

ESSEX WALKER

LONG SERVICE

In the Forces those who soldier-on are rewarded with a 'Long Service and Good Conduct Medal'. Well PETER CASSIDY deserves such an award; for he's now in his 16th year as Honorary General Secretary of the Race Walking Association. This is remarkable as the average length of tenure of 19 predecessors is 4½ years!

RETURN OF THE KING



Ilford's 'Iron Man', 1972 Centurion and sub-9 hours London-to-Brighton finisher STEVE KING (ex-Stock Exchange stalwart) will be back in Blighty during March. He'll be having a reunion meal with his Ilford colleagues from the past (many of whom are 'still going' in the present) and he hopes to show us his form by appearing at the PAT FUREY TROPHY MEETING (5 Miles) at Donkey Lane on March 17th and in the LPR Open 9K Handicap Walk at Blackheath Park on the following morning. We all look forward to seeing him on our start lines once more (or even twice more).

ESSEX COUNTY AAA OFFICERS FOR 2007

Our new PRESIDENT is JEAN TIERNEY of Havering/Mayesbrook AC with Southend-on-Sea AC stalwart RON DAWSON as President-Elect. Loughton AC leading light PETER CASSIDY is the Chairman. We look forward to welcoming all at our many meetings.

NEW SELECTION POLICY?

The international selectors should visit venues like Donkey Lane and then announce their choices. That's a view expressed by RWA President PAUL NIHILL at the 2006 Enfield League awards. "They should select those walkers who support the races. Today's top walkers hardly ever support domestic races – I'd like to reward those who do! I can remember when RON WALLWORK and I came to an Enfield Open 7 Miles and, with KEN MATTHEWS and all the top men racing, it was a struggle to get a decent position in the top ten. In those days top walkers all supported the races and it did them no harm. I'd like to see today's top men here and at other venues". Paul's views drew generous applause!

WELL ORGANISED

Walkers proved what an organised lot they are as last-minute Christmas shopping failed to dent the turnout on December 23rd at Donkey Lane. A bumper field contested the 5 Miles and – to prove that Enfield is our No. 1 growth area – this included 3 Enfield League newcomers. Those entering the upstairs café were handed complimentary mince pies and wine (in proper glasses – no cardboard cups here!). RWA President PAUL NIHILL and his good lady PAULINE were again in attendance, where Paul did the 'hand-shaking duty'. Photos can be viewed on www.rikko2photo.co.uk

Full series results are in ENFIELD WALKER EXTRA so we won't steal their thunder in these pages. From an ESSEX angle, DAVE SHARPE was 3rd individual (from 133 in the final table). Ilford AC teams came 2nd (behind the hosts) and 8th (from 25 teams). There were 3 special participation awards for walkers who completed all 12 races, and 2 went to Essex athletes – JON MAY and DAVE SHARPE receiving a case of lager each. Cheers!

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

Ilford's PETER RYAN was in imperious form over 10K at Ely winning by a distance as he clocked 54.43. Also walked: 2. Byrne Stephen 60.51, 3. Cath Duhig 63.27, 4 Ron Wallwork 68.41, 5. Ken Livermore 74.34 and 6. Sue Clements 74.36. Well done to Ron and Sue for promoting it – more would have got-in had they been quick enough to enter (entry closes rapidly). Let's go for it come December 2007!

ALWAYS TAKE YOUR HAT OFF TO A LADY

STEVE ALLEN brought along his Santa Claus hat to Enfield's pre-Christmas 5 Miles and intended racing in it. But when he saw serious athletics photographer LESLEY RICHARDSON present he discarded it.



DO YOU WANT SOME?

After 2 successive years of woefully supported Essex 20 Miles Championships can we justify asking officials to give up hours for a single-figures field? One person has said that we should stage it in 2007 as another long-distance opportunity for Essex-readers to build-up mileage in preparation for Southern-based 100 Miles at Battersea Park in July. Please let RAY PEARCE know your YES/NO so as we can gauge if its worth putting on?

DAVE SHARPE'S WHINE

In the past Dave has refused 'participation awards' as he doesn't believe in being rewarded "just for taking part". However he joyfully accepted the case of Kronenbourg 1664 which came his way for taking part in all 12 Enfield League 2006 races. And good luck to him – supporting the lot takes some doing! As he opened his bottles Dave might have been crying in his beer, for while he took home his case somebody (and probably totally inadvertently) picked up a box containing a bottle of his wine. A case of turning wine into lager? So if you've a large bottle of white German table wine, and you're not sure how you came by it, then it's probably Sharpies.



GET WELL SOON

BILL SUTHERLAND BEM was the appointed referee for the Ilford Christmas 10K. Sadly he suffered a health setback days beforehand; which also caused him to scratch from Enfield's Christmas and Boxing Day races. Bill made a spirited comeback during 2006 and his improved times earned him handicap prizes. We hope that Bill will soon be well again and able to come along to our events and to London Irish fixtures (where he's a season ticket holder).

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

Readers can remember when 1968 Olympic 20K walker JOHN WEBB celebrated his 60th birthday by racing the pre-Christmas 10K at Chigwell Row with aplomb. John announced his intention to do likewise for his 70th birthday, as the 2006 race was a day before his celebration. Sadly injury prevented an appearance, but he assures that his thoughts were very much with us all on the day. Let's hope John soon gets over his injury.

FROM LOUGHTON LINES

A QUIET WEEKEND IN LEAMINGTON

You ought to know by now, because I go on about it enough, that this year the European Cup of Race Walking will be held in Royal Leamington Spa, with various L.A.C. types in the organising and executing teams – not, alas, in the walking teams!

On the 17th June last year, there was something of a try-out of the organisation at a Grand Prix event there. The races are held in Victoria Park in Leamington Spa, which is a rather small place; the laps for such events are usually 2000 or 2500 metres, but in Victoria Park we can only manage 1000 metres, and that necessitates going out of the gates, 140 metres or so along a road and then turning and coming back in; at least that gives us somewhere to put the refreshment and sponging stations.

