

JUNE 2010 - ISSUE NO. 319

ESSEX WALKER



THREE LINE WHIP

One for your diary. The WINNING WAYS 500TH ESSEX LEAGUE RACE is to be staged on SATURDAY 3RD JULY (2.30 PM) at REDBRIDGE CYCLING CENTRE, Forest Road, HAINAULT, Essex IG6 3HP. The circuit is at the eastern end (Hainault Forest end) of a very long Forest Road.

It has been billed as a 5 Miles race. It's now reduced to 5 Kilometres, in keeping with the 300th and 400th Essex League races (both around the 3 miles/5 Kilometres mark) to encourage 'one-off' comebacks by former Essex League competitors. And some have already pledged to appear. Indeed we hope to have Basildon's Olympian JOHN WEBB (now Bristol-based) with us. John won Essex League Race No. 1 and was a most welcome visitor at our 400th meeting.

This venue has a large car park, and if full, there's plenty of quiet safe parking outside. Public transport is good. Nearest Underground station of Fairlop (Central Line) at the western end of Hainault Road. However this means a 1½ mile walk along Forest Road (no bus route). Better to alight at Hainault (Central Line), cross the road and get a 247 bus – a high frequency service every 10 minutes. It's served by modern buses announcing each next stop. Alight at the 'Forest Road' stop...cross the dual carriageway and walk into Forest Road (5 mins walk at maximum). The circuit is on your left hand side. Bus 247 can also be joined at Romford Station (Network Rail)...on leaving this station, turn right and the stop is 20 paces away. Again alight at 'Forest Road'. From Chadwell Heath and Grange Hill, bus 362 will get you to that stop – every 30 minutes.

Track hire is from 2 pm so allowing warm-up time, and is hired til 4 pm for warm-downs. A large function hall (holding up to 100 persons) is being hired (at a cost of £105) for our post-race reunion/buffet/social. An attractive package is offered as was the case of our successful 300th and 400th races (i.e. special 'T' shirts and mementos) Presently race fees are £4/£5 per race. The 500th race will be £10....but you'll get a 500th commemoration toto bag, 500th commemoration 'T' shirt, post race buffet and – of course – a race, which will be on a traffic free/safe and fairly easy course. This cycle circuit has excellent changing facilities with coin-return lockers for your security.

It's directly opposite Forest Road Crematorium, where so many readers assembled last June to bid farewell to Essex League regular Laurence Dordoy.

Opinions of celebrating this milestone and seeking views on whether it should be our final Essex League race (500 and out) have been sought for over a year. Only 5 ever responded with any view. At this late stage, if you've ideas on such issues, or about what should happen on the day or beyond, then please respond and we'll pass comments onto our Honorary County Walking Secretary Ray Pearce – or you can contact him directly. Despite this lack of interest a devoted few have decided that 500 Essex League races cannot pass without a celebration, and serious efforts have been made. 100 toto bags and 'T' shirts have been ordered – maybe a bit optimistic – but one has to aim high! We don't want a small turnout with loads of items and food left behind do we?

Our 300th race had 91 starters/90 finishers (1 retirement). That memorable 400th race (also John Hedgethorpe's Memorial race) saw 185 starters and finishers. At both our 300th/400th races, we were pleased to see many former names turning up to watch and support, even if not racing. It's a reunion as was those 300th/400th races. And as at those events we again ask attenders to bring along their favourite pictures and mementos of our previous 499 events....covering decades spanned between Races 1 & 500.

One thing for certain – there won't be a 600th, so let's all make this a day to remember. Over to you.....

ILFORD SWEEP THE BOARD

Ilford swept the board at the annual Pednor 5 Miles road walk on Bank Holiday Monday, held over a testing road loop through the Chiltern Hills, filling the first three places.

At the late afternoon (5 pm) start time it was slightly chilly, threatening rain though bright, but Ilford's Portuguese ex-international star scorched the roads with a blistering start in his debut appearance in this race. Former winner Steve Uttley tried to keep pace but fell back before the first mile and was overtaken by Peter Ryan another former winner. Meanwhile Reis moved further ahead extending his lead up the first and most severe of the two major climbs on this almost traffic-free village course. Uttley having recovered from his start caught and overtook Ryan on the hill but didn't manage to open a gap and Ryan overtook again at the top of the hill. By this time Reis had opened a 200m gap and was moving away, going on to clear victory in 42.04. Ryan and Uttley battled right to the end with Ryan getting the better of Uttley on the line. The official score sheet gave them times of 43.28 and 43.29 respectively, but the actual gap was just a few inches as Ryan held on to his slender lead all the way to the line.

As always this event saw some hardy athletes who had sped around Stevenage's track earlier that same afternoon!

NORTH OF THE BORDER

Intrepid ultra-distance walking international PETER RYAN recently covered 212 miles/340 Kilometres of the Southern Upland Way (crossing the width of Scotland) in 11 days...carrying a 42 lbs pack. A good build-up for his forthcoming Parish Walk! It was Britain's first official coast-to-coast long distance footpath and for hill walking enthusiasts it has 80 summits rising over 2,000 feet (610 metres)...so it's no billiard table! The route is from Port Patrick on the south west coast to Cockburnspath on the eastern seaboard. It offers a most dramatic and unspoiled long distance route. To follow Pete's footsteps you can get full details on the Path's official website: www.southernuplandway.gov.uk.

EMAILS OUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SECRETARY

The National 20km Championships at Victoria Park was another great occasion for the sport when more than 100 walkers gathered with various goals and various results!

At the top of the pecking order, the men's race was won by young Tom Bosworth in a shade over 90 minutes although most of the spectators present felt he would have gone sub 89 and achieved the qualifying time for the Commonwealth Games had it not been for the unhelpful strong winds.

Six men under 96.20 and nine club teams finishing was a welcome return to a high quality result sheet.

Jo Jackson continued her relentless drive towards world class with a classy and relaxed 99.14 victory in the women's race to ensure her selection for both the World Cup and Commonwealth Games later this year.

