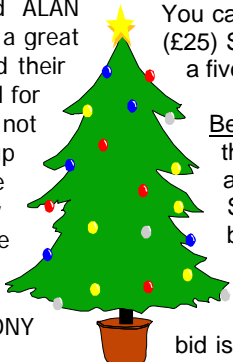


ESSEX WALKER

END OF THE SERIES

The 2004 Blackheath Trophy Series ended with a good turnout, which was much improved when compared to earlier races. Sharpie was first over the line in the only yacht handicap of the year; other events being off level starts. Postie MICK SUTTON is the overall champion and so becomes the first Royal Mail victor since the late and much-missed BILL KING headed the table way back in 1977. NICK KAVANAGH and ALAN O'RAWE completed the frame. KIM HOWARD (what a great season) took the ladies honours while Ilford retained their team title ahead of the L.P.R. and Tonbridge. A word for MIKE HINTON who was indisposed and therefore not able to line up for the final race. But...he still gave up his morning to bring along the team trophy for the re-presentation, as he was its custodian. Trophy discipline has been very poor in recent years, so we hope that more trophy holders will take a leaf out of Mike's book. Thanks, as always, to organisers STEVE WYNN and HARRY JEFFORD and to host TONY KAY at the Old Addyans Club for making us welcome.



MICK BARNBROOK – POTENTIAL PARLIAMENTARIAN

While the likes of Joan Collins, Robert Kilroy-Silk and Frank Maloney are heading for the U.K.I.P. exit door faster than the leader in an Open 7, Mick's standing in the Party has risen. He's been selected for their panel of Prospective Parliamentary Candidates and is now seeking adoption by a Constituency Association. If adopted he'll be aiming for Westminster, or possibly aiming to save his deposit! Who knows? Mick has made his first promises – to be an honest politician who will not have his snout in the expenses trough.

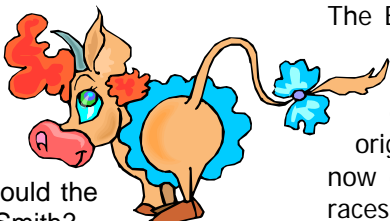


THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Well, here's a naughty little item which has yet to be revealed for public scrutiny. In the fiscal year 2003-2004, Sport England received £42.612 million from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Of this amount, grants to national sporting governing bodies amounted to £6.2m. The administrative cost for distributing this largess was £14m. Would someone from Sport England kindly enlighten me about where the rest went? (From the Daily Mail)

WRITES OUR NATIONAL PRESS OFFICER

We all feel Race Walking suffers from lack of TV coverage, but RWA PPO Chris Smith reports on a breakthrough. Whilst watching the CBBC channel with my 5 year old, the cartoon character blue cow was talking from her field, when a pack of half a dozen cartoon race walkers came into shot, with headbands on and exhibiting excellent technique and pace. Could the setting have been in Essex, asks Smith?



Seasons Greetings

BE AN OFFICIAL PATRON OF THE LEAMINGTON BID FOR THE E.A.A. 2007 RACE WALKING CUP

You can give financial support by becoming a GOLD PATRON (£25) SILVER PATRON (£10) or a BRONZE PATRON (for just a fiver).

Benefits: Gold members will receive a guaranteed seat in the V.I.P grandstand and a 10% discount on all official bid and event merchandise.

Silver members will receive a 5% discount on all official bid and event merchandise.

All patrons will be acknowledged in the bid newsletter, on the bid website and in Race Walking Record. If the bid is successful you will also be acknowledged in the official programme and on the event website.

Please send your cheque (£25/£10/£5) made payable to 'Leamington Grand Prix', together with your name, address (and email address if you have one) to:- Ian Richards, Leamington 2007, 3 Back Albert Grove, Headingley, LEEDS, LS6 4DA.

BOO AND HISS

Look out Mister he's behind you. It wouldn't be Christmas without Loughton 2nd claimer CHRIS 'The Scribe' FOSTER clambering onto the Pantomime stage. This year he's The King's Chancellor in 'Puss in Boots' – which will be pulling in the punters at the Intimate Theatre, Palmer's Green. Contact the performer directly for your tickets.



THREE TIMES A LADY

The Southern Area of the Race Walking Association have a Lady President for a third successive year – much respected international distance walker and Centurion PAM FICKEN. It was very much a case of 'As you were' at the AGM, with Officers agreeing to remain in post – so the Area now has a President serving for an unprecedented 3rd term.

We congratulate Pam on this honour, and call upon readers to give full support to the good lady during her time in high office.

ULTRA-DISTANCE NEWS

The BILL KING TROPHY has been re-assigned. It was used for the Britain v Netherlands Centurions match over 100 miles, having replaced the original trophy which had been declared lost. The original trophy has been unearthed, so Bill's trophy will now go to the YOUNGEST FINISHER at U.K. 100 Miles races.