The timetable for the day, with expected durations/expected numbers of starters in brackets was:

9.00	Men's 50k	(5 hrs/14)
9.30	Junior M&W 10k	(1 hr/22)
11.00	Senior M&W 20k	(2 hrs/41)
1.15	Open M&W 5k	(35 mins/35)

It's left to you to guess what might be happening at, say, 11.30, with two separate 20k races and a 50k going on at the same time!

Those of you who go in for 5000m and 10000m on the track will know that, although there is a lap-board with the long-awaited bell, it's useful if the recorders can let you know how many laps you have to go if you have been lapped by the leaders. We specified that there should be two lap-boards and Bag Lady and I equipped ourselves with cards to wave in the latter part of the races at people who were some laps behind. By some oversight, there were *no* lap-boards, so that the little cards had to be waved all the way through the race; actually it didn't turn out too badly and we subsequently used the same system for a couple of L.A.C. Championships, being too idle to excavate our lap-board from the store-room.

The weather was blazing hot on the day, which had the advantage – for us – that of the fourteen walkers on the programme for the 50k only twelve started and *three* finished, two having been disqualified. In the combined 20k, three were disqualified and ten did not finish, which was also a relief.

If you read by bit about recording in our series "Them in the Blazers", you may recall that we need to record not only the walkers' numbers as they go past, but also their times, as a check in case they start having longer lap-times – as they tire, for instance – or drop out or get disqualified; additionally, if we know their recent lap times we know roughly when they will be round again and can watch for them. In this particular event, despite having to have two recorders acting a animated lap-boards, there were only six of the total of about 1400 laps that were not recorded properly and of those we could estimate four because of their positions relative to those we *did* get; we reckoned that we had done a fairly good job. (It's not *really* good unless all the laps are recorded).

Meanwhile, Pam and Brian Ficken and Françoise and Toni Fernandez were slaving away for the whole time in the road outside the gates handing out drinks and sponges on a scale not usually necessary in the English Midlands in June and finished up a bit we round the edges, while Capt.B., Bag Lady and Paul Brown wrestled with the recording (not on their own, of course; there were others!).

To cap it all, at the dinner in the evening, one of the speakers did not show up and Capt.B. was appointed at ten minutes' notice to deputise; it quite spoilt the desert.

Still, we hope that we managed to learn something from the weekend; stand by about this time next year to find out whether we did!

Peter Cassidy.

PETER GETS HIS GAVEL OUT

Congratulations to PETER CASSIDY on taking over the role as Chairman of the Essex County A.A.A. *Give order!*

AN ESSEX VICTORY – BUT ONLY JUST?

The annual 10K postal match between ourselves and The Netherlands, held over the weekend 16/17 December, saw a narrow victory this time for the Chigwell Row field – by 363 to 368 points. Thanks again to Centurion stalwarts TONY PERKINS and HANS van der KNAPP for their initiative in staging this now annual challenge match. Full results of both races are promulgated in this issue.

RESULT FROM HANS VAN DER KNAPP

Hello

Here are the results of the 10km of Dronen 16/12/2006. the Dutch part of the Postal Match.

1	Jacques van Bremen	1984	48.54
2	Pedro Hunjens	1967	50.27
3	Victor Mennen	1963	53.38
4	Robert van Bremen	1982	55.21
5	Hans van Der Knapp	1959	56.31
6	Orsolya Gruber	1972	57.18
7	Fabian Hume	1969	57.35
8	Fred Rohner	1950	57.38
9	Caroline Housmans	1989	58.27
10	Alex Wijsman	1948	59.59
11	Hans van Ginneken	1960	59.59
12	Hans van Wakeren	1949	1.01.31
13	Boetji Huliselan	1955	1.01.41
14	Ad van Oijen	1944	1.03.08
15	Marleen Radder	1951	1.03.35
16	Liesbeth van Leeuwen	1988	1.05.35
17	Aad van Leeuwen	1949	1.08.05
18	Paul Koks	1965	1.19.25
19	Hermien Teske	1949	1.32.46

This is the Netherlands half of the annual Postal Match v our field at Chigwell Row. The date beside each Dutch finisher is their year of birth.

WRITES OLLY CAVIGLIOLI

Hello Tony,

I think I'd like to receive the Essex Walker by email from now on please.

I greatly enjoy the read and marvel at how you manage to fill it every edition. Like others I am shocked at how race walking is shrinking and, judging from the participants' average age, soon to disappear. The newsletter is sadly still relevant to me, as there is so much news about the past. Not much, obviously, about new talent.

I'm still very active, balancing as always running, weight training and various forms of stretching. But definitely no competition. Still, now at 54 I'm getting closer to retirement age when I promised myself a little comeback, in race walking. That is if there's still such a sport!

Keep up the sterling work,
Regards, Oliver.

AN IDEA FROM NICK

It must be frustrating for the Southern Committee to have no one turn up at the AGM, however SW1 on a Monday evening is not very user friendly.

Can I therefore suggest that the meetings be held before a race i.e. Enfield or one of the Essex venues.
Nick Silvester.

ILFORD CHRISTMAS OPEN 10K

Sunday 17th December at Chigwell Row

1	Scott Davis	Ilf	48.42
2	Trevor Jones	Hill	51.12
3	Phil Barnard	CP	54.01
4	Steve Uttley	Ilf	54.36
5	Carl Lawton	BH	57.16
6	Kevin Marshall	Ilf	57.36
7	Steve Allen	Ilf	57.51
8	Dave Sharpe	Ilf	58.29
9	Amos Seddon	EH	58.38
10	Laurence Dordoy	Ilf	59.19
11	Paul King	BH/Ltn	60.26
12	Michael Harran	SWC	61.15
13	Cath Duhig (L)	Ltn	61.18
14	Mark Culshaw	Tam/BH	61.58
15	Anne Belchambers (L)	Hill	61.59
16	Maureen Noel (L)	BH	62.09
17	Fiona Bishop (L)	AFD	63.52
18	Ron Powell	EH/Ilf	64.00
19	Brian Sturt	EH	67.01
20	Kim Howard (L)	Sth	67.27
21	Mick Barnbrook	Ilf	68.02
22	Brian Boggenpoel	CP	69.06
23	Bernie Hercock	EH	69.31
24	Eric Horwill	D&S/Ltn	70.25
25	Peter Cassidy	Ltn	71.44
26	Ken Livermore	EH/Ltn	73.52
27	David Hoban	SWC	74.37
28	Francoise Fernandez (L)	Ltn	76.32
29	Pam Ficken (L)	SWC/Ltn	77.05
30	Jack Fitzgerald	SWC	94.20

