

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Many remember Bill Pilgrim who walked for Borough of Enfield Harriers (in 1999 they merged with Harringey AC to become the formidable Enfield & Harringey AC) and Verlea AC (who in March 2002 merged with Hertford & Ware AC to become Herts Phoenix AC). Bill also completed local runs and, now in his 60s, this popular Stevenage resident has - like so many of our readers - progressed into the world of retirement. We wish this former Deputy Headmaster many long and happy years to come; and hope he'll get along to see us someday at our events.

GOLD FOR ILFORD PROTAGONIST

Ilford's Francisco Reis turned in a truly top class performance at Lee Valley's arena to emphatically win the British Masters' Indoor 3,000 Metres Championship on a steeply banked track. From the "off" he showed a quality field a proverbial clean pair of heels as his gap by the end of lap 2 was such that others could only complete for 2nd place. Francisco broke the tape in 13 minutes and 35 seconds; a personal best time since reaching status, and just over a minute ahead of Olympian Ian Richards.

A STAR IN THE EAST

Great TV by BBC1 "Look East" (who filmed Southend's 100 Miles last year) as promising Callum Wilkinson was constructively featured on a programme also showing East Anglian residents Ron Wallwork and Ray Middleton on the podium after 1966 Commonwealth Games gold and silver performances in Jamaica. Ron and Callum were interviewed in a package that must surely have enthused younger viewers to come and try.

GAME OFF

For a first time ever our RWA National 10 Miles was cancelled owing to a lack of entries. What this means for the Essex County 10 Miles (due to be held in conjunction) is anybody's guess. But if a National field can't be assembled, what chance do we have of raising an Essex field? This Championship began in 1947 at Sheffield. It wasn't held in the years 1999-2007 inclusive ... before being returned to the fixture card by popular demand. That popular demand seems to have waned, perhaps also aided by illness, age and mortality.

SEEING NO MORE RED

Stalwart Cambridge Harriers "Mr Starter" Dave Maynard has, after 42 years firing his pistol, hung up his distinctive red jacket and cap. He was recognised when receiving a coveted and much merited 40 years' long service award from the South of England Athletic Association. Dave's still active as a helper, as seen at Bexley Winter League races and elsewhere. We all thank him for many years of service with his pistol.

A GOOD DAY IN SUSSEX

On Horsham Track, in overcast and chilly conditions with a headwind down the finishing straight the annual Slater/Bryce 10,000 metres' race walk produced a couple of good battles, with few walkers improving on their last year's times. Francisco Reis led off with Olympian Ian Richards (Steyning AC) in close attention. The Ilford man then gradually drew away and went on to a clear victory in 48 minutes and 25 seconds: he was hoping for a faster time but felt the headwind had slowed him somewhat. Ian Richards was 2nd in 50.04, Barnet's Steve Allen 3rd in 53.18 with Loughton 2nd claimer John Hall 4th in 56.34, a second ahead of SWC's Malcolm Martin who works in Essex. 12 men and 1 lady finished with 1 walker opting for 5,000 metres.

Report by Ron Penfold

END-OF-THE-ROAD FOR WALKERS - RIP

At the end of the Cambridge Harriers' 2014/15 Winter League Series Presentation, in their Bexley Clubhouse, organiser Noel Carmody took everybody by surprise when announcing that this long-established series had reached its end. From 1977 onwards this Series provided racing for all, from Internationals to novices. For nearly 38 years distances raced had been 5K, 10K and 15K, though recent years had seen an all-5K road format - so reflecting an increasing age of participants. At times these meetings provided Championship status to others (ie Veterans) who'd raced in conjunction. Participation levels had dropped and a few years' ago there were some low turnouts - however in recent times, younger-aged-groups had seen better numbers. The final season wasn't well supported by seniors but it wasn't turnouts that caused the death blow ... risk assessment came into play for that! Noel thanked all who'd had officiated and helped over the years as well as those who'd supported these races. In return those few at the presentation gave Noel and his team a round of applause. RIP.