PUTTING ON AN EVENT

To keep things, simple, we shall concentrate on the largest road event that the Club promotes regularly, the London Open Walks, the organisation of which is down to me with assistance from Pauline Wilson; it's the other way round for the New Year's Day walks

We'll start at the beginning, when and where. 'When' is easy the first Sunday (generally) in February, unless something else is on, when a nearby date must be found. 'Where' is also straightforward Victoria Park. Here we have the first thing that actually has to be done. Permission has to be obtained from the Park Authorities and St. Augustine's Hall (Victoria Park Harriers' Headquarters) has to be booked; obviously both these are liable to be affected by other events in the Park, which is why we use Sunday, a less popular day. The wonders of E-mail make it an easy job to book the Hall and a fax message to the Park Manager always obtains willingly-given permission.

All open race walking events need a Permit, this is the easiest bit of the lot, because I am the person responsible for issuing Permits in England; all that I need do is convince myself that the Risk Assessment requirements have been observed and I have never doubted my own honesty on the point.

To ensure that there are adequate walking judges, it is necessary to have the event on the winter Fixture List issued in August, as Pauline is the National Fixtures Co-ordinator that's not difficult either. Why must it be on the Fixture List? So that the Southern Area Judges' and Officials' Secretary can be satisfied that it is a 'proper' event and can appoint judges; he will, in due course, send me a list of the appointments, with his selections as Chief Judge and Chief Judge's Recorder the person who marks up the 'red cards' on the board and keeps the paperwork in order so that walkers can be disqualified if necessary. The Judges' and Officials' Secretary used to appoint all the other officials as well, but then stopped doing so, so it is down to me to appoint the starter, the appropriate number of timekeepers and recorders and to find a bicycle and rider to go round the course, collecting the red cards. (The new J. and O. Secretary says the he will restart the practice of appointing the other officials, so that will be a little less for me).

The only other official to be appointed is the Referee. It is a peculiar position, because he often has nothing at all to do but is also the ultimate authority if any problems, protests, etc., happen to arrive. It is a fairly painless job for him to give permission for people not to wear their club colours or to wear tights in very cold weather, in theory, knees in walking races must be kept bare so that the judges can see them but referees usually permit the wearing of skin tight garments if the weather is bad enough. Unlike a Field or Track Referee, he has no administrative or operational at all. The referee, therefore, should be a senior figure with good knowledge of the Rules of the R.W.A. the A.A.A. of E., U.K.A. and the I.A.A.F, but may simply spend the meeting as a spectator.

If the race is long enough (which the London Walks are not, if you look at the Rules edge-on) there will also be a need for water and sponging stations, we have needed them in Victoria Park when promoting National Championships and then we have appointed Pam and Brian Ficken who have already described what they do.

The final question is First Aid. There is a requirement for first-aid cover and some doubt as to what to do about it. The parks staff have first aid knowledge and the nearest station of the London Ambulance Service is about one mile away, so that's covered, contrary to what some people believe (and keep saying) it is not necessary to have an ambulance in attendance, although for Nationals we do.

The fixing of the timetable was done years ago and we do not change from year to year. We like to have competitors, so the meeting is advertised by leaflets at various meetings and, since it is also an R.W.A. National Y.A.G Grand Prix Event, it has to be advertised in the December edition of Race Walking Record, where we normally take a full page.

Competitors, supporters and officials will want refreshments and we must provide for them; Françoise (who generally races as well), Jackie Brown, Pam Ficken and Margaret Livermore are the catering staff and to make a little more money, we have a raffle.

All that remains to buy the plaques, medals and tokens for prizes, prepare the recording sheets, registration papers and prize presentation sheets and provide each Chief Official with an envelope containing all the papers that he and his team will need (including their free refreshment tickets!). remember to put the 'Disqualification Warning Posting Board' in the car and we are ready for the day.

The races are over the following distances; 1k, 2.5k, 5k and 10k. The lap that we always use is 1538.5 metres; as we want all the races to finish in the same place, we have to mark the starts (two of them) for the shorter races and the point at which all races turn to make up the distance. Another complication is that the Women and Under 17 competitors doing the 5k can go on to do the 10k (starting at the same time) to score if eligible in the Essex League, so that the 5k and 10k competitors have to be given different coloured numbers.

Very few people enter in advance, so entries must be taken on the day and slips filled in to work Cassidy's Patent Recording System, which saves a good deal of time afterwards and helps to eliminate errors. Pauline Wilson takes the entries, compiles the results, prepares the sheets for presentation, fights off the pests and answers those with genuine queries.

When a long day is nearly done and we have got home (generally via the Black Horse, where we stop to strengthen ourselves), all that remains is to type up the results for the magazines, the Essex League Secretary and those who have paid to have them sent and to work out the accounts.

Ah, the accounts! How much do we make? In 2004, we lost about £25, which is the best that we have ever done; we do this, of course, only because the catering team (and ourselves) do not charge for any of the food that we sell, the raffle prizes are also provided for us by the aforementioned helpers (partly from redundant Christmas presents and partly provided specially) and most of the officials do not claim their expenses. However, Loughton A.C. is not a financial institution and the main object is to give the competitors an afternoon of well-organised racing.

I have never organised a track or cross-country meeting (except partly the Inter-Area Walks Match), but I imagine that the problems are much the same. So, if your involvement in athletics is limited to turning up, paying your fee, whizzing round the park a few times, collecting your prize, buying a raffle ticket, having a sandwich and going home, spare a thought for those who have done a fair bit of work in the background (and put their hands in their own pockets) and remember that, although our promotion would be pointless without the athletes, it would be impossible without a lot of work about which, perhaps, you now know a little.

