

ESSEX WALKER EUROPEAN CUP SPECIAL

GREAT OCCASION – BUT NO GREAT CROWDS – AS RECORDS ARE BROKEN

After over 3 years of hard planning and preparation the EUROPEAN CUP OF RACE WALKING took centre stage on the compact 1 Kilometre circuit at Victoria Park in ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA in Warwickshire. The venue showed our many overseas guests – from 29 federations – the very best of England. Leamington Spa has many fine Georgian, Regency and early-Victorian houses which are laid out in impressive terraces and squares. The impressive 19th century Church of All Saints was built in neo-Gothic style. Salty underground springs feed baths in the famous Pump Room, where 50,000 people a year receive treatment. Visitors can taste the waters from free fountains in the Pump Room and from a drinking tap on the pavement outside. However those racing in the Park were wisely offered bottled spring water from Tesco! Queen Victoria herself visited the town and bestowed the title of "Royal" in 1838 – at the height of the town's fame as a spa.

Day One saw a 'Health Walk', a kids one lap event and as a build-up to the opening ceremony, an all-comers 3K. These were un-judged, leaving it to individuals sense of fair play. Welsh champion MARK WILLIAMS moved clear over the closing stages to emphatically win in 12.41 from Ireland's MICK DOYLE in exactly 13 minutes. From GB, SCOTT DAVIS completed the frame in 13.14, just ahead of JIMMY BALL. Those representing ESSEX clubs were 15th placed STEVE UTTLEY in 14.56 and 30th placed DAVE AINSWORTH in 20.40. 31 finished. CHELSEA O'RAWE-HOBBS was on form to place 2nd in the ladies race clocking 15.35.

The Opening Ceremony, with teams present, was well staged and saw an appearance by the Town Band and a singer.

On Saturday evening a formal silver service dinner was held in the town's famous Pump Room. Many took the opportunity to look around the adjacent museum, which contained a display dedicated to the town's most famous sportsman – former World Middleweight Boxing Champion RANDOLPH TURPIN (1928-1966), whose main claim to fame came when defeating legend Sugar Ray Robinson at Earls Court in July 1951. Many, many attenders noticed the failure of UK ATHLETICS to support this top European meeting; as that Organisation's President, Chief Executive and President were all conspicuous only by their absence. Instead they were represented by 'Whatshisname', a back bench Committee member seemingly known only to PETER MARLOW. The President of EUROPEAN ATHLETICS and the CHAIRMAN of WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL graced the top table. It was a pity that around a score of places remained empty at the dinner tables, as a number of Federations failed to pass on their allotted tickets to persons who would attend. There were a number of meeting officials and supporters in town who could have been present – and would have appreciated being there. As the meeting was a EUROPEAN one, the Race Walking fraternity chose the occasion to honour 2 great walkers who conquered all to become Champions of Europe. They were KEN MATTHEWS MBE and PAUL NIHILL MBE who both won gold medals in the European Games 20 Kilometres in Belgrade (1962) and Athens (1969) respectively. Both had nice words said about them and, when called forward to receive silver salvers, received spontaneous and long standing ovations. The up-market function were able to hear background music played on a grand piano by an excellent classically trained concert pianist, who also sold his autographed CD's at a tenner-a-time.

Sunday's racing commenced at 8 am with the 50K, which sadly lacked UK participation. The top 3 were VLADIMIR KANAYKIN (Russia), TROND NYMARK (Norway) and OLEG KISTKIN (Russia) who clocked 3.40.57, 3.41.31 and 3.41.51 respectively. 25 (yes 25) walkers beat 4 hours! The Junior Women's 10K was won by Russian ANISYA KORNIKOVA in 43.17. The British representative REBECCA MERSH came 32nd in 52.44. The Junior Men's 10K saw Russian SERGEY MOROZOV break the tape in 40.25 with Britain's BEN WEARS coming 26th in 44.41.