OPEN HOUSE

Southend-on-Sea AC has a new Clubhouse at Garon Park track. It's situated facing the home straight and already there have been 2 ceremonies. Firstly a digging of the first sod, and on completion a formal "Ceremony of the Keys" as builders (Interior Precision Ltd) handed a large key to Representatives of the local Club – story and photo courtesy of the [Evening Echo](#). Now in use, the next formal occasion is to be an Official Opening by a dignitary. What next at Garons - how about a Grandstand?

FIXTURES

4 Apr	National & Essex 10 Miles	Lee Valley	TBC
14 Apr	Veterans AC 5 Miles (guests welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
18 Apr	RWA & Essex 20K Championship (YAG from 1.00 pm)	Hillingdon CC	2.15 pm
26 Apr	BMAF 20K Championships + 10K	Downham Market	10.00 am
26 Apr	Virgin Money London Marathon	Greenwich	9.00 am
27 Apr	SCVAC T&F League 2,000 Metres	Lee Valley	7.20 pm
29 Apr	Veterans AC + Herts/Middx 10,000m Championships	Battersea Park	6.45 pm
1 May	Ilford AC Annual Dinner & Dance	Met Police Chigwell	TBC
4 May	Herts/Vets/Open 3,000 Metres	Stevenage Track	12.30 pm
4 May	Enfield League/Pednor 5 Miles	Chesham	5.00 pm
12 May	Veterans AC 5 Miles (guests welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
24 May	Essex 3,000 Metres Championship	Chelmsford	TBC
2 Jun	Veterans AC 5 Miles (guests welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
6 Jun	Enfield League 5 Miles	Moulton	1.00 pm
9 Jun	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m + YAG	Ashtons Track	8.00 pm
13 Jun	Jack Fitzgerald Memorial Races	Tilgate Park	12.30 pm
20 Jun	IOM 85 Miles Manx Telcon Parish Walk	Douglas	8.00 am
21 Jun	Small Nations' Representative Match	Bedford	TBC
21 Jun	BMAF 5K Road Championship	Horwich	10.30 am
27 Jun	RWA 10K Championship	Hillingdon CC	TBC
1 Jul	EVAC League 2,000 Metres	Chelmsford	TBC
7 Jul	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m + YAG	Ashtons Track	8.00 pm
13 Jul	SCVAC T&F League 2,000 Metres	Hemel Hempstead	6.30 pm
14 Jul	Veterans AC 5 Miles (guests welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
19 Jul	Inter-Area Representative Match	Solihull	TBC
22 Jul	Cambridge Harriers Open 1K Walk	Sutcliffe Park	TBC
25 Jul	BMAF Track Championships Day 1	Alexander Stadium	TBC
26 Jul	BMAF Track Championships Day 1	Alexander Stadium	TBC
29 Jul	EVAC T&F League Walk	Corby	TBC
1 Aug	Enfield League/LICC 5,000 Metres	Allianz Park	TBC
2 Aug	Mark Byrne Promenade 10K	Redcar	10.30 am
4 Aug	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m + YAG	Ashtons Track	8.00 pm
15 Aug	IOM Open/RWA National 100 Miles	Castletown	2.00 pm
18 Aug	Veterans AC 5 Miles (guests welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
29 Aug	Essex 10,000 Metres Championship	TBC	TBC
29 Aug	Enfield League/LICC 5,000 Metres	Allianz Park	TBC
31 Aug	Southend Mile (+ George Woods Trophy)	Garons Park	10.30 am
1 Sep	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m + YAG + Series Presentation	Ashtons Track	8.00 pm
6 Sep	Guernsey Church-to-Church 19.4 Miles	St Peter Port	9.00 am
6 Sep	SCVAC T&F League Final 2,000 Metres	Ashford	TBC

THE WOODFORD TUESDAY WALKS ARE BACK

All will be over 3,000m at Category A, with the option of 1,000m for young and new walkers. The venue is Ashton Playing Fields, Woodford Green. Start time is not yet definite, but it is hoped to make it 8:00 pm. [Vets' AC has kindly arranged their Battersea Park series to avoid the Woodford dates, so you won't have to make a choice!]