Peter Cassidy

(Reproduced kind permission Loughton Lines)



THE ABC OF ATHLETICS

Compiled by VETERIS

Reproduced by Kind Permission of The Eastern Vet



- A** Amateur is the state of a competitor who competes for the sheer love of the sport. Some, however, are persuaded to accept the odd few thousand pounds to be able to buy a gold chain.
- B** Barrier is an obstacle that is put in the way of some 3000m runners to slow them down. There is also a barrier with a large pond after it. This event is then called a steeplechase.
- C** Champion is a northern term to signify that something is good or first class. Such as "Eee by gum, that's a champion lass over yon!"
- D** DNF is a category given to a non-finisher in an event. This indicates that the person in question was having a poor run or a clubmate was likely to beat him/her for the first time in years.
- E** Entry. Generally a form enabling a competitor to partake in a given event. There is normally a closing date for this form to be sent in which is traditionally ignored.
- F** Form. Can be as (E) or can be the state of fitness of an athlete. "I was off form today" is a phrase used by someone beaten by a member of the opposite sex or someone much older.
- G** Gradient. Often found on road courses and are put there by nature to cause the maximum pain to a runner. Course designers often make detours to include a very severe one.
- H** Hurdle. Very similar to (B) but of a lighter construction and generally more of them are placed around a track. These have to be of a certain height and distance apart, which always causes confusion to track officials.
- I** Implement. The name given to such objects as Shot, Hammer etc., that large people hurl about to the danger of other track users.
- J** Junior is an athlete of tender years. Older athletes tend to show them how to behave and to respect their elders by not beating them in competitions.
- K** Knowledge is a very valuable thing. It gives a competitor the edge over a rival such as knowing short cuts on a cross-country course.
- L** Lethargy. This is the state some runners find themselves in at 23 miles in a marathon, or waiting for 'that bloke' to finish in the 100m so he can have his turn at the long jump.
- M** Men. These can easily be identified. They are the ones with the big hairy chests, facial hair and muscles. Not to say some of the opposite gender do not have these attributes.
- N** Number. This is printed on a small white card on the front of a competitor for identification purposes. They normally curl up or disintegrate in the wet so that the finish marshal is unable to identify the competitor.
- O** Olympic Games. A celebration of athletics that occurs every 4 years, it is debatable for whose benefit, the athletes or the country it is held in.
- P** Pole Vault. A field event in which an athlete tries to jump over a high bar using a long pole. The whole event can take up the entire meeting and normally everyone has gone home, except for the participants, long before its conclusion.
- Q** Queue, a line of people waiting for the medals/trophies they have won at an athletic meeting. Could be avoided if the winners were to collect same during the meeting as they were won.
- R** Runners. These are the main participants in athletics. They can be dividend into 3 main categories 1) those that run to jump 2) those that run to throw things and 3) the main category, those that run to get somewhere, normally back to where they started.
- S** Shot. A large heavy metal ball that is not thrown but 'putt'. The weight is determined by the age of the user. As a junior it is light, gets heavier the older one gets until it gets lighter again in old age.
- T** Tug of War. This is an athletic event. Two teams, normally men, arrange themselves each end of a stout rope. Each team then walks backward gripping the rope. One presumes the idea is to snap the rope.
- U** Undemocratic. As in a company, club or federation, having large membership but submitting to the will of a minority.
- V** Veteran. An athlete who is of a certain age. In a lot of cases they have children who compete and, having taken them to events and seen the low standard of performances, decide to take up the sport. Often these people become obsessive fanatics.
- W** "Walking is a mode of progression so taken that contact with the ground is maintained at all times". That used to be the definition of race walking which has now been 'modified' to the detriment of the sport to such a degree that the number of competitors has declined.
- X** Xmas the one day a year when a man must do a training session. This would normally take place at such a time as to avoid any preparations for lunch and finish in time to join in the festivities.
- Y** Youth. A stage in life that we all remember but not always accurately, a 2:57 marathon somehow becomes 2:47 or a 30 second defeat turns into inches. This is mostly due to advancing years.
- Z** Zip, a type of fastener often found on tracksuits. They are so designed that they jam seconds before an event, thus causing the athlete to miss the start.

The above was submitted by a member and should be read, as it was written, tongue in cheek. I trust it will not offend any sensitive readers! Tony Challis.

FUTURE CHANGES AT COLCHESTER

After previous attempts failed, merger talks are back on in England's oldest recorded town, as Colchester Harriers and Colchester & Tendring A.C. are considering a joint future as COLCHESTER UNITED (where they will have links with the local professional football club of the same name). Also, plans are well-advanced to demolish the Arena Club as part of a local development. Watch this space!



CORRECTIONS

The November issue advised that the European Cup is to be held on May 14/15th at Miskole. A revised date is now May 21st. It has now been deduced that Miskole is somewhere in Hungary. The November issue also announced that GLEN ROBERTSON had become a father for the first time and offered congratulations. Well it's not Glen the walker who merits these congratulations, but another Colchester Harrier of the same name. One can only request, yet again, that information suppliers double-check their facts before submitting them for publication in Essex Walker.



