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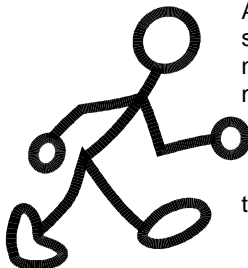
ESSEX WALKER

NEW PUBLICATION – QUALITY MAGAZINE

We've already mentioned this publication earlier, when we reported that DAVE SHARPE had been appointed as the Race Walking Correspondent. It's MASTERS ATHLETICS MONTHLY. It covers all aspects of athletics for senior readers. Cover price is £2.60p. It's on sale at newsagents/kiosks etc., Subscription comes at £13 per 6 months (which is a bargain and saves £5.20p per year). There is an introductory offer of 6 issues for just £6. Yes £6! Subscription hotline is 01959 – 541444. Meanwhile readers with any hot news, snippets, results etc., are asked to send them to Sharpie (as well as Essex Walker of course).

TRAINING WHERE THE GREATS TRAIN

BOB and OLIVE DOBSON enjoyed a holiday in Lazarote – their first with SAGA. This Canary Island is a long established training centre for elite U.K. athletes. Who knows, Bob may be have been there for that purpose in his heyday? When Bob was a member of the elite U.K. squad, all members got buckshee BUPA check-ups and a weekly pound of British cheese. The perks are considerably better these days for the selected few! Bob did some training while on his holiday and reports "Training along the prom of Costa Teguisse boosts one's ego, for at only 4 and-a-half miles per hour you are classified as Olympic Class by Saga standards".



DOG AND BONE

Former international GEORGE NIBRE has asked that his contact number be published – It's 07885 – 432187 (mobile).



PRICE HIKE FOR WALKERS

The fee for competing in Essex League races is to be £3 in 2005, which includes team fees. It is a long time since the entry fee was last raised and brings us into line with other Essex County entry fees.

ON PARADE

Regular attendee DAVE SHARPE has noted a spate of lateness among walkers. Said Dave, "I advise all entrants to arrange their journey's so as they are at the venue at least ½ hour before the start". Dave does as he says, for he is always in good time.

HEAVY – LEGGED

ALAN BLEWITT, who had hoped to appear in the final Enfield League event, had to pull out on account of an injury sustained while participating in running races. Alan attributes this to wearing sports footwear that is too heavy. He should queue up at the back of Amos Seddon's camper can for a discounted deal.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A phone-in caller on Jeremy Vine's Radio 2 lunchtime mixture of music and current affairs was 'Bill from Islington' as he is known on the airwaves. BILL SUTHERLAND, as we know him, passed comment on the lack of Police involvement in Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Many will remember that Bill was featured on Panorama when the subject of our ageing army of net curtain twitchers was featured on the small screen. Meanwhile MICK BARNBROOK (in his new role as UKIP's prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Old Bexley & Sidcup) attended a local Neighbourhood Watch meeting – only to find no Police Officer present. Mick rattled off a critical letter to the Borough Commander in his indefatigable complaining style!



'SIR ALF' RUDDOCK

After an early 2004 burst of good form, followed by a sound London Marathon Walk, we haven't seen LEN RUDDOCK at our meetings. Explains the leading light of the 70s himself, "I've been running a Saturday morning football team on Wanstead Flats, which is rewarding but also time-consuming". Soccer is in Len's blood, for his late father was a hard working and respected official at the old Ilford senior side which played in the last-ever F.A. Amateur Cup Final at Wembley Stadium in 1974 (they got walloped by Bishops Stortford) before disappearing off the map when their ground got sold for housing. They reformed over a decade later and now play their Ryman League home games at Cricklefields Stadium, which they share with Ilford A.C.



COACHED BY THE GREAT

The December issue reported on the ping-pong career of much-travelled JOHN PERKINS, now on the books of Havering 90 Joggers. At one of his Clubs – Cranleigh Fellows – the Club Coach is an old boy in his 80s, whose main claim to fame is that he once coached CHESTER BARNES. Now, be honest, how many readers remember him?

MET POLICE ANNUAL DINNER & REUNION

This is on Wednesday 2nd March at New Scotland Yard (6 for 6.45 p.m.) at a subsidised cost of £24. Book your tickets from any MPAA member or order from KAREN (Paddy) BAILEY at:

Karen.bailey@met.police.uk

HAPPY NEW YEAR

WRITES LESLEY RICHARDSON

Thanks once again for an excellent December edition of the Essex Walker and the kind words about myself. I took about 150 photographs at the Enfield 7. If anyone would like copies of any of the pictures they are 5 quid a go. I will be giving copies of the photos to Sharpie to show around at various race walking functions. I wondered if you could put a couple of lines in the next Essex Walker to let people know.

Kind Regards
Lesley.

WRITES ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION OF WALES PRESIDENT – JOHN COLLINS

Congratulations on another excellent edition – interesting even to a distant and very limited walker! Not anything to do with Essex, but perhaps of interest to your readers. The newly appointed assistant manager at the Swansea University Sports village – National pool, all-weather hockey pitches, new indoor athletics facility and upgraded track, latter still yet to receive top all-weather surface! – is former Cardiff Race walker Gareth Holloway. Swansea's walkers have been very thin on the ground over the years – Alf Yeomans – Olympic & unratified world record early last century; Shaun Lightman at Swansea University about 1960, I am told, and currently youngster Antonio Cirillo – being coached by Martin Bell. Perhaps with a former quality exponent 'in house' we can develop that area of your/our sport here in the west?

