

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

THE PAY OFFICE

The Pay Office has managed to keep everybody paid. Every pay day £80,000 (£120,000 when in the States) has been paid out. Where it all goes to, only you can tell. All in all, and despite the computer (or because of it!), the ship has one of the largest, and certainly the busiest, Pay Offices in the Navy. And to finish the Commission with a bang we have managed to arrange a Pay Rise for all of our customers.



THE STEWARDS

The Stewards have gone about their task, often unsung but never unheard. Over the past three years, the Stewards have served more than half a million daily meals, about sixteen official Receptions for between 600 to 1,000 people, scores of minor official and private functions, scores of V.I.P.s including Admirals, The Prime Minister, M.P.s, senior N.A.T.O.

officers and H.R.H. Lt. The Prince of Wales, and two official Wardroom Balls. Many civilian waiters and hoteliers for that matter, would be envious of such a wealth and variety of experience, even in a life time. So the Stewards can justly claim to have contributed equally as well to the success of this Commission along with every other branch.

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

STORES ACCOUNTING SECTION

The department has continued to succour the needs of the ship for its ironmongery and clothing (if available), etc. We have continued to use the old tried and tested methods of accounting for everything by writing it through the store ledgers. At last we managed to amalgamate under "one roof" the former Stores and Victualling Empires. We managed to ditch several volumes of American Store catalogues and replace them with our very own "TV Silvery Screen" and got the Micro Film to go with it. We've also seen the complete transfer from R.N. Store Depots over to the R.A.F. of the ranges of Air Stores. Who knows we may see that elusive Teleprinter appear soon!

Replenishment at Sea—Many tales can be told and we are not without exception. Fortunately there have not been any disasters, due maybe, to having the Nelson touch on deck. A comment overheard when Lieutenant Commander Nelson was taking over from the former Deputy Supply Officer whose initials happened to be G.O.D. was, "how can we possibly go wrong now that we have God and Nelson watching over us". Well, we have R.A.S'd from the Arctic Circle through the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. Start time being anything like 0200, 0530, 1700, 1900—does anyone notice the lack of times between 0800 and 1600?—it must be connected with the old saying of "No work and all play makes Jack a dull boy"

or is it the other way round? However, no matter the time, it all happens and it gladdens the storekeepers' heart to see all the "goodies" coming across from the replenishment ship so that we can keep the wolves at bay for just that little longer.

The Air Stores Usage Control Organisation (A.S.U.C.O.) has successfully beaten the Squadrons repeatedly by being unco-operative, stubborn and downright rude to the pleas and cries of anguish that "the aircraft is grounded". The thumping of desks by A.E.O.s has only brought forth the comment "Mend it". . . . This hot seat is being taken up by another "Airy Fairy" soon. He has been on the extended course for the art of knowing when to switch off, i.e. 0800 to 1800 daily (except week ends) and is shortly to be fitted with buffers for each ear. *Some of our Funnies . . .*

The R.C. Padre who requested his gratuitous issue of a Tropical White Raincoat !

The C.B.G.L.O.s £21 landrover tyre purchased in Sicily.

The "Bedstead" radar aerial that was misplaced. . . . It makes a good garden trellis.

The wrong digit on a demand that caused the R.A.F. to send us 6 X6 cwt. cases of aluminium sheet instead of a few feet of hinge pin wire.

The Mark One R.A.S. rig.

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The spring deployment was effectively an exercise period split into three slices with visits to Gibraltar and Malta in between. Two notable events during the Christmas A.M.P., however, had been the Nuffield Trust presentation to the ship of two minibuses, which were to become invaluable, and the winning of the Navy Cup of the R.N. Rugby Union Knock-out competition.

Meanwhile, on with the sea-time. Having sailed on 25th January we proposed to fly for six days in the Southwest Approaches, despite our previous experiences of weather there. The met men were quite right—we shouldn't have tried. We wandered from Lyme Bay to Falmouth Bay to Plymouth areas, trying to find some decent conditions. At one time there was no acceptably clear airfield in the whole of the West Country.