G'DAY

VICTORIA WINCH (an award winner in the 2004 Colchester Garrison 2K Track Series), ALEX and their father GERRY have all race walked during the year. On October 31st, the Havering Mayesbrook A.C. trio emigrated to Australia. We wish them all well. Not so long ago, a Southend walker emigrated 'down-under' and took trophies with her. If that one gets spotted, who knows, we might see our silver again? Meanwhile speculation looms about the future of the Colchester 2K Track Series.

EMAILS KATHY CRILLEY

Once more, a very readable and enjoyable issue of 'Essex Walker' has dropped into my e-mail box. What a good read, or as Melvyn Bragg is wont to say "a right riveting read" (please apply a Northern Accent).

I have to agree with a lot of what Reg (Wells) has to say, although I have seen one or two walkers do a bit of 'straight legged running' in 100 mile races (usually at night in far flung corners of the course).

I also enjoyed Denis Sheppards letter on his visit to Athens. Sadly, BBC chose not to cover the mens 50km in full – and I was at work in any case. I did email the BBC about the hooah over timings on the marathon events (in the heat of late afternoon) – I wondered why the walks were scheduled so early in the day and the marathons weren't. Goodness, didn't TV stations want to televise race walks at convenient ratings times. Well, no! Don't be silly! Incidentally, I did feel sorry for Paula Radcliffe (been there, done it, feeling) but wondered why British team management had let her set up her 'camp' totally separate. She was, after all, ... Ladies Team Captain. But that's by the by.

Last but not least I too attended Derek Johnson's memorial service at Lord's Cricket Ground last month (October). Like Mike, (whom I don't know) it was really good to see such a good turn out. The London marathon website wrote a good obituary of Derek, saying in part, that "he (Derek) was to be seen in the 1990's running in Hyde Park with a rag tag bunch of runners", well that included me! Derek introduced us to interval training, in all it's forms. I'm sure I speak for all Serpies that it was very much appreciated. Colin Young and Mel Batty were also present.

Please thank your team in producing the Newsletter. I know just how much effort goes into it. I have just taken over as Newsletter editor for the 100km Association (running) and I costed the production of getting out one issue of their Newsletter to about £120.00 (The Assoc has about 200 members) I too will be getting the members to accept an electronic Newsletter. I think I'm in for an uphill struggle!!!

All the Best
Kathy

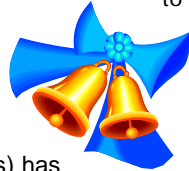


PUT YOUR HEART INTO WALKING

This is the title of a new campaign by the British Heart Foundation. In the leaflets supporting this campaign, are many good reasons to take up walking.

CHANGING UNIFORMS

Many times Olympic walker Chris 'Mad Max' MADDOX has exchanged his Policeman's uniforms for a Royal Mail one. He now 'walks the walk' in scenic Devon. Over the years, quite a few walkers have either left or joined the Post Office. Who Next?



VOTED OUT OF A TITLE WIN

Among those who shamefully voted to reject the suggestion of the Essex County Walking Secretary RAY PEARCE, about staging the Essex 20 Miles Championship in conjunction with the National 50 Kilometres Championship in North Essex, was PETER CASSIDY. Come the day, he was the leading Essex entrant at the 20 miles mark, although he didn't make the full trip (50K). Bearing in mind that, on 2 previous occasions when such arrangements had been made for the Essex 20 Miles, those reaching 20 miles had been permitted to retire at that point and be formally recorded – Peter had effectively helped to vote himself out of another Championship trophy and medal to accompany his 2004 Essex 3,000 Metres award.

WRITES TOP JUDGE AND RESPECTED STATISTICIAN JOHN POWELL

Dear Dave.

Eric Hall refers to Chief Judge Peter Marlow's advice to judges in Athens not to put red cards in for minor infringements. The rules have not been changed and I have had similar advice in the past in this country from an international panel chief judge. I always ignore such instructions as I consider that a walker should get a red card if not complying with the definition at any time. We judges are there to protect the vast majority who are endeavouring to walk correctly. In the Athens context some latitude might be excusable for those trying to survive in the latter stages of the 50 kilometres. The move to judging by committee and the spread of the Nelsonian style chief judge, reduced to being no more than an administrator, has done the sport a disservice. After all, Premiership football referees would not last long if they failed to issue red cards.

I was at this year's World Cup in Naumburg, Germany when I was pleased to see that the judging was much stricter than on the previous three occasions thought Pauline Wilson and I were rather surprised to see a certain Senor Martinez get through. The same Guatemalan had run round Victoria Park Leamington three years ago and picked up only two cards. The quality of walking in the well supported open races in Naumburg was generally good and few had any trouble with straightening their legs. In view of this I was rather disappointed to see Peter's remarks and particularly as his own style was impeccable.