She followed this up with a magnificent third place at the IAAF Challenge in Sesto San Giovanni, the first Briton to ever reach the podium of an IAAF Challenge event.

The 20km championships were combined with the YAG Championships and is certainly the way to go forward in the future and it was interesting to note that there were two non English victors in the YAG races, one from the Isle of Man and one from Northern Ireland.

The event received outstanding support from both the UKA and England Athletics media departments with both organisations giving the pre and post event coverage top billing.

A sponsor also provided t shirts on the day which we welcomed by all who took part.

One of the most interesting stats from the championships was that there was more than 1 million metres walked on the day! (1,165,850m to be exact!)

June sees the turn of England to host the annual so called small nation's match which will be contested by England, Ireland, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland and Denmark.

The event, which has an EAA Permit will take place in Bedford on June 20th and includes a final Commonwealth Games trial and is of crucial importance for the development of the senior walkers for the future of the sport in England.

In an exciting addition, the junior 10km races will take place on the track as part of the UK Junior/U23 Championships.

The rescheduled National and International 50kms will take place in London on October 20th along with supporting events.

Finally, as part of the big build up to London 2012, the 2011 National Championships will be on the Olympic Course in the Mall which will certainly be one to tell the grandchildren about.

Only 11 months of training left.....

Peter Marlow

SUFFOLK 3,000 CHAMPIONSHIP – IPSWICH – 9TH MAY

1	David Buchanan (unat)	16.42
1	Angie Alstrachen (EHAC)	20.12 (champs record)
2	Serena Queenie (EHAC)	21.15
3	Jennie Greenward (New J)	23.30

NORFOLK (held in conjunction)

1	Cath Duhig (Ryston R)	18.14
2	Sue Smith (Ryston R)	22.27

HEAR HEAR

Among readers agreeing with Essex Walker's comments about unacceptable behaviour at our National 20K presentations was PAUL NIHILL, who stated that attenders should give proper acclaim to award winners, and not hold their own conversations in opposition to proceedings.

TOM ELLIS RIP

What has the death of former MP for Wrexham (1970-1983) at the age of 86 got to do with race walking? You may well ask? Well Tom, along with the late RON PICKERING were towers of strength in our Race Walking Association's Ken Matthews Campaign of 1977. Both leaned heavily on both the Prime Minister of the day, and the Minister of Sport at the time (Rt. Hon. Denis Howell) and allowed their names to be used in connection with our aims. Ken Matthews lived – and still does – in Wrexham, and that town's MP took a really close interest. For newer readers, in the Tokyo Olympics of 1964 Great Britain (we'll use that term and not this naff 'Team GB') won 4 athletics gold medals courtesy of 20K walker KEN MATTHEWS, 800 metres runner ANN PACKER and long jumping duo MARY RAND and LYNN 'the leap' DAVIES. Come the first Honours List after those Games the latter 3 were honoured with MBE's. Ken was ignored then, and was still in 1977. So a campaign was started – one tactic being to bombard No. 10 Downing Street and the Minister of Sport's office with protest letters. In fact over 2,000 were received through both letter boxes...a sign of interest in the issue and also a sign that UK walking was enjoying considerable strength at that time. Many Essex walkers joined in our campaign, which ended with Ken being summoned to take a walk to the Palace and get his belated gong....13 years after the others!

CONDOLENCE EXPRESSED

We're sorry to hear the father of FRANCOISE FERNANDEZ passed away just before April's London Marathon, which the good lady then obviously withdrew from. On behalf of readers we express our profound condolence to all family members.

JUAN ANTONIO SAMARANCH R.I.P

At 89 the former International Olympic Committee President has died. In office we saw frequent calls for his resignation and even when found innocent of wrongdoing many still blamed him for turning a blind eye to corruption. During his time many lesser IOC members were expelled from the movement. The worst case saw some IOC members caught receiving up to £650,000 in cash, gifts scholarships and other favours to ensure Salt Lake City got the Winter Olympics. Under his reign this global event was transformed from being a tournament battered by boycotts, doping scandals, terrorism and financial setbacks into becoming the World's favourite sporting festival which could attract considerable commercial revenue. In his retirement speech (2001) he said, "You have to compare what is the Olympics today with what was the Olympics 20 years ago. That is my legacy". Mr. Samaranch was also credited with the introduction of professionals into the Games. He certainly won't be forgotten in a hurry!

BILL MAXWELL R.I.P

Although not one with Essex connections, he was known to many of readers as he was a true character. Bill, who died age 76, walked for the now defunct Leyland Motors AC and when that folded he donned the vest of Lancashire WC. He qualified as Centurion 509 in 1973 at the tough Bristol 100 Miles (21.52.29) and achieved that feat 4 more times. He travelled all over and came south with Leyland Motors to race against Ford & Vauxhall Motors in British Industries Championship races organised by PAT FUREY and staged in Luton by the late JOHN TELFORD. We express condolence to his family

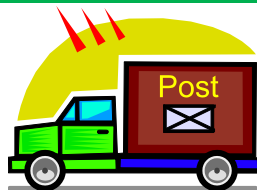
NOTICE ABOUT DEATH NOTICES

Not long ago PAUL NIHILL had a letter published in Essex Walker complaining that nobody informed him of the funeral service of the late Gerry Rhodes (SWC & Centurions) whom he'd known for over 4 decades. Paul missed a service at which he would have been present and also resulted in his condolence being expressed long after Gerry's demise. Now Paul's been in touch reporting that nobody told him of the Reverend Christie Murray's service – a man who Paul had admired for decades. Obviously which members Surrey Walking Club decide to tell (or not to tell) when one of their number passes on, is a matter for them. However in the Reverend's case, walkers and ex-walkers from other Clubs have also expressed disappointment that news of this service didn't get much of an airing, and that only 2 went. Essex Walkers info service (249 takers) isn't at fault as we never got told either!