Turning south to an operating area which was new to us we took part in the N.A.T.O. Exercise "Sunny Seas" off Portugal from 4th to 8th February. We were joined by the Standing Naval Force Atlantic with Dutch, Canadian, Norwegian, U.S. and R.N. vessels. Some German and French vessels also took part while French, German, Portuguese and R.A.F. aircraft operated from shore.

The subsequent visit to Gibraltar for three days was a Fleet Gathering with some 26 R.N. ships and F.O.F.1 and F.O.F.2 were joined by C.-in-C. Fleet, who flew his flag in *Glamorgan* and paid a visit to *Ark Royal*. The number of sailors was rather more than Gibraltar could cope with, but an intense sports programme was arranged and *Ark Royal* made a clean sweep of all events in her class.

On sailing from Gibraltar we went straight into an anti-submarine phase of "Sardex", the next exercise, which was primarily a weapon training period in the Sardinian area. Once again, advantage of the proximity of U.S.S. *Forrestal* was taken to cross-operate. This time we swapped just four Phantoms and had a little worry when one of theirs became highly unserviceable on our deck on the day before we were due to enter Malta.

From 23rd February until 6th March we had an Assisted Maintenance Period in Malta and to help us a part of the Fleet Maintenance Group had been flown out from U.K. We were tied up to buoys in



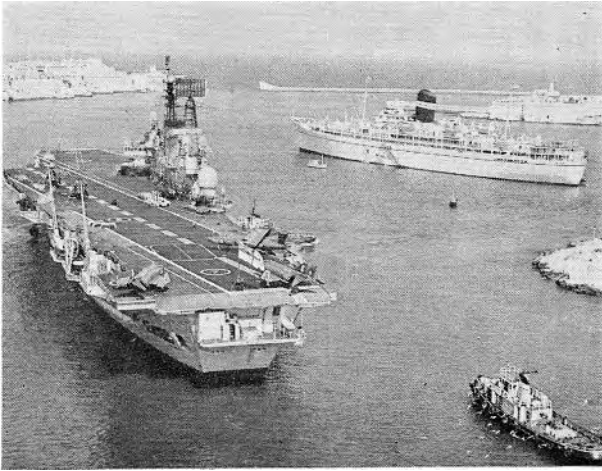
Ark Royal in Oils by John Borg Manduca

Kalkara Creek, a new berth for a carrier, and a walk-ashore of pontoons had been planned from the port after ladder into St. Angelo. But both the lop in the harbour—scend to the knowledgeable—and the yaw of the ship rather ruined a sound idea and, in the main, traffic inshore was by boat. Once again a sound programme of sporting events and visits had been arranged and most people enjoyed their off-duty hours. On Wednesday 5th March, we had the honour of a visit by Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten



of Burma and on the previous Wednesday, we had the honour of holding Divisions in the afternoon and Exercises "Awkward" and "Blow-up" in the evening.

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The last of the three exercises, "Ruler", commenced on sailing from Malta and finished soon after

clearing the Straits of Gibraltar. It was an extremely interesting loose tactical play exercise in which the *Ark Royal* force had to try to get from Malta and break out into the Atlantic as unobtrusively as possible. Our track took us through the Straits of Messina, the Bonifacio Strait between Sardinia and Corsica, and then through the Balearic Islands. Both sides used established cold war tactics of harassment and provocation in a most realistic manner.

On completion of the exercise we headed for home and disembarked a number of aircraft from off southern Portugal, but the next day in southern Biscay we recovered two of the *Buccaneers* back again, in one of which was the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Royal Navy) Mr. Anthony Buck, M.P. He disembarked by Helo the next day, 15th March, just prior to the ship going up harbour to Devonport.

ROYAL MARINE BAND

In these days of modern warfare, missiles and computer fitted ships, it may appear odd to the outsider, whether Service or Civilian, that a Royal Marine Band is still found at sea. In this respect, *Ark Royal* is now unique for she carries the one remaining seagoing Band, as well as laying claim to being the last Fixed Wing Aircraft Carrier.

