Issue No: 466 **September/October 2026**

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

ON THE RECORD

Congratulations to Cameron Corbishley on his UK Marathon Walk record time of 3:13.31 at the European Athletics Championships held in Birmingham. It saw 29 on a start line with 27 reaching journey's end. Full marks to Cameron who again proved he can keep going in '*unhelpful*' oppressive conditions.

On the Saturday I received both phone calls and emails from persons wanting to know where it was being televised? Even when a reader "pointed me in the right direction" I couldn't find it. Only thing I found, albeit late in the day, was very short clips of finishes on a BBC sports website. It wasn't much better leading up to the walks as many couldn't find where these races were being held in the City of Birmingham. A general thought was they'd be held in "The Jewellery Quarter" but was informed speculation. Fortunately, former Race Walking Association Chairman Glyn Jones unearthed details and kindly circulated them. But all fairly close to the big day! We'll not publish full details as they're widely available - and apart from Cameron, we'd no home-based participants. This gives British race walking a challenge, which we're sure will see action. 2026 saw no UK walkers in the Commonwealth Games and one in the Europeans. There are well meaning folk on our race walking scene dedicated to seeing better times at future Games - so please give them full support as they press on with an uphill task.



COMMONWEALTH GAMES RACE WALK OFFICIALS

The 2026 Games in Glasgow didn't have British competitors, for various reasons, so let's concentrate on our officials as Home Nations were represented. This as yet again our officials are highly regarded and given *"plum appointments"*. So, let's hear it for our valued officials - who we warmly congratulate.



Southern based International Race Walking Judges at the Commonwealth Games 2026 - Verity Snook (WA Silver) at her first CG and Noel Carmody (WA Silver) at his third.

Pictured here with the other members of the panel; Daniel Michaud (CAN - WA Gold), CJ Ian Richards (ENG - WA Gold), Zoe Eastwood-Bryson (AUS - WA Gold), Steve Taylor (IOM - Gold), Jerry Watson (Recorder - ENG - UKA) and Jane Pidgeon (Asst. CJ - ENG - UKA).

SAD NEWS ABOUT POPULAR ALAN O'RAWE

Sorry to be informing you late … but dad quite a severe heart attack on 22nd June. Thankfully, because he is so fit for a man of his age, he survived the incident and is now on the road to recovery. He is taking things nice and slow and hopefully will be back to normal asap. I will bring him to Southend for the mile race so he can still carry out his duty of handing out the trophy. I am nursing a bad back and knee problems at the moment, age is catching me up, but it did go through my head about trying to get in a reasonable condition to do the race myself. I will see you on the day and hopefully I will be in my racing shorts 😊

Andy O'Rawe



Adds Hon Ed: Our previous edition published a tribute article to mark Alan's 85th birthday. All readers will be wishing Alan a swift recovery - back to his usual genial self. Andy writes: *"Dad is improving slowly and out doing a few short walks."*

SAD NOTIFACTION - JULIAN HOPKINS RIP - NATIONAL COACH and AUTHOR

Dear friends
Forgive this round-robin message but I'm struggling with my feelings this morning. My dear friend, Julian Hopkins died yesterday evening in the care home, where he was living. I did manage to see him a few weeks ago and feared that the end was nigh. I'm going to put a holding notice on the Lancashire Walking Club web site with an obituary of sorts to follow. By that I mean there will be gaps in the story as our friendship was at its closest through to the end of the 1970s. I never grasped properly the nature of the controversies that led him to resign as National Coach and withdraw slowly from the world of race walking itself. So unsettling to be the bearer of such sad news, I did love the lad. ***Tony Taylor***

JULIAN HOPKINS RIP FUNERAL DETAILS

I've received this information from Vivienne, Julian's sister-in-law. Could you please circulate.

We have now completed the arrangements for Julian's funeral. Tuesday 8th September service 1130am at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough L40 7SP then refreshments at Maghull Cricket Club, Tommy Gent Way, Hall Lane, Maghull L31 3DY. If anyone is interested in attending, could they please email me at viv.hopkins13@gmail.com or text/WhatsApp on 07504081823. You may give them my details.

I've booked my flights so I'll be there, honoured to be asked to give a short speech. ***Tony Taylor***

Note: Chosen charity for donations in lieu of flowers should be made to Alder Hey Children's Charity. Donations can easily be made via their website (Check out our appeals | Alder Hey Children's Charity).

JULIAN HOPKINS RIP

- Sad story. He took the trouble to take coaching at the Brickfields track when Dad was involved in Dawlish & South Devon Race Walking Club based in Plymouth. He must have had a positive effect because we won the Sparta Trophy ... a good bloke! ***Edbanger C590***
- Sorry to hear of the passing of Julian Hopkins. It is a fact of life that coaches can change lives. I first met Julian at a coaching session in Tonbridge in 1979 and into the 1980's. That with his coaching book, that I still own, have made me a better coach than I would be without his input. You don't need to be a Physicist to appreciate "the Ripple Effect". ***Chris Hobbs***
- So sorry to hear this sad news. RIP Julian. ***Chris Maddocks***
- My thoughts are with you after the loss of your dear friend. I was aware of Julian's standing as a coach and writer during the 70s, and I still have my copy of his coaching book.which gave me my first true concept of periodization in walk training. I know little of the conflicts which led to his withdrawal from the sport but I hope that, eventually, he'll be remembered more for his contribution to it. ***Stu Cooper Australian Centurion 5***
- Sad news indeed. A champion for the sport. ***Len Ruddock***
- Sorry to hear about Julian's passing. I liked him, he was a good coach and wrote an excellent race walking coaching manual. He seemed to lose the favour of the powers that be and from National Coach seemed to fade into the background. I still have photos of racing beside him in the Met Police 7 at Imber Court in the 60s with snow visible off the road back in walking's heyday. I was fortunate to replace him in the 70s as coach with the National Junior Squad for a week in France, Chris Maddocks etc, when as a school teacher he could not go in term time. ***Alan Buchanan***
- So sad that Julian has left us. He was a great innovator and saw the future which was denigrated by the old school during the 1970 and 1980's. He influenced my participation in Race Walking by letting me have a copy of the sort of training which the East Germans were doing which at that time I wasn't far off. It was clear the effort needed but I was at the stage where I had to choose work or walking. Coming from a council house in Essex there was little choice. I am now living in Herefordshire with lots of hills unlike the flat lands of the Thames estuary where the nearest thing to a hill was a railway bridge! ***Denis Holly***
- Very sorry to receive this news. Another great friend of racewalking gone. ***Mike Parker***

