



Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION

Preliminary Notice of AGM

Notice is hereby given that due to Covid19 restrictions, the Annual General Meeting of the Race Walking Association will be held as a virtual (online) event on Saturday 30 January 2021. The RWA acknowledge that online meetings are difficult for a number of people so a method of advance participation is being implemented to help achieve inclusion as far as is reasonably possible. This will result in slight modification to the usual timeline and is detailed further within this notice. The main feature is that all reports will be circulated prior to meeting (but will not be read out in the meeting). Any comments on reports received before AGM will be read out at AGM followed by debate or discussion of the report if appropriate. Votes may be submitted in writing or electronically prior to the meeting and will be anonymous to the meeting. The Honorary General Secretary (HGS) will receive and validate advance votes. As current president, the HGS will chair the meeting and, as per the rules of the association, will only vote where a casting vote is required. Advance votes must be in writing and will be available for scrutiny by the other officers of the RWA after the meeting. Voting in the meeting will be open (ie not-anonymous), advance votes will be then be added after the live vote to obtain the result. Votes for affiliated bodies will only be accepted (both in advance and on the day) from delegates who have been formally authorised by the secretary of the body (or other official duly acting on behalf of the secretary). Letters of authority may be sent either electronically or by post but must be received the HGS by the specified date. Any motions for consideration must be submitted by an affiliated club or body, area committee or the general committee of the association. If requested, the officers of the association will be prepared to advise on the structure and wording of motions before formal submission. Any such advice will be purely of a technical or procedural nature and should not be taken as indicating any opinion on the merits of any intended motion. If there is only a single nomination for any post, then the nominated candidate will be declared elected unopposed. The formal notice and agenda of the AGM which will detail all motions and nominations received and will be circulated to affiliated clubs and other members of the association by Saturday 16 January. The formal notice will give full details of voting rights and procedures as laid out in the rules of the association. The deadline for receipt of amendments to nominations, for receipt of reports (officers and areas etc) and for receipt of letters of authority will be Saturday 23 January. Any amendments to motions and all reports will be circulated on Sunday 24 January. The deadline for advance votes and comments on reports to be read out in the meeting will be Friday 29 January.

Colin Vesty Honorary General Secretary

1 Crossley Close, Barrow Upon Soar, Loughborough. LE12 8QL

Tel: 07857 246803 E-mail: wasecretary@Yahoo.co.uk Web: www.racewalkingassociation.com

CENTURIONS' AGM - ADMISSION DETAILS

Essex Walker's readership has a high percentage of Centurions, and we remind all that an Annual General Meeting is to be held on **Saturday 23 January commencing 1.00 pm** ("doors open" 12.30 pm). For obvious reasons it's on "Zoom". Honorary Secretary Sue Clements (C950) promises her popular annual AGM *picture show* is - again - being made available. A "Zoom" connection will run from 12.30 pm with the gavel coming down to commence business at 1.00 pm. For Centurions seeking admission, a code and password are required as per "Zoom" procedures. If wanting to participate, or just observe, you'll need this information. Needless to say, such information is only for Centurion members. Request your admission "ticket" to Sue at: susanclements950@btopenworld.com in good time please.

ESSEX COUNTY AA - AGM

This was held, as usual in December, but on "Zoom". I've tried to get a brief report of business conducted but without success. One gathers all Office holders remained in post. *Can any reader add to this?*

OBITUARY TO PAUL NIHILL by Rev Dr Roy Lodge MBE

I write this obituary immediately on my return from my local gym having spent an hour on the cross trainer that I dedicated to Paul's memory as I thought of his dedication, courage, stamina and discipline as one of our greatest Race Walkers. Along with Ken Matthews, Paul Nihill was someone I looked up to as a role model and gained enormous inspiration from his determination to reach the pinnacle of sporting excellence.

Despite his many athletic achievements as a Race Walker he was unpretentious, warm and affable. He was Olympian, yet the twinkle of humour always lurked.

He was also extremely courteous, with old fashioned charm. Beneath the impassive countenance lurked strong passions which belied the public image. He above all combined impenetrable discretion with a silky intelligence, extremely discreet and extremely skilful in his discretion. Such were his qualities that he commanded respect and admiration, friends and colleagues and opponents trusted him, believed in him and had confidence in him as a man who was true to his word and would not let anyone down. In his life he honoured that trust and confidence placed in him and did not let himself, his family or his colleagues down. We give thanks that it was because he felt highly regarded and valued for who he was that he achieved so much. The Race Walking world owes him a great debt of gratitude, for what he gave of his life in time, energy and dedication.

Others will write of his outstanding achievements in the domestic and on the international stage. If there is one race that I recall with fond memories it was the Calne Six Mile Open Race Walk on the 11 October 1969. It was the nearest I ever came to Paul in second place with Roger Mills third. Our times were 42.09; 43.12; and 43.16 respectively. My second prize vase will now have a poignant memory.

When I heard of Paul's death I thought immediately of three lines of Edith Sitwell in her poem, "Eurydice": "Love is not changed by death, and nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest." We give thanks that he has left us a legacy of laughter and happy memories – warm hearted with a tough core – human warm memories from a very human warm man.

In the annals of Race Walking history he will be immortalised and ever remembered as a Race Walking legend.

Our deepest sympathy to his beloved children and extended family members, we share their grief and honour his memory.

Rev Dr Roy Lodge MBE

PAUL NIHILL MBE - a professionally written record courtesy of Peter Matthews

Vincent **Paul NIHILL** (GBR) (**b. 5 Sep 1939 Colchester**) died on 15 December at Medway Hospital, Gillingham, Kent, aged 81. He won a record 27 UK national walking titles between 1963 and 1975: on the track, he was AAA champion at 2 miles 1965, 3000m 1970-1 and 1975, 7 miles 1965-6 and 1968, 10,000m 1969; and on the roads he won RWA 10 miles 1965, 1968-9, 1972; 20km 1965-6, 1968-9, 1971-2; 20 miles 1963-5, 1968-9, 1971; 50k 1964, 1968, 1971; not only was he the only man to win at all the four road distances, he won them all in one year, 1968. He also won the Irish 1M title in 1962 and 1964 (in an Irish record 6:31.4). A member of Surrey Walking Club, he won the 50km silver medal at his first Olympics in 1964 and he won 35 successive walks races from December 1967 to his failure to finish the Olympic 50km in 1968 in the heat and high altitude of Mexico City, but then won a further 51 consecutive races to June 1970, including the European 20km in 1969. He took the European 20km bronze medal in 1971 and was 6th at 20km and 9th at 50km at the 1972 Olympics and was 30th in the 1976 20k. 2nd

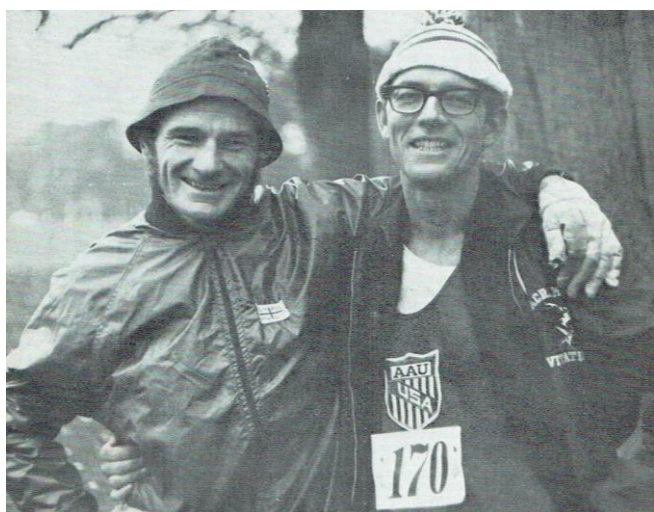
Lugano Cup 20k 1963. 15 GB internationals 1963-76. In his career 1960-77 he won 355 races. He was awarded MBE in 1976.

