

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

YOUR IAAF SELECTIONS

The British Athletics team for the 2017 IAAF World Championships in London has been announced:

<http://www.britishathletics.org.uk/news-and-features/british-athletics-name-london-2017-team/>



Race walkers to represent Team GB

Men

20km Race Walk:

Tom Bosworth (Andi Drake)
Callum Wilkinson (Andi Drake)

50km Race Walk:

Dominic King (George Nibre)

Women

20km Race Walk:

Gemma Bridge (Mark Wall)
Bethan Davies (Andi Drake)

13 August 2017
The Mall

All readers wish them the very best on their soon-to-come big day. Please all come to support them in person! There is no charge for spectator seats in the Mall. Start times are: 50K at 7.45 am, Women's 20K at 12.20 pm and Men's 20K at 2.20 pm.

MIXING IT UP

Race walking already has some races which teams can compete in with members of both genders. Olympic chiefs have approved a mixed 4 X 400 metres' relay in the 2020 Tokyo Games. IOC head Thomas Bach said these Games will be "more youthful, more urban and include more women". IAAF Chief Seb Coe said, "We'll work with the IOC on how best to include more women". Tokyo sees new events, including mixed swimming and 3-on-3 basketball with skateboarding included as a 'proposal sport'. Meanwhile organisers of the World's greatest marathon have said it's too white and middle-class and needs to evolve to reflect the ethnic and social diversity of London. Organiser Hugh Brasher said he'd been inspired by his late father Chris's vision of "the marathon as a melting pot". Hugh added, "When the London Marathon started, it was for stick thin, skinny white men". Back then in 1981 female finishers were just 5% - it's risen a lot since. Said Mr Brasher, "Our aim is to inspire hard-to-reach groups to get involved and to create new running communities so that the demographics (currently 16% black) mirror the demographic of London (37% BME). It's an ambitious goal but we believe we can achieve this within 5-to-10 years".

FROM OUR TV CRITIC

Our TV critic reports that he's seen another advert with Race Walking on Channel 5. It's called 'Jacamo Fits' and features a Race Walker with a good style pouring water over his head. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hznnHjRt0ro>

Adds Hon Ed: I also saw it and didn't know what "Jacamo" was until this commercial break. "Yesterday" television channel produced a 1-hour documentary, "Games on the Battlefield", which showed sports and leisure (including **race walking**) that was provided for World War 1 troops (those not actually at the front line). It screened archive footage from this conflict and those years immediately afterwards.

MOULTON 2017

Again this event showed what is best about British race walking, as an increased field enjoyed traditional Saturday afternoon racing on a public highway. It was good to see Moulton resident, Centurion 899 Ian Garmston, as our guest "Mr Starter". It was a wonderful and enjoyable occasion - as always. Local favourite Callum Wilkinson won by over 10 minutes! Two Essex stars of past decades, Frinton-on-Sea based duo Brian Armstrong and George Nibre completed the 5 miles - and very well indeed! Two other



Essex stars, Olympian Roger Mills and twice former Moulton winner Pete Ryan, conducted the prize-giving ceremony, which saw awards for all finishers. A pair of names for the future, Emma Lewis and Anya Nibre, won the Under 11's 1k. We'll not write further as it'll steal "Enfield Walker's" thunder. Moulton regular Olly Flynn, unable to make this year's event due to a prior commitment, stated, "It's a wonderful meeting and an enjoyable occasion. It's really family orientated and is a template for how our events should be staged".
Hear! Hear!

SIR BOB

Now 71 year old Sir Bob Russell, great supporter of The Centurions and host of their Centenary Dinner (and former guest speaker at the Metropolitan Police Dinner when they booked "outside" guest speakers), was sunk without trace in a bid to regain his Colchester Parliamentary seat in June's General Election. Sir Bob was a distant 3rd in a seat he'd won by a proverbial mile in 1997, 2001, 2005 and 2010. It could be "curtains" for his political career, but you never know? He retains one position in public life - as High Sheriff of Colchester. He was a great supporter of those memorable 100 miles' events staged at Lower Castle Park (near his home). One saw him stay up all night encouraging, and another saw him start and finish it - well he walked the first lap, and then near the end of the 24 hours' permitted period, returned to walk the final circuit with back markers. He was also once our "Mr Starter". A genial man whom we wish well.

WALKER ON THE MOVE

We wish octogenarian well Ron Powell on his move from North London to Norfolk, to be nearer family members. Ron's a true Enfield & Harringey AC stalwart who also walked for many years as an Ilford AC 2nd claimer in the old Essex League. May many happy days be had in Norfolk.

WARM DOWN

Heard in Moulton's Village Hall changing room, by a back marker, "I don't do warm downs as my warm down is in the closing stages of the race".