- I was very saddened to hear of the passing of my late friend and former Lancashire Walking Club clubmate Julian Hopkins who had been living in a care facility since his terrible stroke a couple of years ago. I remember him as always a very optimistic and cheerful person. He was also what I suppose you would describe as a science geek, he worked as a physics teacher, always keen to know how things worked and to subject them to scientific analysis. That applied to his race walking too and so he applied his analytical skills to his sporting event and to helping others. A good class walker himself of maybe just below international standard, he became a coach and ultimately National Event Coach, which is how many will remember him. It is difficult to remember at such a distance, just how central Julian was to UK walking in the 70s and 80s, and how influential. He authored the official BAAB manual on Race Walking, a follow up to the first edition by Olympic Champion Harold Whitlock's, but a totally new book, not merely a revision of the original. It cannot be denied that some of Julian's views on the direction the sport should take were not well received by some others. Ultimately the controversy became exhausting and Julian sadly stood down from his national role. From then on he became much less visible though he did retain a few coaching commitments and coached Mark Easton pretty much through his career. Sadly, I lost touch with him around this time and didn't see him again until 2023, at which time he still seemed quite well and happy I'm pleased to say. I hope everyone realises just how significant a figure Julian was in our event and lastly that he may rest in peace. ***Steve Uttley***
- Thank you for the notification. I never got to know Julian very well although did realise that he spent some considerable time trying to develop the quality in race walking. As Tony Taylor says Julian withdrew from the sport after his resignation. I am sorry to read that he spent his last few years in a care home although I am sure he was properly looked after. ***Peter Selby***
- So sorry to hear of the passing of Julian Hopkins. As a greatly respected RWA National Coach in the 70's he changed the mindset of British International Race Walkers totally and the remarkable chain of success that followed especially in the Commonwealth Games was down to his inspired wisdom. He has been greatly missed ever since. May he Rest in Peace and join the long list of many famous Race Walking names in the heavens. With great sympathy to his family and so many friends from yesteryear. ***Bill Sutherland***
- A truly sad loss. Julian played an important part in me making the GB teams for both the European Championships in Prague and the Moscow Olympics. Julian, Reg Wells and Peter Marlow were an awesome trio who had great success in promoting elite race walking in the 70s and 80s. How we could do with them today. ***Ian Richards***

WHAT SHOULD BE ON RACE WALKING's TARGET LIST?

The Commonwealth Games has ended. It was low key compared with past Games as a total combined attendance of 434,000 was far short of 1.5million at Birmingham in 2022. This was understandable as a scaled down Games offered 10 sports compared to 17 in 2022. However, we're all grateful Glasgow stepped to keep these Games going and 2 race walks on their programme. Without 'live' terrestrial TV coverage, for many, at times these Commonwealth just drifted by. Withdrawals by *'big names*' didn't help either. For instance, the top 6 women's 10,000 metres running times this year were all by Commonwealth athletes - yet none of them were at Glasgow!

The Commonwealth Games is now set to return to India where in 2030 the city of Ahmedabad will be hosting - with its main feature being a 132,000 capacity "Narendra Modi Stadium" - the World's largest cricket ground - named after the Country's Prime Minister (he is at our distribution time). Last time in India (at Delhi) we had an English race walking gold medallist: Jo Jackson clocked 1:34.22 in the Women's 20 kilometres, in which Lisa Kehler was 4th in 1:40.33 (season's best) from 9 starters (1 DQ, 1 DNF). In the Men's race we had a trio: Luke Finch 10, Tom Bosworth 11th and Alex Wright 13th timed at 1:29.37, 1:30.44 and 1:34.26 respectively - from16 starters (1 DNF).

So, our target should be to try to get as near as we can to full complements of 3 in all 2030 Commonwealth Games Walks (if retained on the programme, which is probable). This for our 4 Home Nations and Crown Dependencies. Let's give it our best shot!

AWARD FOR POPULAR ESSEX VISITOR



Centurion 938 Hans van der Knapp of the famous RWV Club from Holland, has received the "Order of Merit" from the Dutch National Athletics Association (Athetiekunie) for his work and efforts in promoting race walking. On the athletics scene he rarely misses race walking events in The Netherlands - appearing as time keeper, judge, referee and as a regular volunteer. Hans is a long time Committee member of the RWV Club who are prominent contributors on our British ultra-distance walking scene, at times having more on start lines than from many home-based Clubs. Hans is well known in Essex having both raced and officiated in the County. He qualified as a Centurion at Surrey Walking Club's 100 Miles around London's Battersea Park in August 1995 clocking 23.32.40 in a race which saw 65 start and 32 finish (1 DQ). Among 13 new Centurions were also Boyd Millen, Kathy Crilley, Pam Ficken, Bernie Yates, Dave Kates, Ray Platt, Maureen Cox and Ken Cardozo. The latter looked uncomfortable at times, with sometimes a noticeable lead - but was fortunate to have the *"know how"* of experienced C527 Dave Neagle as his attendant to ensure success. Dave Kates was driven back to his Hertfordshire home by his son who'd passed a driving test only 1 week earlier and coped well with Central London traffic. Dave, who'd made a late decision to appear, needed a week off work recovering as he'd given the race so much to ensure success. There was a surprise early leader - who was out front for some time - Bernie Yates of Worcester AC - who in later life had a leg amputated, but still managed to then complete a half-marathon run - *what a star!* However the form book proved correct as Richard Brown won to equal Dave Boxall's record of 6 UK 100 Miles victories. Needless to say, Sandra recorded yet another finish as 1st lady. Richard and Sandra competed after setting best Land's End-to-John O'Groats times earlier that year. In a changing room before racing commenced was National Theatre actor, and former professional wrestler, Brian Glover, forever remembered as a comically overbearing brutal sports teacher in an award winning 1969 film *"Kes".* He was getting ready to run/jog a few laps of the park to keep fit. It wasn't the best day for a walking race as hot weather was oppressive and such conditions brought out so many park walkers and roller skaters onto the Queen's Carriageway (on which racing was held over 40 circuits) plus a local radio station were hosting a basketball tournament. Many recall when Pam (daughter of the great C145 Hew Neilson) finished, the good lady got louder applause and cheering than did the winner! Hans went onto complete 11 sub-24 hours UK hundreds with a best 21:38.19 set in July 2005 in "The Norfolk 100 Miles' Challenge" at King's Lynn. ***We congratulate popular visitor Hans on his most deserved award.***