Many thanks for recent kind comments on myself.
Compliments of the season – John

EMAILS SANDRA BROWN

Dear all,

Many thanks for another bumper number – and best wishes to the team. You are doing a fantastic job!

Warm Regards, Sandra Brown

WRITES OLYMPIAN ERIC HALL

Dear Editor,

The following item from 'Walk' Winter 2004 issue may be of interest to readers.

"The Rambler's Association has joined forces with other environmental groups to form a Shadow Walking Board. The aim is to put pressure on the government to take walking as a form of transport seriously and introduce policies that favour pedestrians. The move is in response to the government's Active Travel Plan that fell short of a full blown national walking strategy."

In view of recent claims and counterclaims in Essex Walker is it possible to join this group to try to work out a strategy at county let alone national level?

Only kidding,
Eric.

WRITES SUFFOLK BASED FORMER INTERNATIONAL JUDGE GEORGE TOWERS

Hi,

Well another year has gone by. My health has meant frequent visits to hospital for various ailments and I have had operations on both eyes; but have had my driving licence renewed thank goodness, though I don't do any great distances.

George Towers

Adds Hon. Ed. We congratulate George and his good lady on recently celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

WRITE ALEX AND KATHLEEN ROSS

Dear Dave,

Thank you very much for the E.W. I guessed it was Geraldine. I had no idea she had her hands so full, but was always aware she was keen to race and had made an effort to get to the start line. Please give her my regards and tell her to keep at it – the sport is bigger than individuals.

Life up North is first class, we have settled down quickly and become involved in all sorts of things:- Kathleen, reading, flowers, swimming, coffee mornings. Me, running, Woodland Trust and general volunteering, e.g. Highland Games, vintage cars, xmas lights.

My committee days are over so I just turn up at events and 'do as I am told' – erect tents, tables, barriers, signs, direct the odd bit of traffic, climb ladders etc.

Running is with Forres Harriers (they have a web site). Mostly R.A.F. types, very friendly, and they wait for me at the back. It has taken 6 months to get up to speed, and that is not very fast. Injuries and muscles take longer to heal and a cold was the most recent setback. Never mind the countryside is great for running and there is an active series of events throughout the year. One club member is Doug Cowie who was in the R.A.F. and walked a couple of the Police v R.A.F. matches in the late 80s. He is a marathon runner (just retired after his 50th) and was part of the escort team for the Olympic Flame. Have no plans to go 'down south' at the moment – it is very nice up here. Have spoken to Alan Buchanan on the phone – will let you know when we meet up.

Many thanks for sending E.W.

Regards to all,
Yours in Sport

Alex and Kathleen

p.s. Good to see Bill S. had been out at Enfield.

WRITES MIKE HINTON

Dear Dave,

The latest 'Race Walking Record' carries a full race advert announcing the last Met. Police Open 10 Kilometres on it's back cover. What I find most surprising is that it states a closing date for entries, and that late entries and entries on the day will not be accepted.

I find this quite laughable with the current state of race walking with its dwindling band of participants. Okay, when this event in the past used to attract 200 plus entrants a closing date was needed.

Both the Enfield and Belgrave Open 7 Miles dealt quite easily with entries on the day, with fields of 53 and 28 respectively. I can't imagine, even though it's the final one, that the Met. Police 10 Kilometres will attract any more.

Anyhow this race will have the ever popular Enfield League 5 Miles to contend with that weekend, and I know which one will get my support.

Regards Mike Hinton.

Adds Hon. Ed. Mike's views will be shared by most readers.

WRITES MAURICE DOOGAN

The BMAF Indoor Walks Championships will be held at the NIAC in Cardiff on Sunday 23rd January 2005. The first race will be at 12.00 Noon. The Championships are OPEN, so even non-BMAF members can compete for medals.

As we have Walks officials available we are also proposing to hold OPEN Walks events for ALL the under 35 age groups as well as the M35 group.

Entry forms are available from me via email, from the BMAF website, from this coming weekend on www.bmaf.org.uk, or by post with sae from me MAURICE DOOGAN at 5 STADIUM STREET, CHELSEA, LONDON, SW10 0PU.

Maurice.



THE FUTURE IS IN THE STARS

AS SEEN BY
GYPSY KARA VANN



AQUARIUS Jan 21 – Feb 19

Now is the time to look at your fitness. There are events in the next few weeks that can make or break your whole year. With Saturn encroaching on Mars you should make the decision to hone your body.

PISCES Feb 20 – Mar 20

The work you have been doing will now show dividends. Prepare to beat off all competitors and life the great prize you have always wanted in the country.

ARIES Mar 21 – Apr 20

With the Moon in the third phase this will be a time of quiet reflection. Do not drop your guard however as others will be out there flexing their muscles for the battles ahead.

TAURUS Apr 21 – May 21

Events at National level may not involve you. This could be to your advantage as a long journey could leave you disappointed. Others may take on that journey and be successful but let them beware of future events.

GEMINI May 22 – June 21

This is the season for you to grasp your chance. It is the start of many battles which, if you win the first, you can take the main prize later in the year. With Pluto on the decrease now is your time to win.