He set world track bests for 3000m 11:51.1 (1971) and 5000m 20:14.2 (1972), and road 20k 1:24:50 (1972). His numerous other British records and bests included track: 1M 6:17.0 (1970), 30k 2:28:44.0 (1972), 20 miles 2:40:42.6 (1972), and road: 10M 1:08:18 (1972), 20k 1:24:50 (1972), 20 miles 2:30:35 (1971), 50k 4:11:31.2 (1964). Other pbs: track 2M 13:16.0 (1969), 5M 34:25.0 (1969), 7M 49:03.0 (1969), 10,000m 42:34.6 (1972), 1 hour 13.671m (1969); road 10k 42:17 (1972), 30k/35k 2:23:54/2:49:53 (1972).

Peter Matthews, Editor Athletics International and International Athletics Annual

PAUL NIHILL

PICTURE GALLERY

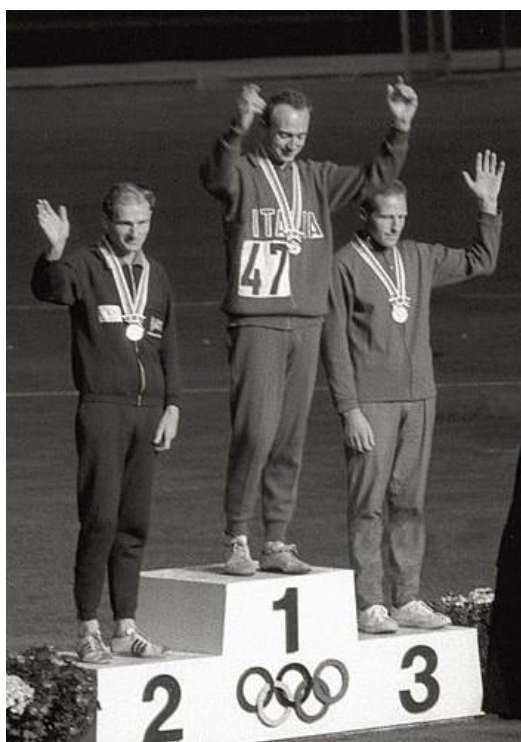


PAUL NIHILL with RON LAIRD in 1971
(Supplied by Trevor McDermot)



Paul Nihill racing against the Russians at Battersea Park in June 1966 over 20K. Nikolai Smaga (No 3) 1st 90.40, Boris Karolavich (No 1) 2nd 92.55, Paul Nihill 3rd 93.03 and Ron Wallwork 4th 94.50.

(Photo courtesy of Brian Keegan)



- *Photo left:* Paul Nihill, 50k Walk Silver medallist, Olympic Games, Tokyo 1964
- *Photo below:* Paul Nihill (wearing No 30) at the 1965 British Games at the White City Stadium, London



REMEMBERING PAUL NIHILL - PETER SELBY's WORDS

Paul was one of a very select band of race walkers who put our sport at the top of the tree in the 1960s. His achievements as a GB athlete were phenomenal and his Silver Medal in Tokyo (just 17 seconds off of Gold) following on from Don Thompson's gold in Rome 4 years earlier proved the strength and depth we had at 50k. But Paul was equally at home doing 20k or even just 3k.

As a club mate in the 1960s I got to know his back very well almost to the point, when I was close enough ... not very often ... of having a conversation with his shoulder blades. He liked to be in front and made sure that that is where he remained. He particularly enjoyed going up hills and had a knack of getting to the top and where most would take a short breather, he upped the pace by 10%, one reason why he won many races.

Paul started out as a boxer and when he was racing you could sense his jabs especially going uphill until at a certain point in the race he produced the "killer" punch and surge on to victory. I am sure that many of the top walkers at that time (the world over) were beaten by Paul's sheer tenacity, he was not a natural athlete but one whose determination had no equal ... he had a dry and ironic sense of humour but liked nothing better than a good chat after a race. His early progress was very much guided by Dickie Green who did so much for many young walkers and novices whether they be in Surrey Walking Club or the Stock Exchange. Sport generally and athletics in particular then did not show quite the interest or support now offered to our top performers but I suspect Paul may not have wanted it any other way ... Farewell to a truly brilliant walker and athlete ... you inspired many of us.

Peter Selby



TRIBUTE TO PAUL NIHILL MBE RIP

So sad to learn of the passing of Paul Nihill. He was a nice man - a true gentleman - and to my mind the greatest race walker this country has ever produced. Paul, himself, would always give that honour to Ken Matthews. But Ken was a sprinter, whereas Paul could beat anybody from 3K to 50k. And just think of his longevity - 14 years as an International - 4 Olympics - a record 27 National titles - and then continuing to take part way after his best days. I remember Dave Ainsworth ringing me up many years after I'd stopped racing to say "You must take part in the 400th Essex League Race". I replied that I had not appeared in any of the previous 399 editions but turned up to be delighted that Paul had also entered. I first met Paul in late 1971. He won a race in Brighton on the Saturday, then stayed overnight to do a 40 mile training spin with Dave Boxall and myself. I prayed that he wouldn't talk about his projected trek across the States but out came the news. This was a hammer blow to me because having walked Lands' End to John O'Groats in 1971 and joined in that year's London-Brighton [unofficially 15th in 9 hours 23 mins], my chief reason for walking was that I intended to take on Bruce Tulloh's 54 day record from LA to NY. I had not told this to anyone in the sport. How now could I undertake this and undercut my hero? I confided all to Alan Buchanan who said 'Just tell him'. And when I did, Paul could not have been nicer. After I had returned from America, Paul invited me to his home in Thornton Heath and after our training sessions he would leave me to sleep overnight on his couch. He didn't have to do this but what a boost it was to an aspiring walker.