For more information: Pauline.Wilson@btinternet.com or 01277 220687

2015 fixtures are:

Tuesdays 9 June, 7 July, 4 August, 1 September
Normal rules apply; the best 3 results from the 4 races count towards the series championships.

SAD DEATHS

Sue Sayer, President of Welsh Athletics died suddenly aged 68. Also Chair of Deeside Athletics Club, Sue was presented with a Meritorious Service Award in 2001 and an Award of Honour 12 years later. Former teacher Sue leaves behind husband Ivor (a respected Mr Starter), son Richard and daughter Caroline. Her funeral service was held in a local church followed by a final service at a Wrexham crematorium

Also in Wrexham, Mrs **Sheila Matthews** passed away aged 81. Sheila was the wife of former RWA President and 1964 Olympic Gold medallist Ken Matthews MBE. The good lady, who hadn't been well for some years, achieved fame at Tokyo when emerging from the crowd to run onto cinders and hug Ken as he finished 1st, by a still record winning margin for an Olympic 20K Walk (1.29.34 to 1.31.12). Indeed Ken approached the tape (they had tape then) as 2nd man - Dieter Lindner, now 78, of a combined German team hit the back straight. Those 1964 Olympics was the last held on cinders and (then) also the last the time a united German team participated. In Olympic spirit East and West Germany came together for the Games ... but from 1968 (Mexico) onwards went their separate ways ... before unification got them together again as one team. To Ken and his son we send our heartfelt condolence.

WITH DEEPEST SYMPATHY

So sad to hear of the passing of **Sheila Matthews**. I can still recall in my mind's eye the picture on the Newspaper Billboard at Finsbury Park Station of Ken Matthews being hugged by Sheila on the Tokyo Track as he won the Olympic Gold Medal so impressively for the 20 Kms Walk in 1964. He provided the motivation for me and so many others in my generation for which I am most grateful. May she 'Rest in Peace' forever. With deepest sympathy.

Kath and Bill Sutherland



10th EUROPEAN MASTERS ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Excellent day in Torun with 1 individual gold, 3 individual silver, 1 individual bronze and gold, silver and bronze teams. Out of a team of 13, 11 members won a medal. The day was very chilly with rain in the air with a good course starting and finishing in a stadium with 3 laps on the road. Fastest of the day was Francisco Reis with a silver in the M50 in a superb time of 23m 11.6.

He was followed home in the same race by Steve Allen with a new PB of 25m 32.1 finishing 5th in the M55. They were backed up by Alan Roberts to take Silver in the M50 team event. The M60 and M65 were combined into the same race won easily by Ian Richards who went into the lead at the start and pulled away throughout the race without coming under any pressure to win the overall race and M60 gold finishing in 25.00.01. Behind him there was a good battle between the Brits won by Malcolm Martin taking silver in the M60 26m 35.7 just in front of John Hall who took bronze in the M65 in 26m 50.1. Peter Bosko got the better of Roger Michell in 27m 46.4 28m16 respectively. Dave Kates followed up with a 33m 02.5. The M65 team race was never in doubt such is GB's superiority in this age group. Despite Ian Richards, the fastest, dropping down to the M60 to try to pick up a team medal in that age group John, Peter and Roger easily won the team gold while Ian, Malcolm and Dave picked up the bronze in the M60 missing silver by just 19 secs. Arthur Thomson went one better than the 3000m to take silver in the M75 while Will Norbert in his last year in the age group took fourth in 33m 41.2 not very far behind the bronze. Both are 2 ladies walked well and we're pleased with their performances. Angela Martin recorded 34m 15.4 in the W50 and only needs to up her cadence to start to move rapidly up the field like her husband Malcolm has done. Both only started in the sport a few years ago and show what's possible. Fiona Bishop did well in the W55 with a time of 33.39.4. Fiona ran in the 5km cross country on Friday to back up the GB's W50 team and secured a bronze medal. Well done Fiona.