CANCER May 22 – July 23

Do not be led into taking your success for granted. While you may have many friends around you do not be fooled. There are those who would like you to fail, to their advancement.

LEO July 24 – Aug 23

Leo may be a lion but lions are cats! Someone is trying to get you away for a period of time not suitable to your timetable. A long journey overseas could be detrimental to your career.

VIRGO Aug 24 – Sept 23

Children will make demands on you that could influence the rest of your year. Resist at all costs otherwise the future looks like it takes a turn for the worse.

LIBRA Sept 24 – Oct 23

With Virgo now in your house and the children despatched you can once again concentrate. The roads you cover each day will be an aid to your future success. These roads to be covered at speed, however.

SCORPIO Oct 24 – Nov 22

The Moon once again takes charge of Neptune. With this in mind look out for darker days. Past efforts could be mollified if you fail to pay attention to fitness. Those roads must be tackled.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 23 – Dec 21

There is now time to reflect on your achievements. You will be told how well the year has gone but, beware. Those same friends who laud you will be your competitors in the years to come.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 – Jan 20

Capricorn can be capricious. With the ending of the year comes time to relax. You are not getting any younger, though. Next year is another campaign with adversaries of a different age. Take heed.

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RON WALLWORK M.B.E.

Oops! In our report of the big November Dinner we forgot to name this worthy as an invited guest.

Ron was there as he won GOLD in the 1966 Commonwealth Games 20 Miles Walk in Jamaica. The Jamaican champion as he is known in some quarters!

ANOTHER IAN RICHARDS

Many readers were of the opinion that Royal Leamington Spa World Walking Cup protagonist IAN RICHARDS was the same athlete who achieved Olympic fame as our sole 50 kilometres walker in Moscow (1980). Well those who attended the November dinner found out that he is not – although he shares that famous name. The 1980 superstar (who once organised the RWA Insurance scheme), had been recently seen – at a London concert to raise funds for the Olympic team. Other aging superstars at the gig included OLLY FLYNN, JOHN WEBB and ROD STEWART – the latter being the top turn. Olympians were admitted as guests – and rightly so.

END OF THE ROAD

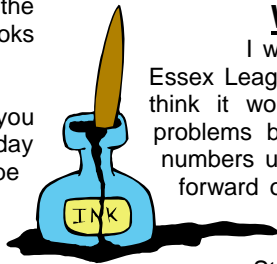
More than 120 years of history is facing the death knell as the Amateur Athletics Association is set to be wound up in April 2006, soon after the last AAA-Managed team have competed in the Commonwealth Games at Melbourne. This is part of sweeping changes demanded by Sir Andrew Foster's report 'Moving On', the AAA will be replaced by a new body known as ENGLAND ATHLETICS. Where the AAA incorporated 3 territories (North, South and Midlands), the new organisation will preside over 9 regional committees (each managed by volunteers). UK ATHLETICS will adopt a strictly strategic role and will look after elite athletes and anti-doping. It is hoped that a devolved form of governing body will end the territorial squabbles that so often blighted the work of the AAA and their relationship with UK Athletics.

JACK BUCKNER (1996 European 5,000 metres champion) has been hired to manage the implementation of the report. The AAA was established in 1880. Previously the sport was organised by the warring factions of the Amateur Athletics Club, the London Athletics Club, the Universities and organisations in the North, South and Midlands.

WRITES STEVE UTTLEY

I would certainly support the non-championship Essex League events being staged as B races. I don't think it would necessarily be the answer to all our problems but I suspect that it might help to get the numbers up. The Enfield League has shown the way forward on this and has been one of the few events where numbers have been going up consistently over the past 4 or 5 years.

Steve



ALTERNATIVE SPORTS – THE END

It's time to end such games as pass the buck, pass the parcel and carry the can. This refers to the 2004 Essex County 20 Miles Championship (R.I.P.). Covered in every issue since May, the matter has now generated enough correspondence to half-fill an issue of E.W. Since some contributions would need vetting by a lawyer prior to publication, it's now time to declare a halt. Essex Walker would have 'left no stone unturned', would have 'named names' and 'lifted the lid' in a bid to unmask the person responsible for killing off this race (for which the Steve Gower Memorial Trophy is the top award). Three names are now left in the dock. Indeed one contribution even gives tips on how to investigate such a situation! An Editorial in E.W. asked the person responsible to publicly announce why they had killed-off this championship. The response – silence! Elder statesman BOB DOBSON (who is not involved) has suggested that it's time to draw a line under the issue, and this viewpoint has been seconded by stalwart DAVE SHARPE. We agree. We call upon all readers to move on and unite in supporting a good Essex 20 Miles Championship in 2005, to erase the memory of what happened (or rather didn't happen) in 2004. All agreed?