I cannot claim the credit for identifying the Westbury on Trym 20km which you say you walked in 1970 from the Greenway track in the nearby Bristol suburb of Southmead and the result did not appear in RWR. When a student living in Westbury on Trym I did see Ken Smith, then of Bristol AC, win the 1957 Gloucestershire mile title in 4 mins 26.4 secs. at the same track.

Best Wishes,
John Powell.

IT'S FOR YOU

Two readers have asked that their new telephone numbers be made available.

JERRY EVERETT, who we saw at the recent

Leamington Spa social now answers on 01473-421828.

ALAN BLEWITT, who has recently been supporting running races around Stevenage, now answers on 07905-901436.



THE LEAMINGTON WEEKEND

Photographs of the Leamington Weekend are available at: <http://radio.weblogs.com/0132470/2004/11/07.html>

MEMORABLE DAY

The best attended reunion and assembly of U.K. race walking, since the Lugano Trophy meeting at Milton Keynes in 1977, was staged at ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA in November – and Essex Walker readers were well represented. With or without the day's star turn (it was without) Olympic Champion ROBERT KORZENIOWSKI, the occasion was bound to be a success. For around a fortnight beforehand, rumours were that the R.K. was going to blow-out. These rumours were in overdrive at Earl's Colne on October 31st; where the leading article in Race Walking Record was being openly discussed. It was a bid to drum-up late business for the function yet – surprisingly – **not one mention was made of the star attraction**. Leading lights were still saying that he was coming – but only because they had not been advised of his withdrawal. Even the National Press Officer of the R.W.A. was not told until the Thursday beforehand, so tight were the lips sealed! His withdrawal was not the organisers fault, though many people would have liked this news to have been more openly disseminated. Or at least that's what several have asked Essex Walker to publish – they approach Essex Walker as they know their views won't be gagged! Yet in almost every case, those who have expressed such views would have attended in any case. We're glad they did, as the weekend was both memorable and enjoyable. Let's give a right if reply here and now. When these points were put to one of the protagonists, PETER MARLOW, he was emphatic when he stated "I assure you that no attempt whatsoever was made to withhold any information about the non-attendance of Robert Korzeniowski". We are happy to publish his statement and are pleased to hear it.

The still active were able to benefit from a track training session, instructional talk and training film under the supervision of 1980 Olympic 20 Kilometres Champion MAURIZIO DAMILANO and two other respected international coaches from Russia and Spain. It was heartening to note that many of those benefiting were from the younger aged group. And more than anything else, walking needs both newcomers and youngsters. The session was very well attended.

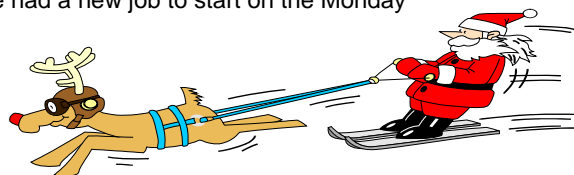
In the Town Hall Council Chamber, PETER MARLOW spelled out the challenge facing the international future for U.K. race walking by saying, "If you exclude the Commonwealth Games, then ROGER MILLS is the last British walker to receive a medal at a major games. That was way back in 1974. Yet we are still the most successful nation in the history of race walking". In the chamber, a constructive fixture seminar took place, followed by a meaningful discussion on possible Law/Rule changes and then an open forum about the sport's future. The nimble ones managed to appear at both track and Town Hall!

The seminar concluded at 4 p.m. which, it must be said, left a lot of time to kill in an unfamiliar town before an evening Dinner which was timed at 7.30 p.m. for 8 p.m. With 9 after dinner speakers booked, an earlier start time would have been appreciated.

In IAN RICHARDS we have a gifted organiser. For just £15 per head he put together a quality meal with personal service, and a pre-meal reception plus wine on the tables and a barrel of Leamington 2007 specially brewed beer to celebrate the – hopefully – successful bid. With that sort of financial nous he should be put forward as a future Chancellor of the Exchequer! Over 160 attended – including many who had not graced the scene for ages plus, as previously stated, many Essex Walker Readers. The object was to get all of Britain's still living major medallists under the same roof. Sadly, illness, holiday and unavailability prevented STEVE BARRY, MARION FAWKES, ROGER MILLS, DON THOMPSON MBE, CAROL TYSON and STAN VICKERS from dining – which percentage-wise was a large chunk. We still had the real pleasure of seeing OLLY FLYNN, KEN MATTHEWS MBE, IAN McCOMBIE, DR. LISA KELHER, RAY MIDDLETON, BILL SUTHERLAND BEM, ROY THORPE, JAKE WARHURST and GEORGE WILLIAMS. With so many not attending, perhaps 'Mad Max' could have got a guest ticket (no medals but 5 Olympics – should have been 6)? Many yarns and past battles were recounted. However, good as bygone days are, the day was about launching the 2007 bid for the Race Walking Cup. Among the 9 speakers was a municipal gentleman (complete with chain) who boasted that Leamington had proudly hosted minority sporting championships such as for petanque and left-handed golf. One supposes that, in his view, race walking sits nicely alongside petanque and left-handed golf (with due respect to their participants). Reminds people of one of the all-time great sporting headlines in The Times, 'ONE-ARMED GOLF – TITLE CHANGES HANDS'. The 9th and billed last speaker was IAN McCOMBIE who stated "I'm in the graveyard spot". He added, "I won the National and Inter-Counties 10 Miles Championship 9 years in-a-row, and nowadays that event doesn't even appear on the fixture list". Any serious points quickly gave way to humour and he had his audience rolling in the aisles. An unbilled speaker – Ireland's PIECE O'CALLAGHAN (who had been collected from Birmingham Airport by TONY PERKINS) – took the word 'Bid' to heart by holding an auction for a Menu card (signed by all the distinguished visitors) and a 2007 Bid T-Shirt (also signed). The successful bidders were DAVE TURNER and BOB DOBSON for £65 and a ton respectively. Both are keen collectors of memorabilia.