HOW TOP WALKERS TRAINING HAS CHANGED

New ideas often come our way. For instance, in the '50s/60s/70s/even 80s our top walkers, with few exceptions, competed with regularity - being familiar sights at Inter-Club races/Representative matches (Ryan Cups etc)/Opens/County/Area and National events. Some were almost on 'race-a-week schedules' as past Race Walking Records (available in the RWR archive) can confirm. In more recent times top walkers preferred to race much less frequently and were often unseen for lengthy periods. Which method is better has often been discussed. In a recent magazine article Keely Hodgkinson (2024 Olympic 800 metres gold medallist and BBC Sports Personality-of-the-Year) stated, "It's way more fun to compete with a person than a stopwatch, so I'm looking forward to what's ahead. Competitive races are just going to make us faster; they are going to generate more anticipation. And when there's something on the line, it feels so much rewarding, so it's exciting".

GET WELL SOON

Athletics Official Heather Croft reports that her husband, Grade 1 Judge **Michael Croft**, has suffered with a bad knee - requiring treatment in hospital. We wish Michael well and for a successful outcome to his treatment. Michael made his name as a talented race walker, as far back as the 70s, with Basildon AAC and Ilford AC. He achieved high positions in races, such as in the '76 Garnet 10 Miles Championship which was held at Chigwell Row. He then qualified as a judge - as was his late and much missed father Arthur. Occasionally Arthur also turned out in walking races when someone was needed to make up the numbers, such as at London Business Houses events when he turned out for a Ford team ... and enjoyed doing so! Michael's judging career advanced to Grade 1 status with saw him appointed to top fixtures, including positions as Chief Judge. Although concentrating on officiating he still fitted in competitive appearances from time-to-time. He rarely missed AGMs at Ilford as he always showed interest in his Club's business. Now based in Milton Keynes, a City which has staged a number of important race walking events over the years (Nationals, the Lugano Cup and a quality 100 Miles) - all based around Stantonbury Campus. *We hope he'll soon be back on his feet!*

F I X T U R E S and D I A R Y D A T E S (September to end November 2026)

It is recommended that dates/start times of fixtures are verified directly with organisers.

SEPTEMBER	3	Ilford AC Walkers' Pub Lunch	The Bull, Romford Market Place	1.00pm
	4	RWA Southern Area Committee Meeting	Zoom	6.30pm
	5	Enfield League 5K Handicap	Donkey Lane	11.00am
	8	Funeral of Julian Hopkins RIP and Post Service Gathering *(see Newsletter)*	West Lancashire Crematorium	11.30am
	8	Veterans AC 5 Kilometres Road (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	7.00pm*
	9	Biggleswade Open 3,000 Metres	Sandy	TBA
	11-13	British Masters Outdoor Championships	Derby	TBA
	19	English Schools Race Walking Championships	Bedford	TBA
	24	Ryan Cup (CS v Police) + Civil Service & Police Champs Men 10k/Women 5k	Evesham Cycle Track	1.30pm
	26	Biggleswade Open 3,000 Metres	Sandy	TBA
	26	Southern Veterans T&F League Final	Linford Christie Stadium, East Acton	TBA
OCTOBER	3	Enfield League 1 hour	Cambridge Uni/Wilberforce Road	1.30pm
	4	Cambridge Town-and-Gown Run (race walking permitted)	Cambridge Midsummer Common	10.00am
	17	Combined Counties (incl Essex) 10,000 Metres Championships (TBC)	Norman Park (Bromley)	1.15pm
NOVEMBER	13	RWA Southern Area Committee Meeting **	*"Zoom"*	6.00pm
	13	RWA Southern Area AGM **	*"Zoom"*	7.15pm
	14	99th Enfield Open 7 Miles (+ Enfield League)	Donkey Lane	10.30am

NOTES

** A walk to start line from bandstand - allow 10 minutes+.*
*** Subject to confirmation*

- Regular distance training walks are held from Leigh-on-Sea's Belfairs Park – details from Centurion Steve Kemp on **07860 617899.**
- **Enfield League** races require online pre-entries to: www.fabian4.co.uk. Any problems, call 07532-397528.

WALKING

Great Times By Nihill and Peter Fullager As Britain Beat West Germany

COMPETITORS found the unexpected first hot day of the year a considerable difficulty to the already arduous course at Bexley as Great Britain defeated West Germany by 25 points to 19 last Saturday. The event was an extremely pleasant one with both the racing and post-race banquet being conducted in very cordial friendship.

The 20km was dominated by the GB team, only Gerd Schuth going with the early pace of our quartet. Paul Nihill and Peter Fullager were soon away on their own, both showing magnificent form. Both men easily surpassed their previous best though Nihill still managed to look sluggish even at this "Russian type" pace! Just when the unlikely event of a joint finish looked possible Nihill found another gear to go clear by half a minute on the last 4km circuit. Both men are now very real medal prospects for Athens and must make Messrs. Smaga, Golubnichiy and Agapov feel a little uneasy. Bernard Nermerich, using his well known "come through" tactics, moved from a way back last to third, showing impressive speed in the second half. He passed John Webb, who always appeared to be struggling slightly, and Bob Hughes, who "blew up" on the last circuit after an impressive showing, in the last 5kms. With several international meetings in prospect it must now be hoped that both Nihill and Fullager get full opportunities to prepare and the right competition so that their peak arrives at Athens.

1, P. Nihill (GB) 90:18.4 (21.59, 44.40, 67.46); 2, P. Fullager (GB) 90:49.0 (21.59, 44.42, 67.46); 3, B. Nermerich (WG) 94.53.8 (24.26, 47.46, 71.36); 4, J. Webb (GB) 96:06.0 (22.53, 46.49, 71.23); 5, R. Hughes (GB) 97:10.0 (22.49, 46.33, 70.36); 6, G. Schuth (WG) 97:35.8 (23.26, 48.05, 73.04); 7, H. Mayr (WG) 99:47.2 (24.11, 48.44, 74.05); 8, R. Jannsen (WG) 104:07.4 (26.13, 52.03, 77.54); **Score:** GB 15; WG 7.