OLYMPIC LEGACY

Former Transport for London boss Sir Peter Hendy is to be the new Chairman of the body in charge of our capital's Olympic legacy. He is to head the London Legacy Development Corporation. Mayor Sadiq Khan stated that he has, "Unrivalled knowledge and experience". His new role includes overseeing the finances of the former Olympic Stadium, now the London Stadium. Most hearing those words "Olympic legacy" respond with "What legacy?"

BMAF AGM

Re-elected as your Honorary Race Walking Secretary was still very much active 1980 Olympian Ian Richards (Steyning AC). Additionally he's now Vice Chairman with specific responsibilities for Policy and International Affairs. Please continue to give Ian your full support.

BACK IN BUSINESS

Steve Uttley has made a low key return to competition following a period of ill health. He guested in the SCVAC Western Division 2,000 metres walk at Abingdon, finishing 2nd in a time of 11-21.5, 5 seconds behind winner Graham Chapman.

CHANGE AT THE TOP

The RWA's Chairman of Coaching & Development (Midlander Steve Arnold) has resigned, as his new day-job now takes up much more of his time. We all thank him for his efforts. Steve has been a key player for a long time on our race walking scene, with many fine performances to his credit, as well as his administrative duties. We wish him well in his new employment.

AT THE TOP

Olympic rower Dame Katherine Grainger has been named as the new Chair of UK Sport, succeeding Rod Carr. Jennie Price, Chief Executive of Sport England since 2007, has received a CBE for services to sport.

GUESS THE YEAR

Our previous edition showed a picture of 1968 Olympian and former 1973 National Champion John Webb (Basildon AAC) from his heyday times and wondered if any readers knew which year it had been taken? Nobody could be sure - including the now Bristol-based man himself!

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY?

As readers ponder over those awards for the only team to finish 3-men in our RWA National 10K Championship, perhaps those higher-up should be asking themselves how far this sport has declined when **only 1 team** in the entire country can get 3 to the finish line for such a short distance event? Ideas have been advanced in past years - even at RWA AGM's - about trying to encourage more to enter by adopting 'B' laws. But with AGM attendances greater than those in some races, such proposals firmly hit the buffers.

ANN LEWIS RIP

Readers will be saddened to hear that popular Ann departed on 18 June at Frimley Park Hospital after a long illness - an illness which failed to dent her cheerful nature! The good lady's first sporting interest was swimming before joining Aldershot, Farnham & District as a runner in 1987. Four years' later Ann had her first race when, after some coaching, she turned out in a popular evening 2,000 Metres Veterans' League event. How many have come into walking via that route? Ann won and there's another question - how many reading this can claim to have won their first walking race? Many medals, plaques and certificates came her way - especially in veterans/masters' categories, with many being gold in colour. A race walked sub-5 hours London Marathon was also in her list of accomplishments. Sadly illness was suffered, but still in times of improvement a number of races were entered and successfully completed - and even when unable to compete, Ann liked to get along and offer us all encouragement. Not one with any Essex connections, as far as we know, but one admired by all readers of Essex Walker and a lady who'll be much missed. To husband Lew, daughter Jennie, son Roger and all other family members we offer our profound condolences.

FIXTURES

These event details are published for your information, and to the best of knowledge are accurate at the time of writing – you are advised, however, to check the status of any event directly with the organisers.

AUG	2	EMAC Central Division 2,000 Metres	Stevenage	7.00 pm
	5	100 Miles + Supporting Races	Bury St Edmunds	12 noon
	9	IAAF Friendship Walks + Enfield League 1, 3 & 5 Miles	Donkey Lane	12 noon
	13	IAAF World Championships – 50K, 20K Men & Women	The Mall	from 7.45 am
	16	England Athletics 3,000 Metres Championship (mixed)	Manchester Arena	TBA
	19	SEAA Track Championships	Crystal Palace	TBA
	22	Veterans AC Road 5 Miles + Presentation (all welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	27	SCVAC/VAC 3,000m Championships 'A'	Kingsmeadow	TBA
	28	England Athletics Championships	Bedford	TBA
	28	Southend-on-Sea AC 1 Mile Track + Geo Woods Trophy	Garon Park	10.30 am
SEP	3	RWA National 50K Championship	IOM Bowl	8.00 am
	3	Guernsey Church-to-Church 19.4 miles	St Peter Port	9.00 am
	3	SCVAC T&F League Grand Final 2,000 Metres	Ashford Track	TBA
	5	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m + YAG + Presentation	Ashtons Track	8.30 pm
	9	Jeff Ford Memorial Walks	Sheffield	TBA
	10	Surrey and Sussex Track Championships	Carshalton	TBA
	10	Eastern Masters T&F League Final	Bedford	TBA
	16	English Schools Championship	Boston	TBA
	17	Jim Sharlott/BMAF 10K Championship + YAG	Abbey Park	11.00 am
	23	Enfield League 1 hour/Essex County 10,000m Champ	Lee Valley	1.00 pm
OCT	1	RWA Festival of Walking	Hillingdon Cycle Track	10.00 am
	6	Athletes' Reunited Luncheon	"The Cow" Stratford	12 noon
	14	Enfield League 5 Miles	Lee Valley	1.00 pm
NOV	1	Enfield Open/Enfield League/LBH 7 Miles	Lee Valley	1.00 pm