Teams:	1.	Ilford AC 11 Points
	2.	Belgrave Harriers 30 Points
	3.	Enfield & Haringey AC 48 Points
	4.	SWC 69 Points

Ladies Team:	Loughton AC 14 Points
Style Award:	Trevor Jones
First Centurion:	Carl Lawton
First Veteran (NOA)	Steve Uttley
First Course Newcomer (NOA)	Michael Harran.

On a brilliantly sunny but nevertheless bitterly cold Sunday morning it was 2005 victor Trevor Jones who set the early pace over 3 circuits on a course which is no billiard table. Host club favourite Scott Davies took charge after the first of the three laps on offer and was never again seriously challenged. The Hillingdon man was awarded the style trophy after the 8 judges had consulted. A much improved turnout was welcome by all. Stalwart Mick Barnbrook announced that he will be racing for Ilford in 2nd claim capacity during 2007 as he desires a year in the colours of Sarnia WC for Open races and Championships. Credit where credit is due for we were blessed with many helpers – including 2 former winners who were unable to race, but nevertheless offered their services on the day, namely John Hall and Peter Ryan. Our thanks to Kim Howard for donating a spot prize. All other spot prizes (wine) were donated by an anonymous well wisher, as was wine labelled 'The Dog's Bollocks' for presentation to the back-marker. It was nice to see Carl Lawton get a spot prize as he's been supporting this event for ages, having won it in 1975. Thanks to RWA President Paul Nihill MBE for coming to present awards. It was good to see him and Pauline plus many others socialising in 'The Maypole' post race.

APPRECIATIVE COMMENT

Many thanks for the most interesting recent copy of Essex Walker. You did me proud.

Cliff Royle (C148)

INFO RECEIVED FROM SUE

Dear Miss Clements

There are 2065 days to go to the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Games. It may seem a long way away, but right now all of us at London 2012



are working every day to create a spectacular Games and long-term benefits for the country. To let you know what we are up to, we have launched 'Work in Progress' the London 2012 blog – at blog.london2012.com This site will open the door on the London 2012 project – letting you know what we are up to. Right now you can see video of tunnelling activity on the site, read an athlete's perspective on the new Aquatics Centre design and go behind the scenes with Seb Coe on the recent Royal visit to Greenwich Park.

We hope you enjoy the new site.

Best Regards,
The London 2012 Team.

PRESIDENTIAL OPINION

Dear Dave,

Re: SPORTS – V – GAMES

There has been more than one attempt to kick race walking out of the Olympic Games. Race walking is an athletic event and a very physical one at that. Now I read that chess is now officially classified as a sport and is campaigning – wait for it – to be considered as a future Olympic sport. Add to this the other Olympic contenders darts and snooker both of which want sporting recognition at the highest level. It used to pass numerous pubs on my training sessions. I would have been a lot easier for one if I could have done my training in the pubs like our pot-bellied darts superstars do.

More silly news the Daily Star reports that Dutch darts champion RAYMOND VAN BARNEVELD has recently been voted one of Holland's top five sportsmen of all time! I wonder if FANNY BLANKERS-KOEN made the list; probably not. Chess, darts and snooker are not sports. They are games as are bridge, poker and snakes and ladders which I used to be good at as a kid.

The Olympic Games has in my opinion it's quota of events that shouldn't be included; but that's another story.

Best wishes,
Paul Nihill MBE

Adds Hon. Ed And who is the principal advocate of darts gaining Olympic status? It's walking's great friend BOB RUSSELL, MP for Colchester, who has promoted an Early Day Motion in the Commons on the issue.

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

The March 1962 'Record' reports that KEN EASLEA won the GARNET 10 MILES around Regents Park in 79.11 just 3 seconds ahead of PETER SELBY with PETER MARLOW (80.56) and the then 'Record' printer JOHN ELSTON 4th in 81.31. Woodford Green won the team race. BOB CLARK (Poly) retained his LONDON 10 MILES title in 75.07 followed by DON THOMPSON, JOHN GODBEER, PAUL NIHILL and RAY MIDDLETON clocking 76.17, 76.50, 77.17 and 79.37 respectively. 1962 County Champions over 10 Miles were KEN MATTHEWS (Warwickshire), COLIN WILLIAMS (Essex), ARTHUR THOMSON (Middx) and BOB CLARK (Kent) clocking 71.59, 78.42, 76.42 and 74.26 respectively. So hot was the 1962 competition in Middlesex that beating 80 minutes failed to secure a place medal! Ken didn't make the MIDLANDS 10 MILES leaving KEN HARDING and JOHN PADDICK to battle it out, with Ken edging it in 79.28. Leicester took the team title.

