG)	ENG	1949	Dublin	A. Mimoun (FRA)	FRA
1909	Derby	A.E. Wood (ENG)	ENG	1950	Brussels	L. Theys (BEL)	FRA
1910	Belfast	A.E. Wood (ENG)	ENG	1951	Newport	G. Saunders (ENG)	ENG
1911	Newport	J. Bouin (FRA)	ENG	1952	Glasgow	A. Mimoun (FRA)	FRA
1912	Edinburgh	J. Bouin (FRA)	ENG	1953	Paris	F. Mihalic (YUG)	ENG
1913	Paris	J. Bouin (FRA)	ENG	1954	Birmingham	A. Mimoun (FRA)	ENG
1914	Chesham	A. Nicholls (ENG)	ENG	1955	San Sebastian	F. Sando (ENG)	ENG
1920	Belfast	J. Wilson (SCO)	ENG	1956	Belfast	A. Mimoun (FRA)	FRA
1921	Newport	W. Freeman (ENG)	ENG	1957	Waregem	F. Sando (ENG)	BEL
1922	Glasgow	J. Guillemot (FRA)	FRA	1958	Cardiff	S. Eldon (ENG)	ENG
1923	Paris	C. Blewitt (ENG)	FRA	1959	Lisbon	F. Norris (ENG)	ENG
1924	Newcastle	W.M. Cotterell (ENG)	ENG	1960	Glasgow	A. Rhadi (MOR)	ENG
1925	Dublin	J. Webster (ENG)	ENG	1961	Nantes	B. Heatley (ENG)	BEL
1926	Brussels	E. Harper (ENG)	FRA	1962	Sheffield	G. Roelants (BEL)	ENG
1927	Newport	L. Payne (ENG)	FRA	1963	San Sebastian	R. Fowler (ENG)	BEL
1928	Ayr	H. Eckersley (ENG)	FRA	1964	Dublin	F. Arizmendi (SPA)	ENG
1929	Paris	W.M. Cotterell (ENG)	FRA	1965	Ostend	J. Fayolle (FRA)	ENG
1930	Leamington	T. Evenson (ENG)	ENG	1966	Rabat	B.A. El Ghazi (MOR)	ENG
1931	Dublin	T.F. Smythe (ENG)	ENG	1967	Barry	G. Roelants (BEL)	ENG
1932	Brussels	T. Evenson (ENG)	ENG	1968	Tunis	M. Gammoudi (TUN)	ENG
1933	Newport	J. Holden (ENG)	ENG	1969	Clydebank	G. Roelants (BEL)	ENG
1934	Ayr	J. Holden (ENG)	ENG	1970	Vichy	M. Tagg (ENG)	ENG
1935	Paris	J. Holden (ENG)	ENG	1971	San Sebastian	D. Bedford (ENG)	ENG
1936	Blackpool	W. Eaton (ENG)	ENG	1972	Cambridge	G. Roelants (BEL)	ENG
1937	Brussels	J.C. Flockhart (SCO)	ENG	1973	Waregem	P. Paivarinta (FIN)	ENG



The great Alain Mimoun (France), whose name will long be associated with this event

Year	Venue	Individual	Team
1974	Monza	E. De Beck (BEL)	BEL
1975	Rabat	I. Stewart (SCO)	NZL
1976	Chepstow	C. Lopes (POR)	ENG
1977	Düsseldorf	L. Schots (BEL)	BEL
1978	Glasgow	J. Treacy (IRL)	FRA

Juniors, men

1961	Nantes	C. Robinson (ENG)	ENG
1962	Sheffield	A. Bouchta (MOR)	ENG
1963	San Sebastian	No championship for juniors	
1964	Dublin	I. McCafferty (SCO)	ENG
1965	Ostend	T. Dumon (BEL)	BEL
1966	Rabat	M. Tagg (ENG)	ENG
1967	Barry	E. Knox (SCO)	ENG
1968	Tunis	T. Bednarsky (ENG)	ENG
1969	Clydebank	D. Bedford (ENG)	ENG
1970	Vichy	T. Harnett (IRL)	ENG
1971	San Sebastian	M. Rose (ENG)	ENG
1972	Cambridge	A. Tomasini (ITA)	ITA
1973	Waregem	J. Brown (SCO)	SPA
1974	Monza	R. Kimball (USA)	USA
1975	Rabat	R. Thomas (USA)	USA
1976	Chepstow	E. Hulst (USA)	USA
1977	Düsseldorf	T. Hunt (USA)	USA
1978	Glasgow	M. Morton (ENG)	ENG

Year	Venue	Individual	Team
Seniors, women			
1967	Barry	D. Brown (USA)	ENG
1968	Tunis	D. Brown (USA)	USA
1969	Clydebank	D. Brown (USA)	ENG
1970	Vichy	D. Brown (USA)	ENG
1971	San Sebastian	D. Brown (USA)	ENG
1972	Cambridge	J. Smith (ENG)	ENG
1973	Waregem	P. Pigni (ITA)	ENG
1974	Monza	P. Pigni (ITA)	ENG
1975	Rabat	J. Brown (USA)	USA
1976	Chepstow	C. Valéro (SPA)	USSR
1977	Düsseldorf	C. Valero (SPA)	USSR
1978	Glasgow	G. Waitz (NOR)	RUM

Abbreviations

BEL	Belgium	RUM	Rumania
ENG	England	SCO	Scotland
FIN	Finland	SPA	Spain
FRA	France	TUN	Tunisia
IRL	Ireland	USA	United States
ITA	Italy	WAL	Wales
MOR	Morocco	WGE	West Germany
NZL	New Zealand	YUG	Yugoslavia
POR	Portugal		