Dear Dave ...

AVAILABLE FOR PUBLICATION

Many thanks for your continuing work on producing your publication. I am always pleased to see it arrive in my "in-box" but the content unfortunately fails nowadays to match the standards of even recent years. This is not directly attributable to you personally, much more being a reflection on the state of race-walking in Essex as well as the UK in general. If all you have to do is look backwards rather than reporting on the present and looking forward it tends to lose its interest after a while. Last Sunday must have marked the low-point, and perhaps will be regarded in the future as the date that race-walking in Essex became officially deceased - only ONE Essex athlete in the county's indoor championships at Lee Valley, and he not a regular member of the walking scene, and NOT ONE Essex athlete stirred to take part in the promotion of the previously prestigious London Walks put on by one of their own clubs.

That said, the main point of writing is to take you to task on your intemperate, ill-informed and completely inaccurate comments on the London Indoor Games held on 25 January at Lee Valley. The race did revert to "A" status this year. The 2014 version, the only year that the event has been held under "B" rules contrary to what you imply, may have been split in to 2 races but the number of athletes involved was THIRTEEN - this year there was 1 race but the number of athletes was FIFTEEN (plus another 10 in the very competitive U15 1000m). And the standard this year was considerably higher - in 2014 the men's race was won by Francisco Reis in 14:10 with only 2 athletes under 15 minutes and more than half slower than 18:50 - this year there were 6 under 15 minutes and the race was won by Callum Wilkinson in 12:28 with Francisco faster than in 2014 but only third (not that you could be bothered to publish the result this year even though Francisco is a member of your own club!).

In earlier years, in "A" races, 2011 produced 26 finishers, 2012 20, with 5 of them under 14 minutes (!), and 2013 18, being won by Ilford Olympian Neringa Adietyte who had actually been beaten in the star-studded field assembled the previous year. So much for the benefits of demoting the race to "Domestic" status in 2014.

The London Games is a premier athletics event and not a mass participation opportunity. It is often used by international athletes to open their winter

season. It is a fantastic chance to showcase our sport and from this point of view the standard of our races over recent years has been excellent. This year's race was no exception. We had the advantage of being moved to the younger age-groups day of events as opposed to previous years so our captive audience was in the 12-15 age-group. There were many comments on the standard of walking, in particular the technical skills and fitness levels demonstrated by the younger walkers being brought through at those two centres of excellence being overseen by Verity Snook and Noel Carmody. Those older athletes who competed did not seem to let the side down either, I hope.

Of course there were only 2 athletes aged between 20 and 50 but we have to accept that that is a lost generation (or even two) - the future is in building on the excellent work being done by these coaches and others. Race walking (as opposed to Walking) is a highly technical event. Like the Pole Vault, Steeplechase and Triple Jump it is not for everyone and requires a high level of commitment to reach even a decent level of performance. It is highly detrimental to our profile to be seen to need an easing of the rules in order to attract competitors - and the London Games is certainly not the place for it - it is a showcase event and should be treated accordingly.

Steve Allen

Adds Hon Ed: The above, from Barnet's version of Steve Allen, mentions not publicising results. Essex Walker usually only publishes National and Essex Championship events and, in past years, Essex League results. There's no point in duplicating endless results which are available in Race Walking Record (now re-launched) and on the www.racewalkingrecord.co.uk website. Also being issued 2 monthly considerably limits available space. Nowadays only a tiny percentage of Essex Walker's vast readership are active race walkers, so most readers prefer articles and - yes - reports covering past times.

BILL SUTHERLAND WRITES IN SUPPORT OF STEVE ALLEN

Thank God we have at last got someone else backing what I have said for years. Unless there is a radical change of approach to the recruitment of new walkers, coaches and fixtures by the RWA race walking as we know has little or no future. I have put my ideas in detail to you and the SRWA and now I await some action. It is no good just talking about the present situation we all know. Look what the Park Run Organiser has done in 10 years!