ESSEX COUNTY AA 10,000 METRES CHAMPIONSHIP

With dismal turnouts of 2 and 1 respectively in 2015 and 16, sadly 2017 won't see this event as part of an Essex County Championship meeting. It's what happens when so many readers stay away. Call it a proverbial "gambler's last throw" if you want, but we've an initiative to at least try and keep this Championship going in some form. Your Honorary County Walking Secretary Ray Pearce has struck a deal with Enfield Walking League Supremo Ron Wallwork to stage it with their League One Hour Walk at Lee Valley Track on Saturday 23 September at 1.00 pm. Different format you cry! Yes - but we'll get around as there's to be a 10,000 Metres timing point. But in the last 2 years, only walker has even reached 10,000 metres, and a 1 hour walk requires all to halt when 60 minutes has elapsed - for distance measuring purposes. True - so all still on their feet who've entered our Essex 10,000 Metres Championship will be given classified finish status at the hour. But Essex Championships are 'A' races and Enfield League ones are staged under 'B' rules you cry. This will see 'B' laws enforced. We really need Essex-qualified readers who've stayed away from your County Championship Walks to re-appear, as if we get a good turnout we might have a case for restoration to our official Essex County AA Championship programme. Over to you.

RWA SOUTHERN AREA 20K CHAMPIONSHIP

Here's a result of the above mentioned race (Essex County Championship in conjunction).

Men (No teams closed-in (even at 2-a-side))

1. Tom Bosworth	Ton	1:24.58
2. Callum Wilkinson	E&H	1:24.59
3. Dominic King	CH	1:26.33
4. Francisco Reis	TVH	1:44.33

Women (No teams closed in)

1. Gemma Bridge	Oxford	1:32.33
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Disqualified: Messrs Sean Pender/John Ralph/Jonathan Hobbs/Daniel King/Guy Thomas

So folks, medals were there to be claimed. Where were you all? Readers - how about next year?

"I DON'T BELIEVE IT"

The TV character who uttered such words has been killed-off, but his catchphrase could well apply to our 2017 RWA National 10K Championship. This was promoted as incorporating a **3-to-score** team race, as is usually the case nowadays (more established readers can recall 4-to-score teams). The issued handbill made no mention of time limits, as there aren't any at a 10K distance. **Only 1 team closed-in 3 walkers in the Men's 10K Championship** - Birchfield Harriers. When called-up for their awards they were presented with 3 **bronze** team medals! Two teams who'd closed-in 2 walkers were placed ahead of Birchfield's **trio**. How can a Club be the only one closing-in 3 walkers in a 3-to-score event and still not win? - answers on a postcard. Is 2 really "a team". It used to be the case that any Club closing-in its full complement of 3 took precedence over any 2-person teams, even if numerically smaller teams had more points. Many have now been caught out, as few seemed to know that Rules of Competition had changed, if indeed they have? Is this another alteration from the proverbial "smoke-filled room", which hasn't been communicated down to our rank-and-file?

ALAN BRENT RIP

Leading Kent official Alan has sadly taken his leave of us at the grand old age of 98. Better known as a Starter and also a cross county official over decades, for 71 years he was a member of Clubs devoted to race walking. Those being Blackheath Harriers and, since 2003, the merged Club of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC. Race walkers were among many mourners at his funeral service in Beckenham Crematorium. Condolence is expressed to his family.

ON THE BOX

BBC2 screened the Championship Meeting at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium over the first weekend of July. It made dire television as big names went missing and a continual sight, on both days, of so many empty seats conveyed a lack of atmosphere into viewers' living rooms. Riches galore were up for grabs by event winners and Championship record breakers. The whole meeting was so poor that, apart from race walking, no other events saw Championship record performances! So one would think race walking coverage should have been longer and with interviews. Hmmm! In both Men's and Women's 5,000 metres races we were shown only the winners' final few strides. In fact Tom Bosworth had more screen time allocated to his victory celebration than to his walking in the race. During this, commentator Steve Cram said, "There's the shy, retiring Tom Bosworth". Second man home, named as Dickinson (but really Callum Wilkinson), managed to get a quarter of a second in the corner of the screen. When BBC put up their on-screen race result it was shown for so few seconds that even a speed reader couldn't have got more than half of it. However, even if not given proper credit by the silvery tongued maestro of the small screen, both Tom and Bethan deserved more mentions for their Championship breaking performances.