The Women's 20K saw (with few exceptions) an assembly of near identically looking entrants in contention, many of whom formed a large leading group which stayed in formation for a number of laps. Belarus athlete RYTA TURAVA led them home in 1.27.52. British vests were worn by JO JACKSON and former Essex University medical student LISA KEHLER (the Meeting's most senior lady participant) who respectively came 38th and 43rd in 1.38.56 and 1.41.00. Lisa collected 2 early cards so had to be ultra careful. The Men's 20K saw a wonderful display of walking by World 50K Champion YOHAN DINIZ (France) who passed 10K in 39.35 on route to a 1.18.58 victory. A fan handed him a tricolour 100 metres from the finish, and he 'high-fived' all the way to the line. In 2nd place and recording a PB was reigning Olympic Champion IVANO BRUNETTI from Italy who clocked 1.19.36 (also 39.35 at 10K).. Yohan is a former course and distance winner at the well-established Leamington Grand Prix.

What racing: All races produced a UK All-comers Best and 3 European Best times were set. All present were in awe of what they'd witnessed and such memories will live for years to come.

Top 5 teams were: 1. Russia 79 pts, 2. Spain 118, 3. Italy 197, 4. Ukraine 282, 5. France 331.

A team of commentators kept everybody well informed as to the goings-on, with plenty of 'gen' for walkers and members of the general public alike. TIM WATT excelled by producing a European Cup preview edition which contained pages of statistical data and analysis. It made for essential reading to further appreciate the talent on show.

ESSEX STAR

Pride of place goes to the County's only selected representative, DANIEL KING (Colchester Harriers) in the 20K. In his race 61 started, 6 were carded out and 2 dropped out. Our man came 48th in 1.30.59 (5K intermediate times of 21.27, 43.50 and 1.06.47). But...that doesn't tell the full story. Dan was sick at 5K but was determined to stick to his task despite being indisposed. To quote Dan (courtesy of the Record's website), "I felt really good up to 5K and then I got awful stomach cramps and was sick. Racing in my own Country I didn't want to drop out, so I'm pleased I managed to finish but I'm frustrated and upset about my overall performance. I need to sit down with my coach and work out what went wrong, but on a plus note, at least I picked up some more 20K experience". Well done to DAN. Mind you, extra stress was placed on Dan's shoulders as he – and he alone – carried the UK hopes in this event. It's a shame that a trio could not have been selected!

HIGH TECHNOLOGY

£9,000's worth of chip technology was hired-in and a rapid results service saw sheets handed out containing the outcome and multiple split times.

More From Leamington

ESSEX WALKER'S READERS

The Event Director DR. IAN RICHARDS received plenty of support from readers of ESSEX WALKER. Too numerous to mention, our readers were on the Organising Committee, judging, acting as Judges attaché, timekeeping, recording, manning the feeding stations, manning the sponging station, announcing, supporting the Main Meeting and undertaking onerous transportation duties etc., etc., **Thanks to one and all.**

THE GREATS

The President of UK Athletics LYNN 'the leap' DAVIES (European Gold in 1966 and 70) attended on the Sunday – which also happened to be his 65th birthday. And he looked nothing like an Old Aged Pensioner, instead looking like a good advert for a healthy active lifestyle. Lynn was in demand to present awards – at well managed ceremonies – together with fellow European Games Gold medallists KEN MATTHEWS and PAUL NIHILL. To keep the entertainment flowing between races a parade of vintage/veteran cars was staged, with the aforementioned trio in the lead car acknowledging the spectators. Bar two, Great Britain's surviving major medallists from past glory days were present and acknowledged. Also present were other GB major games representatives and other walking internationals.

DOWNSIDE

A Festival of traditional English 'heel-and-toe' it was not! One respected Grade 1 judge (who was present in spectator capacity) wrote down transgressors numbers in his own notepad. **(It was lengthy!)** Gone are the days when you took your photos, waited another 3-or-4 months while you finish off the film in the camera and then waited for another week while Boots sent it away for developing. Nowadays, digital cameras (even in inexperienced hands) can instantly catch those who are 'up'.