The *Ark* possesses the facilities and amenities for a Band to live, work and play onboard, and also the tradition. It is very fair to say that we consider ourselves as being an integral part of *Ark* as a fighting unit. But, our duties are not entirely musical, we have been spotted watchkeeping in the Operations Room during exercises and we pop up to Colours now and again just to make sure that the "Fish-heads" are doing everything as we would wish. In a ship the size of *Ark Royal*, with an ever demanding and strenuous programme in harbour and at sea, continuity is very important. It is here that perhaps the Band comes into context, we hope we have succeeded in putting a smile back onto faces and colour into cheeks when things are getting tense, by providing musical entertainment at Band Concerts, Beat Retreat, Sods Operas and the Mail Call.

Many miles have been steamed in the past three years and many ceremonial and recreational commitments achieved, both onboard and ashore, for the *Ark* and for others. To name but a few places, the Band has found itself in Bristol and Bath, Turkey and Barcelona, the Caribbean and America, hospitals, orphanages and baseball stadiums. The list is endless, but worthwhile, and despite the rare setback of misplacing the bass drum overboard, caps being lost to souvenir hunters and sprained ankles being pumped full of pain killing drugs by the Principal Medical Officer to enable the Cymbals player to march, we have managed to keep smiling through thick and thin.

During the quieter harbour periods with *Ark* alongside in Devonport, we have found ourselves more recently logging more flying hours than the average Phantom Pilot, with trips away from the ship to far away places to join and work with other ships of the Carrier and Amphibious Squadron. *Albion*, *Bulwark*, *Fearless* and *Intrepid* have all hosted us. It may be of interest to mention a few of the places visited with the Squadron during the latter part of 1972, and 1973.

The first trip away from the *Ark* offered work with

Albion who was abroad in Canada. Halifax, Montreal, Quebec and St. Johns received our attention and we covered a multitude of ceremonial and official duties, including concerts in aid of charity, television performances and hospitals. Even at this distance, it was a surprise for us to encounter and be hosted by many ex-Royal Marines, all of whom displayed that desire to see a Royal Marine Band playing and marching again.

We rejoined *Ark Royal* for a pre-Christmas 1972 cruise to the Mediterranean and performed in Barcelona at various functions. *Bulwark* and *Fearless* borrowed us for visits to Toulon and Corsica and then after leave in the U.K. it was off with *Intrepid* for West Indies and Southern States of America visits. After the snow of Canada, the sunny shores of Bermuda and Florida were very welcome. Whilst at Mayport, we left *Intrepid* to rejoin *Bulwark* at Charleston and branched out from there to Camp Lejeune in North Carolina where we played alongside the Royal Marine Commandos. In an exercise on the Isle of Vieques we accompanied the Commandos again. This was a particularly enjoyable period, as our duties found the Band playing mainly on the beaches. It was then back to *Intrepid* and Bridgetown, Barbados for the British Week celebrations attended by H.R.H. Princess Margaret. The official and social programmes were busy to say the least! It is of delight to us to mention that one of our concerts was attended by an estimated 8,000 people, and we forgot to make an entry charge.

After this sunny and pleasant visit, it was back to *Ark Royal* prior to her deployment to the Caribbean and Florida. We have done well for sun. Mayport was revisited, new territory in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands discovered. St. Thomas provided quite a test as we were asked to Beat Retreat in the local car park whilst it was still full of cars. (Fortunately, there were no crashes.) The *Ark* also visited Fort Lauderdale during this cruise and here again the programme was busy.

Just to complete the travelling stories, we left the ship at Lauderdale and flew inland to Fort Riley, Kansas, to work with 59 Independent Commando Squadron, Royal Engineers, who were carrying out a two month exchange training period with their American counterparts.