For a while in the 60s, Paul was as good as anyone in the World so it is sad that he didn't win an Olympic Gold. Mind you, it was no disgrace to finish second to Abdon Pamich in the Tokyo 50k in 1964. The thin air of Mexico in 1968 was too much for the great Ron Clarke - and for Paul as well. He told me that his planning had been wrong - he shouldn't have done the 50k but gone for the

20k instead. A year later he was completely dominant when winning the European 20k Gold in Athens. In the 70s we had an, ultimately successful campaign to Keep Walking in the Olympics which centred on a March to Parliament. Going into a Government Minister's office seemed quite daunting - but not with Paul aboard. The Minister for Sport, Dennis Howell, was one of Paul's biggest fans. Paul said one thing to me that I'll never forget - he had no time for any sportsman who was great on the field of play but a complete jerk off it. A boxer in his younger days, Paul Nihill always played by the Queensbury Rules.

John Lees

VINCENT PAUL NIHILL MBE, RIP - READERS' TRIBUTES

Expressions of sadness have been received from many, including: Andy O'Rawe, Tony Perkins, Roger Mills, June Cork, Peter Addison. Other readers' commented:

- "I got pretty close to Paul during our racing together, but the closest I got was in the European Champs 1969. We were going along with leaders - I thought it was a hard pace when Paul tapped my shoulder and said "Webby, *there's a break, there's a break*". I replied, "Go with them Paul - I'm at my limits". Paul went on to win the gold medal which showed what a great athlete he was. Thanks Paul for the great memories. **John Webb**
- "Very sad indeed. I did not meet him but knew of him. When I started walking they said I had a similar style. Certainly not the ability." **Richard Cole**
- RIP dear Paul. Sad to lose yet another great race walker who was simply the best. **Ray Middleton**
- RIP Paul Nihill, an athletics legend whose sporting greatness will never be forgotten. Pleased you had your family with you when it was time to say 'Goodbye'. **Chris Maddocks**
- "Very sad, he was a gentleman and a pleasure to have raced against him. A stylist and in my eyes a true walker." **Carl Lawton**
- "So sad. Whilst I grew up idolising Ken Matthews, Paul was the greatest walker I ever knew and raced against. And he was always encouraging to upstarts like myself." **Tony Taylor**
- "This is more dreadful sad news. Just 3 days before his death he appeared in Kent Sports news - [Walk for Grandad](#). **Chris Foster**
- "That's sad news. There have been so many individuals who have passed away this year." **Dave Gulliver**
- "You must dread opening messages. There will soon be no legends left, but no less sad for that, this news of the passing of such a fine unassuming, supportive athlete just adds to the sense of gloom of this unrelenting year." **Cath Duhig**
- "By an amazing coincidence this afternoon I was watching the Cary Grant film "Walk Don't Run" about a 50km walker in the Tokyo Olympics and was thinking of Paul." **Chris Hobbs**
- "Very sad news about Paul. I hadn't realised his health was so poor." **Steve Uttley**
- "This is sad news indeed. Another great loss and the passing of a stalwart and a great servant to the Race Walking fraternity. Paul's achievements in race walking will long live in the memory. He will not be forgotten." **Glyn Jones**
- "Such sad news. This year just gets worse and worse really." **Hilary McDermott**
- "This has been a bad year, and not just because of Covid. First Jordi Lopart, then Ernesto Canto and Peter Ryan, and now Paul. A true great character who also ran a rock n' roll disco at one stage if I'm not mistaken." **Paul Warburton**
- "Such a shame - he played a major part in the uprising of Havering AC Walking Club in the 70s. Please pass on our deepest condolences from the Robery family." **Ian Robery**
- "That is very sad, although I guess not unexpected as he looked very unwell when I last saw him some 3 - 4 years ago. Another legend departs with no proper send off." **Andy Catton**
- "Very sad - always had fond memories of Paul and he helped me do my fastest ever 6 miler in 46 min 50 sec during one of his many comeback races." **Brian Keegan**
- "Very sad. Sorry to hear this news. Give his family Belgrave Harriers' sympathy and kind regards. A stalwart of race walking!! Very genuine kind person." **Mark Culshaw**
- "This is very sad news indeed, another great champion leaving us." **Olly Flynn**
- "RIP. I missed his glory times but will never forget 'the gov'nor'". **Ed Shillabeer C590**

- “A very sad day for British sport. A true champion that has left his name on the sport of race walking. I had the privilege of watching him on several occasions and marvel at how effortless he made it look. My deepest condolences to the Nihill family.” **Jack Lord**
- “The sad loss of a mighty walker.” **Tim Erickson**
- “I was a fellow club member at Surrey WC (introduced by the late Dickie Green). I remember chasing him home in the Battersea 10. He was quite surprised - he shook my hand at the finishing line and said ‘You've improved a bit for a former scrubber!’” **John Nye**
- “Sad news indeed. Paul was our last living Olympic race walking medallist. Here's hoping that 2021 is a much better year than 2020.” **Guy Goodair**
- “Why is it that we are always being told these sad tales at this time of the year? Paul was such a great ambassador for our sport and will be greatly missed.” **Laurie Kelly**
- “Sad news about Paul but not unexpected. I am putting news on the Centurions Worldwide website as he was well known to Centurions and non-Centurions alike.” **Kathy Crilley**
- “My boyhood hero.” **George Nibre**
- “How much worse can 2020 get? All of our friends and heroes are dying. I suppose at our age that's what happens but you never think it would happen to our great Paul Nihill. I'm so sad. I started race walking in 1968, at that time Paul was out there in front, the first ever great athlete I met. PAUL NIHILL, just saying his name brings back memories. That little blue book, Athletics Weekly (AW) always had Paul's race results and race reports. Paul was a race walking hero long before I got into the sport, one time 20k world record holder. All we ever saw in a race of Paul was his back, the nearest I ever got to him was 2nd in the Inter County track championship. Very sad. RIP Paul.” **Don Cox**
- “A massive loss for British race walking being a champion through and through with such a humble, ever inspiring attitude. A fantastic racer from short to long distances. Sincere condolence to his family. The [article](#) in The Times brought tears to our eyes. What a star Paul Nihill was and I truly know he was a 'beacon of inspiration' to me and so many others reaching for the heights in race walking.” **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- “Sad news. Paul was a walking legend - 4 Olympics winning silver in 1964 and European champion in 1969. I always remember him with his cap and hankie round his neck.” **Ernie Forsyth**
- “I had heard (the news) on local radio, also his family were doing a 50k walk on the Sunday prior to raise money for the care home he was in ... a sad loss.” **Dick Hyland C340**
- “So sorry to learn about Paul. He and I had some tight races in the early days, then he had a knee operation and I never got near him after! I also remember him on the Vidarians Club 20 miles competing with Abdon Pamich shortly before the Olympics where Pamich beat him for the gold medal.” **Gerry Grosse**
- “Paul Nihill's death has affected many people who admired one of our great race walkers.” **Chris Flint**
- “Very sad to hear this news. With Colin Young, two giants of our sport have passed away in recent times.” **Len Ruddock**

THE FINAL CURTAIN

Paul's last competitive walking race was at Moulton in June 2013 where he completed 5 testing miles in 58.36. Paul was able to “*bow out*” when sampling the best of race walking's heyday - that being a traditional Saturday afternoon road walk on a public highway. It was a nice day on a course which took a good number of enthusiastic participants through the delightful Suffolk countryside. Paul announced beforehand it'd be his last race - even though we'd heard this a few times before, he enjoyed warm start line applause.