Horst-Rudiger Magnor, a 27-year-old Frankfurt medical student who finished 11th in the Mexico 50km, chose the 35km race to score his *very first* senior victory. Dominating the race from the start he overcame the unhelpful conditions, using a style which could mildly be described as ungainly, powering along while others wilted away. Ray Middleton put in a typical gutty performance, showing he is far from finished with the international scene, despite badly blistered feet which certainly blunted his attempt to challenge Magnor soon after the 20km point. Shaun Lightman pushed the early pace and gallantly held off another fast starter in Gerhard Weidner (16th in Mexico). West Germany won this event as the consistent Vossminchel passed the very tired George Chaplin and then Bill Sutherland very near home after the latter had put in a splendid effort following his late selection. Long time international Koch was always tailed off in the rear.

1, H. Magnor (WG) 2:58:56.4 (51.59, 1:41:44, 2:32:58); 2, R. Middleton (GB) 3:03:51.0 (52.09, 1:42:30, 2:53:23); 3, S. Lightman (GB) 3:05:47.8 (51.59, 1:41:54, 2:37:03); 4, G. Weidner (WG) 3:08:15.0 (51.59, 1:43:02, 2:38:52); 5, J. Vossminchel (WG) 3:09:50.0 (52.21, 1:46:10, 2:41:56); 6, W. Sutherland (GB) 3:10:30.0 (52.15, 1:42:30, 2:41:04); 7, G. Chaplin (GB) 3:12:24.2 (52.09, 1:45:00, 2:42:13); 8, H. Koch (WG) 3:24:13.2 (53.41, 1:47:59, 2:50:42). **Score:** WG 12; GB 10.

By COLIN YOUNG

PRESS CUTTING FROM ATHLETICS WEEKLY

10 May 1969



GB team for the 35km race vs West Germany – featuring (in order of finishing) Ray Middleton, Shaun Lightman, Bill Sutherland and George Chaplin – shaking hands with the West German team.

Photos: Race Walking Group Facebook page

C557 KEN ROOST RIP

Just to let you know that my Dad passed away peacefully in the Isabel Hospice in Welwyn Garden City in the early hours of 14 August. I will let you know of the funeral details. I have no idea of the timelines, the amount of administration to do is mind boggling. ***Tony Roost***

FUNERAL DECISION - KEN ROOST RIP

The funeral was on 26 August at 10am. It was a family only funeral. It was a hard decision to make but the main reason was that we wouldn't want anybody to travel that might not be up to it. We only have a relatively short window for the service as my wife (Tracy) and I are caring for her 87-year old mother who is completely bed-bound. We can only get limited cover. He has a serving stepson, Ian. There is really no need to send a card. I'm overwhelmed with the tributes that you

have sent to me. It's amazing to see his life story. Thank you so much for doing that. We will be having a collection. All proceeds will be going to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Thanks again for your support at this very sad time. ***Tony Roost***

LAST WORD

Ken Roost's son Tony has sent an account of a "*family only*" funeral service. Entry music "The Dambusters' March" and a Centurion's exit music from this Service was "Keep Right On To The End of The Road" by Harry Lauder of Music Hall fame. Writes Tony: "The ceremony went as well as it could have done. A few glasses were raised in his honour and he was well remembered. It was very emotional; I'm actually welling up as I type this. I'm so pleased that his friends and teammates raised a glass or 2 in his memory. Thanks again for all of your support. I hope you make the most of everyday, you never know what is around the corner."

- The Centurions send their condolences and will be thinking of Ken and the family at the funeral. The Centurions will donate to the RAF Benevolent Fund in memory of a great race walker and supporter of the Centurions since he qualified in 1975 as Centurion 557. ***Chris Flint C849 Secretary, The Centurions***



KEN ROOST OBITUARY

L-to-R C557 Ken Roost, C652 Ron Purkiss (Photo: Ron Wallwork)

In earlier days he was an RAF Command Standard Water Polo Player. He was keen on athletics and represented the Royal Air Force on a few occasions as a race walker. Ken was a key figure in race walking when RAF Coltishall were a leading team in RAF competition. He was well respected in Hertfordshire and then Middlesex athletics, where he gave a good account of himself at both Verlea AC and The Borough of Enfield Harriers (as then called). He helped out at races after he'd hung up his racing shoes being a frequent pointsman at Enfield's races. He was an esteemed Life Member of Enfield. At RAF Coltishall he ran the Station Snooker team which competed in a local league - Ken was proud of his 52 highest break. On leaving the Services he ran a snooker team in a local Snooker League based in his town of residence - Stevenage - and also served a spell as Chairman of that local league. His team comprised of British Aerospace retirees. Between leaving the RAF (when based at RAF Henlow) and joining the workforce of British Aerospace at Stevenage, Ken had a spell working for North Hertfordshire Council issuing OAP's bus passes. Ken was also a keen follower of *"The Turf"*.

In the Royal Air Force Ken had a spell at the Officers & Aircrew Selection Centre when based at RAF Biggin Hill. I served with Ken twice, when he was a Flight Sergeant in the RAF Coltishall Education Centre and at RAF Henlow when I did a course at that Station. Widower Ken's 2nd wife Lily (known as Lyn) wife pre-deceased him in March 2018. He was very keen on supporting The Centurions and had dined with Lyn at Centurions Centenary Dinner in House of Commons. Both Ken and Lyn died aged 95 - Ken's birthday was on Boxing Day.