HOLLAND V ENGLAND RESULT

18TH DECEMBER 2004 POSTAL MATCH OVER 10KM 16 A SIDE
HELD DRONTEN HOLLAND AND ESSEX WALKERS AT CHIGWELL ROW
ENGLAND

1	FRANK BUYTAERT	71	OLSE	45.40	H	1
2	PEDRO HUNTIENS	69	UNITAS	50.50	H	2
3	P. RYAN		SHEFF	52.14	E	3
4	VICTOR MENNEN	63	UNITAS	53.22	H	4
5	THEO KIENIS	51	SV DE LAT	53.37	H	5
6	A. ELLAM		COL	54.57	E	6
7	HANS VD KNAPP	59	RWV	55.25	H	7
8	S. UTTLEY		ILF	55.33	E	8
9	K. MARSHALL		ILF	57.10	E	9
10	P. KING		LOU	58.02	E	10
11	A. SEDDON		ENF	58.06	E	11
12	M. HINTON		ILF	58.51	E	12
13	FRED ROHNER	50	UNITAS	59.48	H	13
14	P. CASSIDY		LOU	60.18	E	14
15	D. SHARPE		ILF	61.02	E	15
16	ALEX WIJSMAN	48	SV DE LAT	61.13	H	16
17	C. DUHIG		LOU (L)	61.14	E	17
18	JULIAN EKEN	88	RWV	61.22	H	18
19	HANS VAN GINNEKEN	60	PARTHENON	61.30	H	19
20	BOETIE HULISELAN	55	OLAT	62.32	H	20
21	AD VAN OIJEN	44	AV WEERT	63.16	H	21
22	R. DOBSON		ILF	63.53	E	22
23	AAD VAN LEEUWEN	49	AV NOP	67.29	H	23
24	M. BARNBROOK		ILF	67.39	E	24
25	F. FERNANDES		LOU (L)	70.47	E	25
26	M. CLARK		ILF	70.58	E	26
27	LIESBETH VAN LEEUWEN	88	AV NOP	71.28	H	27
28	THEO PLATE	48	RWV	72.14	H	28
29	PETER HOPMAN	59	RWV	73.33	H	29
30	K. LIVERMORE		ENF	74.10	E	30
31	P. PRASHER		ILF	78.33	E	31
32	PAUL KOKS	65	UNITAS	78.51	H	32

MATCH RESULT
ENGLAND 263 HOLLAND 265

EXECUTIVE DECISION

The 2005 Essex 20K will be held on Littlehampton Promenade on Saturday 26th February (1 p.m.) in conjunction with the Southern Area Championship. Will any trophy holders not attending Littlehampton, please return their trophies at the Essex 10 Miles (on Sunday 20th Feb at South Park, Ilford 10 a.m.) This will free up a later date at Basildon for the much-debated Essex 20 Miles, which we must get right this time.

GOOD NEWS

CHRIS FOSTER, now The Scout Association's District Commissioner for Southgate, reports that walking up a steep climb near his holiday retreat on Corfu did wonders for his dodgy Achilles tendon. It's almost back to normal, although his quack has told him that he'll never be able to run 100 metres in 10 seconds again!!

STILL IN THE RUNNING

Among the hardy souls pounding the sod at Hainault Forest in Ilford's pre-Christmas 10 Miles X-Country run was former London-to-Brighton Walk victor KEN TUSON. And he was giving a good account of himself, as indeed was his equally athletic son.

WRITES CATH DUHIG

Hi Dave,
Here's a few bits and pieces...

1) Re: 100 miles at King's Lynn – my former, now second claim club, is RYSTON Runners, not Royston as Chris Flint seems to be putting about. And anyways they are nothing to do with the organisation of the KL event. Mainly it's Pete, supported by a couple of ex-clubmates, and Ron Wallwork for the Centurions. We are currently thinking for a name for the whole weekend's package and will let you know that, plus any other details as they emerge, as a priority.

2) Re: off-road/track activities – the current panto season sees me cast as 'Dolly Dewdrop, the Buxom Barmaid of the Black Pearl Inn' and Peter as 'Black Jake, an inept pirate'. Hmm. Our next planned production has Pete as director and he has asked me to read for a role described in the script as 'short and dumpy, with a large, comfortable bosom... in her sixties or seventies'. I don't know whether to be flattered that he thinks my acting abilities are such that I can carry off this part, or offended that he thinks it will be an easy task to assume such a role. Either way you can see why I find the prospect of organising/walking in a 100 mile event far easier...

Wassail!
Cath

FORMER ESSEX CHAMPION TAKEN ILL

We are sorry to report that GEORGE MEADOWS has suffered a severe stroke. George won the ESSEX 10 MILES in 1958, clocking 1.17.13 in the colours of ESSEX BEAGLES (as they were then called) who also won the team honours that day. Essex won the Inter-Counties 10 Miles in 1957 (Coventry) and 1958 (Victoria Park) – and George was in both scoring fours. In 1957 it was: R. F. Goodall 7, G. L. Meadows 8, R. E. Davies 11 and C. Williams 13. In 1958 it was: G. L. Meadows 4, R. F. Goodall 5, R. E. Davies 12 and J. Goodhall 15. When George was 4th, those ahead of him were Stan Vickers (1st), Eric Hall (2nd) and Norman Read (3rd). Ken Easlea (who has remained in contact for decades) recalls, "I remember George winning a Met. Police Open 7 Miles when there was snow and ice on the ground". His first claim club was the famous Highgate Harriers. George is a retired Fleet Street proof reader. We all wish him well; and should readers wish to send get-well cards and messages, George resides at: 25, Curthwaite Gardens, Oakwood, ENFIELD, Middlesex. EN2 7LW.

TELL IT TO THE MARINES

The new Performance Director for United Kingdom Athletics is former Royal Marine DAVE COLLINS. He is a 6ft plus University Professor with a granite jaw, and is currently on the wrong side of 18 stones. He is no ivory-tower academic, according to the Daily Mail! Like he was in the Marines, he'll be in charge.