ILFORD AWARDS 2006

Colin Young Trophy (Walker-of-the-Year) - SCOTT DAVIS
50K Trophy – SCOTT DAVIS
Long Distance Trophy – KEVIN MARSHALL
HUNWICKS Trophy (Clubman-of-the-Year) – LAURENCE DORDOY

ESSEX LEAGUE 2006 ROLL OF HONOUR

(figures in brackets are appearances)

Overall: 1 S. Uttley (10) 377 pts, 2. K. Howard (L) (11) 353, 3. D. Sharpe (9) 318

Ladies: 1. K. Howard 353, 2. C. Duhig (6) 192, 3. P. Ficken (6) 161 pts

Junior: 18. C. O'Rawe-Hobbs (3) 108 pts

Most Improved: 10. F. Fernandez (L) (5) 154 pts (+ 5.4 points per race)

Best Beginner in 1st or 2nd Season: 17. B. Boggenpoel 1 (4) 11 pts

Overall Teams: 1. Ilford 1,489, 2. Loughton 1,044, 3. Ilford 'B' 640, 4. Southend-on-Sea 384, 5. Castle Point 375, 6. Colchester H. 158 and 8. Ilford 'C' 106 pts

Ladies Teams: 1. Loughton 331, 2. Southend-on-Sea 232, 3. Castle Point 40 and 4. Ilford 18 pts

Hard Luck Trophy (Wooden Spoon) for athlete completing most races without winning an award: 4. L. Dordoy (8) 280 pts

OTHER LEAGUE POINTS SCORERS (NOT MENTIONED ABOVE)

5. P. King (6) 216	7. P. Barnard (5) 192	9. S. Davis (4) 158
11. P. Cassidy (4) 125	12. M. Barnbrook (4) 119	13. J. Hall (3) 118
14. P. Ryan (3) 115	15. D. Kates (3) 112	16. E. Shillabeer (3) 112
19. K. Marshall (3) 99	20. A. O'Rawe (3) 98	21. R. Dobson (3) 96
22. R. Powell (3) 91	23. J. Borgars (3) 90	24. Don & Dom King (2) 79
26. S. Allen (2) 73	27. A. Seddon (2) 68	28. D. Ainsworth (2) 62
29. K. Livermore (2) 49	30. O. Browne (1) 38	31. M. Hinton (1) 34
32. V. Mountford (L) (1) 31	33. G. Brooks (L) (1) 29	34. M. Clarke (1) 27
35. S. Gillam (L) (1) 26	36. E. Horwill (1) 21	

Note: Maximum appearances possible = 11

LOCAL FIXTURES

Sun 4 Feb	London Walks (incl Essex League 10K) Note: Main Event is at 2 pm	Victoria Park	1 pm
Sat 10 Feb	Cambridge Harriers Winter League 5K	Bexley	2 pm
Sun 18 Feb	Essex 10 Miles (+League)	Chigwell MP	10 am
Sat 24 Feb	SRWA 20K Championship (+Essex)	Imber Court	1 pm
Sat 3 Mar	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane	2.30 pm
Sun 4 Mar	BMAF Indoor 3,000 Metres	Pickett's Lock	TBA
Wed 7 Mar	Met Police Walking Dinner & Reunion	NSY	6.30 PM
Sat 10 Mar	Cam H Winter League 5K (+presentation)	Bexley	2 pm
Sat 17 Mar	Pat Furey Trophies Mtg 5 Miles (Dble Pts)	Donkey Lane	2.30 pm
Sun 18 Mar	LPR Open 9K Yacht Handicap	Blackheath Park	11.30 am
Sat 7 Apr	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane	2.30 pm

WRITES DAVE SHARPE

Dear Sir,

The recent Essex League season has come to an end thank God. Well we lost an event – the Essex Police 5 Miles – and the 20 Miles had a poor turnout. But there is a new event, the Nicola 5 Miles on Canvey Island with the runners (500) and 20+ walkers, where we could recruit new walkers. Essex had walkers at the Inter Counties (Molly Barnett) and on the tracks at Bedford and Crawley. The team managers want walkers, but we have to contact them. In the Essex League we've had races outside Essex: The Dartford Hour, SRWA 20K at Imber Court and the Bexley 5K. The best event for numbers was the 10 miles Essex/Herts/Middlesex at Chigwell. There is the same old problem of mainly veterans and too few youngsters and newcomers. But there are good ones about – Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs, Phil Barnard and Scott Davis who retained his National 50K title. Well nobody gets any younger and Father Time catches up with us all. Well walking has to push itself forward, so come out of the comfort zone and go down to the Power Walking and Jogging Clubs – and turn up at the Veterans League meetings where there are walking races and recruit. It's dog-eat-dog, otherwise things can slip away. The good old days of walkers winning medals at major games are gone but they can come back. Somewhere there is a little Johnny or Susie that maybe will be a medallist in 2012.

Yours in Sport,

D.W. Sharpe

SCVAC/IAC Walking Secretary and Centurion No. 578.

Adds Hon. Ed. A message of hope, so 2007 will not be 'The International Year of The Pessimist'. Dave mentions our lack of major games medals, but Commonwealth Games apart, we're not even getting UK walkers on start lines. Our pursuit is truly in difficult times; but you know that the 70s were not all great times. Just look at where Team UK finished in the 1977 Lugano Trophy Final at Milton Keynes. It was 11th out of 12, bettering only the USA.

A YARN FROM FRANCE

Hi Dave,

I'm now in France and busy restoring my house, it's beautiful country around here and I should be able to get some good training in between digging the garden, decorating etc., etc.,

Thought I would let you know Alan O is here in France for a visit and a bit of training with me. I took him to the town to the market and on the way we saw a cat that appeared to be asleep on a wall. Alan was so intent on looking that he walked into a post!!! Another chance missed to be 1st past the post.

Please keep in touch with any news and if you fancy when the weather warms up, perhaps a visit?

Have a good new year and perhaps we will see you sometime.

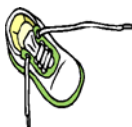
Best Regards. Kevin.

ON THE CARDS

Big-hearted MICK BARNBROOK had advanced a charity-raising idea, following RON and JOHN WALLWORK's gesture of Christmas past. For Christmas 2007 Mick suggests that we stop sending Christmas Cards to each other (many do) and donate similar amounts of money in lieu to THE GAMBIAN HOME FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES, which is run by GEOFF & ROHEY HUNWICKS in philanthropic capacity at HART HOUSE in The Gambia. Hart House was named after the late Essex-based Grade 1 walking Judge ALBERT HART, who was a Manager in that field of work. Geoff's a former Junior International walker and Essex County Champion. Mick's offered to be our focal point for donations. So...come December 2007, if you wish to give money (equalling your Christmas cards spending/postage for race walkers) then send it to Mick who'll pass it on as a lump sum to Geoff and Rohey. A reminder nearer December will publish Mick's address for 'off-the-scene' readers. Most see Mick at races, as he's a stalwart supporter of events. A good idea?