In June '75 Ken completed the Ewhurst100 Miles in 22.03.26 to claim Centurion No 557 in Verlea AC colours when 95 had started/56 finished (both figures then records). Ken raced in many preparation build-up races, stating his favourites as the London-to-Brighton 52 Miles, Leicester Mercury 20 Miles and Birmingham Outer Circle 25 Miles (now all gone). By the time of Ken's next 100 Miles race in June '79, he'd switched to the Borough of Enfield Harriers *(as then called)*. In the '70s there was quite a bit of *"to-ing and fro-ing"* between Verlea and Enfield. The race was again over 100 Miles at Ewhurst when 2 more records were set**:** most starters 107/most finishers 78 of whom 37 were new Centurions. Prior to this race Ken upped his training, doing so with ex-RAF man Ron Purkiss (Metropolitan WC) then resident in Stevenage where he was a chiropodist. Ron had no intention of racing 100 miles but days before entries closed thought, "I've done the training with Ken, so I might as well line-up" Ron (now RIP) clocked 19:35.45 to claim Number 652. Ken aimed training to perform 10 equal laps as near as possible - and it happened on route to 19:52.53. For Enfield it was a great team victory as they defeated strong teams from

both the Continent and UK - their trio being all established Centurions. Ken led them home followed by C577 Jack Rossiter in 20:12.01 and the late Peter Worth in 20:20.44. Ken was one of so many present at the 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles and memorable reunion - in a photograph taken by Brian Boggenpoel, of 28 Centurions present (2 had to leave early) - Ken's that dapper one in the centre of the front row.

Son Tony sent me this sad news. Ken's last years at his Stevenage home weren't good ones for his health, resulting in him being housebound for several of them relying on visiting carers. Many will have had the pleasure of knowing Ken Roost RIP.

TRIBUTES TO KEN ROOST RIP

- Sad news indeed and a loss to the Association to which Ken had made a significant contribution. Ken's last appearance with the South West Herts Flight was pre-Covid era at our meeting on 7 December 2019. He arrived by taxi from Stevenage and as you can see from the attached photo (left) was in good form. (Ken is seated 3rd from the right). I remember him wearing his RAF Seletar-badged blazer in our earlier meetings, if asked he would say "I closed down Seletar".





The other photo (right) is from a few years earlier (2004) with Ken smiling on the familiar Three Crowns steps. ***Phil Gough***

Adds Hon Ed: Ken is centre in the front rank.

- Sorry to hear about Ken Roost. In cricket parlance, he had a very long innings. ***Glyn Linder***
- Please pass on my condolences to the family. ***Patrick Furey***
- Very sad news indeed. A real stalwart of Centurions over so many years. Ken Roost was so popular and prominent in Enfield Harriers Walking teams for countless years. May he rest in peace. Sincere condolences. ***Bill Sutherland***
- We paid our respects to Ken Roost C557 and also Theo Bicke at The Centurions committee meeting held on 14th August. Both outstanding Centurions. ***Chris Flint***

EUREKA!

With apologies to Archimedes we'll use his exclamation. After the 2026 TCS London Marathon we asked if any race walkers had appeared? We only found one - Steven Wilde who flew the flag for Lancashire Walking Club. In August we've now found another who'd race walked it**:** former Essex League champion Chris Bent who is now a prominent member of Buxton Athletic Club, which he and his wife Angela founded in 1977. Under their leadership Buxton received a coveted Athletics "Club-of-the-Year award. Chris joined the Centurions, as member No.694, in the colours of Leicester Walking Club at their first Congerstone promotion in July 1980 when clocking 20:39.17. He really hit the jackpot when returning to the same course in July 1984 to record 18:31.01. He took up a Headmaster's position in Benfleet where he promoted races from his school and also generated much interest in Essex Schools race walking. He was a leading light at Southend-on-Sea AC as it was then known. Chris, who recently became an octogenarian, keeps in touch with our Southern goings-on as an appreciative Essex Walker recipient.

THEO BICKE RIP

Notification has been received that Centurion 690 Theo Bicke has passed on aged 77. Centurions1911 | We regret to inform you that Theo Bické, Centurion 690, passed away this week | Facebook. He qualified as a Centurion at the first Leicester Walking Club 100 Miles race staged at Congerstone - this course having replaced a traditional Leicester-to-Skegness which ended after its 1978 event. Theo clocked 19:51.46 as a member of Belgium's Vlierzele Sportief Club. This

event saw 2 records - 98 starters were a record for a Leicester 100 Miles and at the front legendary Brighton & Hove AC star Dave Boxall recorded a 6th UK win at this distance. From them 56 finished among them were 28 new Centurions. He returned to that same course in 1984 to lower his time to 18:35.10 and in that year also became Continental Centurion 102. Theo, who resided in Oordegem, walked 1113km from Brest-to-Moscow in 17days. He put much back into our sport by his work in promoting the "Tour of Flanders" and founding the Belgian Walking Association. We've said farewell to one who was a popular visitor on our British distance scene.

WELL KNOWN WALKERS ON TOP FORM

Just 2 days after our 25th Moulton event, similar high temperatures prevailed at Lee Valley track on Monday 6th July at a Southern Veterans Track & Field League (Herts and North Middlesex Division) 3rd meeting of 4. Chief Judge John Hall gave an informative briefing before our 2,000 metres walk. Loughton's Melanie Peddle (V55W) gave an imperious display to dominate the action when winning in 10:44.43. 2nd was Ilford's Stephen Crane (V45M) who added yet another 1st man victory to his League record in 12:51.94. Stephen's athletic appearances list contains many impressive race walking times in the famous Surrey Walking Club's colours. 3rd came Kate Dixon (V45W) of St.Alban's Striders in 13:19.95. For those not knowing Kate, she's active in road, track and cross country runs with a 3:26.15 London Marathon finish to her credit. Dave Ainsworth (V75M) *"also walked" t*o pick up a few points for Ilford AC by going around 5 times. Praise for John Hall who spoke with some seldom seen race walkers who filled-in to gain points for their Clubs - and with all the enthusiasm of an evangelist, told them about local race walking events. Our discipline needs more of John's sort! These evening Veterans League meetings are worthy of support.

TOM MCNAB RIP

Glasgow-born Tom has died aged 92. Not a race walker but one well known throughout athletics. He was an elite triple jumper who gained fame as a respected coach and author. His 1982 book *"Flanagan's Run"* topped The Times best sellers' list and translated into 16 languages. The late Syd Webb *(Essex Beagles)* lent Hon Ed his copy which made wonderful reading. Tom's high profile engagement came when appointed Technical Director for an Oscar winning film "Chariots-of-Fire" film which meant coaching/training an army of extras. Among extras in a top box office success was Paul Warburton (Belgrave Harriers/Southend-on-Sea AC 2nd claim). Tom's National Service was in the Royal Air Force where he achieved Flying Officer rank. Condolences to his family and friends.

Dear Dave ...

FIRST COME FIRST SERVED!

E-Bay have just released a very good photo from 1964 Tokyo Olympic Press archives of the starting full field in the 20 Kms Walk in which the Great Ken Matthews took the Gold Medal.