Paul's desire was to be seen as having had an active career spanning **2** London Olympiads (1948 and 2012). He had published running results from before those 1948 Olympics as Paul was “*in the running*” before his race walking career commenced. In 2012 he was unwell for much of the time - so little was seen of him that year. But he was determined to race once **after** our 2012 Games so he could claim his career indeed did *span 2 London Olympiads*. He came to Moulton to

complete one final race - and, this time, it was his last. Looking at a lengthy result sheet, many "Essex walkers" were present on that occasion when Paul crossed a race walking finish line for a final time.

PAUL NIHILL MBE MISSED OUT

Shamefully BBC's "Sports Personality-of-the-Year" omitted Paul's name from their annual tribute list of those who've passed-on during the year, despite being told twice. This for one who was the first male GB athlete to gain selection at 4 Olympics and was 1969 "Athlete-of-the-Year. We're aware letters/emails of complaint have been sent. As for that dismal programme, it lost a massive 50% of viewers from the December 2019 show - and that year was also well down. It once was compulsive viewing, but who wants to watch overpaid BBC so called "stars" touching their forelocks to those from the well-paid world of sport, as a tax exile speeds off with the main award. One of the nominated "super six" was Tyson Fury. At the start Gabby Logan informed a dwindling number of viewers, "Tyson Fury decided not to engage with Sports Personality-of-the-Year". *Who can blame him?* **DA**

YES - HE DID IT!

A race walker by the name of **Ryan** did win the **Ryan Cup!** Often placed, Pete's only outright victory in this long-established representative fixture came over 10K at Tally Ho (Birmingham) in 2004 when clocking 49.30 in a British Police team - behind him was Dwayne Butterly (Civil Service) in 50.05. *Just one of so many commendable performances.*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? - CHRIS BENT

Chris was a key player in our Essex race walking scene as he used to stage the Essex Schools Walking Championships, which were held annually on a tight circuit around quiet back roads near Cedar Hall School (where he was Headmaster) in Thundersley. Those were the days when walking talent came from our County's schools' scene! Chris permitted his school facilities to be used as changing rooms and for post-race presentations/catering etc. Annually he staged one of our 12 Essex League events around that same quite near traffic-free course. The race he staged was always close to our Festive Season, and there was always a table selling Christmas cards/calendars etc with profits to going to a worthy cause - to assist his community-based special school. Some of Chris's students turned out in our races and one, Oliver, was tipped for future success - Chris mentioned his name as one to watch for, when giving a "live" interview to Roger Buxton Essex Radio. The reason Chris was being interviewed was as he'd just won our Essex League's individual title. He was part of a successful Southend-on-Sea AC race walking squad.

Before moving to Essex, to take up an appointment, he'd already made his name as a formidable athlete in the East Midlands with the famous Leicester Walking Club. He twice completed 100 Miles events in under 24 hours, his first being at the 1980 Leicester 100 Miles when he clocked 20:39.17 to claim No 694. It was some race as 98 started (a record for Leicester promoted 100s) with 64 finishing including winner C464 all-time great Dave Boxall (17.45.10), who won a UK 100 Miles for a then record 6th time - breaking the tape 20 minutes' ahead of Centurions' newcomer Tony Collins C688 (18.04.51). The gap would have been closer had Tony not gone off-course during the night. 1980s race was the first on a new course, which started in the City centre before heading west for 13 miles to the village of Congerstone where 7 laps of a 10-and-half miles' circuit awaited the field. After completion of these laps those still going were directed back to a finish line in the City. Among 28 new Centurions were 2 from the south: North Essex-based Long Distance Walkers' Association protagonist C709 Mike Powell-Davies (23:15.11) and C714 M R Booth of the Borough of Enfield Harriers (as then called) in 23:37.56. Before 1980 all Leicester road 100s were from Leicester-to-Skegness on even years between 1958-and-1978 (inclusive). The Congerstone was used on even years from 1980-to-1988 before switching to a course based on Hungarton village from 1990-to-1994. In addition the Club staged a track 24 Hours on a brand new tartan track in Leicester which the late Colin Young won in 1969.



Chris relocated to Buxton in Derbyshire, where he's now Chairman of Buxton Athletic Club, and also a Club Welfare Officer. Buxton are really doing well as they were East Midlands Athletic Club-of-the-Year and really hit the jackpot in 2017 when England Athletics named them "National Club-of-the-Year". Wouldn't it be nice if the natural enthusiasm of Chris could stir up interest in race walking at his current Club? We wish Chris well in all his does for athletics.

Iford AC Who's Who ... BOB DOBSON ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

You've put much back into athletics by officiating and serving as Race Walking Association President – after a 1972 shameful Olympic omission, your event not staged 1976 (only Olympics since its 1932 introduction) and a 1986 Commonwealth Games' snub when Wales could have got you there for the price a train ticket, how did you managed to get over severe setbacks to show so much genuine keenness for race walking?

- I suppose I got used to disappointments but after failing to make the 1980 Olympics I kept my momentum going by notching up numerous appearances in specific races, winning Essex medals, and "Masters" titles. I also moved up in distance and tried to set records at the multi distance events.

Your great win in the 2001 "Hedgethorpe Memorial 100" at Colchester's Lower Castle Park was the closest finish in UK ultra-distance racing (apart from a contrived dead-heat between the two Browns) as you so narrowly defeated Richard Brown, becoming our oldest winner of a UK National race walking title. What do you recall from that event?

- My win in 2001 came as a surprise. I had entered in tribute to John Hedgethorpe but it was 15 years on since my 24 hours track win and only a few 100kms races in between. So it was going to be a test of endurance. The multi lap out and back helped because I could keep my eye on the opposition. Richard Brown had all the multi distance experience and was my main threat. I knew he had the ability to finish strongly so I had to keep focused. Only when he gave me a "high five" on the penultimate lap as we crossed in opposite directions did I sense he had conceded defeat.

Is British race walking close to a proverbial cliff edge – or do you see light at the end of the tunnel?

- We have seen a massive loss of young talent over the years but now there is a glimmer of hope with age group championships and a more professional set up at the top for our seniors. But above all UK Athletics, European, World and Olympic Athletics Organisations MUST maintain our sport at various distances. Race Walking is an endurance event and should cater for all. The move towards ditching the 50kms, and in some cases the 20kms (Commonwealth Games) is a tragedy.

What made you pick Race Walking as opposed to Running? Who introduced you to the sport?