DOUBLE-FIGURES

For a first time in over a year-and-a-half, **double-figures** were seen on a WTW (Woodford Tuesday Walk) start line at Ashtons Track for their June meeting. Sadly double-figures couldn't be recorded-in as one (a then convincing race leader) suffered stitch and wheeled off the track. The 2017 Series final race is at Ashtons Track (8.30 pm) on Tuesday 5 September (+ Presentation). Let's **all** try to get there for a truly great conclusion.

"AYE AYE, THAT'S YOUR LOT"

... so uttered the late comedian Jimmy Wheeler at the end of his every act. His catchphrase can be now be used when addressing our slower 10K walkers, for it's proposed that from 2018 onwards, our RWA National 10K Championship will have a 70 minutes' cut off time, after which any still competing won't be recorded/timed-in. It's a reaction from the "powers-that-be" to this year's 10K Championship which saw medals going to some clocking over 80 minutes. Fields, small as they are, are likely to get smaller!

WOODFORD TUESDAY WALK SERIES: 3,000m Walk – Category A - Tuesday 4 July 2017

1. Melanie Peddle (L)	Loughton AC	17:17.5
2. Stuart Bennett	Ilford AC	17:26.1
3. John Borgars	Loughton AC	19:42.7
4. Seán Pender	Enfield & Haringey AC	21:25.4
5. Peter Cassidy	Loughton AC	21:49.9
6. David Ainsworth	Ilford AC	23:40.4
7. Alex Macheath (U15B)	Cambridge Harriers	DNF

Teams:

Loughton AC	84
Ilford AC	54
Enfield & Haringey AC	27

Judges

Michael Croft (Chief)
Pauline Wilson

Leading positions after three races:

1 Melanie Peddle	88
2 Seán Pender	78
3 Peter Cassidy	74
4 David Ainsworth	71
5 Steve Allen	57
6 Stuart Bennett	56

Leading teams after three races:

1 Loughton	217
2 Ilford	127
3 Enfield	80
4 Barnet	57

The whole of the Woodford Green Open Graded Meeting was very thinly attended, so that the walk field was not too desperately low; there were periods of inactivity as the starter waited for the next event to become due under the timetable. Among the teams, the same seems to be true – barring miracles – of Loughton. Alex Macheath, who had won the first in the series, had to pull up with a knee problem, leaving Melanie Peddle and Stuart Bennett to fight it out: Melanie had the better of the tussle to record her second outright victory of the series and cannot now be caught.

There is no August race this year; the fourth and last in the series will be on Tuesday 5 September at 8:30 pm at Ashton Playing Fields, Woodford Green, with presentations at the end; would those walkers holding trophies please ensure that they are returned. **For enquiries, contact Pauline Wilson on 01277 220687 or Pauline.Wilson@btinternet.com.**

INTER-COUNTIES' SELECTION

Congratulations and our thanks for those walkers who stepped forward to represent our county - **Essex** - in July's Inter-Counties' Representative Match at Kingsmeadow, two of whom (Seb and Melanie) were rewarded with **PBs!** In the Men's 3,000m Ilford's Seb Parris was 3rd in a quality field clocking 16:01.8, with Southend's Keith Palmer 7th in 19:45.9. Sadly Southend colleague Simon le Mare suffered d/q when just strides from finishing. Others with Essex Club membership, and wearing vests of other Counties were Ilford's Mark Culshaw (Middx) 5th, Loughton's John Borgars (Herts) 6th and Loughton 2nd Claimer Sean Pender (Middx) 9th recording respectively 16:34.6, 19:31.3 and 21:30.6.

Essex won the overall men's team contest. In the ladies' event, Loughton's Melanie Peddle was 4th in 17:13.6, competing in another field of high standard. Alas, no other Essex ladies were available so many points were forfeited (3 permitted in each walk). As for our ladies team result, at time of going to press, nobody can be found who'll "go on the record" as to where Essex came.

WORLD BEST IN STRATFORD

The "Anniversary Games" included a Mile Walk, which reminded our more established readers of times, in the '70s/early 80s, when mile (or 1,500 metres) walks were always part of major sponsored meetings. This time we were back in, and our entire race was shown + preview & post-race interviews. Winner Tom Bosworth shaved 6 seconds off a world best time, clocking 5:31.08. Perhaps BBC hadn't consulted history books as we were told race walking had never been a big thing in this country until Tom came along. Hmmm! There was a time that Great Britain had won more Olympic gold medals at walking than in any other athletics' event. The spectacle

looked better in real time, and it wasn't until the very end that viewers were shown slow-motion transmission. All credit to the BBC as they didn't make anything of that, continuing to focus on a World best time and favourable aspects of the race. BBC presenters also expressed a wish that those organising