WORD PROCESSOR CONTRIBUTION FROM MARTIN OLIVER

Dear Dave,

I was delighted to read in 'Essex Walker' that Mike Hinton has made contact with John Jones of Newham. He was a Youth & Junior in the late 60s/early 70s, at the same time as me, so when you asked whether any readers remember him, it was inevitable that my hand would shoot up! He was a very useful walker, who placed 3rd in the Southern Area Youths Championships in July 1969, and won the Youths Race within the Surrey Walking Club Open 3¼ miles in November 1969 amongst other fine performances.



6 will evolve or maybe not??

Regards RAY P.

STATEMENT BY COUNTY WALKING SECRETARY

RAY PEARCE

Re the Essex League. Will carry on to the last race in the year and it will end. By request. Perhaps another formula using only champs top

EMAILS A CHAMPION WALKER

Hello Dave,

Great to hear of the Reverend Roy Lodge's exploits. I remember his 20 miles National win well. It is a great shame that the Commonwealth Games is now held over the Olympic Walk distance of 20 Kilometres. There was something special about 20 miles or 30 kms as it provided an opportunity for speed and distance walkers to show their colours. I think all countries should be aiming towards putting walkers on the starting line and not worrying about standard times so much. I feel sure that if standard times had been necessary in 1970 quite a number of walkers including myself would not have made the starting line. We presently have a small but nevertheless talented group of younger walkers leading the way and it should be up to each and every one of us to encourage them to stay in our great sport. There is no 'quick fix' with Race Walking, but for those who carry on 'through thick and thin' much to be gained with camaraderie second to none. May I be one of many to congratulate Helen Middleton of Enfield who falls clearly into this category. Good Luck to all and good walking.

Yours in Sport, Bill SUTHERLAND B.E.M.

EMAILS DON COX

Good to see a good turn out, pity about the wind, maybe in Bedford, Go Jo Jackson, only two years to go to London, come on boys, get your finger out, RACE MORE

DON COX

GEOFF'S VIEW

The Essex League should be maintained in memory of those who worked hard to make it successful, to provide races for local people and in anticipation of a future walking boom. Race Walking's day will return – have faith and be positive!

Geoff Hunwicks

VAC 10,000 METRES – CHRIS FLINT'S COMMENTS

It was a good meeting with 22 starters and finishers on a warm Spring evening and although Ian Richards, Olympian and Centurion, convincingly won the overall race it was good to see other walkers tussling it out in their own battles further down the field. Once again, Arthur Thomson put in a great performance finishing 5th overall and 2nd in the Herts County championship, just 20 seconds down on winner Steve Allen, Barnet and District. The turnout by Officials is greatly appreciated and a number had responded to the appeal circulated by Essex Walker. Such communications channels are most useful and this is also greatly appreciated.

I would be grateful if this information could be circulated via Race Walking Record, EW, VAC Newsletter and other channels please.

Best regards, Chris.

STATEMENT FROM PETER MARLOW

The unanimous decision to cancel the 50kms was made by the race organisers/officers and Area Secretaries of the RWA. There was no way we could justify spending nearly £1000 to stage the UKA/EA/RWA Championship for 17 walkers.

We are proposing to hold the Championship in London on October 17th with a full programme of other events.

Kind regards,
Peter.

The first race at which I can recall meeting John was the Enfield Open 3 mile Novice Walk at the Donkey Lane Track in October 1969:- The 3 Enfield Novices:-Philip Jones, Pat Furey and myself assumed that the battle for the places would be between ourselves. We reckoned without Tommy Kent, however, who dispatched two of his Newham 'protégés':- John Jones & John Wray to mop up the prizes! Whereas Phil, Paddy and myself were true 'Novices', having only been Race Walking for about 3 months each, the 2 Newham lads were experienced Race Walkers, and in John Jones case, had already won Open prizes and Individual Southern RWA Championship medals, so was hardly a 'Novice' in the recognized sense of the world. However, the RWA had a Rule that stipulated that anyone under 16 could take Open prizes without losing their Novice status, and this rule had just been amended at the RWA AGM in September, so there was much consulting of the Rule Book & phone calls to leading RWA Officials before John was allowed to walk! Tom Kent was an expert at finding loopholes in the Rule Book in order to drive a coach & four through it. His favourite son & protégé in his later years was Dave Sharpe. Need I say any more?!

Predictably, in the race itself, John won comfortably in 25 mins 45 secs, with John Wray 2nd in 26-40, and I managed to get the better of Phil Jones for 3rd (27-00 to Phil's 27-05), with Patrick in 5th (27-41). The real battle though, unfolded behind us, as apart from a half dozen or so serious walkers, the rest of the field consisted of about 50 schoolchildren, most of whom were running as fast as their little legs would carry them! The sole Judge, my uncle (Bill Oliver) decided that the best policy was not to disqualify them, but to send those he caught running back to the start line:- chaos reigned! Unsurprisingly, the timekeepers & recorders hadn't the faintest idea who had done what, so only the first six got times & positions, and the rest were just marked as 'They also walked!' My uncle did however, 'pull' one young lad out:- Ken Easlea's son Steven, on the grounds that as his Dad was a Race Walker, he would have known better! A bad move!...Steven took it very hard and never took part in a Race Walk ever again:- much to Ken's immense sadness, and he regularly mentioned it to me over the years (It was all my fault of course:- Guilt by family association!)

I'm pleased to say that I was beating John Jones regularly within a couple of months of that race, but he was a genuinely nice chap and it's a great shame that he never continued with Race Walking:- He showed a lot of promise at a very young age. If Mike Hinton managed to get an address or telephone number for John:- Can I ask that he remembers me to him, and to tactfully suggest that he would be very welcome if he fancies making a comeback, or even just a flying visit to an Enfield League race:- It would be great to see him again!

See you soon,
Take Care,
Martin

EMAILS ARTHUR THOMSON RE OUR 500TH RACE

Re I have to question whether it is effective to keep cutting the length of races. Does this REALLY give bigger fields and if so how do newcomers get any experience of races at international distances?? Looks to me like yet another nail in the coffin of British race walking.

Adds Hon. Ed. Reduction encourages ex-walkers back for comebacks on a special occasion (as per our 300th/400th races) where short events pulled in such athletes. Ilford hired this track to fit in 5 Miles race, so lose money by using it for less time than planned. It's all about encouraging folk and a reunion. D.A.