POLICE 5

Training shoes worth over £10,000 were stolen from a van parked in Lower Bedford's Road, Romford in December. Police have asked to be informed about anybody seen selling cheap Nike Velcro, Adidas Stan Smith trainers – velcro and lace-up, as well as junior trainers. Anyone with information is asked to call 01708-779246 or Crimestoppers.



DOWN MEMORY LANE

The Essex League team trophy (a huge and weighty bronze lump) was originally the trophy that was presented to the ESSEX TEAM which won the 1971 AIROLO – CHIASSO RELAY. The trophy is engraved with the 5 athletes names who contributed to a winning time of 9 hours 10 minutes and 56 seconds. The leg distances are not engraved but the times are: 1. D. Cox Southend 2.14.09, 2. K. Carter Southend 2.27.27, 3. A. Seddon Southend 1.08.24, 4. O. Caviglioli Basildon 1.29.44 and 5. P. Embleton Newham 1.51.12.

BOXING DAY 'DARK HORSE'

This proved to be the first setback since Enfield revived their long-established and traditional Boxing Day walk, as numbers declined to single-figures (9) with 8 finishing. GEORGE BROWN and former winner JOHN HALL turned out to ensure fair play while IAN SPINKS opted for the running race over the same distance. And, as always, the delightful SHARON HERBERT called our times and recorded us in. Most of the 9 starters were 'over the hill' but one who wasn't was schoolboy ALEX WRIGHT of Brymore School. An unknown quantity, he shot off and was never headed. He won easily in 26.53 from DAVE SHARPE (M50) 27.56 and PETER CRANE (M60) 30.30. Dave phoned-up to discuss the race and stated that walkers should not crowd around and pester the newcomer. The newcomer is from Streatham but spends most of his year at a Somerset boarding school. So please encourage the lad when you see him – as indeed we should be encouraging all younger race walkers.

THE GLOVES ARE OFF AND THE TOWEL THROWN-IN

So much property was left behind after Ilford's Xmas 10K that (along with unwanted trophies) it completely filled Hon. Ed's car boot. By New Year all had been claimed bar a tatty blue/white towel and a pair of well-worn woolly gloves. Any takers?



WRITES GERALDINE LEGON

Hi,

Just read December's Essex Walker. I was unable to spectate at Bexley on Saturday as we had a Christmas fayre to go to. I do wonder if 'He' would have spoken to me – he hasn't so far! Maybe one day I will once again take part there but not until 'He' approaches me with an apology. It does not take much!

WRITES FORMER INTERNATIONAL PANEL JUDGE GEORGE TOWERS

Hi,

Seven visits to the hospital this year and one more to come. An operation for hernia and the other for eyes and electrocardiogram. I guess I must be showing signs of being past my sell-by date. My walking these days is generally on one end of a dog lead.

George.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Ring fence this date now – Saturday 9th June at 2.15 pm – Enfield League 5 Miles at MOULTON. It's double points....and it's the most popular event in the south!

INSTANT PRIZE

STEVE ALLEN earned a handicap award at Enfield's December 5 Miles, which was tins of Red Bull energy drink. He must have expended so much energy during the race that he opened up a can as soon as he got his hands on it!

LAGER SALES

Please make me offers for 24 cans of Skol (out-of-date). Proceeds to club funds. Essex walkers need not apply unless they are coming up here to do a sand walking challenge. They probably wouldn't know what this is for anyway? Over and out.

John Paddick (Redcar).

IN HIS OWN WRITE

Southern Area Hon. Treasurer, statistician (member of NUTS) and former race walker of note in the colours of Highgate Harriers, JOHN POWELL has had his latest book published. It's entitled, 'POOLE TOWN F.C. 1890-2005' and costs £10 by post from John Powell, 74 Eastmead Avenue, GREENFORD, Middlesex. UB6 9RG. That will get you your autographed copy. Or you can save £2 as John's selling them for just £8 in person at matches and at 'A' race walking meetings (note he only judges 'A' races)



ONE TO TREASURE

Having purchased a Leamington 2007 raffle ticket solely to try and boost the funds and then placed it behind the clock, I was most surprised when Record Editor Tim Watt sidled up to me as I shuffled out of Don Thompson's funeral service and told me that I'd won the top prize. This was BA flights to Ethiopia (invoice cost was £837). 5 nights (not 4 as printed on the ticket) at the 5 star Addis Ababa Hilton, entry into The Great Ethiopian Run and a meal with the great double Olympic 10,000 metres gold medallist Haile Gebrselassie. What a prize for just £1, and surely that should have attracted more than the 1,300 ticket stubs which went into the drum – spun by Dr. Ian Richards and plucked out by star walker Dr. Lisa Kehler.

Initial reaction was not positive, as walkers told me that they had not entered in case they might win and others were commiserating with me for winning a buckshee trip to such a location. I decided initially not to actually appear in the run – solely as I thought that it was a marathon and since spending 11 days in hospital with heart rhythmic concerns in 2003, have not walked too far in competition. In fact my Doctor told me to pack it in altogether. The Gospel According to St. Luke states, "Physician heal thyself" and shortly after giving that advice to my own GP had a heart attack himself and has never returned! When I found out that 10K was the distance I decided to give it a go. Actually Ethiopia suffers an appalling image problem going back to the famine and drought of 1984. It's interesting to note that while visiting the National Museum in Addis Ababa, not one single picture, statue and mention is made of Sir Bob Geldof – as that image is one Ethiopia is trying hard to bury. When contacting my travel insurer, I was told that Ethiopia was one of the 10 most dangerous places to visit and only offered cover provided that I undertook not to venture near the Eritrean border (where a battle rages) and Kenyan border where it's bandit country.