[1964 Tokyo Olympics Press Photo GREAT BRITAIN GB Ken Matthews 20km Walk Gold | eBay UK]

It is priced just over £7 plus Postage and I am sure John Paddick and other Golden oldies in Race Walking would be interested in snapping it up. ***Bill Sutherland***

ARTICLE ABOUT TOM DOOLEY by STEVE TILL of SWC

This is what I wrote in my weekly newsletter - STill Running (weakly) - which you can subscribe to through therunoflife.com. It's free. Every week I pick an inspiring event from the past, something going on in the present, and a suggestion for readers' future training. I don't know if this would help/fit in EW … The email newsletter, Essex Walker, has been very kind in publicising my

book, The Run of Life, so I wanted to show my gratitude by offering 3 free copies of it to the newsletter's readership, drawn at random. One of the lucky three was a gentleman called Tom Dooley, who lives in California.

What interested me even more was that Dooley had been an elite athlete, competing in the 20km race walk at the 1968 and 1972 Olympics, coming 17th and 15th respectively, and winning a silver medal in the 1971 Pan American Games 20km. Interestingly, I can also find records of him competing in World Masters Championships and USATF Masters Championships, certainly up to 2024, including a 62:45 10km at the age of 74! What is even more noteworthy is that his roommates in 1968 were none other than Tommie Smith, John Carlos and Lee Evans. Smith and Carlos won gold and bronze in the 200, before displaying the famous Black Power Salute on the victory rostrum, something that got them banned from the Olympics for life. Evans won 400 individual and 4x400 relay golds, both in world record times.

The USA managed a clean sweep in the 400, and Evans and his colleagues, Larry James and Ron Freeman, performed a rather more muted Black Power protest on the podium, which allowed them to continue their participation and partner with Vince Matthews (who would win individual gold in 1972) to win the relay gold. In 1972 – keep up, keep up!! – Matthews and silver medallist, Wayne Collett, made their own protest, which got them banned, meaning that the US could not field a 4x400 team – denying Lee Evans another probable gold medal! Tom Dooley has spoken about sharing a room with Smith, Carlos and Evans, as they debated exactly what they should do during the victory ceremony, recalling it as "crossroads of history" and describing Smith and Carlos as "legendary" runners who made an impact by protesting against racism and injustice in the United States. He credits the experience with elevating his own perspective on sports, social upheaval and historical change. ***Steve Till C768***

- Great article on Tom. Had the pleasure of meeting him way back. Even had the chance to stay with him in San Fran en route to staying with in particular Ross Pilkington and Graham Seatter in NZ. Tom has possibly the most extensive reference library on T&F and in particular racewalking in the world. A thoroughly lovely bloke who has been a fantastic ambassador to our sport and US athletics as a whole. Ciao. ***Roger Mills***
- If nothing else and, said very glibly, I trust Tom Dooley was able to dine out on that interesting 1968 Olympic Games 'roommates' anecdote. ***Chris Maddocks***

Adds Hon Ed: Our other 2 prize winners were most deserving ones (Chris Foster and Tony Perkins) - as both have been long serving diligent 'behind the scenes' workers as well as regular participants: indeed Tony has been a GB Team Manager on major occasions.

AN OPINION -SHARED BY MANY

Race walking in the Commonwealth Games must again be in jeopardy. Such a shame when people worked so hard to get it into the programme. One of the issues is presumably the severe qualifying standards which make it impossible to get the same kind of field boosting home country participation we have seen in the past in Games held on British soil. Three finishers must put the future in the balance. ***Steve Uttley***

THE WAY FORWARD

As the Marathon Walk seems to be the preferred distance for the future in Major Games the RWA should introduce and encourage all to promote an RWA National Marathon Walk for Men and Women from 2027 with Awards too for significant distances on route to encourage new race walkers to compete in our great sport. We need action NOW if our discipline is going to survive in Track and Field in the Future. ***Bill Sutherland***



CRYSTAL PALACE ARENA PLANS APPROVED

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp30ywwzzdqo

Great News. ***Olly Flynn***

FROM AN AUSTRALIAN DOUBLE OLYMPIAN

It is good to hear Bill Sutherland is going along well. Bill's remarks bring back good memories of an exciting but tough day. It was quite some headwind as Bill says, nearly bringing me undone and putting me in a position where I had to dig pretty deep to gradually pull away from Bill before the finish line. Please give Bill and Kath my very best wishes. ***Bob Gardiner***

Adds Hon Ed: Now nonagenarian Bob competed in the '64 and 68 Olympics and was the 1970 Commonwealth Games 20 Miles Walk silver medallist.

FROM THE CENTURIONS VICE CAPTAIN: RWV CENTENARY 5K in 2028?

Dear race walking friends

Somewhere around 1 September 2028, the Rotterdamse Wandelsport Vereniging (RWV) will celebrate its 100th birthday. In 2028, there will be several (race) walking events in honour of this jubilee. One of these events will be a 5K postal match: we will try to get as many race walkers and clubs around the world to race walk 5K in that week or in that weekend. We hope that you would like to participate. For the final results we will either use regular e-mail or a Strava group, where everybody can submit his or her result.

Would you and your club be interested in participating, maybe organising a local opportunity to race walk together? And could we use one person in your club as a point of contact or postal address, if we would send out a small souvenir to all participants? We do not need to arrange anything at this moment, I would just like to explore whether you would be interested. And please, help us gather more clubs who would like to join this festive race. Forward my mail to anyone who might be interested. ***Frans Leijtens*** Committee for the RWV Centenary

Adds Hon Ed: Any readers' responses will be forwarded to Frans.