LOOKING BACKWARDS

In the autumn of 1967, Phil Everard and John Hedgethorpe launched the first season of the Essex League. The object was to foster race walking in Essex by staging a League programme of twelve races, which were all to be staged in the County.. However, to get it 'off-the-ground', some venue locations were used that were not in Essex – but where Essex walkers were appearing. So the Highgate Hour on September 23rd 1967 became race No. 1, at the Parliament Hill Fields track in London N.W.3. Also in 1967, the famous Highgate Harriers Open 7 miles Walk (with its infamous early and steep hill) was used as an Essex League race.

It is a veritable memory test to call back all the faces of those who contested this event. The total field numbered 213, of whom 35 were Essex Club members or Essex qualified. There were no second-claimers in Race No. 1, but there are listed five walkers who were in the field and became League scorers later on, either through Essex League qualifications or by joining an Essex club. So where are they all now? Sadly some are no longer with us, and we have mourned their passing. A small number still race regularly, and some 'now-and-then'.

The Essex League continues on, with nearly all its races in Essex and metropolitan Essex, with only the occasional races being staged elsewhere. Co-founder John Hedgethorpe went on to become its most prolific competitor, with 354 completions – and nearly all those races at which he did not finish, he was there in some capacity or other. In December 1999 John received an award to commemorate his 350th Essex League finish.

At the 300th race, on August Bank Holiday 1992, 90 finished, 1 retired and several others came along to Colchester to spectate and socialize. On the same weekend, at the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre, the World Veterans held their 30 kilometres and 20 kilometres Championships for men and women respectively. It proved to be an ill-fated meeting, and whatever could possibly go wrong DID! One athletics publication described the entire programme as the worst disaster since the Titanic. Some walkers appeared in both meetings, to wit Brum on Saturday and Colchester on Monday. The 300th race saw 9 finishers, who had completed the 1st Essex League event: Messrs Roger Mills (3rd), Geoff Hunwicks (6th), Ken Carter (30th), John Hedgethorpe (31st), Ken Livermore (41st), Alec Banyard (47th), Brian Ficken (66th), John McCabe (67th) and Ken Easlea (74th). The race was held over a most accurately-measured 5,828 metres; and a special prize went to the competitor who could most accurately guess the course distance (this being known only to organizer John Hedgethorpe prior to start). This went to studious Cath Reader, who had got in a bit of pre-race estimating two days earlier – by having to guess 20 kilometres (or so) at Birmingham (as that multi-lap event lacked lap scorers and distance markers). Mister Starter was Chief Superintendent Mike Blackwell, who had completed Race No. 1 also.

Stuart Phillips (20.08), Jamie O'Rawe (26.16) and Roger Mills (27.03) formed the 1-2-3, ahead of 4th placed Scot Davis (27.43). Cath Reader (30.44), Helen Sharratt (31.46), Irene Bateman (35.36) and Mary Worth (36.02) were the top four ladies in 16th, 20th, 44th and 49th positions respectively.

Roger Buxton, the Sports Editor of 'Essex Radio' covered the meeting, and who will forget his report? It boomed out "44 year-old knock-kneed sports shop proprietor from Wanstead, Roger Mills, made yet another successful comeback". Injury had put a question mark against Roger's comeback, as an injury had restricted him to just 3 pre-race training sessions. But once the 'off' was sounded he shot down Colchester High Street as though the Devil was after him, and he was a circuit-one leader (of 3 circuits). He suffered for his efforts on the Tuesday following. A post-race social was held at the Arena Club – Sharpie and Mike Croft got lost on their way there, and went into an Old Folks Home instead. As neither were yet Veterans, they were led out and pointed in the correct direction. Both Sharpie and Reg Walton (Colchester and ex-RAF) announced their retirements from race-walking after the race. The former, as we know returned to the fold. The latter never did, and was last heard of at Stradishall in Suffolk, where he became a screw in the prison that opened up on the sight of the former Royal Air Force station. Leister Piggott did his time there, and the only way they could get him into his cell was to place a bag over his head and walk him around in a circle three times!

In answer to requests, here is published the result of Essex League Race No. 1 on the 23rd of September 1967, at Parliament Hill Fields Track, London N.W.3. The Essex results were extracted from the

Cont/.....

overall list of 213 finishers, who had completed in 4 different races, billed as Sections 'A' (Fast) 'B' (medium-to-fast) 'C' (medium) and 'D' (slow).

POS	NAME	CLUB	MLS	YDS	SECT
1	J. WEBB	BAS	8	188	A
2	M. TOLLEY	BAS	7	1365	A
3	P. EMBLETON	WALT	7	1039	B
4	A. BANYARD	SOU	7	1034	A
5	K. LIVERMORE	W.G.	7	1022	B
6	G. BROWN	W.G.	7	965	A
7	R. MILLS	ILF	7	965	B
8	C. WILLIAMS	ILF	7	771	A
9	J. THOMAS	W.G.	7	596	B
10	D. ROSSER	SOU	7	585	B
11	D. TOGWELL	BAS	7	231	C
12	J. HEDGETHORPE	E.P.	7	211	B
13	D. HOLLY	THU	6	1176	D
14	P. AIREY	SOU	6	1106	B
15	J. CLIFTON	W.G.	6	1056	C
16	K. TUSON	SOU	6	1052	C
17	H. NEILSON	W.G.	6	871	C
18	G. FURNIVAL	E.P.	6	734	C
19	G. SMITH	BAS	6	730	D
20	G. HUNWICKS	ILF	6	701	D
21	W. FORTUNE	E.B.	6	680	D
22	G. LEE	E.P.	6	606	D
23	B. FICKEN	W.G.	6	588	D
24	M. BLACKWALL	E.P.	6	571	D
25	S. GOWER	E.P.	6	532	D
26	R. FORTUNE	E.B.	6	414	D
27	W. EVARARD	E.B.	6	409	D
28	J. ATKINSON	SOU	6	347	D
29	J. BARCHAM	E.P.	6	150	D
30	P. MAHY	ILF	6	36	D
31	J. MacDONALD	NEW	5	1701	D
32	R. MENDHAM	ILF	5	1690	D
33	G. JANSEN	BAS	5	1665	D
34	G. WILLIAMS	E.P.	5	1215	D
35	J. McCABE	E.P.	5	1071	D

Also took part K. EASLEA 7m 1385 yds, D. FOTHERINGHAM 6.1302, P. CRANE 6.792, K. CARTER 6.1360 and J. SCAMELL 6.293.