The journey from Heathrow to Addis Ababa took 10 hours with a mid-route stop in Beirut. In the next row to me was Irish Olympic silver medallist Sonia O'Sullivan, who offered me a copy of her AW to read (which previewed the GER and whose Editor was going out to report it personally). Sonia was pretty knowledgeable on Irish walking and we enjoyed a pleasant athletics chat. At Beirut most passengers alighted and nobody got on – leaving a jet with 9 passengers and 8 crew! Talk about personal service. Economic madness running this flight for 9 people (of whom 4 were there only for the GER)! The steward stated that the service did a roaring trade on the return carrying Ethiopians to the UK on single tickets and with huge amounts of excess baggage as they relocate their lives.

Ian's organisation was spot-on as a Hilton courtesy bus met myself and my guest Cynthia. Sonia was collected personally by GER Race Director and marathon great Richard Neurekar. All stayed at the Hilton, which had a large outdoor thermal swimming pool for relaxation. We enjoyed a relaxing Friday and then spent Saturday exploring the intriguing Addis Ababa, including jostling in the Mercato – the world's largest outdoor market. Ethiopia's rainy season had ended in September and temperatures caused by African sun were cooled down by a high altitude.

Come the day of the race, I found that because I'd been entered as a competition winner, the organisers had mistaken me for a true contender and issued me with a number and an elite start at the head of 25,000 entrants in the vast Merkel Square. I had to modestly dispel their assessment of my anticipated performance. Only the top 20 or so men and women get numbers and are timed. The rest have to wear a special GER 2006 'T' shirt. The start had much more atmosphere than 'The London' with continual chanting from excited entrants, while greats such as Haile Gebrselassie, Hicham El Guerrouj and heptathlon all-time great Carolina Klüft were introduced from a podium. There's no starting from pens and silicon chip technology like in the London Marathon and no time/positions recorded at the finish. There was a false start – which I'm told happens almost every year (this being the 6th year). I did wonder why so many athletes carried water bottles. I soon found out, for while I expected about 30,000 water bottles to be heaped beside the road at around the mid-point there was none. Good job I carried a few Birr in my pocket as I bought a mid-race drink from a shop. At the finish the only drinks were those being sold by peddlers for a few Birr. In strong sunshine and at 7,800 ft above sea level, the good doctor who pulled my ticket from the drum may have had doubts about my wisdom in lining-up! With no graded starts (except for the elite) getting going took some doing. What a range – from greats to 5 year old bare feet kids running at the back. One could not help notice that many runners shouted slogans whenever passing Government buildings (Courts, Police stations – and even the British Ambassador's palace). Afterwards I was told that the Government is unpopular due to rising prices. The last kilometre was a funnel in itself with crowding preventing runners and even the odd race walker progressing with pace. The highway space was further compressed by finishers walking back along the road. In any case, nobody runs near the road edges, for there are no drain hole covers in the city – even in the busiest streets! Pedestrians and runners have to be wary. Race marshals were the local Police and they certainly deterred anybody thinking of short-cutting at those places where it was possible – the swing of a baton soon got folk back into the main body of the field. Near the finish, again it was the Police (and their batons) who were marshalling runners, their task being to extract any participants not wearing the correct GER 'T' shirt. My guest watched and described their actions as "robust". That meant only bona-fide entrants reached the finishing line and collected their GER medals, which were issued from the backs of trucks complete with an indelible ink tick marked on all runners' vests so preventing any coming around for 2nd medals. There was behind-the-scenes drama for 2 days beforehand the Ethiopian Athletic Federation wanted to ban the race as they'd nothing to do with it and hadn't sanctioned it. A compromise was reached and the 6th staging of the event went ahead. I pounded out 85 minutes, some 5 minutes behind Ian Richards. The slow times were totally down to the course congestion.

The afternoon saw the next part of the prize – an outdoor meal with Haile Gebrselassie at his mansion on high ground in gorgeous sunshine overlooking the bustling city of Addis Ababa. 150 had been invited for a meal in his grounds. The man himself personally met every guest and came around pouring drinks, while live background entertainment was provided. He allowed guests to wander around his house to look at his trophy cabinets – all was on display including his Berlin Marathon trophy which had been won only weeks earlier, except for his 2 Olympic medals which were in a church. It was truly memorable, both the race and the function, as everybody mingled – greats and non-greats. And... what a modest man is Haile! Sonia, Tracey Morris, Carolina Klüft and Haile were only too ready to pose for photographs with guests. Indeed Tracey said how much she had admired race walkers in Brisbane and Gothenburg. And what an advert is this Leeds optician – having only taken up jogging for the first time when aged 36 years. Now, just before reaching 40, she's an Olympic marathon runner with other games to her credit. Can't we find some hidden talent like that?

On the Monday I ventured 225 kilometres to visit the Great Rift Valley – after all I'm only likely to come here once – and spent Tuesday relaxing by the hotel pool. Ian Richards and his Leeds Met colleagues ventured into the City and beyond to give Sports lectures. On route to the airport a BBC guy who had run the GER to sample the atmosphere boomed, "I've left my medal in the hotel room". Sonia O'Sullivan responded, "Limited edition medal – only 25,000 issued". On route home the plane flew over the Pyramids while landing at Alexandria for a fuel stop, so providing memorable views. Memorable, sums up the trip – the GER, function and all else. All for a quid, which tempts me to repeat my surprise that only 1,300 tickets were sold for the best prize ever offered in a race walking raffle. If anything similar comes our way again, fill your boots with tickets.

Dave Ainsworth (2006 Great Ethiopian Run finisher)

HARRY WEBB RIP

We extend condolence to JOHN WEBB and his family over the loss of brother HARRY. Harry was not a walker but deeply involved in local Essex sport. A former Mayor of Havering, Rainham-based Harry was the eulogist at Syd Webb's funeral, where many walkers were present. Our thoughts are very much with all the Webb's on their sad loss.

NATIONAL 50KM RACE WALKING CHAMPIONSHIPS

A report from Cath Duhig

There has been a National 50km for men for many years but 4 years ago the event was introduced for Ladies. In the first year I had to retire through injury and the two subsequent years the date clashed with the EVAC T&F League final. This year the 50km was a week later and I took my chance and despite little racing** I entered.