ROYAL MARINE BAND

Now, we find *Ark Royal* heading back to Devonport for leave and the Refit. The Band will remain with the ship during this period, but we can expect to find ourselves off on jaunts around the world

with the Carrier and Amphibious Squadron and then sail with the ship next year. Some members are leaving and new faces joining and it is to these, we who remain, say "farewell" and "welcome".



Port Everglades, June 1971



Band Concert in the Gothic Quarters of Barcelona, November 1972



Oslo, October 1972

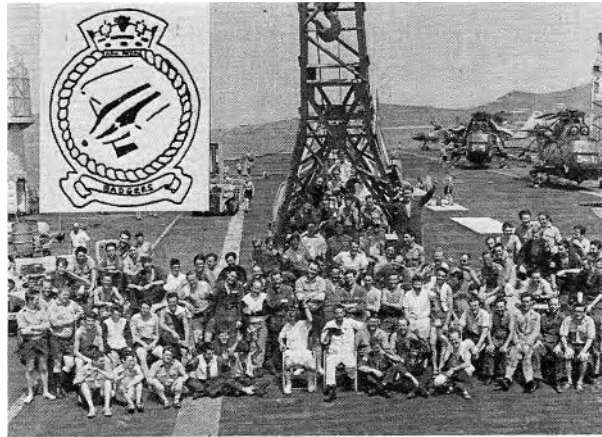


Topeka, Kansas, June 1973



"Rent a Band"—Garden Fete whilst on passage Mayport to U.K., July 1973

FLIGHT DECK ENGINEERS



BADGERS—ST. THOMAS, 1973
(Or The Flight Deck Engineering Department half
an hour before the last boat went unserviceable
inshore)

Unlike other Departments, "Badgers" are very unassuming people and do not often boast of their achievements. However, on this special occasion they thought a few hard facts about the Commission's triumphs may be appropriate:

1. There were a total of nearly 9,400 fixed wing recoveries on the arrestor wires and a total of 12 attempted rotary wing recoveries. This was equivalent to recovering, by weight, one *Ark Royal* per wire.
2. An *Ark Royal* catapult has the power to launch a Pusser's "Red Devil", giving it enough acceleration to propel it to the Moon and back. In fact they didn't, but by weight they did launch the equivalent of 2 *Ark Royals* from the Waist Catapult and 1 *Ark Royals* from the Bow.
3. 42,000 tons of fuel were pumped into the fixed wing aircraft and 54,000 tons into the rotary wing. This would, if more sensibly used, take a Saturn Rocket to the Moon and back 40 times, or a London taxi to the Moon and back 1,342 times.
4. There were over 60,000 fuelling operations which would have kept the average garage in business for about 2 years.
5. The Liquid Oxygen Plant produced 320,000 litres which is enough to keep the average man alive for 357 years.

6. General Service Hydraulics were provided for a total of 7,765 hours which if used continually would have lifted No. 2 Weapons Lift for 2,360 miles and its electrical officer with it.
7. The High Pressure air compressors have produced 37,500,000 cubic feet or 1,275 tons of air which is enough to fill a balloon 416 feet in diameter. It would also provide enough air for combustion to get that London taxi mentioned in 3 above to travel 24,500 miles.

We ask, "How can so few, provide so much for so many?"

The Green Badgers hitherto unmentioned consist of a staff of 14 without which none of the achievements above would have been possible. They are there to keep everyone happy by maintaining 142 different light fittings fixed to the island and set into the Flight Deck, 2 Aircraft lifts, 52 aircraft servicing outlets and associated motor generators, 2 ship's cranes, 15 winches, 2 deck landing sights, and all the electrics connected with both catapults, both jet blast deflectors, the arrestor gear, aviation fuel systems, liquid oxygen and pure air plants. They have also been so busy doing all this that they have had no time to take statistics regarding London taxis to the Moon, etc., etc. However, as a footnote, the present Flight Deck Engineering Officer has bummed more "Fags" than W. D. & H. O. Wills produce in 1 year.