GOOD NEWS

Just heard that **Judith Goodair** has become the W85 world sprint orienteering champion. Guy Goodair has had tremendous success as an orienteer since retiring from race walking. He has had success at European level. He turns 90 on 29th September. ***Chris Bolton (C332)***

Adds Hon Ed: Judith won her age group in the World Masters Orienteering Championships held during August in Poland. Judith belongs to East Pennine Orienteering Club. Success is in the family as husband Guy had a hat-trick of 52 miles' Manchester-to-Blackpool victories in '64/65/73. He's Centurion 327 having completed the July 1962 Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles' Walk in 21:07.00. when 45 started and 26 finished including 13 new Centurions - among them C332 Chris Bolton who clocked 22:09.27. Chris participated in the Centurions 100 legs relay at last year's big Lewes "Hundredth 100 Miles" meeting. Guy has had the kudos of being a Centurion with the lowest number attending a Centurions AGM. ***All readers will be wishing Guy a truly "Happy Birthday" as he reaches 90 on 29th September.***

STAR AT THE PARKRUN

On arrival at Highbury Fields Park run on 1st August I was greeted by an unexpected fellow Life Member of the MPAA and Double Olympian **Paul Blagg** and his partner. When asked what time he expected to do over the 5 lap course on a particularly warm morning he said he'd done 22 minutes the other week. He looked in good shape too. In fact after cheering one another round in the early laps he completed the course in 23.06 in 133rd place from 701 finishers, which was a very creditable result in the 65/69 age group, with yours truly a long way back in 54.37 in 693rd place and 2nd in the 80/85 age group. A considerable improvement from my last outing in 57.58 Not an easy day though! ***Bill Sutherland***

ONTHE BOX

Chess brings young and old together at championship in Coventry - BBC News

I was watching the local news and there was a piece on a chess championship. It featured a ninety year old man playing an 8 year old chess prodigy. I thought I recognised the old man's

voice, but it wasn't until the camera moved around when I was astonished to see John Eddershaw. Still as keen as ever on his chess! ***Peter Fawkes***

- ***Colin Harle*** writes: "I have played chess with my granddaughter who is approaching 14 for many years. She's getting very close to beating me now."

ESSEX WALKER ON TOUR

I was in the area for a break, so decided to do the Fred Pearce Relay event. I also spent a few days in Wales. I also did the Vets Inter Area 2000m on Sunday in Yate, finishing second behind Dave Annetts in the M60 in 11.58. ***Steve Uttley***

BIG NAME IN THE RUNNING

Great Notley parkrun had 1970 Welsh representative David Rosser on the start line.

Tony Perkins

Adds Hon Ed: This was on 1st August. On 18th July 1970 Dave was in the Commonwealth Games 20 Miles Walk at Edinburgh, where he clocked 2:49.41 to claim 11th spot from 21 starters (1 DQ/1 DNF).

WRITES PARKRUNNER DAVE HOLBY

Small world … my local parkrun, Barclay in Hoddesdon, has a newish race director Chris Foster (ex-police) and friend of Bill Sutherland. Didn't know Chris myself but we were at the same primary school together. ***Dave Holby***

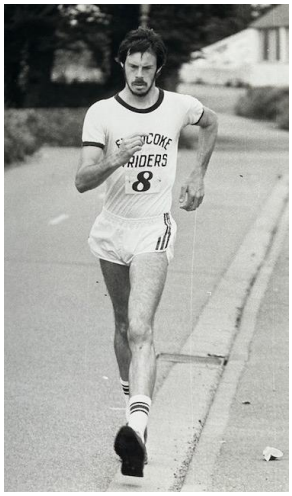
- *Adds* ***Chris Foster*****:** I have the honour of being Race Director at the Barclay Park event on Saturday 22 August where I will be congratulating David on reaching his 200th volunteering at the event.



I REMEMBER

Reading in the newsletter about Tom Dooley brought back memories. I made contact with Tom Dooley years ago in the early 1980s. Few letters between us, long before the ease of internet, which I still have. I found out what he had achieved in race walks from him. He had asked for racing kit to swop probably in Race Walking Record. I sent him my Commonwealth Games spare kit and other bits. He sent me bag full of vests etc - still have them. I wore a few in local races a couple of times and picked up by the local Press.

Rob Elliott



EUROPEAN GAMES 2026 Marathon & Half Marathon Walks

This year's edition of the track and field competitions will be remembered overall as a great and engaging Championships. I applaud the excellent coverage that the BBC supplied to us eager and casual viewers alike with all commentators providing brilliant and knowledgeable insight and narrative. It was a happy event with a joyous cast of hundreds.

However, shunted into a siding, we encountered another example of the ritual humiliation of Race Walking, dishonouring the participating athletes. What can only be described as a 'dog's breakfast' with all four events starting at the same time, with the marathon just a bit behind the half marathon start line. It was difficult enough to work out what was going on via the tv coverage, with commentators Tim Hutchings and Phil Minshull doing their best, but for anyone watching from the narrow street course it must have been utterly confusing. Also, 20km champion from Rome, Antonella Palmisano, tripped on the base of one of the barriers and nearly went over which may have affected her as she was off the pace for the latter part of the race.

I appreciate the logistics involved for judging etc but the measly 1km flat course soon mixed up all the competitors. It was like watching a front-loaded washing machine.

The obsession with breaking records, dutifully endorsed by the commentating duo, somewhat detracted from the races themselves. Why not hold the events on the same course as the running marathons, even on the same day, then it would've been more exacting, challenging and dare I say, exciting.

Congratulations to Cameron Corbishley, marathon finisher 19th out of 27 finishers with a time of 3:13:31. The half Marathon had Frederick Weigel competing for Germany, 18th out of 24 finishers in 1:30:04. Yep, the son of Ronald Weigel, ex-World Champ and Olympic Medallist who first competed for the then DDR, East Germany.

The women's half and full marathon races again showed off the cream of the European contingent with 30 and 16 finishers respectively. ***Len Ruddock***

INTERNATIONAL JUDGING SYSTEM OF RACE WALKING A TOTAL FARCE!

Having viewed the recent European Championships Race Walks with the introduction of time penalties for those considered to be breaking the rules our great Sport has been reduced to a 'snakes and ladders game' where no one other than the Judges knows what's going on except that those in the know in the public rightly perceive that it is no longer Race Walking. One of the main reasons is that there is no longer a distinct lock of the knee on each stride coupled with a short stride and little to no style. There are however a very few who comply with the rules of yesteryear but have no chance of a podium finish. As the Judges of the past used to say and stress 'If you don't disqualify promptly those who break contact at the front the remainder of the field will only follow their example.' The speeds of the top competitors has got faster and faster and has made the standards to gain entry in Major Championships very difficult to achieve in the UK. It is amazing that Race Walking holds such a prominent place in the Major Games nowadays and is so popular in many countries, because in my era when the sporting authorities-that-be disliked our discipline intently for various reasons, like low numbers participating and ongoing judging issues, they would have done anything and everything to discontinue our event. Another problem that worries me intently is the number of positive drugs test findings for race walkers in recent years. If there is a will there is a way to bring back past glories in UK Race Walking. ***Bill Sutherland***

RECOMMENDED READING

A number of things have come out of the Euro walks situation. I've come across two fascinating articles, translated into English and published in the excellent, Marcia dal Mondo website. For all aficionados of RW, I would strongly recommend that these two articles be read.