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/athletics/40549175>



such meetings would again feature race walking in their programmes - *we'll see won't we?* All credit to BBC for not mentioning post-race activity which saw 4 walkers disqualified after finishing, including those who'd crossed the line in 2nd and 3rd places, only to see one of the other two then reinstated. Our Olympic Stadium holds 60,000 and takes some filling - hence those empty spaces were so obvious to television viewers and those present. Crystal Palace with a 17,000 capacity was always full on such occasions, so easily generated exciting atmospheres. Result: <https://www.iaaf.org/results/diamond-league-meetings/2017/muller-anniversary-games-6038/men/one-mile-race-walk/final/result#resultheader>

SOCIAL REPORT

July saw the 3rd of a series of Race Walking Association organised tribute luncheons at London's Tower Hotel, this time to honour those who'd represented their country in the IAAF World Championships since their commencement in 1981, to-date. Forgotten by many was a fact that the IAAF staged **one** World Championship athletics event in 1976, this being a 50 Kilometres' Walk at Malmo, open to those who'd been denied Olympic status as the Montreal Games - which were the only ones since this event had been introduced in 1932, to today - that it wasn't included. Our 1976 trio (Bob Dobson, Carl Lawton and Roy Thorpe) were duly mentioned. Those taking lunch in the Gallery Suite were formally welcomed by RWA Chairman Glyn Jones, and after the meal, speeches were given by leading light Callum Wilkinson, top official Steve Taylor and Olympian Tom Bosworth. A closing vote of thanks was given by former Metropolitan Police Walking Club Chairman Andy Bignold. Four of those five who'll compete for us on 13 August were present as guests.

The first such luncheon, a 2012 Olympic Tribute, saw a full house squeezed into the room, with a wait list. So popular it was that many called for another - this duly being organised with similar success to pay tribute to Commonwealth representatives in 2014. Good idea that, as it showed our passion and upset when those Glasgow 2014 Games organisers disgracefully ditched walking races! This was well received and again, so many then called for another Tribute luncheon, which was laid-on in answer to demand. No attempt was made to profit from attenders - The Tower Hotel charge £30 per person to use their Gallery Suite for functions, with a stipulation that a minimum 100 are paid for. The RWA charged this exact price as required, which most agree is highly reasonable for such a top Central London venue - right on the Thames by Tower Bridge. Alas many who'd actually called for this function didn't book, others said they'd come if given guest tickets and others said they wouldn't attend as they'd heard others were attending. Others booked then cried-off as the day approached, and around 83 attended. A big loss ensued, which can only come from your Association's funds. It didn't help as the Nihill Shield Representative Match at Tullamore was rescheduled for that same weekend, causing 10 firm bookings to be rescinded. This was our 3rd such tribute luncheon, so it can safely be assumed it'll be the last - as many who called for it, then didn't support it - for a variety of reasons, some of which have been stated. Pam Ficken did a great job seeing this task through, and it was unfortunate that co-organiser, Olympian Peter Marlow, was indisposed on the day. So many stated their enjoyment of an afternoon well spent and, as always, it was the reunion side of this day that was so very popular. But alas - no more!

BMAF 20K CHAMPIONSHIP/COVENTRY + ELSEWHERE

Francisco Reis (Thames Valley Harriers/Portugal) was the victor in 1:49.28, with former Welsh Champion Mark Williams (Birchfield H) also breaking 2 hours (1:58.48). 3rd overall (2nd M50) was Ilford's Mark Culshaw in 2:08.49 - what a busy time he's had, having been involved in athletics on the Saturday (IAAF Tribute Luncheon), Sunday (BMAF 20K), Monday (winning a SCVAC T&F League 2,000m in 11:03 at Hemel Hempstead, then also running in 200m **and** 800m), Tuesday (winning VAC's 5 Miles around Battersea's Park's Queen's Carriageway in 47:53, ahead of Stock Exchange's Steve Bishop, 48:27, and Loughton 2nd claimer John Hall, 51:16) and Wednesday at "testing" Hainault Forest when among over 300 runners at Ilford's 5 Miles. Back to Coventry where Loughton duo John Borgars and Sean Pender were respectively 4th in 2:17.49 and 13th in 2:30.09. It must be reported that these 2 worthies were also very active at various venues/functions. Another active participant, Ilford's Stuart Bennett, was 2nd at Hemel in 11:13 before his 800m and 4 X 200m relay performances. He also raced in that big Hainault Forest run - as did top man Seb Parris who excels at both running and race walking modes of progression.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

UK Athletics have announced that MIKE HARRIS has been appointed to the UK Members' Council as a Representative of Clubs affiliated in England. Mike, who's Team Manager of Trafford AC and his Club's Grand Prix organiser, said, "I will do my utmost to ensure Club Athletics remains at the heart of the sport. If

we have a healthy Club structure, then the stars of the future will continue to emerge, and I want to play my part in that".