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RUGBY

On return from the Atlantic deployment where the rugby team was televised in New York while playing on a frozen Central Park pitch, the administrator and organiser Lieutenant McKerrow left the ship. Since there was no obvious replacement, it was decided for many reasons, to form an *Ark Royal* rugby club with an elected committee under a Chairman.

With great interest centred around the newly formed Navy Cup competition involving for the first time both ships and shore establishments in a knock-out situation, there was plenty to look forward to in the 72/73 season. Surprised at beating Manadon 12-9 in the first round, the team went on to beat C.T.C. Lympstone 7-7; H.M.S. *Bulwark* 27-4 and H.M.S. *Fisgard* 1 *Raleigh* to reach the semi-final of the Navy Cup itself. To find ourselves Plymouth Command champions was an incredible feat especially with difficulties of travelling long distances to play our matches and finding very little opportunity for match practice being at sea for long periods. When we beat H.M.S. *Daedalus* 11-6 in the semi-final amidst heavy rain and wind at the Rectory ground, the final against H.M.S. *Neptune* seemed just a formality. The game however, proved to be very close, *Ark Royal* winning by 12-10.

During this period our main strength had been our pack which included A.B. Davies, P.O. Dagnall and N.A. Gilholm in the front row, M.E.M. Simpkins and M.E.M. Hollis in the second row and N.A. Daniels, Mech.I. Ives and A.B. Miller in the back row. A.B. Miller was later selected for the Navy and Combined Services to end a very successful season for himself. Other names which should be mentioned are Marshall, Hollihead, Sims, French and S. /Lt. Hattersley; these players substituted in the pack at some stage and were all worthy first team members. No mention so far has been made of the backs who never released their true potential although they remained a sound unit throughout. With L.S. Finnemore, Surg. Lieut. Martin-Jones, N.A. Hopkins, McCartney, Eddy, Maddocks, and Wilkinson forming the nucleus, Easter, Hoskins and Sheridan all won places during the early part of the season.

Once again the fleet cup remained in *Ark Royal's*

hands, after victories over H.M.S. *Kent* 54-6, H.M.S. *Blake* 88-0 and finally H.M.S. *Tiger* 28-15. For the final against H.M.S. *Tiger* the team was considerably altered due to injuries and drafting but remained just as effective as it had been in the earlier rounds with a near full side. We were fortunate to be able to call upon Stockdale, Stockwell, Surg. Lieut. Evans, M.E.A. Waters and Lieut.-Cdr. Philips. With such depth of talent available, the 2nd XV had they had more games, would have been an extremely successful unit.

It was promising to see so much young talent in a newly formed Colts XV under the direction of Lieut. Hodgson. This will undoubtedly provide an interest for the juniors onboard, and eventually produce 1st XV material; a good omen for the future.

One unfortunate aspect of the season which resulted from the heavy cup commitment and the ship's long periods at sea was the few opportunities for friendly games. However, the rugby club, being the only real social sports club onboard, managed to make two short tours; the first to South Wales where we played Cumgrath and won 9-6 and Glynneath to whom we lost 3-6, the second to East Anglia where we played Spalding R.V.F.C. Both these tours were organised by two of our own players, A.B. Davies and P.O. Sims respectively. Other games played were :

v. Oslo XV at Oslo won 35-13

v. Barcelona Football Club XV at Barcelona where we won 28-12. Surprisingly, of all the games played in Malta, we lost all three. A round robin tournament was completed in Miami, Florida, with the ship's XV running out winners against H.M.S. *Rothesay*, H.M.S. *Devonshire* and the local Miami side.

In writing about a rugby outfit it is always easy to forget the people behind the scenes; people such as Surg. Cdr.(D.) Hird for his refereeing and useful committee work, C.P.O. Daniels at team manager and C.P.O. Wilde our newly appointed successor to C. P.O. Daniels. To end, a word of praise for Captain Cassidi for his support both on and off the field. His presence at all the important games was much appreciated by the teams.