When one considers how successful the day was, one hopes that a Centenary Dinner can be held in 2007 when the R.W.A. will celebrate 100 years. Hopefully all the great medallists will be able to attend for a 100% turnout. And... the Bid must be successful if the enthusiasm shown at Royal Leamington Spa is anything to go by!

Finally, even without Robert Korzeniowski, it was a great day for which we thank IAN RICHARDS and his Committee. And where was R.K.? Was he away doing the Outer Mongolian 10K? No he had a new job to start on the Monday morning and wanted to turn up bright, alert and early on his first day.



ESSEX LEAGUE RACES

Sun 6 Feb	London 10K.	Victoria Park, E.9.	1 p.m.
Sun 20 Feb	Essex 10 Miles.	South Park, Ilford	10 a.m.

OTHER RACES

Sun 19 Dec	Ilford Open 10K.	Chigwell Row.	10.30 a.m.
Sun 26 Dec	Boxing Day 5K	Donkey Lane, Enfield	11 a.m.
Sat 1 Jan	New Year's Day Meeting	Victoria Park	11 a.m.
Sat 8 Jan	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane, Enfield	2.30 p.m.
Sun 9 Jan	Met. Police Open 10K	Imber Court	2 p.m.
Sat 29 Jan	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane, Enfield	2.30 p.m.
Sat 12 Feb	Camb. H. Winter League 5K	Bexley	2 p.m.



Sporting yesterdays

(A 1976 CARTOON)

IT IS HOPED THAT CROYDON HARRIERS' CHAMPION WALKER **PAUL NIHILL** WON'T BE TOO UPSET AT BEING REGARDED AS A SUBJECT FOR OUR "SPORTING YESTERDAYS" SERIES

AFTER ALL, PAUL IS STILL REGULARLY "PROGRESSING BY STEPS" SO TAKEN THAT UNBROKEN CONTACT WITH THE GROUND IS MAINTAINED"



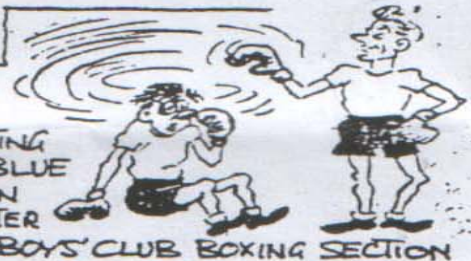
ACTUALLY THE REASON FOR HIS INCLUSION IS THAT EXACTLY TEN YEARS AGO (IN OCTOBER 1964) AT THE TOKYO OLYMPICS

BEFORE 60,000 PEOPLE AND IN POURING RAIN, PAUL NIHILL WON THE SILVER MEDAL FOR GREAT BRITAIN IN THE 50 KILOMETRES ROAD WALK



AS A SCHOOLBOY, PAUL WAS QUITE A DAB WITH PAINT-BRUSH AND COLOURS

LATER HE PRODUCED SOME EXCITING BLACK AND BLUE STUDIES ON CANVAS AFTER JOINING A BOYS' CLUB BOXING SECTION



CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING WAS NEXT ON THE AGENDA

THEN FINDING HE COULD COVER DISTANCES QUICKER ON FOOT THAN MOST PEOPLE DID BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT PAUL TURNED TO ROAD WALKING



NIHILL IS AN ADMIRER OF THE OLD TIME PRIZE-FIGHTERS

HE PROBABLY REGARDS HIS OWN OLYMPIC WALK AS A MERE DODDLE COMPARED WITH DISTANCES THE OLD LADS WENT TO!



A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT PAUL NOW HOPES FOR A PLACE IN THE 1976 MONTREAL OLYMPICS

IN OTHER WORDS HE'S AIMING TO BE A "SPORTING TOMORROW!"

JIM MEECE



ENFIELD OPEN 7 MILES

Another big field (50 + a well supported under-card), saw former winner PETER RYAN show best from among the many Essex Walkers readers in contention. Peter was 3rd in 55.59 in what was a close race throughout. Ilford took the team honours with just 3 seconds covering their scoring trio - former winner STEVE ALLEN, STEVE UTTLEY and OLLY BROWNE who received his first award since making his comeback. For newer readers, Oly was once an inspirational Ilford Captain. In keeping with Enfield's notorious reputation, 3 competitors took tumbles, 2 of whom were from Essex - FRANCES FERNANDEZ and ALAN O'RAWE, both of whom rose to finish. Alan is Chairman of Canvey Island Amateur Boxing Club, so you'd expect him to rise from the canvas (or in his case the tarmac). However, it must be said that, unlike on some previous occasions, commendable effort had been made to clear the racing surface of wet leaves, conkers and other miscellaneous rubbish. Well done to all for another fine afternoon of well-supported Category 'B' racing. Thanks also to Centurion KEN ROOST for flogging the raffle tickets and SHARPIE for endlessly drawing what seems like a score of prizes.