Bill Sutherland

IAAF WALKING COMMITTEE 8th FEBRUARY

The IAAF Competition Director said at the meeting of the IAAF Walking Committee last Sunday there is no truth in the rumours that athletics will lose events in 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The IOC is proposing a reduction in competitor numbers from 2000 to 1800 which means about 4 athletes per event. Prospective IAAF President's Sebastian Coe and Sergey Bukba have stated they will protect track and field competitions.

Peter Marlow

OPINION EXPRESSED

That's positive news from IAAF. I'm sure, like many, I wonder if there will be any move to shift the next two editions of the World Cup from Russia?

Andi Drake

ESSEX NEWSLETTER FEB/MAR 2015

In the latest edition of the Newsletter, an article titled "Centenary Occasion" was not quite accurately reported. I would like to put the record straight. This event was not actually the Centenary of North Shields Polytechnic, which I happened to attend in 2003 (Marion was in Australia at the time). It was in fact merely the Annual Prize/Presentation night and for the first time ever Race Walking was to be the theme to celebrate the rich history of Poly walkers both past and present. When you consider past Poly walkers such as Tommy Payne, Olympians Ralph Harrison and Ian McCombie, Marion Fawkes and George Nibre, the Club is rightly proud of its past and it was decided to invite Ian, George, Keith Harrison (Ralph's grandson), Marion, Ann Irving and myself to be guests of honour for the night. However, Ian couldn't attend as he was going to his Law Firm's annual dinner and George had to cancel a few days before the event due to his wife's illness.

This left 4 of us looking forward to raising the profile of the sport on the night. However, when the Master of Ceremonies stood up he made a complete hash of it. He started off by mentioning Ian was a prominent Lawyer who he had been told had done quite well in the sport then mentioned George who he said was a promising young high jumper who converted to race walking with some success. He then mentioned that Marion was a promising walker who missed out going to the Olympics as the event was not on the programme and finally me who apparently only took up walking because of a dodgy knee. No mention of Keith or Ann!! To make matters worse, he didn't even point to where we were sitting and left everyone scouring the room and wondering where we were.

I can only say that I was thankful that Ian and George didn't go as I would have felt embarrassed

dragging them all the way up to the North East for what turned out to be a damp squib. I did eventually receive an apology from the Organizer (who couldn't be there on the night) but if your own Club can't get it right, it doesn't auger well for the future of Walking.

Peter Fawkes

Adds Hon Ed: This account was published from info supplied ... so happy to put the record straight. So sorry to read that this function didn't quite live up to expectations. By the way ... that M/C wasn't me!

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG

To whoever was responsible for emailing me the Essex Walker ... I send my heartfelt thanks. As for me, I am pleased to announce that I have fully recovered from my surgery, and now am looking optimistically to the future and to taking-up where I left-off. Nowadays, coaching is my passion, so I am readily available to all those that are prepared to work extremely hard ... and perhaps, with my dedicated help they might achieve their dreams.

Barry Ingarfield

BARRY INGARFIELD'S RETURN

That is the best news I have heard for a long time! No mean performer at 50 Kms Walk and don't we need the likes of him around now. Bad news for Race Walking to hear Edmonton, Canada has dropped out of the race to hold the 2022 Commonwealth Games, so it's Durban, South Africa, now firm favourites who have very few Race Walkers. 22 Russian race walkers now named as doping offenders with one Major Games Champion passing away at 45 with a heart attack. The real shame is that over the last 10 years Russia have been instrumental in raising the World Class Standard by cheating and putting the medals out of the reach of anyone other than cheats or runners!