ESSEX LEAGUE AWARDS – 2004 A.D.

Overall: 1. Kim Howard 303 pts, 2. Steve Uttley 276, 3. Peter Cassidy 270.

Ladies: 1. Kim Howard 303 pts, 2. Francoise Fernandez 114, 3. Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs 74.

Junior: 1. Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs 74, 2. Victoria Winch 37, 3. Alex Winch 34. (n.b. The latter 2 have since emigrated to Oz, so we need some more juniors – pronto!)

Most Improved Walker: Peter Cassidy
Best Newcomer in 1st or 2nd Season: Kevin Marshall
Hard Luck Trophy (Wooden Spoon): Dave Sharpe(4th).
Overall Teams: 1. Ilford 986 pts, 2. Loughton 763, 3. Ilford 'B' 386, 4. Southend 303.
Ladies Teams: 1. Loughton 182 pts, 2. Southend 179, 3. Havering 49, 4. Ilford 19.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A RUNNER 'HITS THE WALL' ?

'Hitting the Wall' is a term marathon runners use when they experience a sudden onset of fatigue which commonly occurs between 18 and 22 miles of the 26-mile race.

Although fatigue can be caused by many factors, such as environmental and neuromuscular stress, the greatest factor affecting marathon runners is depletion of the body's carbohydrate supply, stored predominantly in the muscles and liver as glycogen.

During exercise, particularly distance running, the working muscles rely on a constant supply of glycogen to meet the energy demands of the exercise. Because it is not possible to load the body with sufficient stores of glycogen to last the duration of the marathon, the body relies on stores of fat to continue in the race. However, muscle glycogen is generally depleted more rapidly during the first few minutes of exercise and subsequently, if the athlete begins the race too quickly, glycogen stores can be depleted sooner.

If this occurs, there will be a point at which the supply will be completely depleted, generally at between 18 and 22 miles. At this point, the athlete may experience severe sensations of fatigue, making it physically impossible to continue and it is then that they 'hit the wall'.

Athletes are advised not to start the race too quickly, and to maintain fluid balance during the event – including energy drinks to help prolong glycogen stores.

Psychological factors also play a significant part in this phenomenon. Negative thoughts and boredom creep in – caused by the monotony of the long race. Incredible mental toughness is essential to get through.

Martin Henderson.

PETER ANDREWS R.I.P

We are sorry to advise you of the sudden death of Peter, respected Honorary Treasurer of the Eastern Veterans Athletic Club. He died suddenly in October. He was born in London and moved to Norwich in 1975 after working in Germany as a Financial Advisor. A former racing cyclist and keen jogger before becoming involved in competitive athletics, Peter was a winner of the Norfolk Half-Marathon in 1984.

Many other successes were on his C.V. His funeral service at Norwich Crematorium saw so many present, that some mourners were forced to stand outside. He'll be much missed, as the athletics world lost a true gentleman who put much into the sport as a diligent official.

"EYE-EYE, THAT'S YOUR LOT"

We are sorry to report that 1968 Olympic 20K walker JOHN WEBB (Basildon A.A.C.) has had an operation to remove an eye and replace it with a glass one. John reports that the operation was a success, and that he's now going even faster in training – in preparation for his 70th birthday appearance at the 2005 Chigwell Row 10 Kilometres. John is not downcast by events, and even selected the paragraph heading!

Meanwhile elder brother HARRY, a Councillor for Rainham and a former Mayor of Havering (who was the eulogist at the late brother Syd's funeral) has also been in the wars. He's been involved in a road accident with a double-decker bus in Rainham, which saw his new Fiesta written-off. We wish him well as he recovers from the ordeal.

TAIL ENDS

Snippets from recent athletic publications. (Not this publication!!!)

"Food for thought, are we moving on, standing still or moving backwards?"

"There is no Secretaries report as the club has no secretary!"

"CRISIS! CRISIS! CRISIS! We have no Chairman, Secretary or Minutes Secretary!"

"Other than the Committee only two members turned up for the A.G.M. It is your club, please attend if you can".

"Desperate call for people to train as judges, please offer to train."

One thing that affects all clubs is the role and help from members. Paying your subscription does not mean that all things will be done for you. Without volunteers it is not possible to run clubs. See what you can do to help your club.

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WRITES PETER RYAN

Essex League is almost at its end, anyone can see that, and it won't be long until the Police race might be at its end. They can't pay out £300 for a small field like we had in October, and yet that's the biggest numbers turnout of the League. Didn't Dave Sharpe suggest B races ages ago, but to no avail. I do agree with you if things aren't changed quickly it will be gone, and let's face it look at the Enfield races, a good League well supported all B races. The dates are usually published well in advance and people go there to race, but most of all to enjoy having fun. Let's face it if people don't have fun they will go and do other things on a Saturday afternoon. It's always easier to pull a bent knee veteran than a person off the deck. The 50K has its difficulties, 20 miles need to be incorporated perhaps in other races and should be 30 kilometres anyway, like the 10 miles should be 15 or 20k. These are Championships' we went metric years ago, are there too many County Championships? Martin Oliver can keep his races at 5 miles because they are B races, non championships, and most of all they are enjoyable, hence the increase in numbers where perhaps a star will be born. Food for thought.