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ATHLETICS, CROSS-COUNTRY AND ROAD RUNNING

A runner is a bit better off on board the *Ark* than, say, soccer or rugby footballers, in that whenever they can use the flight deck, all they virtually have to do is to run and train in the same way as they would ashore, without having to practice any intricate manoeuvres or plans (apart from avoiding "waffoo" obstructions and cunningly laid booby traps).

Taking everything into account, the *Ark* has always provided formidable opposition on the running scene and has done remarkably well.

By the way, American hammer thrower Chuck Ittaway has abandoned experiments with his six turn technique, having screwed himself into the ground three times in the past fortnight.

So to our achievements then, some of the details of which are a bit skimpy, and I apologise for that.

At the beginning of 1970 our stalwarts were Wtr. Hall, P.O. Barker, Furse, Box, Copeland, Sparr and Thorpe and they kicked off the commission with an equal first time place for the ships' cup in the Plymouth Command Cross Country Championships held at Wembury. We were equal 4th in the overall championships, quite a good effort.

May, 1970, saw the intrepid athletic types at the Brickfields competing against each other in the *Ark's* inter-part Sports Day. There are no individual results to hand but apparently a fine day was enjoyed by all, especially the seamen who won the day with 112 points from the Air/A.E.D. with 86.

Which reminds me. The A.G.M. of the "Crystal Palace Regulars", a new association formed by the hard core of British athletics spectators, will be held in a telephone box near Regents Park on Saturday.

Our sports day was a warm up, as it were, for the Plymouth Command Champs. in June also held at the Brickfields. The *Ark* did very well on a windy day, coming 4th against all the shore establishments and other ships. (Please note, we thrashed the *Eagle*.)

Nothing else happened until October when the ship found its way to Malta and a cross-country race was held against the R.A.F. Our team excelled itself against the land lubbers by drawing the race 39 points all but unfortunately the R.A.F. was given the winner's perks on account of the "last man in" rule. Hall was 2nd, with Barker 3rd.

1970 ended with a Round the Rock 7 mile road race at Gibraltar against the local boys. Again no

individual results but we beat them by 29 points to 13.

Talking of road races. The start of the Indian National Marathon championship was held up last week after reports that there was a man eating tiger out on the course. It turned out merely to be a man eating cucumber sandwiches.

1971 seems to be almost blank as far as running goes except that in December, the pilgrimage to the top of the Rock at Gibraltar got under way on the ship's arrival there, 21 miles of uphill slog, and 254 of the ship's company took part. Hall won in 21 mins. 54 secs., a good effort after very little training.

On arrival back in U.K. a team was sent to Yeovil for a cross-country meet. We would have done well but for the fact half the runners got lost on a badly marked course. Hall was second though.

Talking of putting the shot. Shot putter Hamish McScringe no longer trains on whale meat and biscuits. Instead he now uses the conventional concrete circles.

1972. Again nothing to report in the early months and by the time the ship sailed again after a dicky refit, we had a new set of runners, namely Lt. "Tonk" Parker, R.S. Phil Hampton, Jim Loveday, Jim Hawkins, Vinall and Clarke. So we started afresh and would have done well in a road relay at Leuchars in Scotland but for Hampton, who took a wrong turning and so spoiled the team's chances of coming a good 3rd or 2nd. (He got in a good 10 miles training though in finding his way back.)

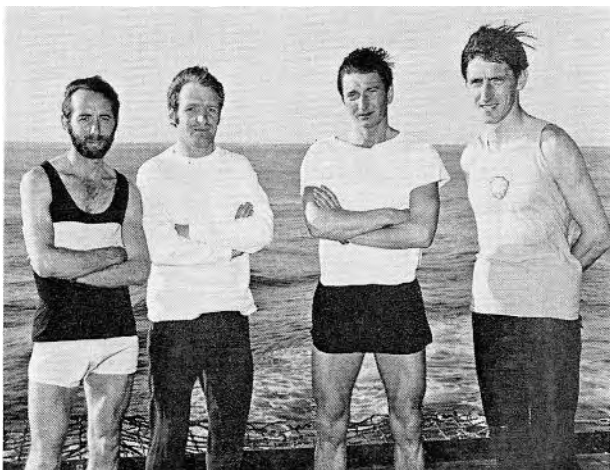
In December, yet again at Gib, and "Tonk" went all out for the "Up the Rock" record but failed by a minute. Result : Parker 19 mins. 53 secs., Hampton 20 : 51, Loveday 22 : 20, Hawkins 22 : 22. Team result was a waffoo victory with 892A first, 809Y second and third was A.E.D. Weary Willies. The *Ark* broke the team record though with a combined time of 133 mins. 9 secs.