- At school my running was confined to short distance and the occasional cross country, but when working I spent a summer season competing for my Office Team in the London Civil Service Athletic League (LCSAL). At no time was I fast enough to call myself a sprinter but I did try a number of events and became a "jack of all trades – master of none". In one of those LCSAL meets I tried the 3k walk and to my surprise didn't come last. A fellow pukka racewalker thought I had done well and when I got home I told my parents. The next day my father told one of his work colleagues – an ex-Essex Beagle Racewalker – that I had done a racewalk and he then introduced me to Essex Beagles where I served my "apprenticeship" under the guidance of Phil Everard and Ron Gum.

I had 6 months as a junior before reaching 21 and thus then competing as a senior. As I progressed with some of the Beagles Seniors particularly Colin Young I was intrigued by his stories of endurance and thus my appetite was whetted.

I also got to meet the great Jim Peters. I suppose I also had a niche for endurance for as a former swimmer not fast enough to aspire to International Level – thus retired at 18 – I had thoughts of swimming the channel until I read a book about it which quickly dispelled these thoughts.

Have you ever done any running races?

- School sports and Office Sports. Nothing of note.

What was it like training around the streets in the 70s?

- A lot better than it is now. I had several big routes where you could train on the pavement for miles without encountering cars or lorries parked on the pavements, building site obstructions, skateboarders, cyclists or scooters. There was more respect and tolerance in those days.

I see you were capped twice by England and twice by Wales. How does that work?

- In 1970 I gained my first International and that was for England at 20 miles in the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. My second England International came in 1990 at 100kms in France. In between I had competed for Great Britain and because I moved to Wales in 1980 I was eligible by residence to compete for Wales in 1981(10k track in Cwmbran) and 1995 (35 Kms in Denmark).

Did you ever race against OLIVER CAVIGLIOLI who represented Thurrock and also France?

- Yes, after my spell at Essex Beagles I competed for Basildon and thus raced with and against Oliver Caviglioli who was also a Basildon member.

Greatest memory from Race Walking?

- A difficult one, as being in the sport for 57 years there are many memories and many that I have forgotten. But what always inspired me in my early career was watching on TV Ken Matthews winning the 1964 Olympic 20k title in Tokyo. The TV clip was repeated over the years and I know I saw it at least 25 times.

What has happened to all your trophies?

- They rarely see the light of day. But I do look at them from time to time and wish I could repeat the performances that won them for me.

Did you follow any nutritional guidance in your halcyon days?

- Yes. I learnt about the so called “Bleed Out Diet” from Ron Hill (carbohydrate abstinence followed by carbohydrate excess loading). I spent a weekend with him when we went to Munich in 1971 for the pre-Olympic Meet (marathon and 50Kms walk).

What was the first single and album you ever bought?

- As a teenager I was a great fan of Adam Faith. I bought several singles, saw his film with Shirley Anne Field and bought the album Beat Girl. I still have the album like a lot of my other old LP's. I am a hoarder who rarely throws anything away.

Do you think the Tokyo Olympics will ACTUALLY go ahead?

- I think they will go ahead because the Japanese are fanatical and have invested too much money to forfeit them. But of course the IOC will have the final word.

What should happen to drug cheats?

- There has to be a great deterrent. They have been around too long and I have raced against them in the 1970's and beyond. I am all for a lifetime ban.

Do you keep in touch with your Race Walking Ilford Colleagues?

- Yes, definitely. Although I live in Cardiff I am still an East End Boy and proud of my Essex roots.

What are your thoughts on International Race Walker Tom Bosworth and how do you feel he will perform in next Year's Olympics?

- I remember judging Tom when he first came on the scene as a scrawny schoolboy with sparrow-like legs. Unlike so many of our past talented youngsters he has stayed the course and showed a determination to get to the top. His success and his character have not only endeared him to the public but he has brought Racewalking into focus with Mainstream Athletics. Sometimes I think he needs to control his exuberance and if he uses his head he could get a top 6 place in the Olympics.

Have you ever been disqualified in a major event? Do you think the rules are complex for those not involved in the sport?

- Never in an International Event and only once in a UK National 50kms in 2012 when nearly 70 years old - my legs did not straighten to the complete satisfaction of 3 judges so I was DQ'd. Yes, the rules are too complex for non-walkers to master. Not only is technique a big issue but now we have to contend with yellow cautions, DQ recommendations, a Penalty Zone with time penalties and Chief Judge's sole discretion in the last 100 metres. How can the public follow that?

MORE MEMORIES OF PETE RYAN

Further to the sad news about Pete, I had, completely by coincidence, found the attached newspaper article (below). I thought it appropriate to share it, should you want to publish it.

Len Ruddock



IN SHOT

Thanks to George Nibre for a great 1978 photograph taken in Mexico City at an Olympic training camp. From left to right are George, legendary Alberto Juantorena, Pete Ryan and Leonard Silva (100m silver/Moscow 1980).



Wonderful memories

EXCELLENT NEW YEAR VIEWING

An in-depth interview with Ron Wallwork MBE is available for free on YouTube - it's 54 minutes and 25 seconds of pure enjoyment. Here what Tony Taylor says, "Great interview with Ron Wallwork". Here's your direct link, so grab a cup of tea or coffee, sit down, relax - and then enjoy. [lancswalkingclub.com/2020/11/18/ron-wallwork-interviewed-his-humanity-shines-through/](https://www.lancswalkingclub.com/2020/11/18/ron-wallwork-interviewed-his-humanity-shines-through/)

SAD FAREWELL

Essex Walker published a list of nearly 150 former and present race walkers who showed-up on The Mall for that memorable IAAF Championship Walks' Day in 2017. So popular was the promotion as more than those listed also attended. Sadly, one of those who participated has passed-on. **Anders Hansson** (Sweden) had died aged 28 with cancer. On that day he was 28th in 3:58.00 in a race which saw 33 make the finishing line with 8 getting the dreaded chop and another 6 dropping out of this 50K along the way. There was also 1 non-starter (Brendan Boyce). Anders also raced the 2015 IAAF Championship 50K in Beijing (DNF) and the 2018 European Championship in Berlin when he was 23rd in 4:11.36 as 28 finished, 9 dropped-out and just one got a red disc. We're sorry to hear such news of one who left us at such a young age.

THE ESSEX WALKER JOURNEY

"Essex Walker" Issue No 1 hit the streets in June 1970 as an initiative of its first Honorary Editor - the late Reg Wells. His opening line was, "In these monthly Newsletters it is my intention to bring to county walkers as early as possible, full results or all walks concerning county walkers." Reg

added, "Comments are strictly my own unless otherwise shown and views printed must be in no way taken as official Essex AAA or RWA unless so authorised".