Peter

A CENTURION STORY

By Ray Platt

The sun shone proudly from cloudless skies
Hats, sweat and sunglasses protect our eyes
We check our watches as the time nears one
For we know we walk and dare not run

One hundred miles or more or less
My legs will venture with some distress
Remember the training, remember the pain
Each strike of the foot again and again

The hours pass and my legs are strong
Lonely thoughts, lonely time are helped by song
My back held straight, tired arms are swinging
To the gentle song my head is singing

Great shock as I peer at my swollen hands
Blood congealed and congested like swollen glands
The torture and pain one suffers for glory
Will open the pages of life's full story

The sun has gone, the moon appears
Long hours have passed since starting cheers
My thoughts travel briefly of forthcoming night
Long shadows, dark trees cast daunting a sight

Dawn, sunrise appears once again
My body sways with onslaught of pain
My lips are dry, I search for water
Without such fluid my body will falter

My legs recover by body strong
The speed increases, I march along
I search for reasons of knowing why
One hundred miles do or die.

'THE DOGS BOLLOCKS'

This is the name of a quality Californian Rose wine. It was donated (along with more traditionally labelled bottles) for the Ilford 10K prize table. The mystery benefactor stipulated that 'The Dogs Bollocks' wine be presented to the last finisher. As the late Johnny Craddock used to say (and the late Bob Todd who mercilessly mimicked him in a Benny Hill Show sketch), "Its an amusing little wine".



ACTIVE O.A.P's

Latest of our happy band to reach pension age is hard-working official, in-form walker and all-round good egg PETER CASSIDY. The reigning Senior Essex County 3,000 Metres Walking Champion achieved this status during an active weekend when he appeared at the testing and long-established Belgrave Harriers Open 7 Miles 'around the houses' (expensive ones) course at Wimbledon. Congratulations on reaching that milestone. Meanwhile January 20th sees statistician COLIN YOUNG, a member of N.U.T.S, hit 70 years. Colin's span is legendary – including having his name featured in the Guinness Book of Records as being the only British man to complete the World's longest walking race – the 385 Miles Strasbourg-to-Paris. He did that... and he's still going strong into the next Veteran's Age Group. Congratulations to both worthies.

WRITES OLYMPIAN JOHN WEBB

To the staff of Essex Walker, I say thank you for a good read during 2004.



THE LINK

What links MICHAEL HESELTINE, TOM COURTENAY, SIR PAUL MCCARTNEY and QUEEN SOPHIA? They've all been served by KATH SUTHERLAND, wife of former Ilford President BILL, in the upmarket jewellery shop where the good lady is employed.

NEW WALKING WEBSITE

Get all your info about the King's Lynn 100 Miles Race on www.100milewalk.co.uk

NEWS FROM A SUPPORTER

IRIS WEBB, widow of the late SYD, has recently had a knee replacement. We're pleased to know that Iris is happy with her operation and is back on her feet again.

GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Eagle-eyed judge and respected statistician JOHN POWELL has been even more helpful in identifying the location of MISKOLC (see our 2 previous editions). "It's 100 miles east-north-east of Budapest" states the much-travelled John. He knows this information first-hand – because he's been there! John is also a keen follower of the Non-League soccer scene and is one of the Country's leading amateur players of traditional cinema organs.



APPEAL

To mark the death of EVAC Honorary Treasurer PETER ANDREWS, his Club (City of Norwich) are setting up a fund in his memory to help young athletes – something that was dear to Pete. Donations can be sent to:- Mark Chaplin, 113 Green Drift, ROYSTON, Hertfordshire. SG8 5BL.

COURTESY OF EVAC MAGAZINE

Veterans/Masters (delete as appropriate) clearly has a future according to an EVAC article:- We live in an ageing population, with more people surviving into their 70s and beyond. By 2050 it is estimated that 43% of Europeans will be over the age of 60. Due to medical advances, most people are just as fit and active as when they were younger, making 50 the new 40!

DISCLAIMER

As we've corrected age categories for other walkers who have had years added on in the Record, we'll now do so for Hon. Ed himself – whose limited talents are not contesting M60 events, despite what you read. That status is a few years away!

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

We had a couple of letters praising IAN RICHARDS for the ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA WEEKEND. We won't use them as this is basically an Essex publication, whereas the said weekend was a National (or even an International) function. But Ian truly deserves his favourable mentions – as indeed do many others, notably PAM FICKEN and the 2 PETERS, MARKHAM and MARLOW.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

IAAF Official PETER MARLOW had hoped to be at CHIGWELL ROW for the long-established pre-Christmas 10 Kilometres. But he was invited over to the Dublin 10K on the same weekend, where the guest of honour was Robert Korzeniowski. Peter points out that his multifarious IAAF obligations and business commitments do prevent him from attending more Essex League events. (N.B. In the end, neither RK or PM was able to make Dublin).



AMATEUR OR PROFESSIONAL?

Amir Khan can contemplate his future at his leisure as he could earn £250,000 a year to remain amateur until the 2008 Beijing Games. To think, if Terry Spinks (1956 Gold Medallist) had worn a T-shirt with a manufacturer's logo on it he would automatically have lost his amateur status. (From 'The Sun').

