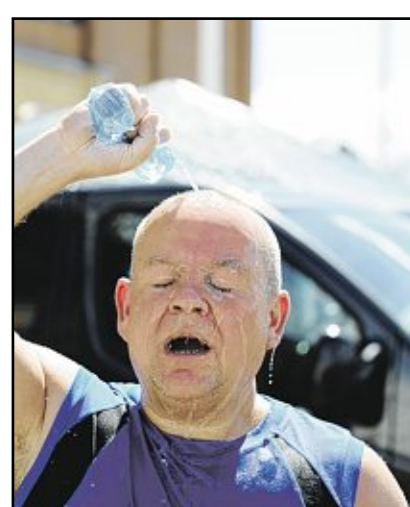




TOP PLACES: The first three runners in the Sunderland Echo 3K Junior race, left to right; Paul Longden (third), winner Luke Clark and second-placed Liam Emmett. Below, runners coming over Wearmouth Bridge.



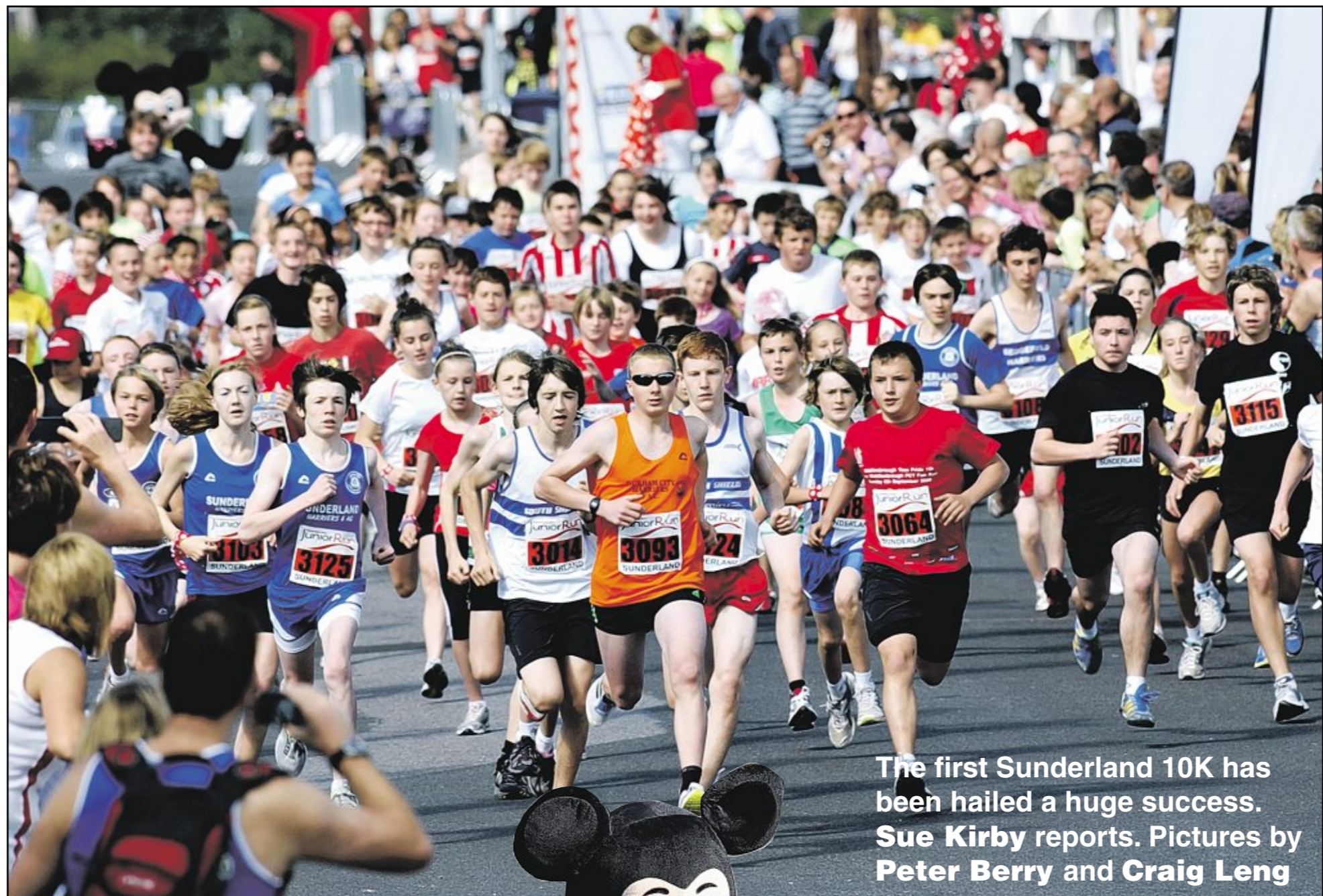
COOLING OFF: Runner Phil Lightburn.