Issue No 1 named 4 **star** walkers worthy of praise, to wit: Oliver Caviglioli for setting a French 10,000m record of 45:50.6 when coming 4th in the Southern 10,000m, Bob Dobson when coming a brilliant 2nd in the Leicester Mercury 20 Miles (Bob clocked 2:38.02 behind winner Ron Wallwork 2:37.22 with Shaun Lightman 3rd in 2:39.04), John Hedgethorpe for his 3rd (198.600) in an International 24 Hours, Roger Mills for winning the Southern 10,000m in 45:03.8 and Colin Young for coming a very close second (204.500 behind winner Karl Abolins 205.160) in that International 24 Hours. From this eminent short list, Colin was named "**Walker-of-the-Month**". This edition also expressed sympathy for Roger as having been selected to represent GB in a 20K event against Romania, his race was cancelled due to flooding.

Being a June publication, it featured May's fixtures including our RWA National 20K Championship at Crystal Palace won by Belgrave Harrier Wilf Wesch in 91.47 - two years' later Wilf attained Olympian status at the same distance. Ron Wallwork, 2nd in 92.12, led Lancashire Walking Club to team honours when backed-up by Messrs Eyre 7, Taylor 11 and Hopkins 18. Every position counted as they pipped Belgrave by 1 point. Belgrave's other scorers were Messrs Lawton 10, Middleton 12 and Coates 16. Basildon were 3rd led home in that position by Peter Fullager in 93.13 and backed-up by Messrs Dobson 15, Flynn 27 and McCormack 32.

In addition to those mentioned above in the Southern 10,000m others at the front were Bill Sutherland 2nd in 45.09, Phil Embleton 3rd in 45:39.4 and Ilford AC's Australian member Frank Clark in 46.00.8. Two interesting younger age group races published were from an annual Essex Beagles' meeting in Barking's Mayesbrook Park. Over 1 Mile convincing winners of the Boys Under 16 and Youths Under 21 events were respectively Laurence Dordoy 7.39 and Olly Flynn 6.52. In 1970 the Inter-Counties Track Championship was a big deal as quality fields assembled for both 3,000 and 10,000 metres. Essex representatives made the frame at both distances. The shorter race order was Bob Hughes (Worcestershire), Olly Caviglioli (Essex) and Wilf Wesch (Surrey) recording 12:25.8, 12:27.4 and 12.38 respectively. The longer event result saw a 1-2-3 of Wilf Wesch, Bill Sutherland (Middlesex) and Phil Embleton (Essex) clocking 45:42.2, 46:18.2 and 47:41.4 respectively. This meeting was a showcase for our event - sadly nowadays few Counties have race walkers and, twice in recent times we've been slung out, only returning after considerable campaigning with such worthies including Peter Cassidy, Laurie Kelly, Roger Mills and Peter Marlow prominent. If we don't rally troops a 3rd expulsion looms - which might be a case of "*3 strikes and you're out* - for good". Sadly, this entire meeting no longer has the importance it once enjoyed.

Notable journalism in this inaugural edition included an "invitation only" Vancouver Trophy 3,000 metres race held at Ashtons Track. Roger Mills set an event record of 12:29.4 when easily winning from Wolverhampton's P Butler, 13:32.8. The next 3 home also had Essex qualification: Brian Armstrong 13:49.6, Jack Thomas 14:21 and Geoff Hunwicks 14:29 (a result sheet recorded Hunswick - many programme/result sheet compilers misspelt his surname). Roger set a blistering pace from the gun which in-form Wilf Wesch struggled to match before hearing a loud call of his number on lap 3. Based on Steyning over a rural 15 miles' circuit the Metropolitan Police provided the victor in their annual match against Sussex Clubs as Bill Sutherland recorded 2:03.34 leading his Police team (including cadets) to team success. The most popular Essex race was the annual Barking-to-Southend over 33 miles-and-more as 237 started with 113 passing the finish line at Southend United's Roots Hall ground before stopwatches were put away at 7 hours 30 minutes. More were still on our Essex roads determined to at least obtain untimed finishes - while frequent victor Charlie Fogg was dressed and changed much earlier having broken the tape by his 5:12.41 timing. Another long-distance event was an annual Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton which saw legendary Dickie Green's 21st consecutive appearance and his 12th win in the previous 17 years. On this occasion 8:54.22 claimed victory, with Southend-on-Sea AC long-distance aces Jimmy Venn and Ken Tuson completing the frame in 9:08.43 and 9:18.32 respectively as 123 started/65 finished. Sadly 1st and 2nd finishers are no longer with us, but octogenarian Ken still

looks fit, trim and enjoys his runs along healthy north Essex coastal roads. Looking back when Essex Walker first appeared, there were so many 3-figure race walking fields - happy days!

2020 saw a couple of Essex Walker landmarks slip by: In June it was **50 years** since publication of our first edition in June 1970, and during this year our **400th issue** hit the streets. As well as long-serving Reg Wells, Phil Everard edited a few issues when Reg was indisposed and Phil Embleton sat in the Editor's chair for a few issues when his health began to fade and he no longer spent hours training and racing - Reg Wells suggested it'd give him something to occupy his time. It was a nice gesture and Phil produced a few editions before he sadly left us in 1974. John Hedgethorpe's long spell ended when he took over the Race Walking Record helm. John's great helper was his tall Secretary Sheila Hulls who typed/distributed also assisting in the first of 2 memorable "Friendship Walks" meetings held in Chelmsford. During John's time Pete Ryan edited a few editions when John suffered illness. For around 3 months nothing happened as nobody came forward. Fields nosedived as it was Essex Walker which informed so many of events/times/dates/places (as not all subscribed to Race Walking Record - our sport's official organ). Tony Perkins persuaded Dave Ainsworth to step-in, and he produced 1 edition - commencing with a plea for a permanent Editor. Volunteer Peter Cassidy (already Hon Editor of "Loughton Lines", his Club's magazine) arrived. Peter immediately transformed Essex Walker converting it from a traditional newsletter to a smart pocket-sized booklet. This continued for a long period until Peter decided to step down as he'd taken on a time-consuming task, that being Hon Secretary of Essex Gardens Trust and also Hon Editor of its members' magazine. Again Essex race walking communications halted for a while and, again, Tony Perkins persuaded Dave Ainsworth to be Hon Editor for a second spell - a position held ever since. EW returned as a newsletter with Tony doing a lion's share of duplicating (no email distribution then). A trio of readers pitched-in with some of the printing: Mike Scamell, Steve Wynn and Brian Ficken. The latter was the most famous as he once left a carrier bag of Essex Walkers by a seat on Liverpool Street Underground Station. It was spotted and deemed an unattended item, so Circle Line trains were stopped for over half-an-hour as it was investigated. A volunteer came forward to do typing and layout as well as email distribution when this facility arrived on the scene. That welcome offer came from Mrs Eileen Allen, then wife of Ilford's Steve. Eileen produced it on a word processor with originals passed on to those doing the printing. When email distribution became a possibility Essex Walker asked for readers to receive copies by that method. The first giving his name was Loughton 2nd claimer Chris Foster. When told he was first, replied it was the first time he'd ever been first in race walking. In the opening 12 months of this availability just 9 signed up, the rest getting copies in the traditional way. As email gained popularity Tony offered paper copies for a small annual subscription and many took up his offer. At its peak over 300 used email communications and paper copies were down to just 9, so it wasn't economic continuing. Our biggest setback was when the European Union issued data protection rules which required all recipients of regular email correspondence to **opt-in**. You always could opt-out but readers had to intentionally opt-in. Despite an easy method of just hitting a return button with **Yes/No**, we crashed to around 100 readers as most never replied. Non-replies were deemed "opt-outs" according to rules. The past 3 years saw a steady trickle of former readers wondering why they'd stopped getting Essex Walker and asking for its return - so numbers have crept up again. However, most readers are ex-race walkers as so few participate nowadays. Currently Dave edits, Christine Perkins does typing/layout and her finished product is distributed by Tony. Some time ago it finally left monthly scheduling to go bi-monthly, as little race news was being published. Fields are well down as many have aged, become ill, sadly passed-on or just faded away from attending races with few newcomers appearing. To buck-up spirits during Covid-19 lockdown Tony and Christine suggested monthly editions to try and keep up spirits - which is why you've got such regular copies. It doubles their workload, so they deserve our profound thanks. We're all so sorry much glum news has made our pages, and all hope for good tidings to come. EW hasn't a dedicated website, but back editions going back many years are available on John Constandinou's excellent www.racewalkuk website.