DIAMOND CELEBRATION

Congratulations to Loughton AC 2nd claim member ERIC HORWILL and his wife Pam on celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary. Both are big players on the race walking scene and in our wider athletics community. They are esteemed Race Walking Association Life Members. Still active octogenarian Eric is a former RWA President and currently President of The Centurions. His interval between successful sub-24 hours 100 miles competitions (1966 Leicester-to-Skegness and 1997 Ware 24 Hours Track Race) is a record span which saw him gain a GB vest at the annual Roubaix 28 Hours Classic. Eric and Pam celebrated at a function in a Dudley Community Hall, at which friends from all around the Country attended - including many from race walking. Congratulations!

BAD BREAK

We're so sorry to hear that Suffolk-based Christine Orme (nee Coleman) suffered a bad fall at home requiring hospital admission for a broken leg. The good lady is now discharged and in need of at least 6 weeks' rest/recovery. We wish her well. Christine was a leading light in walking and is the daughter of double Olympian (1952/56) George (Highgate Harriers). We've seen Christine from time-to-time at Moulton and also at 100 Miles events staged at Newmarket's Rowley Mile Racecourse.



Dear Dave ...

DEREK ROBERY RIP

It is with deep regret that I have to inform you all of the death of my father Derek Robery. Derek was the backbone of a great Havering AC Walking Section in the 70-80s. He was well known to everyone in the Essex race walking fraternity and as a judge. Derek was unfortunately a victim of Alzheimers and dementia. My mum Shirley and sister Julie all miss him dearly.

Ian Robery, Shirley Robery and Julie Robery
(Havering AC Walkers 1977-1984)

Adds Hon Ed: Derek toiled hard for our sport, always striving to promote it and was an organiser of many events. What a great guy he was - always joyful and content with life. After stepping back from athletics he would still attend our events from time-to-time, often on surprise visits, when he was always made most welcome. Derek was generous, as a hand was often in his pocket for our benefit. For instance he once turned-up at Ilford's pre-Christmas walk around Chigwell Row with a load of prizes he'd bought. That year our prize table groaned under the weight of all Derek had piled on it. He'll be missed, but never forgotten. The world was a better place - with him in it! On behalf of all readers, profound condolence is expressed to all family members. DA

ESSEX CHAMPIONSHIPS

Following the Essex Walker request for us to consider whether the Essex Champs Race Walks should be category 'A' or 'B', I raised the issue in

the CATs committee meeting and we briefly discussed some of the issues. Following discussion the committee were split on their opinion. Personally, I would prefer Category 'B' to encourage participation.

Steve Cartwright

MEDALS DON'T SEEM TO BE AS LONG-LASTING NOWADAYS!

I was astonished to see that winners of much cherished Medals at the Rio Olympics and Paralympics in 2016 are returning their medals due to discolouration not even a year after they have received them. I'm pleased to report that my bronze Commonwealth medal from 1970 and many commemorative medals are as good as new, as are many other trophies of yesteryear. They don't seem to make them to be long lasting today as in the past.

Bill Sutherland

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Just been looking at the latest Essex Walker and saw the report and photo of the 100 mile walk in April/May 1977. I was there all night and the experience has always remained with me. I knew all the participants as I was a frequent spectator at walking events supporting my brother Steve Gower. I remember the fact that the mist came down and covered the track which meant that judging was a bit of a lottery and that George Nibre suffered particularly from this because of his very individual style. Also the wonderful dawn chorus in the early hours.

Wonderful memories of that night that have always stayed with me. Thanks for including this, and best wishes.

Jeanette Street

KING TWINS ON TOUR

Dom and Dan King raced in La Corunna Spain on 3 June 2017 at a permit meeting with a World Class field, won in sub-80 minutes' time. Dom walked a PB in 87.20 and Dan 89.10 walking technically sound and with added confidence, in preparation for a 20kms race in the Isle of Man in September. Dom's time will give him added confidence for his 50kms race in August on the Mall. Dom will prepare in Font Romeu France for altitude training, followed by Paris before the World Championships.

George Nibre

BACK ON THE SCENE

Me and Julie will definitely go for the mile race at Garon Park in dad's memory, so see you there. Tell the world the Roberys are back for one race only (or more, you never know).

Ian Robery

Adds Hon Ed: This race drew 23 entrants in 2016 and is at **10.30 am on August Bank Holiday Monday (28 August)**. In conjunction is the **George Woods Trophy** - donated by the talented O'Rawe family in honour of late Southend-on-Sea stalwart Centurion George Woods. It goes to the first Essex-resident Centurion (current holder: Olympian Dominic King). Enter-on-the-day. It's an opportunity to showcase race walking before a good sized crowd at a major athletics meeting. Free car parking at: Garon Park Centre, Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea. SS2 4FA. Ian and Julie were leading members of a Havering AC squad who were strong in numbers and won many awards.

SINCERE CONDOLENCES

We were so sorry to hear of the passing of dear Derek Robery. We well remember our regular visits to Havering for the race walks and the enthusiasm Derek and his family showed always was a great attraction. He was the 'heart and soul' of Havering Athletic Club and we and many other race walkers of that era will always remember that fondly. Kath and I send our sincere wishes to Shirley, Ian, Julie and family. We hope we may be able to meet sometime again soon to recall those great times.