ON TWO WHEELS: The motorcycle parade which took place as part of the 10K run.



SLOW GOING: Fancy dress runners feel the heat during the run.



The first Sunderland 10K has been hailed a huge success. Sue Kirby reports. Pictures by Peter Berry and Craig Leng

SUN RUN!

TOP athletes and fun runners came together to take part in the first Sunderland City 10k run. After five months in the planning the event, which took place in blazing sunshine, was hailed as a huge success – and plans are to build on that, possibly adding a marathon to the mix in future years. First to cross the finish line in the 10k was runner Ian Hudspith with a time of 31mins and 15 secs and the winner of the Sunderland Echo Junior Run was Luke Clark from South Shields Harriers. Hundreds of people went along to the Stadium of Light on Sunday morning to cheer on the runners and there was entertainment for the children as well as a motorcycle cavalcade around the ground in honour of Armed Forces Day at the weekend. Also raising the profile of armed services was Sunderland soldier Sgt Shaun McGlynn, 31, who recently returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan and took part in the race wearing his military kit and 37lb back pack. A member of the parachute regiment, he said: "I just thought I would come along and take part in the race, which is great for Sunderland. I had a lot of support and good

wishes while I was running." Sunderland's Tom Cuthbertson, whose son Private Nathan Cuthbertson was killed in action aged just 19, was one of a group of 10 people who took part in the race to raise money for the Brothers in Arms charity. Tom said: "I enjoyed the race, but it was far too hot. I think something like this is brilliant for the city." Also taking part in the Sunderland City 10k was Pc David Rathband, who was shot and blinded by Raoul Moat. Pc Rathband said he thoroughly enjoyed the run. He said: "I started the job on Wearside, in Southwick and Castletown before working at Gilbridge. "It was nice to be able to visualise where I was. I could see in my mind's eye where I was when I was in

Fawcett Street and the Mowbray Park. The people cheering me on from the side of the road were so friendly, it was lovely." Pc Rathband was running the race as part of a series of runs that will culminate in the New York marathon, and aimed at highlighting his Blue Lamp Foundation. "That was by far the most enjoyable run I've done so far," he said. A lot of people took part in the run to raise cash for charity, including Michelle Braithwaite, 38, from Herrington, who was one of a team from Gentoo hoping to raise £1,000 for Heroes and Grace House. Also raising money were nine people from Washington software company, Data Wright, who were hoping to boost funds for international children's charity, Coco. Hannah Miles, 27, who lives in

Washington, said: "The company already had links with the charity, so we just thought it would be good to get a team to take part in the race." Other runners just took part in the event to give themselves a challenge, including policewoman Leigh Gill, 37, who took part with her twin sister, nurse Kelly Robinson, who lives in Sunderland. Leigh, who now lives in Darlington, said: "Last year I had some heart problems, so I wanted to prove to myself I could still do it. It was great run." Phil Lightburn, 44, from Chester-le-Street, is a sports coach in schools, so decided to take part in the run to set a good example to the children. He said: "I decided at Christmas I have to really start getting into shape, so this was part of that." Steve Cram, Olympic legend and founder of the Sunderland City 10k, said he would like to thank everyone involved, including the events team, medical staff and sponsors, Sunderland City Council and travel company, redspottedhanky.com, for making the day such a success. ● See tomorrow's Echo for more pictures of the race

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TAKING PART: Soldier Shaun Aray (right), with Tom Cuthbertson and, below, PC David Rathband; right, Nicola Lamb with granddaughter Emily Lamb.



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