Marcia dal Mondo
The web-site of World Race Walking

BIRMINGHAM AND THE "MIXTURE OF FRIED FISH" OF WALKING: HOW ATHLETICS IS DESTROYING ITSELF.

21 Aug 2026

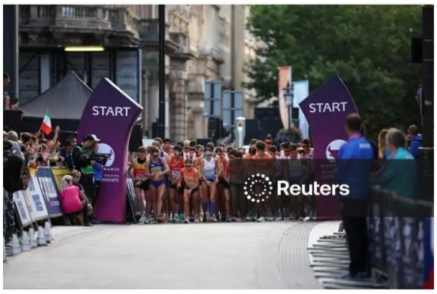


https://marciadalmondo.com/edit-news/2026/birmingham-and-the-mixture-of-fried-fish-of-walking-how-athletics-is-destroying-itself/

Marcia dal Mondo
The web-site of World Race Walking

DOES THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP WALK STILL MAKE SENSE ?

16 Aug 2026



https://marciadalmondo.com/edit-news/2026/does-the-european-championship-walk-still-make-sense/

Len Ruddock

GOOD NEWS

Thank you for the August edition of Essex Walker. As always, excellently written and very interesting read. I managed to secure a place for Saturday's London Marathon 2027. Just to let you know I have race walked 6 London Marathons to date (2 actual and 4 virtual) between 2020 and 2026, in times ranging 5hrs 10mins to 5hrs 27mins. ***Hardeep Minhas C1176***

KEVIN LE NOURY RIP

OFFICIAL NOTICE:
LE NOURY, Kevin John – On 11 August 2026, peacefully at the Princess Elizabeth Hospital, aged 68 years. Loving husband of Jayne, loved father of Stuart and Jason, father-in-law of Kira. Adored grandpa and papa of George, Alana and Elodie, much loved son of Barbara and the late Stan, and brother of Nigel.

I can confirm Kevin has passed away. He had been in hospital since New Year, with only few weeks home. Last two weeks he took a turn for the worst with cancer. My wife and I visited regularly, friends since mid 70s. Jayne was around yesterday at our house. I will be writing a tribute during the week to go on Sarnia website https://sarnia.wordpress.com/ which is still active. Will also email it around. ***Rob Elliott***

Adds Hon Ed: Sad news indeed. Kevin and his family were amicable hosts whenever Sarnia Walking Club (alas now disbanded) welcomed visitors to their events - and post race social gatherings and presentations. Kevin gave around 50 years or more meritorious service to Guernsey race walking and his Club - and represented Guernsey in an Inter-Island Games. The Club's flagship event, the 19.4 miles "Church-to-Church Walk", attracted many "Essex Walker" readers to its delightful course which started/finished on the Capital's St Peter Port's seafront - and passed every Parish Church on this beautiful holiday island. On Friday evenings before Sunday racing was a short 3,000 metres road walk at Vale - and Sunday evening ended with a presentation buffet at an upmarket hotel on the Capital's fringe. Many readers competed often and are listed as former winners. Commonwealth Games Representative walker Rob has given details below of a website where tributes can be submitted - many have already been made and more certainly will be. On the passing of a most popular athlete we offer profound condolences to all Kevin's family members and friends on their loss. ***DA***

ACCESS DETAILS FOR KEVIN Le NOURY TRIBUTE

I have tribute plus photos on the Guernsey walking website for Kevin.
https://sarnia.wordpress.com/2026/08/19/kevin-le-noury-tribute/
Kevin Le Noury Rest In Peace 1957 to 2026. Kevin Le Noury, a valued member of the Sarnia Walking Club for almost 50 years recently passed away after battling an illness for the last months of his life. He leaves wife Jayne and sons Stuart and Jason, all of whom put so much into the Sarnia Walking Club. Rest In Peace Kevin. ***Rob Elliott***

MORE SOUTHEND MILE TROPHIES

This year for the first time there will be 3 trophies:

1. Outright winner - non-returnable so the winner's own award
2. The O'Rawe's George Woods trophy to first Essex Centurion - returnable
3. The Ray Pearce Memorial Trophy for first club athlete to finish (Club Champion) - returnable.

Plus, of course, the now non-negotiable photo. ***June Cork***

NIJMEGEN MARCH NEWS

This year is my 46th. I've just met up with Hans Rennie and Peter Addison as well as others from the past. Hans must be on his 49th now and Peter is supporting the Met and Sussex teams. All to play for. ***Andy Bignold***

SPITFIRE SCRAMBLE

Sorry for the delay on reporting on this fabulous event but briefly ... Further to my previous mention of my intended participation in the 24 hour Spitfire Scramble race held at Hornchurch



Country Park over the weekend of the 11th/12th July. This being the site of the former airfield base used by the RAF during the Battle of Britain where the famous Spitfire's were so successfully deployed. I was part of a 5-man relay team (including 2 of my sons). The race wasn't without incident as several wildfires started up after a few hours causing the race to be postponed for an hour while the London Fire Brigade doused the flames nearby to the track being used. Undeterred we resumed with the course being altered and shortened due to safety issues relating to the high temperatures experienced throughout that weekend. I was greatly encouraged throughout by many runners and supporters intrigued in how I was able to challenge a multi-terrain course in a rather unusual way! I was personally very pleased to have been faster than many runners as the race progressed throughout the afternoon, night and morning. We finished 3rd overall and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. This included sleeping for the odd hour under the stars before setting off on another lap. What a superb annually held event that I would recommend to any runner or walker as a solo or team effort.



Colin Harle

PS: The race at Southend (Bank Holiday Monday) was another success. Great to watch my 10 year old Grandson battling it out with your good self. Well done indeed to you Dave.

Adds Hon Ed: Essex Walker recommended this long distance/overnight event for readers contemplating trying a 100 Miles' event. Colin makes mention of the Southend race - it'll be fully reported in our next edition.

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