Bill Sutherland

THANKS FROM A 5-TIMES' OLYMPIAN

Pam, Dave, Peter ... thanks and well done on putting the luncheon together. Excellent meeting old friends and listening to the new young guns.

Chris Maddocks

Adds Hon Ed: Pam Ficken and Peter Marlow received thanks from many attenders. Essex Walker received similar comments as those by Chris, from Andy Bignold and Les & Margaret Adler. Chris sent a photo of guest speaker Tom Bosworth giving his after-dinner speech.



ANN LEWIS RIP

Some of you will already be aware that Ann Lewis's very brave struggle has ended. I have picked up the news from the following reference. <http://www.afd.org.uk/anne-lewis/>. Many of us knew Ann and she will be greatly missed. I'm sure you will all wish to join me in sending condolences to Ann's family and friends.

John Hall

MARCHING IN ESPANA

Hola ...

Just thought I'd let you know that I competed as a guest in the Spanish Masters T&F Championships. They were held in Elche, Alicante province, about 45 mins/an hour's drive from where we now live, so too close to miss, though a 9 am start ... We competed in the champs as guests as you can only register for a Spanish competition licence in November of any year. Despite the early start it was already pretty warm out there, probably at least 30C. I decided to try to stick with either Maria José Briz Rodriguez or Aurora Alvarez Ordas, both of whom I'd raced against before in Euro/World Masters events, though they have now both moved up to W65, Aurora just 3 days before the champs. As it turned out MariaJo and I had a good battle, mainly with her half a step ahead and reacting with a little burst of speed every time she thought I might be trying to edge past. Finally I managed to make a move with 600m to go and then hung on for dear life, holding her off by about 5 seconds in the end, to win the W60 category in a not very impressive 31:41, but a pleasing race nonetheless as it's really the first time I've been in any sort of mix since Perth last October. After the first Spanish licensed W60 had received her championship medal I was called onto the podium to be presented with a guest medal, which was nice.

Pete wasn't able to do his "best" events as we had people staying so couldn't really be away for the 2 days, so he'd entered the M65 400m, just to say he'd taken part in the Champs, and ended up coming 3rd, so also got a Guest medal.



Usually out here I've been walking in running races so it was good to be in a proper walking event – even if I did get 2 knee cautions ... I'm still struggling to find a way into the Spanish walking scene, but have made another small step by doing this event. The whole championship was really well organised and administered, but the Veteranos are part of the national Federation, not a separate body reliant on volunteers to do all the groundwork, which helps in terms of status as well as financially.

Hope all is well. I'm enjoying keeping in touch with news from Blighty by means of various publications, social media sites, etc.

Cath Duhig

EMAILS PAUL WARBURTON (Aka "Scoop")

I am still grateful for Essex Walker; always a good read, unless it's adorned by pics of the editor still winning stuff; how do you do it, Ainsworth? Have to admit I'm down to maybe, three 8k a week; a cycle and a gym session. It's a way of keeping fit, but not sure competition is on the cards anytime soon.

I have no idea who the nearest walker is to St Ives, but I wouldn't mind betting I'm the only one in Cornwall, never mind the town. I left Trinity Mirror Southern, the west London employers, in February when it became clear the monthly commute wasn't going to work much longer than the 18 months already served. I asked for and received voluntary redundancy, but am still writing for the IAAF, European Athletics, and other bits of football freelance. I'm off to Podebrady for the European Cup as well as the World Champs in August.

I like the idea of 'early' retirement. Chance would be a fine thing even though on the same day Carl Lawton was 68, Don Thompson would have been 84 - I was 65, and at least getting the state pension that will be some years off for those who follow us, eh? Keep up the good work, and while here, I asked a Romfordonian in exile but who works with Véronique whether she know if the Kings Head in Romford was still open? It was where I saw Free (*All Right Now* etc) for 8/6d in 1970 the week after I saw Led Zeppelin at the Dagenham Roundhouse

7/6d (get off Upney, walk back). Are there other Essex walkers of a certain age who remember the gigs?
Paul Warburton

Adds Hon Ed: King's Head is now demolished, though we walked past it when memorable Romford Brewery sponsored Town Centre races were staged in the late 80s/early 90s - no entry fees + free beer and buffet for all! Paul quotes "*All Right Now*" - those watching BBC comedy "Hospital People" in June saw inept hospital radio DJ Ivan Brackenbury play that for some poor so-and-so in a hospital ward who'd just had his left leg and arm amputated! Paul, once a **Southend-on-Sea AC** 2nd claimer, was a top performer in his heyday with high placings in London Open 7s and other important races.