Bill Sutherland

LONDON OPEN WALKS 2015

Thanks to all competitors, helpers and officials who were at Hillingdon yesterday for the "London". We were free of snow, hail and earthquakes after all. Mark Easton's photographs can be found at <http://markeaston.zenfolio.com/f766407746> The elderly Sikh(?) gentleman who appears in a couple of the images was nothing to do with us, but perhaps Hillingdon AC would like to sign him up for next time; his knees seemed to be straight, anyway! A set of earphone-type things were left behind by someone; if the owner would like to contact us, we can arrange to return them. Once again, thanks for your support; we'll see you next year.

Peter Cassidy & Pauline Wilson

LETTING OPPORTUNITY

Thanks to Tony, for distribution, and Dave and all concerned for the continued compilation of this excellent publication. I am both delighted and disappointed about the news of the Euro event in Murcia – delighted that such a prestigious event will be taking place almost on our doorstep, for our house in Spain is in Murcia, only about an hour by bus from the eponymous capital city of the region; disappointed because the date clashes with that of the Euro Masters event in Italy for which we had already booked flights and accommodation. Still, if anyone wants to go to Murcia and needs accommodation ... house to let!

Cath Duhig

SHANE DONNELLY RIP

Sadly I advise you and your readers of the passing of Shane Donnelly on 17 January 2015 at the age of 59. Shane had battled cancer over the past 6 years. Shane did a couple of 'stints' race walking in England during the 1980's and represented NZ at the 1983 World Championships (Helsinki) in the 20km and the 1990 Commonwealth Games 30km in Auckland. The turnout for his funeral, in excess of 500, was testimony to the high regard and respect that Shane was held in. Shane actively maintained his contacts with past and present NZ race walkers here in NZ and his funeral was somewhat of a reunion of the athletes of the 1970–1990's. Those in attendance who have had the pleasure of experiencing the race walking scene in England included Kevin Taylor, Shaun Sullivan, Mike Parker, Graham Seatter, Peter Fox, Anne Judkins, Keith Olsthorn and myself.

Ross Pilkington

EMAILS JOHN BORGARS

I (as a member of a club competing against Belgrave and therefore not conceivably regarded as prejudiced in their favour) should like to second John Hall's letter. I witnessed Kay Koeslag finishing the race and was, a little earlier, briefed by one of the judges that the timekeepers would keep the clocks going so that the slower finishers would know their times. I agree with him that her performance was admirable.

I also remember a few years ago I entered a 50k Essex League race at Earl's Colne which was used as a (? Olympic ? Commonwealth Games) trial

from which I gained exemption and strained a calf muscle when hitting a hole in the road: I was "classified" when the judges decided I wasn't going to finish in time ('cos I couldn't have *run* the last 2k in the remaining time). It seems a pity that this option was not pursued if they did not want to record times outside the schedule: to say Kay "DNF" is just wrong.

John Borgars

AN OLYMPIAN'S NEWS

I read that race from Victoria Park has been moved to another venue. That's a shame! At the moment I'm in training camp in Guadix, Spain, training real hard for my upcoming season. I'm planning on coming to London in late April.

Neringa Aidietyte

GREETINGS FROM THE GAMBIA

How you doing now and thanks again for the Essex Walker and the numerous inclusions relating to me and Hart House and the interesting articles and, as I have said before, well done for making the effort to get people on the road (pounding the sod!). But even if I was there I don't know if I could be 'participating' with a handful of geriatric looking geriatrics! So thanks for your contribution to the Essex Walkers Hart House Christmas appeal on behalf of all here!

PS Isn't the "100 years Afoot" a good read?

Geoff Hunwicks

TOPICAL CONNECTION

Sarah Lightman's husband, Leon Hunt, was Site Supervisor of the Leicester University Archaeological Team on the two Richard III digs and he did the initial desk based assessment to work out where to dig so he was involved right from the beginning and will be there at the end for the re-internment.

Leon supported Sarah at her brilliant Southend and Lingfield 100 mile successes with Sarah's family. There are lots on this, just type in Leon Hunt and Richard III in your search engine.

Dave Hoben

Adds Carl Lawton: My company built a temporary studio being used for Funeral Service television transmissions and also camera platforms.

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