LEADER NOT THE FIRST

United States visitor ZAK POLLINGER, an Under 20 Junior, is not the first overseas entrant to win the long-established Enfield Open 7 Miles, though his victory in 55.35 (from 51 starters) does show that the quality is heading south, when you consider what previous visitors had to achieve in order to break the Enfield tape. C. McCullagh (Australia) won in 1965 with 50.30 from 115 starters, W. Wesch (West Germany) won in 49.59 (1970 -123 starters), R. Laird (USA) won in 50.22 (1971 - 155 starters), R. Gonzales (Mexico) won in 50.05 (1973 - 151 starters) and E. Vera (Mexico) won in 48.44 (1977 - 123 starters).

GET 'EM OUT

We hope to get out plenty of walkers for the immensely popular annual PLAYTEX MOONWALK which commences in London's Hyde Park on June 18th. Entry forms are on:

www.walkthewalk.org

2006 COMMONWEALTH GAMES QUALIFYING STANDARDS

Men: 20K - 1.30.00 and 50K - 4.20.00
Women: 20K - 1.45.00

90 NOT OUT

Not one with any Essex connections, as far as we know, is GEORGE MITCHELL. But he's much admired by all readers who know him. The Birchfield Harrier and respected Centurion became a nonagenarian in November and celebrated his new M90 status by rattling off 5 Kilometres in 42.35 at Birmingham's Perry Park. 29 finished that race, headed by Welsh champion MARK WILLIAMS in 23.40. Special presentations were made to George - one of race walking's great stalwarts.

RETURNED TO HIGH OFFICE

Former Southend-on-Sea Olympian (1972 Munich 20 Kilometres) PETER MARLOW, who nowadays is well known as an International official, has been voted in for a 2nd term as R.W.A. President. **Congratulations.**

UP 'N' UNDER

BILL SUTHERLAND, whose Enfield League comeback brought letters of praise from Messrs. Hinton and Ross, was hoping to race the final event in the programme. But... it clashed with a London Irish away trip to France so Bill followed his beloved rugby side across the Channel.

GOING DOWN

We reported that the Enfield Open 7 Meeting in November had seen 3 fallers on their notorious course. WRONG! Another has now given details of a fall, making 4 in total (3 from Essex). Unless, of course, you know different? No wonder the host club keep on publishing their legal disclaimer.

MISSING TROPHY

EDDIE TROTTER is seeking the BERT ANGEL TROPHY, which is held by the victor of the Busmen's 7 Miles Championship Walk - which has not been staged for some years. Eddie hopes to revive the race if the cup can be unearthed. We've done well of late, in locating missing trophies, so can we try for this one? Information please to Eddie on 01708 - 375096.



IT'S NEVER OVER TILL THE FAT LADY SINGS

The 2004 Enfield League series held its 12th and final event in December, and another large field assembled at Donkey Lane. The last 4 races have seen 3 senior races pulling in over 40 starters and 1 with over 50 starters. Essex League and other race organisers please note, that a 'B' format is what the punters want, as proved by the fact that they are voting with their feet. We are in a different era, as shown by the fact that 40/50 is nowadays regarded as a bumper field. In the 60s/70s/80s, that was regarded as the 'going rate' for an Inter-Club meet. But... in 2004 it's commendable and much praise is due to Enfield host MARTIN OLIVER and his hard working committee of helpers. Ilford A.C. were bidding for their 6th successive team title and had trailed Enfield & Haringey throughout the series, and did so by just 13 points after 11 events. Come the 12th and final race and Ilford were lacking the members who could have clinched it, through unavailability. Captain DAVE KATES defied injury to race, but alas was forced to 'do a Warburton' before halfway - as indeed was the man who lent his name to that phrase, PAUL WARBURTON aka 'Scoop'. Regulars MAUREEN NOEL and JOHN HALL didn't race as they were keeping their powder dry for the Luton Marathon on Sunday. John - the Middlesex President - viewed proceedings and gave a thoughtful oral discourse on the afternoon's race walking standards. This was a constructive way of filling-in time while Martin and the officials toiled to produce a series result. The team result proved that saying "It's never over till the fat lady sings", even though nobody fitting that description could be seen at Donkey Lane. The ending had more twists-and-turns than the course itself as SEAN PENDER's number was called and Ilford's team 'nicked' the team award by just 25 points after 12 months competition. Both League leaders came from Aldershot, Farnham & District - NICK SILVESTER and ANN LEWIS. From an Essex perspective, AMOS SEDDON (2nd) and ALAN ELLAM (3rd) claimed individual series awards, team-wise Loughton were just adrift of the frame and HELEN CROFT was 2nd in the Girls Under 11 table.

IT'S OVER!



Respected RAY MIDDLETON (1966 Commonwealth Games silver medallist) presented the awards, except for new PAM PHILLIPS MEMORIAL TROPHY (for the top lady). This was presented by KEITH. Pam sadly took her leave of us during 2004 and a link between the departed lady and the Enfield League is a strong one; for Pam was always near the top of the table and indeed won the Ladies title for the first 4 years.

Each Enfield Series gets better, and to those who won't deign to support events around Enfield Playing Fields, we suggest they come and 'test the water'. The way other events are folding, it may one day be all that's left!

MARATHON MARVELS

MAUREEN NOEL (3.38) and JOHN HALL (3.51) formed part of a mixed DEFRA team which placed 3rd in the Civil Service Marathon at Luton. Maureen was 3rd individual lady in the Civil Service Championship.

ON AT THE B.B.C.