NEWS FROM RON WALLWORK

I can now confirm that the Enfield League race walking fixtures in September, October and November will be at Lee Valley Athletics Centre (start times 1 pm). Numbers participating in the hour meeting in recent years has only warranted 1 race, so I've only booked the track for an hour and a half. Therefore walkers wishing to guarantee a place in the race will need to enter in advance.

Re the TV coverage on July 2nd - accepting the points you make, on the positive side was the non-derogatory nature of Cramy's comments which is an advance on the way we are usually portrayed.

ATHLETICS WEEKLY COLLECTION

After collecting the AW since 1962, I am now disposing of 39 years of copies (Jan 1978 to Dec 2016 inclusive), all in good condition stored in boxes not filed. Rather than throw them on the dump I thought I ought to try and reach an enthusiast, as I have been, who would like them. I am holding back earlier years, which mark my graduation from Jnr to Snr level, at least for now.

I don't want to split the collection and have decided not to heed advice to either sell through EBay or advertise in AW although I had thought such action might raise a few quid for charity. Ideally they would be interesting to an Athletics fan or possibly a club but I recognise that with so much online these days I may end up just dumping them, shame though that would be. The collection would have to either be picked up from West Byfleet Surrey or I could possibly RV somewhere. Perhaps you know somebody or a club who might be interested. I still take the AW and will be off to the Inter Services Championships at Portsmouth on Wednesday and in the London stadium each evening of the World Championships in August.

Roger Clark rog.clark@btinternet.com

INTERNATIONAL RACE WALKING

I have pointed out clearly their mistakes and lack of knowledge of International Race Walking. What we are viewing today in no way represents TRUE RACE WALKING and you and I plus many others I link with agree with my personal views. The RWA has become weak on this issue and put their heads in the sand. Well I will certainly not be doing that and intend to take every opportunity to highlight their failings as well as those of the IAAF Walking Commission. In short our event has become a joke as has been highlighted recently on social media sites. Why not publicise THE TRUE FACTS in ESSEX WALKER (with pictures or real photos) because what we are seeing today is clearly setting the WRONG example for new would-be race walkers and will never give the viewers 'a better product' next time. The only positive way to address this is by the urgent introduction of technology not only as a deterrent to the many who are skipping along and not race walking legally, but for the first time in countless years the TRUE RACE WALKERS will be on the podium to receive the medals they justly deserve. **Bill Sutherland**

Adds Hon Ed: Bill sent 3 other emails about this since our last edition. His answer (see above) is an urgent need for technology. Essex Walker is but a **newsletter**, similar in size to one Bill himself once edited - with distinction - for the Met Police Walking Club over many years. Hence we really haven't got space for much more International news plus those many photographs needed to illustrate readers' points. But we try.

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

Has International race walking ever been in a worse place than now? Let's not belittle the excellent efforts of Dave Ainsworth in 2012 (Olympic co-commentator) as he is in no way responsible for the appalling behaviour of Russian athletes and officials. The commentary and insight into our sport that he brought to the attention of the Public was exemplary and commendable and he should remain proud of his efforts.

Sadly, race walking (and all other Olympic events) has moved far away from being a Sport and has steadily morphed into a Business. However, I still firmly believe the vast majority of Walkers, both here and abroad, behave in the best interests of the event and we must not demonise them for

taking full advantage of the vastly superior facilities and sponsorship opportunities on offer at the present time. At least the McLaren report is a giant step towards cleaning up the transgressors.

Peter Fawkes

Adds Hon Ed: Pre-race briefing instructed us to aim our commentary at all times to a general public and not to devoted athletics followers. We were ordered to say nothing negative, including attempting to explain reasons why some participants had been "off the scene" for 2 years at a time. Although we had details of "crosses" as they came in, we weren't permitted to make public references to them, only reporting after competitors had been red-carded.

EMAILS KEITH PHILLIPS

Greetings from afar, thanks very much for the latest news-letter. I was very interested to read the two comments from that esteemed champion of bipedal locomotion, Bob Dobson. In the headline article he laments the fact that Essex competitors failed to support an event in which the county could have been victorious and then writes in a letter on page 9 explaining the possible reasons why: a fine example of balanced commentary. I would like to wholeheartedly endorse his second comment, for it was over-enthusiastic judging that persuaded me not to compete in any walking events in Essex again. I am sure that many others of mature years may feel the same and deem it unrewarding to spend time, effort and money to attend A-grade events only to be adjudged cheats and summarily dismissed.

I would also like to raise the question of using technology in race-walking - should the sport have any future - to assess the legality of walkers in major sporting events. It is clear when a recording of an event is frozen that many of the participants are divorced from their shadows and far from keeping contact. At 200-240 paces/minute the human eye - especially those of myopic geriatric judges - is not capable of spotting the basic walking illegalities. Isn't it time we brought the sport into the present instead of lingering in the past? And on that subject I applaud the organisers of the walk/run competition.

Keith Phillips

ESSEX WALKER

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