1973. Gib again, and this time two races in the same day. "Up the Rock" in the morning and a 7 mile road race against the locals in the afternoon. "Tonk" again went well up the rock, winning in a time only 5 seconds outside the record. He was naturally very disappointed Hampton was again 2nd, a minute behind. The 7 miler in the afternoon was a fast one and the *Ark* did well coming in 2nd team

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after running up the rock in the morning Hampton, more at home in a longer race was a close 2nd with "Tonk" 3rd.

February, in Malta, saw "Tonk" thrashing the locals in a 2 mile race against a gale force wind, Jim Loveday was 4th and Hawkins 9th.



The last race before going to press was also in our Malta visit and on a rainy, windy day, over a 4 mile road course, "Tonk" again led the way in, with Hampton 3rd and Jim Loveday 8th.

All round, some very satisfactory results indeed. Well, done.

In May 1973, our team was strengthened by the arrival of Joe Clare, a past winner of the London to Brighton 53 mile road race and twice winner of the Isle of Wight marathon. Both Hampton and Clare were members of the successful Royal Navy team in the Boston U.S.A. marathon in 1969, when the R.N. won the team event against over 1,200 competitors. Hampton was 9th and Joe 17th.

Hampton is also a past winner of the Isle of Wight marathon in 1969, when he also was the first Navy man to win the famous Windsor to Chiswick Polytechnic marathon. In 1971 he repeated his Poly marathon win and two weeks later broke the World Record for running 50 miles on the track, a record he still holds, with a time of 5 hrs. 1 min. 1 sec.

THE DUMBLETOWN ROUND THE HOUSES RACE

More than 200 athletes made the trip to the North of Scotland for the inaugural Dumblertown Harriers Round the Houses race last week, a tribute to the tenacity and enthusiasm of British distance men, though not to their geographical sense as the race was held in Dorset.

Saturday morning dawned clear and fine—a surprise, considering the previous evening had been warm, windy and Tuesday—but 112 athletes lined up for this experimental race, and heard the Mayor describe it as "equal in status to the Olympics", before he burst a paper bag to send them on their way.

After half a mile local boy Terry Bloggs was forcing the pace, and had a lead of some 25 yards as they headed into a cul-de-sac. When they re-emerged, the surprise leader was 93-year-old Eustace Dobbs who until that point had been lying a canny 112th, but the psychological strain of leading proved too much, however, and he had to be helped to a park bench. What a game runner Eustace is—anything he lacks in guts and ability he makes up for in sheer years.

With a tremendous effort, Bloggs managed to overtake the whole field and again build up a 25 yard lead approaching the railway station where passengers on the 15.47 London train had an excellent view of the runners cannoning into each other at the level crossing which closed its gates as they approached. The train having passed, the leading group of 111 sped down the High Street, where busy Christmas shoppers gave them a vociferous welcome. As they left the High Street, Bloggs was leading by ten yards from three dogs, eight women shoppers brandishing walking sticks, and a traffic warden. A number of runners were forced to drop out at this point, and were last seen hanging upside down from the Christmas decorations.

After a mile and a half a new challenge showed itself when the field crossed an ingeniously added hazard, a 200 yard dash across a wet concrete precinct. Buster Hedd and Paddy O'Thump, neither of whom were on the programme, appeared alongside the leader who responded to the fresh challenge magnificently with a brave spurt and pulled away from them both, glancing over his shoulder at the