Additional Information: Debut walks for Steve and Geoff. Brian Armstrong missed the event as he had cut himself at work (he still bears the scar). By the way, you had to be very good to even get a start in the 'A' races.

QUESTION TIME

Dear Dave,

Perhaps a challenge for those who like one?
With reference to the Essex League some questions.

- 1 Who has completed most races?
- 2 Who has covered the most Mileage/Kilometres (could be different to the one above)
- 3 Who has officiated the most at the events?
 - a. Judged
 - b. Recorded
 - c. Timed
 - d. Mixture of all the above
- 4 Who has scored the most points

Maybe there are some other Q's could be put?

Ray Pearce

ROLL UP – ROLL UP

April's RWA National 50K Championship hit the dust as few entered. Not to be defeated the RWA having another go – after all, you can't abandon a Championship which has been held annually since 1930 (except war years) can you? It's on Sunday October 17th at a Southern venue (to be named). To get more entry fees to offset location hiring fees there will be an Open 20K on the card. When entries are asked for on this occasion, we hope more punters will step forward!



FAREWELL TO SUE CLEMENTS

Essex born SUE is leaving us in early June, having handed in her notice at her Cambridge place of work. Sue's moving to Madrid to commence a new life. Sue will be much missed as The Centurions Vice-Captain, as a member of Enfield & Harringey AC and also as a leading light at the Cambridge Branch of the

Red Cross, where she works in voluntary capacity and is an instructor. Sue has completed 90% of the task involved in writing The Centurions 2011 Centenary Handbook, and has pledged to complete the rest. Sue's coming back for this year's Parish Walk, and also will be there for the 2011 Centenary 100 Miles and also the Centenary Dinner on May 14th at the House of Commons. What's the chances of Sue starting up a Centurions Club of Spain? We all know how enthusiastic she is.

EMPHATIC VICTORY FOR FRANCISCO REIS

In searing Saturday morning heat at Hendon's Cophall Stadium Ilford's Francisco Reis enjoyed his best outing since making his comeback with a gun-to-tape victory in May's London Inter Club Challenge/Enfield League 3,000 metres. His unchallenged victory was in a rapid 14 minutes and 24 seconds, well clear of 2nd placed Steyning's Trevor Jones who clocked 15.04. Battling Steve Uttley finished strongly and robustly to claim 3rd sport in 15.16. Despite appearing in the Virgin London Marathon on the following morning, Dave Sharpe still turned out to be rewarded with 11th position in 17.34. Stalwart Mike Hinton, who is soon moving to Bournemouth, was 12th in 18.48.

"THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER"

One of the best books and films with an athletics theme ever completed...and now it's author Alan Sillitoe, 82, has himself passed-on. Colin Smith, a lag behind bars discovers running talents and eventually the Governor lets him out of the gates alone and unsupervised for a training run. Does he return? Come the biggest race of his life, he's ahead by a distance – the 2nd man isn't even in sight! But...our hero stops a year from the finishing line. Does he win? You probably know, but if not you'll have to watch yet another re-run of that film (starring Michael Redgrave, Tom Courtney and James Bolam) or better still...get the book from your library.



THE ITALIAN JOB

A reader sent details of the Milan 20K, where ALEX WRIGHT came 26th in 90.27 and National 20K Champion TOM BOSWORTH 31st in 93.03. Experienced DARRYL STONE was 34th in 94.36. Sadly Essex boys didn't have 'a day to remember' as DOMINIC KING recorded a d/q and DAN a dnf. In the ladies stakes, our only Mexico-bound UK race walker JO JACKSON was an excellent 3rd in 92.05.

TURKEY WALKS

The Turkish President announced his country will bid for the 2020 Olympic and Para-Olympic Games. Let's hope walks are part of our athletics scene come the time.....wherever these Games are.

REPORTS CHRIS HOBBS

Dear Dave,

Always enjoy reading your newsletters. Thanks. Just to add to the good news about the Kent Champs. There were in fact 19 starters in the race with 'at least' 9 Under 21's getting personal bests!

Regards
Chris

DAVE SHARPE REMEMBERS

A reader with an encyclopedia knowledge of yesteryear's walkers is our Dave. Our May issue saw a reader's letter asking if anybody recollected Newham AC's JOHN JONES? Dave did. Said Dave, "He was a Met. Police Cadet, who used to race in Battersea Park midweek fixtures. John was stocky with dark hair and his uncle was TOMMY KENT who was my coach at Newham AC. John raced for Newham AC as a youth in the now defunct Southern Area Track Competition. He'd be about 58 years of age now. He didn't maintain his involvement in race walking". So now you know. Dave also remembers BILL MAXWELL, the respected Centurion from the North West, who died in April. Said Dave, "I recall Bill. His son Sean was a champion youth and junior walker. His son was very good but after going to college he disappeared from the scene". Sadly even then promising juniors used to vanish!

ON HIS BIKE

Readers will be pleased to hear that walking's only surviving UK Olympic gold medallist KEN MATTHEWS is getting better after recent hospital visits. Ken's back on his bicycle, though at present, only for recreational rides.