GOOD and BAD NEWS

The Olympic 50K Walk, introduced in 1932 and held until now (except Montreal/1976) won't be on the 2024 Paris programme. Good news is whatever walks do go ahead will be at a top location - **Champs Elysees.**

SAD NEWS

When Bill Sutherland won a Commonwealth Games 20 Miles' Walk bronze medal at Edinburgh in 1970, later than same day another success came Scotland's way as Lachie Stewart won gold in the 10,000 metres. Bill and Lachie have always kept in touch. Sadly, Lachie has had an amputation below his left knee on account of diabetes. We all wish him well as he recovers from such a setback.

HAPPY NEWS



On Monday 30 November, we heard great news from Ilford AC's double Olympian, Neringa Masilioniene, as her second born baby, Maya, safely arrived - a sister for Jokubas who was born last year.

Writes Neringa: Delivered my baby girl this morning at Harlow hospital. Momma and baby are doing well. **On behalf of all readers we express our warm congratulations.**

- "Some good news at last." **Steve Uttley**
- "Please pass on my congratulations." **Ed Shillabeer**
- "How refreshing for you to have some good news to share, for a change." **Cath Duhig**

ROB ELLIOTT - 50 NOT OUT

Over decades many Essex Walker readers have forged strong links with Sarnia Walking Club and the beautiful holiday island of Guernsey, especially with their flagship event - the 19.4 Miles classic Guernsey Church-to-Church Walk, an exact distance reflecting a route passing every parish church! Indeed many readers have competed and also enjoyed success with wins in Men's and Women's categories, some more than once and in Ed Shillabeer's case 4 times! Our readers are also prominent in setting "Allcomers Records" on Guernsey, which has often been a venue for Representative Matches, such as with visiting Royal Air Force teams. Mick Barnbrook appointed himself "*Minister for Mainland Development*" and for years drummed-up interest (and extra entries) for the Church-to-Church and it's popular "*curtain raiser*" - a 3,000m road walk at Vale Parish on the Friday evening beforehand. One year, Ron Wallwork got up a well-supported plane trip from Stansted Airport which boosted Church-to-Church interest. Indeed there are strong links, as witnessed by Sarnia's trip to compete in the 2015 Moulton 5 Miles.

From 1970-to-today **Rob Elliott** has been a committed supporter of his island's race walking activities, having commenced in 1970 as an 11 year-old over 2K (11.35 by the way). In the early 70s he was already racing up to 7 miles obtaining his 6 miles-in-an-hour badge in 1973. By that time, as an Under 17 competitor, he'd recorded a 7.36 mile, 15.34 over 2 miles and 64.55 for 7 miles. When hitting senior status he was truly in form as he'd clocked 55.03 for 7 miles, 83.24 for 10 miles and was unbeatable on Guernsey at distances up to 15 miles. He made a determined effort to gain 1978 Commonwealth Games 30K selection but his best of 2:36.28 was just outside the qualifying standard. To get more mainland action he linked up with the famous York Postal distance squad. In the north he's proud to have an arduous Bradford 50K 3rd (5:09.46) on his record. In 1982 he was home-and-dry for Commonwealth Games selection as he broke the qualifying standard on 4 occasions. These were happy times for Rob as his best performances around that period were: 1 mile 6.30, 2 miles 13.13, 10K 43.48, 10 miles 72.40, 20K 93.01 and a Church Walk of 2:32.28. He was selected for Brisbane and had some encouraging warm-up races prior to the big day. In a quality race, won by Steve Barry (Wales) Rob started fast and, on reaching 20K, was only a few seconds outside his personal best for that distance. He then hung on to pass the finish line in 2:24.28 so claiming a commendable 10th position. Rob's a many

times' winner of his island's Church-to-Church Walk and when not breaking the tape was usually near the front and often in the frame. His last shot at that event was in September 2019 when he was 4th (3:49.04). This year, for obvious reasons, this classic event wasn't staged. You'll see Rob on start lines, for as recently as 29 November he won a mixed track 2K handicap - his actual time being 12.05. Over 50 years he's completed nearly 1,300 races - an achievement we all salute.

With so many readers having visited Guernsey to enjoy their friendly walks scene, Rob is a well-known and popular athlete - to whom all warmly congratulate on clocking up 50 years of active service to race walking.

STILL SHOWING

For those who missed Pete Ryan's funeral service due to work, other commitments, etc, a screening is available for repeat showings for a little while longer. Details can be found through the following link www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/funeral-notice/13-11-2020-charles-peter-ryan/. Direct link to the live stream of the service: boxcast.tv/view/charles-peter-ryan

ROUTE 66

Our previous edition gave details of the [Route 66](#) virtual fitness challenge event, in which some of our readers are participating. Among those involved are Centurion Kim Howard and her 4 sons. On Facebook ([Remembering Chelsea O'Rawe Hobbs | Facebook](#)) it's reported that Kim Howard is dedicating her Route 66 walk to Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs. Upon achieving her 20% milestone at the end of November, Kim dedicated a tree (planted by the organisers) to her friend, Chelsea. Essex Walker has received an encouraging message from a reader: "All good luck to Kim and her sons" writes Chris Flint.