Off Pete and I went to Earls Colne to the airfield where the race was held. The heat was tremendous and the few starters were soon down to four who finished. The winner, Scott Davis of Ilford, had to stop at one stage as the heat got to him too. Scott finished in the creditable time of 4Hrs 55Min, good in the heat and I managed 6Hrs 9Min, disappointing as my fastest over the distance is 5Hr 20Min but that was 15 years ago. My main challenge came from previous winner Kim Howard (another EVAC member from Southend) who set off at a fast pace and it was only in the last 10km that I got away from her to win by some 30 seconds.

The National 10km Championship was held on the same day and it was a shock to suddenly find so many more athletes on the course. In this race Rod Dunn finished 12th in 58.38 and in the Ladies Jill Eve 6th – 66.53 and Susan Rey 7th – 73.28; all three walking for Leicester Walking Club.

The above events are NATIONAL open races. The BMAF 10km walk Championships were held on September 16th at Enfield and there were a number of EVAC athletes on show. Mark Wall was 8th in 57.04 – 3rd M45, Rod Dunn 9th 57.41 – 2nd M50. With the Ladies Jill Eve was 23rd in 64.22 – 1st W40, Sue Rey 33rd in 68.47 – 1st W45. Making possibly his first appearance in a BMAF Walking event was Peter Howard who finished in 41st with a good time of 72.45 in the M60 category.

** Not racing much is not strictly true! While we were in Spain I was out training one day and was stopped by an elderly gent. It seems that his son was, in the late 90's the 3rd placed junior walker in Spain. I was given details of some mile walks and Pete and I went along and competed. Pete finished 28th out of 36 in the Senior and Veterans and I was 5th of 5 in the Ladies. To our surprise at the presentation ceremony we were both given trophies as winners of our age groups! That means we must go back next year to defend our titles!

(First published in the Eastern Vet)



GET YOUR DOWNLOADS HERE

Sports photographer and former Essex County 3,000 metres championess LESLEY RICHARDSON took shots at December's Enfield League race. You can view and purchase at www.rikko2photo.co.uk.

PLEASE NOTE

There was NO January Issue

"GET SOME IN"

Ex-RAF types will immediately recognise that saying – as will watchers of a TV situation comedy of that title in the 70s/80s. Well RAF race walking is well and truly grounded as in 2006, they could not even raise a dynamic duo to represent them in the Sir Sefton Branker Trophy over a mere 3,000 metres. At December's Enfield League meet some old copies of the 'Record' were left on a table, one issue being March 1972 (which was so up-to-date that even March results were promulgated). The RAF 7 Miles Championship result was featured, being held at RAF Cottesmore in Rutland in January. 101 started, 88 finished and 8 were pulled. Flight Lieutenant BRIAN CURD organised it and he obtained some civilian judges from nearby Leicester to adjudicate – which was a shock to many (especially the 8). The victor was Welsh Commonwealth Games representative Corporal ROY HART in 51.26 with another Corporal – PHIL ETCHES – just 2 seconds behind. Both were physical training instructors. 3rd was parachute packer STEVE HOLLIDAY, then a Senior Aircraftman, in 54 dead. He still races today. Others known to our readers who were racing included Sergeant TONY TRAVERS, Flying Officer DAVE BROWNING, Squadron Leader MIKE PERKINS, Corporal DAVE AINSWORTH, Sergeant TONY DAINTY (who in 1976 would win the Garnet Cup at Chigwell Row). Flight Lieutenant DICKY BIRD and Flight Sergeant KEN ROOST. The field was led by a 'civvy' guest – GEOFF TOONE in 50.13. The same issue reports the annual SHEFFIELD UNITED HARRIERS V RAF 10 MILES match at RAF Lindholme in Yorkshire. Like so many ex-RAF stations, Lindholme is now a prison. Big-name locals ROY THORPE (72.06) and JAKE WARHURST (73.15) were in the van with Sgt BRYRON WILLIAMS 3rd in 74.21. JOHN EDDERSHAW (74.26) was 4th followed by Messrs. ETCHES, HART and HOLLIDAY in that order. In the middle order could be found Messrs. TRAVERS, BROWNING & PERKINS coming 12th, 14th and 19th. Sheffield won.

DAVE AINSWORTH was missing, as he also was on March 1st when the RAF staged their 20K Championship, again at Cottesmore (where organiser BRIAN CURD was stationed). Hon. Ed. Was on a 3 months detachment with 63 Squadron at Belfast Airport, earning his General Service Campaign Medal mainly from behind an Orderly Room typewriter, as the RAF properly looked after security (assisted by a couple of ageing RAF police dogs). Over 20K, 45 started of whom 2 retired and 7 were pulled. 9 stations closed home teams. STEVE HOLLIDAY (1.38.17) won by a distance from BRYRON WILLIAMS (1.44.36). TONY TRAVERS, DAVE BROWNING and MIKE PERKINS came 4th, 5th and 6th. Also based at Cottesmore was Chief Technician TONY CHALLIS who filled 19th spot in 2.01.42 just ahead of Corporal ALAN JENKINS (2.03.41) of the London Vidarians. Tony is now the enthusiastic Honorary Editor of the widely read EASTERN VET. TONY DAINTY came 26th in 2.09.58. Tony had many years in the middle and lower orders – which makes his wonderful 1976 efforts all the more remarkable and truly commendable.