ON THE TRAIL

HANS and DERRY RENNIE have kept up their pedestrianism - big time - with a 3 weeks long walking holiday around Korea, Japan and Taiwan.



TROPHIES: WHERE ARE THEY?

Essex County Walking Secretary RAY PEARCE is grumbling about a number of the County's trophies not being returned in time for re-presentation at Championship races. Some are still in the possession of previous holders – and he asks that these be handed to him as soon as is possible.

PULLING MORE STROKES THAN OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE!

The Essex 20 Miles saga rumbles on-and-on. Stories, rumours, charges and counter charges about the wishes of Essex walkers to hold their race in conjunction with the Essex-located National 50 Kilometres Championship. This is the 5th issue of Essex Walker to cover the matter, as differing tales still emerge about the shenanigans inside the 'smoke filled room'. Latest version is that there was no vote. States Honorary Treasurer JOHN POWELL, "People are reading something into this meeting that never happened. No vote was taken as it's not in the Southern Area's gift to decide this issue. Peter Marlow spoke on the issue, but he was only there as a guest". We've already published RAY PEARCE's statement, in that – although it was his idea in the first place – he couldn't speak on the issue as he was chairing the meeting. We've also published PETER MARLOW's statement and a comment from PETER CASSIDY. We feel sorry for Ray, who failed to gain support for his own idea, for the Gower family who put up a trophy for a race that was brought down by politics and for those walkers who wanted to appear in a race, only to find themselves unable to. Meanwhile conflicting statements range from a unanimous vote to no vote at all. To borrow a catchphrase of the stadium announcer at Bolton Wanderers home games, "IT'S A RIGHT DING-DONG-DO".



THOUGHT FOR 2005

Don't wait for your ship to come in
– row out and meet it!

WRITES JOURNEYMAN DISTANCE WALKER AND RESPECTED CENTURION ED SHILLABEER

Dear Dave,
Like many, I also believe that Chris Maddox should have been given a guest place at the Leamington Spa Dinner, in recognition of his 5 Olympic appearances (which should have been 6 had 1980 brought its just reward). Mad Max, as he is known, competed in 21 majors and never failed to finish... science alone will not put us back on the world stage. He has plenty to give back to the sport, if only he could be asked in the right way. As for 2007 in Leamington Spa, can they produce a suitable course? With the London 2012 Olympic Bid now under way, where would the walks be held? Leamington Spa backwater? We should be pushing for The Mall! Think about it! You heard it here first. Max could speak with his ex-room mate Lord Coe. I have a back door to the Palace and we have plenty of ex-Police who could walk the corridors of power to facilitate road closures. Anything the London Marathon can do, RWA Centenary and the Olympics can duplicate.

Yours in Sport – walk tall
Edbanger

Adds Hon Ed. The 2012 proposed marathon course has already been announced. Starting at Tower Bridge it will pass many famous landmarks (inc. Buckingham Palace and The Mall) before finishing with a lap of the Olympic Stadium.



WRITES MIKE HINTON

Dear Dave,

Your clarion call for walkers to make an effort and support this year's last race in the Blackheath Series, didn't fall on deaf ears.

Glad to say the turnout was more than double the previous race. Steve and Harry put a lot of effort in to keep this event going, and deserve a far better turnout throughout the year.

The individual and team awards presented at series end are excellent, so let's hope next year's series can start off in the way it finished.

Regards Mike

WRITES DAVE SHARPE

Dear Capt. Birdseye,

So again we have come to the end of yet another Essex League season which, this time, had 9 races. There have been some new faces turn and old hands re-appear. The highlights were good fields at the Essex 10 Miles and in the Essex Police 5 Miles at Earl's Colne. The lows, unfortunately, were low turnouts at other events. Combining with other races does work. The League at Victoria Park, with the London Championship, makes it more competitive than being held on its own. The downside has been the low numbers at both the Essex 3,000 metres and the County 10,000 metres. So, perhaps with a little thought and planning, things will work out better next time. Races have been done outside Essex before, so why not give a chance to combining the Essex 20 Kilometres with the S.R.W.A 20K at Littlehampton, which is an 'A' race – and if the British Masters 10K is at Enfield again next year; going-in with that? As it's a good place to race and is well organised, even though a 'B' event, the Moulton 5 Miles should be considered.

Yours sincerely

Dagenham Dave Sharpe.

Adds Hon. Ed. There was nothing wrong with the 2004 Essex 3,000 and 10,000 metres – except that the punters didn't turn up in great numbers. Mention is made of Moulton, which in 2005 will be on Saturday June 18th. **Ring fence that date now.**

COMBINED EVENTS

At the Leamington Spa Fixtures Seminar, a leading official commented adversely on the amount of combined fixtures. However, they're popular, as more racing in one event brings more enjoyment for those partaking. It does cause problems for race organisers, as extracting up to 4 different sets of results from one list takes some doing. However, it does save on travelling costs and – with the cost of hiring venues nowadays – it makes financial sense. Combined events are clearly here to stay.