PETER FULLAGER (1943-2020) RIP

Sadly, on Wednesday 23 December outstanding former International race walker Peter died peacefully in his sleep. Peter represented both Surrey Walking Club and **Basildon AAC**. He took up race walking while in the Royal Air Force (1959-1964), being one of a talented trio of race walking brothers. In August 1966 he was a Race Walking Record (Issue 287) front cover man. In August 1970 he relocated to Adelaide. In the 1974 Commonwealth Games 20 Miles' Walk (Christchurch) Englishmen Jake Warhurst and Roy Thorpe were 1st and 2nd as "ex-Pom" Peter completed the frame. An established GB International in the '60s, his 1968 Olympic dream died when he was one of those who went off-course as a marshal arrived late on his post. Peter strived to make up lost ground and reached 4th, which was just short of a Mexico selection. His GB International high spots were 2 x Lugano Cups and 2 x European Championships. He was a bowel cancer sufferer. We send our condolences and deepest sympathies to Vic, Jen, Ruby and Kai.

Thanks to Tim Erickson for this notification and information. Tributes will be held over to the next issue.



Dear Dave ...

ANTICIPATED DEATH OF THE OLYMPIC 50K in 2024

- Breakdancing to make its Olympic debut at Paris 2024. Looks like we're going to have to take up dancing. **Martin Fisher**

- Are we too old to take up the new 2024 Olympic sport - Breakdancing?!!! At this rate the Olympics will become a circus act! **Bob Dobson**

MORE MOULTON 5 MILES' FILM CRITICS

- A really good watch and some great shots of our dear friend Pete Ryan. **Steve Allen** (Ilford version)
- Excellent. **John Hall**

ESSEX WALKER APPRECIATION

- A good one indeed. Thanks for another fabulous Essex Walker. Your articles are so full of information and so appealing to your many readers. Thank you again to one and all your helpers. **Bill Sutherland**
- An excellent edition. **Len Ruddock**

PAUL RAY RIP

- OMG the list goes on. Rest in peace. **Pat Furey**
- Sorry to read this sad news about Paul Ray. **Chris Foster**

READER'S WORDS

It was a great tribute by Denis Shephard for the late great Peter Ryan. I'm afraid I would not have recognised him although he may well not have recognised me. By the way I have a double being Graham Kelly formerly of the FA. Did John Powell get a fitting tribute at the virtual SRWA AGM and thanks for my inclusion in the latest Essex Walker.

Any suggestions to bring new race walkers in or increase our few races when Covid-19 dies down? The half mile sprint I was hoping to do at Finsbury Park Track has had to be cancelled due to possible ice on the track. Long gone are the days of 1966 at Keele University, Staffordshire at the National Police 10 Miles Walk when Wally BATSON rang a bell in a snow blizzard to guide us to the start. Snow covered the entire road course even on main roads. Great tussle between Dave Watts and Charlie Fogg, but when the thaw came on the final lap I passed them to record my first of seven successive wins! Where's the time gone? I was only 20 in those days ... great days!

Bill Sutherland

ANTICIPATED DEATH OF THE OLYMPIC 50K in 2024

As I prepare to take my first coaching session for some weeks at Lewes this Saturday due to second Lockdown (not to mention the first Lockdown) this is NOT the news to pass to budding junior athletes. The 50k walk was introduced in 1932 (88 years ago and except for 1976 has been at every Olympics since). The interesting fact is that almost every Olympics has seen an increase in participation. It is an event that epitomizes what the Greeks intended in 8th century BC the only difference is they now wear clothes! The removal of the longest athletics event will be another nail in the coffin for the Olympics. Retain both 20k walks the men's 50k walk and introduce formal and recognised women's 50k and if they would like a mixed gender relay then do it, great idea. Stay safe all and hope we can return to racing soon.

Peter Selby

PS: Who can recall in 1956 listening to the Light Programme in the morning as it broadcast Englishman (from Steyning) Norman Read winning the 50k for New Zealand? One of the iconic events of my life as a skinny 14 year-old who could not run half a mile. I could not believe that humans could walk over 30 miles let alone race it!! Look what happened then a year later. My first race!

WRITES A FORMER ESSEX PROTAGONIST

I travelled down to Essex to see David Staines while he was still in hospital. He was a good friend of mine as we were both heads of neighbouring local schools. In my early years in Essex we used to train together after school, but the job just grew and grew for both of us and those sessions became fewer and fewer. It's amazing when people of our generation die. They always seem to have been so indestructible, I guess it gives us a view of our own mortality.

I had a hip replacement in 2016 which went well and I was back walking again pretty soon after, but in 2017 I had a knee replacement which first of all seemed to be almost miraculous, but then became infected. It needed three more operations to get it right, but I am still pretty mobile and am able to race walk, although not very quickly. Still at one time during that year I thought I might lose my leg. So, I'm pleased to be where I am.

Chris Bent

OPINION OF A FORMER INTERNATIONAL

We now read that Race Walking a highly disciplined, technical and physically demanding event has been dealt yet another body blow this time by the IOC in axing the 50km walk from the 2024 Olympics. Historically this has been the longest endurance race in the Olympic calendar attracting athletes competing in the event from all over the world. Has the IOC no regard for history and precedent? Although this decision has been criticised by the former World Athletics Athletics' Chairman, will this decision also be challenged on a global basis by nations wishing to enter athletes in this event? Is there a governing body in Race Walking who can step up and challenge this decision? In all athletic running events it is recognised that there are sprint, middle distance and long distance races, so why cannot this principle be recognised in Race Walking with a choice between the 20km and 50km, the shorter and longer distance. Although personally my preferred distance was the middle distance 20 miles combining speed and endurance. It is difficult to get into the mindset and thinking of the IOC these days and breakdancing entering the calendar really takes the biscuit.! I can only feel disappointed for our GB 50km walkers and hope for their sake that a positive appeal may be possible.

Dr Roy Lodge MBE, former National 20 mile champion

NEW CENTURIONS 1911 WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The revised Centurion website can be found at www.centurions1911.org.uk. We hope you find it useful and informative. Let's hope race walking events will resume in 2021.

Sue Clements, Hon Secretary for Centurions1911

USEFUL INFORMATION

The current website for many years now has been: Race Walking Association. The old racewalkuk.com website is still up but just re-directs people to the "new" site, and is kept going for posterity reasons for possibly a few more years. www.racewalkingassociation.com

John Constandinou

WISE WORDS

Watching the ITV, a national TV station now, they are announcing Paul Nihill MBE Olympic Silver medallist's departure from us from Covid by his grandson with a picture of I would imagine going back to some time in the 60's, partly as a warning to others if a Silver medallist dies of Covid we are all vulnerable. He is still garnering PR for our sport from the other side, that would please Paul too that he was remembered.

Olly Flynn

Adds Hon Ed: Several readers have drawn attention to this bulletin - Olly's words are used as he also conveys the serious nature of this message.



Happy New Year



Happy New Year



ESSEX WALKER

Dave Ainsworth
18 Angmering House, Barnstaple
Road, Romford, Essex RM3 7SX

Telephone:



01708-377382



Email

dave_ainsworth@yahoo.co.uk

or

essexwalker@btinternet.com

Please note that you may unsubscribe to the Essex Walker at any time by contacting the Editor or Essex Walker mailbox.