POLITICS AND SPORT DON'T MIX

The General and Local Elections saw some connected with race walking trying to make the Commons or their local Council chamber. SWC member PHILIP HOLLOBONE, who appears on Blackheath's all-time 9K finishers list, and had the last Parliament's lowest expenses, easily retained his Kettering seat. Walking's good friend BOB RUSSELL, who booked the House of Commons for The Centurions Centenary Dinner, was another easy victor – in Colchester. MICK BARNBROOK and IRENE BATEMAN were both unsuccessful in the Dagenham & Rainham and Basildon & Billericay seats respectively. And long standing campaigner ED SHILLABEER failed to become a Plymouth Councilor, on this occasion. Eagle-eyed results reader MARTIN OLIVER spotted that MIKE BATEMAN tried unsuccessfully to be Chelmsford's new MP....as our headline states, politics and sport don't mix, so we'll not mention any of their Political Parties!

DENTIST FILLS A GAP

Congrats to former Scottish International DAVID BUCHANAN, whose dental surgery is in Gubbins Lane, near Harold Wood Station (Romford) on his comeback after a long lay-off. He won the Suffolk AAA 3,000 Metres Walk at Ipswich. The men's race saw David as its only starter and finisher....so but for him, that title would have gone un-awarded. David has kept fit by playing golf to a high standard. The Suffolk card included neighbours from Norfolk.

GAME ON

After speculation 'the blazers' have decided England will attend the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games after security concerns had caused a rethink. JO JACKSON is already is already booked. We certainly hope England...along with other Home Nations....will send full complements. Walks were ditched for 2010, and only campaigning and dealing (we reduced walking races for 3-to-2) kept us in. Organisers were concerned over low numbers (as at Salford Quays 2002). We must see good turnouts in our remaining 2 Commonwealth Games Walks to ensure another go in 2014 at Glasgow.



FIXTURES

Sun 6 Jun	SVAC Championships	Ashford (Kent)	
Tue 8 Jun	WTW 3,000 metres	Ashtons Track	6.30 pm
Sat 12 Jun	Moulton/Enfield League 5 Miles	Moulton	2 pm
Sun 13 Jun	Alan Flear Meeting	Nuneaton	12 noon
Wed 16 Jun	LBH/City Charities/Open 3,000m	Willesden Track	7.15 pm
Sat 19 Jun	LICC/Enfield League 5,000m	Ashtons Track	11.45 am
Sun 20 Jun	Final CG Trial & Small Nation Mtg	Bedford	10 am
Tue 22 Jun	Vets AC 5 Miles Championship	Battersea Park	7 pm
Sat 26 Jun	Parish Walk (85 Miles)	Douglas	8 am
	BMAF 20K Champs/YAG Support Races	Northampton Racecourse	
Sun 27 Jun	Post Office-in-Uniform 10K	York	1 pm

ESSEX COUNTY AAA 3,000 METRES CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Senior Men

1	Dan King	12m 45.21s
2	S. Uttley	15m 09.18s
3	D. Sharpe	18m 13.78s

4 Non Starters

Senior Women

1	L. Mountford	20m 59.04s	(Unat)
2	V. Mountford	24m 24.96s	

3000 mtrs U17

1	Jordan Bull	23m 01.73s	(Ormiston Pk Academy)
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Note: Above results are included in the Essex League

1000 mtrs MU13

1	Elliott Mountford	7m 25.27s	(Unat)
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MIDDLESEX 3,000M CHAMPIONSHIPS - COPTHALL STADIUM - 8 MAY

1	Maureen Noel	Belgrave	17.50.91
2	Norma Grimsey	Enf & Har	20.12.10
1	Francisco Reis	Ilford	14.14.62
2	John Hall	Belgrave	15.43.96
3	Shaun Lightman	Surrey W.C.	16.37.68
4	Sean Pender	Enf & Har	17.41.93
5	Ron Powell	Enf & Har	18.58.43
6	Bernard Hercock	Enf & Har	21.07.95

OLYMPICK-A-BARGAIN

The official London 2012 online shop has opened. Games Chairman LORD COE said that merchandise was vital to raising a further £2 billion. Currently there are 250 lines including clothes, collectables and badges. This range will increase at 2012 nears. Site address: www.london2012.com/shop



VIRGIN MEGASORES

Said a national newspaper on the Friday before the Virgin London Marathon, "A health alert was issued after forecasters said marathon runners will face the hottest weather of the year on Sunday. Temperatures in London are expected to top 72F/22C. The heat will cause havoc for more than 35,000 runners – including thousands covering 26.2 miles in fancy dress". Well it didn't happen did it? The hottest London on record was in 1996, when it reached 22.7C.

In keeping with race walking's demise, there could not be seen the number of known race walkers showcasing our event before millions lining the streets and on TV. That used to be the case. Big hearted DAVE SHARPE aimed for 5 hours walking, and was elated to finish in 4.45. Dave raced for some distance with Theresa Therwell (ex walker of Herne Hill Harriers). She's now called by another name and has 3 kids. Her family took Dave for a post race meal to celebrate, and then drove him home. Another regular, Ilford's STEVE ALLEN, donned Royal Mail uniform and a traditional Post Office peaked cap to run a one-paced 3.49. Another regular – former Loughton AC walker DENNIS JONES (Pitsea Road Runners) – completed the distance in 5.35. All 3 managed to raise money for charities. So well done....and remember...their collection sheets are still open for late donations.

MAUREEN NOEL ran the London and got around in 3.34.51. She was quicker in the first half than the second (1.41 to 1.53) but said she speeded up again towards the end. She loves it! She hopes to run the marathon in the European Veterans Championships in Hungary in July, a few days after doing the walks.

MARATHON NON-RUNNER

AMOS SEDDON is as much a part of the London Marathon scene as the eve-of-the-race Pasta Party. But this year, pre-Event Exhibition and Registration regulars saw no sight of him...he wasn't there as Bourne Sports didn't hire a stand. This gave Amos time to speed around Copthall Stadium on the Saturday instead.



POOR NUMERICAL TURNOUT AT ESSEX COUNTY AAA 3,000 METRES WALK

Despite readers being implored to support this year's Championship at Melbourne Park Arena only 3 men started and finished...in order International DAN KING, in-form STEVE UTTLEY and stalwart DAVE SHARPE. The ladies race saw only LINDA & VAL MOUNTFORD claiming gold and silver medals respectively. There was 1 new junior....more of him later...but what an example to show him on his debut (and the watching crowd to boot). We had a good turnout of officials, so where were the competitors? We had 1 less in the men's field than were in the Essex County Indoor Mile earlier in the year. And that was totally unacceptable. Essex race walking is truly heading downhill at pace.