SOCIAL FUNCTION

Iford A.C. are to stage their Annual Dinner and Dance on Friday 11th March at the Chigwell Manor Hall. Guest speaker is to be International hammer thrower PAUL DICKENSON. Costings and booking details will be published when known.



AN INVITATION FROM SUE CLEMENTS

Hi everybody,
The New Year's Eve 10K road run at Ely is welcoming walkers to the event.

They have decided to start the walkers 15 minutes earlier than the runners i.e. at 10.45 a.m. This will be mentioned on the welcome letters sent out with the race numbers so that the other walkers will be aware of the procedure. Walkers will finish at the same point as the runners and we will then add 15 mins to their times so they are in the correct places in the results list.

You are invited to report to registration on the day around 30 minutes before the start of your race in order that they can mark your race number accordingly.



ON THE ROAD

BOB & OLIVE DOBSON can be seen driving around in a new car and, in keeping with past purchases, it bears a personalised number plate.

Gone is 50K RWA (or whatever) and now on display is EX50 KMS

EDITORIAL

Elsewhere in this edition is the latest on the Essex 20 Miles saga, which first reared its head in May when – after the Essex 20K – our County Walking Secretary clearly stated that unless it went ahead with the National 50K (in Essex) it would be forfeited. Just one person made mild criticism. It is now history that the 20 Miles Championship was killed-off, but by whom? Fingers have been pointed in the direction of a top official (who is hardly an Essex League regular attender) who was at the relevant Southern Area meeting. But he has pointed out in his statement (fully reported in E.W.) that it couldn't be him as he was only a guest and therefore did not vote. The Chairman pointed out in his statement (fully reported in E.W.) that owing to the neutrality of Chairmanship, he couldn't participate in the debate or vote either. Another has stated that he thinks he voted against holding the 20 Miles and now another has 'lifted the lid' on the whole sorry affair by revealing that no vote took place. Yet another reports that the vote was unanimous. Even walkers who had no intention of racing the event are now objecting. Others are speaking 'off the record' and excusing themselves. When athletes with a long fuse like Amos Seddon take umbrage, then all is not well. Perhaps there is somebody out there who will have the guts to admit "I TAKE PRIDE IN KILLING OFF THE ESSEX 20 MILES". Perhaps they can then write or telephone the Gower family to explain their actions. A memorial trophy is the name of the late and great STEVE GOWER was donated in 2003. Steve made it to position No.4 on the U.K. all-time 20K list and twice won the Essex 20 Miles title (1975 and 1977) in times far faster than seen in County races nowadays.

Somebody out there should be holding their head in shame but... it's time to move on and draw a line under the shenanigans. What we must all do is try our best to make the 2005 Essex 20 Miles Championship a well-supported and properly organised meeting – to erase the 2004 fiasco for all time.



THE PING PONG KING

After a decade playing for Harold Wood Methodists, JOHN PERKINS (Havering 90 Joggers) is taking his table tennis bat to the nearby Maylands Club. He also plays for Cranleigh Fellows. We wish him well at the table.



WRITES CHRIS FLINT

Karen (Paddy) Bailey tells me that the Met. Police Annual Re-union and Dinner is on Wednesday 2nd March at New Scotland Yard at 6.30 p.m. I don't know who if anybody has yet been thought of as the main speaker.

Good turnout at Enfield I hear. Credit where it's due I say. By the way, **hot press**: The fixed date for the 100 Miles/24 Hours National Championship is 30-31 July 2005 at Kings Lynn Leisure Centre being organised by Royston Runners with assistance from the Centurions and the New Astley Club.

Best Wishes,
Chris.

WHY DIDN'T HE HAIL STEVE'S BLACK TAXI?

One bleak rainy November evening, Steve Allen was driving to his local gym when he spotted new Essex man MARTIN FISHER – **race walking**. Steve thought, "That's dedication". So why did our new man not hail the taxi? He didn't see Steve!



WRITES MARTIN OLIVER



Dear Dave,

Just a short note to Thank You for all your help in making this year's Enfield Open 7 Miles a resounding success once again. As you know, we had an excellent turnout of 63, (53 in the Main Race + 10 in the Juniors) which was the largest number of Starters since 1995 (68 starters) & the best since 1988 (72 starters), so we are indeed slowly clawing back the lost ground!

The principal purpose of the Enfield League is, of course 'Family Fun & Enjoyment', and I'm satisfied that we achieved that once again on November 13th. In consequence I am yet again deeply indebted to all of you who helped to officiate in some capacity on the day itself & indeed to those who couldn't be there on the day but nevertheless contributed Raffle prizes or Financial assistance. Let's do it all over again, with the 2005 Enfield League.

Kind Regards & Best Wishes,
Martin

FUNNY FEET

Funny feet, funny feet
Oh I have such funny feet
Left then Right
To and Fro
They always know
which way to go