On the eve of the Belgrave Harriers Open 7 Miles, BBC Television Regional News sports slot was broadcast live from the Bels H.Q. at Battersea Park's Millennium Stadium. Indeed presenter MARK BRIGHT made a number of references to Belgrave Harriers – but not a single mention was made of the long-established Open 7 Miles on the following day. CARL LAWTON, who is well-known at both the BBC and the Bels, is looking into this glaring omission.

BREAKAWAY BLUES

With talk of an alternative Essex League, based on Championship races plus 'B' events, now being openly discussed ESSEX WALKER will (as the County's Walking Newsletter) publish fixtures, results and reports from both Leagues – should matters ever reach that far.

WRITES MARY WORTH

Many thanks for sending the newsletters, they are much appreciated.

CHIGWELL ROW 10K – A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK

Since being booted out of the Essex League (the crime being to adopt 'B' status) the event has again pulled in double that which was seen in 2002 (when last an 'A' race) – proving that Ilford's Christmas 10K has more of a future outside of the League programme. As always, the Christmas spirit saw several former walkers popping in to socialise, and there was a pleasant atmosphere afterwards in the nearby Maypole Inn. Special mentions for GRAHAM CHAPMAN and DAVE KATES, who were both unable to race through injury – yet both travelled considerable distances **just to return trophies in time for re-presentation.** Colchester Harriers dominated the 2003 race, and STEVE KING also made considerable efforts **to get trophies returned.** We've frequently appealed for all trophies to always be returned clean, engraved and ready for the next presentation. These 3 worthies have set us an example. Ilford's President, hammer-thrower WESLEY CLARKE – a former Mr. Universe – also entered into the spirit of the occasion, for which we thank him. There was also a postal match arranged between Essex and The Netherlands; co-ordinated by TONY PERKINS and our good friend HANS ver der KNAPP. Their race took part at DRONTON, 30 Kilometres north east of Amsterdam on the Saturday and must have been flatter than Chigwell Row on the Sunday. Hans was not confident about Dutch chances after their 10K – but it proved to be a mighty close match, as just 2 points settled it. **Close enough for a rematch in 2005?**

A NOISY END

Sharpie produced his trademark stentorian finish at the Ilford 10K, so loud that residents twitched their curtains and one even ventured outside to find out what the hell was going on? He knows how to draw a crowd!

OFF THE RECORD

In a stunning decision the R.W.A. have given 3 months notice that they will no longer be supporting the long established RACE WALKING RECORD. After that TIM WATT (Editor) will run it as best he can – though he does have some sponsorship from the I.A.A.F (1 year) plus subs to work with. Essex Walker, despite making a few adverse comments, has always advised walkers to subscribe to the Record. It's vital for a minority sport to maintain its official organ. Past Editors and supporters will be turning in their graves. A rethink should be considered.

WRITES DAVE SHARPE

Dear Captain Birdseye,

Ilford A.C. staged their Xmas 10 Kilometres which is a 'B' race which got 25 starters and 23 finishers. The same number of starters as the year before – just different personnel, which proves that at club level the 'B' event works, as 3 years ago the field was half the size when it was an 'A' race within the Essex League. So perhaps its time to use 'B' races to score in Essex League events? I do believe that this is the way the sport should be going at Club level; so why not change before time passes us by and we are forced to?

Yours in Sport

D.W. Shapre I.A.C. Walking Secretary

BOXING DAY SUCCESS

Enfield & Harringey A.C. staged their traditional and free race (in conjunction with the runners) and the walking field was double that of 12 months earlier. Some entered into the yuletide spirit by donning santa hats and, in one case, some very fancy dress. Full result in the Record/A.W. Sharpie personally ensured that there was no repetition of the 2003 situation, where walkers sat through a long presentation of runners awards (both sexes and umpteen age categories) only to then be wished a Happy New Year and a safe journey home – with no mention of the walking race. Sharpie dived-in and compiled the results and then acted as M.C. for their awards. We salute DAVE SHARPE – man who gets things done!

WRITES WALKING NEWCOMER MARTIN CLARKE

Hi Gang,

All the class runners were at the Ilford 10K Walk – 3 laps of Lambourne End. Myself, twin bruva PresWes, Ken Hylton, Pam & Pauline laid waste the novice section of prizes.

Wow it ain't an easy as it looks started off doing a sort of Hello Sailor there's something on your shoe, cavort thru Chigwell Row village and promptly got warned by the first judge. Soon settled into more of a military two-step march with limited hip swagger which although a bit slower seemed to assuage the judge's anger but displeased Ray's roving eye. Speaking to Stevie Allen afterwards, it's all in the technique. I need to get more fluid.

No don't go there.

Martin Clarke.

ACE KINGS

Essex walkers – DANIEL & DOMINIC KING – are 1st and 2nd respectively in the U.K. Merit Rankings for 2004. We'd truly love to see them displaying their undoubted talents more in Essex. Congratulations on their high placing.

"THE PUB WITH NO BEER"

Loughton training nights often end up at 'The Hollybush' inn on Tuesday evenings. **Yes folks, Loughton A.C. train.** On one pre-Christmas Tuesday the thirsty athletes arrived to find no bitter, Guinness or even lager. Only bottled sweet cider of gnats piss strength! So they took their custom elsewhere. And who had a worldwide hit in 1958 with 'The Pub With No Beer'? It was SLIM DUSTY MBE, who had a state funeral in New South Wales when he died at the age of 76 during 2003.