ESSEX WALKING CONTINUES INTO FREEFALL

Essex County AAA staged its annual 10,000 Metres Championship, as part of an athletics meeting containing other Championship events, at Ashtons on a pleasant Saturday afternoon (15th May). Essex Walker implored readers support but sadly most chose to stay away. A 12 noon start meant walkers had plenty of time to make their TV sets before the Cup Final. Only 2 Essex men finished (1st STEVE UTTLEY & 2nd DAVE SHARPE) – 1 less than our Essex 3,000 metres – and no ladies. Where were you all? Guest FRANCISCO REIS was leader and was about to lap the field when approaching 2nd placed STEVE UTTLEY. But then he felt ill and was forced to stop for over half-a-minute. Francisco got going again to win the overall race. The only lady HELEN MIDDLETON (guest) was rewarded with a track PB, as did welcome Herts visitor STEVE ALLEN. A full list of judges and other officials...but hardly any walkers. That decision to end the Essex League this year really is making itself! Sadly serious contender STEPHEN CRANE saw red so ending his afternoon's sport. The Organisers were optimistic – as a steeplechase was timed for 1 pm so giving walkers an hour! Athletics is doing downhill for this steeplechase, when it got going, seemed hardly well supported.

A large Multi-Cultural Festival on the outer field of Ashtons Playing Fields brought traffic jams to a place not noted for them, and difficulties parking. The waft from foreign cooking and the strains of 'Ting-Tang-Tong' music provided distractions as those 25 circuits unfolded.

It was pleasing to see BRIAN FICKEN, COLIN YOUNG and FRANCOISE FERNANDEZ among those giving up their afternoon to come and support this small field. We had a trio of Presidents courtesy of Pam (RWA) Ray (Essex) and Sean (Middlesex).

Result

1	F. Reis	Ilf/Gst	51.40.83
2	S. Uttley	Ilf	53.28.93
3	S. Allen	Bar/Gst	55.27.36
4	H. Middleton (L)	EH/Gst	57.07.67
5	S. Pender	EH/Gst	1.01.54.10
6	D. Sharpe	Ilf	1.04.22.83

DQ S. Crane SWC/Ilf
7 Started/6 Finished

Essex Championship

1 S. Uttley, 2. D. Sharpe
7 Started

1,500 METRES

Talented recent Centurion STEVE KEMP was seen giving it his all at the Essex meeting...in the 1,500 metres run.

MIDDLESEX CHAMPION

Iford's FRANCISCO REIS was a convincing victor in the Middx 3,000 metres, with Loughton 2nd claimer JOHN HALL in silver position. A better field here, though probably with the highest average age yet seen in the history of that event.

"I'M ALL WIGHT"

Centurion on both road and track, OLLY BROWNE supported the Isle of Wight Walking Festival – completing a day/night 72 miles walk around this beautiful holiday island. Fellow Centurion JILL GREEN is prominent on the Organising Committee. There's good news for his broken bone in a foot, as sustained in last year's Newmarket 100 Miles, now seems to have finally healed. Olly thoroughly enjoyed the event and commends all distance walkers to support it in 2011...and beyond, as he intends to. Olly's committed to the Parish and Church-to-Church Walks, so he's obviously in good form and showing great enthusiasm.

BERNIE'S SETBACK

The Southern Veterans T&F League 2,000 metres was held at the Lee Valley on May 10th, and unfortunately – after finishing – the host Club's BERNIE HERCOCK collapsed. An ambulance was called and Bernie was given defibrillation before being conveyed to hospital, where needless to say, he was detained. He was seen to be coming around as he was being placed into the ambulance and the following day was reported to be sitting up in his bed...so obviously improvement had come early to Bernie...and may this continue. Two GP's were trackside, one of whom NORMA GRIMSEY – had raced. Bernie does so much for walking both as competitor (where he's always prominent in that annual table showing those making most appearances) and as a hard worker. Bernie is Lee Valley's Clerk-of-the-Course is always busy before warming-up begins.. putting out the bollards. At January's Enfield League race he spent much time sweeping a dusting of snow so we could race safely. All readers wish this truly popular participant a swift and permanent recovery.

ILFORD WIN DOUBLE

Inform dynamic duo FRANCISCO REIS (over 40 race) and STEVE UTTLEY (over 50) took the honours in May's Vets 2,000 meters dash at the Lee Valley clocking 9.14 and 9.54 respectively. Well done lads. Let's hope that such walking might encourage other athletes to switch into race walking. As a sport, we've had few come into the fold after starting out in this competition. Next one is at the delightfully situated Hemel Hemstead track on Monday 12th July (6.30 pm).

REVVED-UP FOR 110 MILES

Our 1967 RWA National 20 Miles Champion, the Revered Roy Lodge MBE (Royal Sutton Coldfield), was part of a sponsored cycle ride on May 1st/2nd. 'From Stratford-to-Stratford' in aid of the Parkinson's Disease Society. This event commenced at the Olympic Site (north access gate) by Hackney Marshes. They rode via Lee Valley Stadium, Ponders End Station, Waltham Cross and St. Albans, heading towards Hemel Hempstead's Premier Inn to spend the night. Early Sunday, they set out towards Stratford-upon-Avon where Roy was recently Mayor. Many readers remember Roy, a former RAF Padre, who turned up at a recent Leamington Spa Grand Prix meeting and dinner. If you wish to donate please make cheques/postal orders out to The Parkinson's Disease Society and mail to:

Cllr. Roy F. Lodge MBE
44 Eton Road,
Stratford Upon Avon,
Warwickshire. CV37 7ER

WANTED

As at our 300th & 400th Essex League races, great efforts are being attempted to unearth those surviving members of Race No. 1. As before, we're doing well...but a name is proving difficult. The 2nd placed man in Race No. 1 was MALCOLM TOLLY. He worked for Fords in Basildon. He moved to the East Midlands and continued to give a good account of himself with Leicester WC. Anybody remember him? Has anybody got an idea of where he is. Midlands protagonist PETER MARKHAM last saw him a few years back in a chance meeting around the Leicester area?