The same issue shows STEVE winning the Wesbury 7 Miles in Trowbridge's colours and young CHRIS HOBBS winning a Medway youths 2½ miles at Maidstone. A number of County champions are listed: RAY BLOUNT (Enf) – Herts, LES DICK (HH) – Beds, D. BERRY (Blackheath) – Kent, DAVE SMYTH (Bristol) – Somerset, KEN SMITH (Coventry) – Gloucestershire, CARL LAWTON (Bel) – Surrey, M. MASON (B&H) – Hampshire, J. WOODSFORD (Trow) – Wiltshire, BILL SUTHERLAND (HH) – Middlesex, GEOFF TOONE (Leic) – Leicestershire, ALAN BUCHANAN (B&H) – Sussex, TONY MALONE (Lancs) – Cheshire, JOHN PADDICK (RSC) – Lancashire, K. BREWSTER (Lake) – Cumberland & Westmoreland and PHIL EMBLETON (New) in Essex. Essex has 38 finishers (no Combined counties race in 1972) including then Essex-based JOHN POWELL with GEORGE WOODS as the back marker. The GARNET 10 MILES is listed with 77 starters at STEYNING where home favourite RICHARD EMSLEY (79.26) pipped STEVE HOLLIDAY by ten seconds. Sussex giants BRIGHTON & HOVE won the team race, led home by JOHN LEES in 5th spot clocking 83.31. ESSEX POLICE came 3rd team (of 11 who closed in). Two other listed victors are OLLY CAVIGLIOLI (Basildon) who won a track 10,000 metres in Brighton clocking 46.28 and PAUL NIHILL (SWC) who won the GLC 10 Miles in 71.25 and was way ahead of the rest (90 started). Even at 4-to-score, 14 teams closed-in. Wonderful days with so many Counties staging well-supported Championships.

May the good times return.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS GROUPS 2007

This is the list of criteria for membership of the International Officials Groups

Officials must:

- Demonstrate a knowledge and understand of IAAF rules (or the appropriate ruling organisation)
- Demonstrate competency in their discipline
- Perform efficiently in an environment with additional technical equipment and personnel
- Demonstrate the ability to interpret data produced from technical equipment in use
- Have physical fitness appropriate to the requirements of their discipline
- Be able to relate appropriately to international athletes
- Be prepared to accept instructions from those involved in event management
- Be able to respond appropriately to demands from our technical partners (Event Presentation, Results, Television and Timing)
- Be appreciative of others' expectations and needs
- Be aware of what is happening around them, whilst focusing on their immediate duties
- Be able to react quickly to changing circumstances
- Demonstrate the ability to handle pressure
- Perform efficiently in a sometimes supercharged atmosphere
- Be a good team worker and follow the instructions from their chief
- Accept that compromise is often the final outcome
- Accept the need for a punctual start to events and keeping to schedule
- Be available for selection for at least three televised meetings in a calendar year and preferably including one indoor meeting
- Demonstrate a willingness to travel throughout the UK
- Demonstrate a willingness to work at all levels of the sport

Chief Officials must in addition:

- Be technically very competent
- Demonstrate competency of acting as a Chief Official at National (non-televised) meetings
- Demonstrate competency of officiating at the highest level, both indoors and outdoors
- Be very competent and able to lead a team of officials
- Demonstrate a good understanding of the benefits and implications of the technologies involved and have experience in the interpretation of the data provided by the technology
- Demonstrate a broad awareness across their discipline
- Have a broad awareness of all aspects of officiating and a good working knowledge of at least two Disciplines
- Be able to develop other officials in their area of expertise
- Be effective in debriefing and mentoring and in timely production of meeting reports
- Demonstrate an ability to administer the new assessment system
- Be a possible candidate for NTO, (ATO and/or ITO) level
- Have access to E-Mail

Thanks to Cecil Gittins for submitting this item.

CALL FOR REUNION

Regular reader TONY PERKINS has reminded us that it's almost 3 decades since Melbourne Stadium in Chelmsford staged one of the greatest events ever seen in the South. The National 100 X 1 Miles walking relay was won by the Borough of Enfield Harriers in 12 hours 37 minutes and 24 seconds. Ilford flew the Essex flag, coming 5th in 13.14.52. In their team was STEVE KING who walked his 10 x 1 mile legs in average time of 8 minutes and 38.3 seconds which was good for one whose forte was over longer distances. 6 teams finished and beat the existing World Record for such an event (Reg Wells being the Chief Recorder). Tony has suggested that all who took part, and are still with us, assemble at Enfield for The Pat Furey Trophies Meeting (5 Miles) at Donkey Lane on Saturday 17th March at 2.30 pm. The next issue of Essex Walker will give fuller details of this great event back in 1977 (30th April/1st March) and any memories that you have of a wonderful sporting event.

Taking part were : Messrs A.James,G.Robinson,T.Major,D.Salter, C.Fisher, G.Scott, P.Worth, C.Fogg, H.Stewart and A.Seddon (**all Enfield**), R.Hankin, Mick Greasley Snr,J.Eddershaw,D.Jackson, Mick Greasley Jnr, D.Staniforth, M.Barrett, I.Smith, K.French and Mel Greasley (**all Sheffield United WC**), J.Bromley, R.Day, J.Dunsford Jnr, J.Hall, C.Lawton, R.Middleton, R.Picton, G.Seatter, D.Fotheringham and S.Bennett (**all Belgrave Harriers**), D.Johnson, J.Lees, C.Pacifico, B.Reid, D.O'Shea, J.Birks, K.Dale, A.Buchanan, D.Holly and S.Elms (**all Brighton & Hove AC**), G.Nibre, L.Mockett, D.Ainsworth, G.Hunwicks, W.Sutherland, S.King, L.Dordoy, D.Neagle, B.Armstrong and S.Gower (**all Ilford AC**), T.Dainty, C.Maddocks, E.Shillabeer, L.Adams, A.Bainborough, D.Reavey, A.Daykin, J.Murdock, M.Pope and J.Hurley (**all Dawlish & South Devon AC**). How many names can you remember? Clubs had to send out a walker to walk 1 mile in an order of 10 - then keep repeating throughout the day and night. Judges were ALF PALMER & BARBARA DUNSFORD. Mrs ANN PACIFICO (mother of Brighton's Colin) did a great job in providing hot drinks throughout the night, while Chelmsford AC helpers did a sterling job in cooking early morning breakfasts.

Times were : 1. Enf 12.37.24, 2. Sheffield 12.52.14, 3. Belgrave 12.53.02, 4.Brighton 13.01.48, 5.Ilford 13.14.52 and 6. Dawlish 13.46.33. So let's see how many can be reunited at Enfield on March 17th?

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