VIVA ESPANA

The ambitious Enfield League plan a Leaguers Training Camp in Calella near Barcelona, sometime between their PAT FUREY TROPHIES MEETING (2nd October) and the ENFIELD OPEN 7 (6th November). Interested readers are asked to get in touch with travel agent Ron Wallwork.

MORE FIXTURES

Wed 2 June	Open 3,000m (enter on the night)	Oxford (Iffley Rd)	7.25
Sat 3 Jul	Ilf Allcomers 5K ESX LGE 500TH RACE	Redbridge Cycle Track	2.30 pm
	BMAF Champs 3,000m	Cardiff	
Sun 4 Jul	BMAF Champs 5,000	Cardiff	
	Tanners Marathon 30 Miles	Leatherhead	9am
Tue 6 Jul	WTW 5,000m	Asthons Track	6.20 pm
Tue 13 Jul	SCVAC T&F League 2,000m	Hemel Hempstead	6.30 pm
Tue 13 Jul	Veterans 5 Miles	Battersea Park	7 pm
Sat 17 Jul	LICC/Enf Lge 3,000m/YAG 1,000m	Lee Valley	11.45 am

SHARPE IDEA

Stalwart DAVE SHARPE has suggested that, in the light of our Essex League folding this year, a 'SOUTHERN LEAGUE' be set up. His idea is therefore floated.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

Gentlemen

To ease our feeling of inadequacy that you might have felt at the size of our field yesterday, you may like to note that today's 10,000m run had four entrants and three starters, there was one Essex entrant IN THE Senior Women's heptathlon, one entrant – who withdrew on Day 1 – in the Junior Men's decathlon and none at all in the Senior Men's decathlon; so we're not so bad.

Best wishes, Peter
Peter.Cassidy@btinternet.com

ENQUIRY FROM TONY PERKINS

I've gone through all my Walkers since No 1. The result of the first seasons doesn't appear in the Walker. I am missing issue 194 which I believe contains a result also issues 200 and 201. After 1994 I believe the result of the League doesn't appear in the Walker. Without these results it is not possible to work out who done what? I also noted after April 293 the next issue was May 295 what was 294?

Tony

THINKING OF THE SPORT'S IMAGE

Few walkers – very few – supported our Essex County AAA 10,000 metres Championship...however one reader missed the event with good reason. Romford born MICK BARNBROOK had every intention of appearing, but didn't. Said Mick, "I had my kit packed and was ready to go. Then I thought about this race being part of an athletics meeting, and I knew I couldn't better 70 minutes. Holding up a meeting schedule for me would not have presented a good image for race walking, so I decided not to travel to Ashtons". So Mick's non-appearance sprang from good intention. Had he done his 70 minutes worth, he'd have earned a County bronze individual medal – to go with the one he earned in our 3,000 metres dash a few seasons back at Garon's Track, as only 2 Essex qualified athletes finished at Ashtons. Silver Medallist DAVE SHARPE modestly stated that his gain has been because other better prospects were not present. We're pleased that it was won with a good time...so thanks to STEVE UTTLEY. As we said before, "Where were you all?"

BERNIE UPDATE

Hello Everybody,

Just a line or so to report that Jon May spent most of Saturday afternoon with Bernie at the London Heart Hospital along with his family and other friends who popped in from time to time.

Jon reports that he was in good form and will stay in hospital until he has a heart by-pass operation on a date which has yet to be fixed

Bernie said that he had been overwhelmed by the get well messages he had received and asked that until he is well

enough to meet his friends and thank people personally, that his gratitude for their support be passed on.

It is wonderful news!

Ron

EMAIL FROM AFAR (Ref Our 500th Race)

G'day,

I'm afraid I'm still out of the Country and unable to make any sort of appearance. Sorry to let you down but good luck with all the organisation.

Best Regards,
Keith Phillips.

VICTOR'S VIEWS (Re Pednor)

Hi Dave,

It was a good race – the course was like the old days, very hard but very good.

Regards
Francisco Reis

NOTIFICATIONS FROM DAVE HOBEN

Dave,

Mick, from SWC, mentioned to me that the upcoming St. Albans Half Marathon has a walk option if your readers are interested. Date is Sunday 13 June at 0800. Not sure the walk really needs to start 2 hours before the run! See www.stalbanshalfmarathon.co.uk

Another reason to go to & celebrate 500th Essex League event on July 3, as if one were needed, is you can also do the 50th Tanners Marathon next day. The website definitely says the last ever (unless 'rescued' by Met Police as reported elsewhere). My spies tell me the route will be the same as the 1st (in 1960) and the 25th anniversary. Previous entrants have included a part of Belgravians & a well known Centurion. Link is tannersmarathon.net

Best Wishes
Dave

TOP SPORTING ATTRACTION

A final reminder to previously published info – by far the South's best supported race walking event for each of 9 past seasons has been the Moulton 5 Miles at Moulton Village (3 miles north east of Newmarket town centre – and well signposted). It's on Saturday 12th June at 2 pm, from the Village Hall. Entry forms are about, or can be downloaded from the Suffolk AAA and the Moulton Village websites....or you can enter on the day for a small premium. It's traditional Saturday afternoon racing on the Queen's highway. There's a serious race, ramblers/ambblers stroll and a YAG support event. You can watch that World Cup post race, in the village pub! So folks, "Roll-up, roll-up"

HOT STUFF

The Enfield League One Hour commenced in midday sun and credit is due to all who officiated, raced or encouraged on what was the hottest day of the year so far. FRANCISCO REIS won this event with 11.344m while HELEN MIDDLETON triumphed in the ladies stakes with 10.289m. Result: Race Walking Record, AW, Enfield Walker and www.racewalkuk.com