True many were in awe, but many were also in dismay as to what passes for race walking in 2007. It's all in those digital cameras! Drug testing was mainly efficient, the only delays occurring when a couple of finishers found it difficult 'to give their best' in reasonable times. The 'crowd' was nowhere near expected. The tight 1 Kilometres circuit should have been ringed with spectators. Long sections saw nobody and even on the home straight only a single line (itself with gaps) looked on. Grandstand seats – hired at some cost – to hold crowds remained mostly empty. Leamington is only 2 hours drive away! One has to ask if those who devoted so much of their time to stage this great meeting, and having seen so few of our numbers attend, would ever want to repeat their efforts in future? One suspects not. There was a hiccup on the 50K recording, but that was probably because a loudspeaker was positioned directly over the recorders heads meaning that 'number calling' became 'number shouting'.

OTHER PUBLICITY & WEBSITES

Leamington webmaster CHARLIE FOGG was present on both days and is to be congratulated on his informative and interesting site, which certainly provided great info in the build-up, and afterwards. Quickest off the mark with reports was the IAAF Website, which contained excellent reports from professional journalist PAUL WARBURTON. The Record's website was essential reading and also gave opportunities for punters to email their own comments. And we had the pleasure of the EUROPEAN ATHLETICS Communications Manager PIERCE O'CALLAGHAN – a Leamington regular who is a true friend of race walking. He's a most genial type who is always optimistic. Just a pity we didn't put him in the commentary box for a while as he's a natural! Finally, our thanks to Chiltern Railways for the publicity on their website – and their offer of discounted tickets for attenders.

TELEVISION

Sky Sports screened the highlights. Here's the good news... they used the same film company who have presented the previous 2 Isle-of-Man Parish Walks. They were excellent.

CLOSE OF PLAY

Programme sales went well – and they were well worth the £3. Many athletes brought programmes to the final night's disco in Leamington's ROYAL SPA CENTRE, to get autographs. The function was well attended and as soon as DJ 'GARY' played his first record the dance floor was filled by young people. 'GARY' certainly used his volume control as more senior attenders were driven from the hall and to the relative peace of an upstairs function room.

INTEREST

Banners promoting the event were hung between buildings in the Town's Main street, and in some of the streets off it. Posters were on municipal notice boards and the local media gave favourable mentions (indeed BBC Coventry & Warwick Local Radio sent an outside broadcast car). However the locals didn't seem keen to be lured into Victoria Park. Walking, like the pole vault, only seems to attract those who are genuinely interested in these events in the first place. That's why we needed you all there. A nice day in a public park can (and has in the past) cause problems as non-athletics minded folk stroll across the park. Therefore the fencing-off of the course by high barriers was essential (and professionally done) to deter 'on course wanderers'. But... it did seriously hamper those who wanted to move around the course. At Milton Keynes in 1977 there was considerable freedom of movement. And instead of crowds 4 and 5 deep there, we had a single-file line with gaps! But in 77 we had well over 1,000 regularly active UK race walkers – today it's just a fraction.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Rumour around the meeting is that a deficit may be declared when the figures are added up. This is nothing new. The 1975 National 20 Miles Championship on the Isle-of-Man made a large loss (mainly because free accommodation had been booked and paid for, for idiots who entered and then didn't turn up). The Record described that event as the best National Championship ever. The 2001 JOHN HEDGETHORNE MEMORIAL 100 MILES made a sizeable loss (more idiots – these ones ran up huge unauthorised bills and then did a bunk, leaving organisers to stump-up). On both occasions the wider race walking fraternity were appealed to. So please be prepared for a further call on your finances if needed. If you didn't attend, just think of how much you've already saved! Thanks to all who did support fund raising by donations, sponsorship (individual and corporate), supporting a major raffle and by purchasing promotional goods and clothing.

FULL RESULTS

There's little point in Essex Walker repeating what's in the RECORD/ATHLETICS WEEKLY/VARIOUS WEBSITES – and you'll find plenty of excellent reporting in such places!

DAVE FARR R.I.P

Our last issue contained a nostalgia article in which former UK. No. 1 JUDY FARR of Trowbridge was mentioned. At the big Leamington Spa meet, BILL LAWRENCE of Basingstoke AC gave us the sad news that her husband Dave had recently passed-on. On behalf of all readers we express condolence to Judy and her family.

NOSTALGIA COLUMN RE-VISITED

That same article also mentioned another former UK No. 1 walker, MARION FAWKES. Marion, with husband Peter, were among the supporters at the European Cup of Race Walking. They disappeared from the scene when they emigrated to the 'Land of Oz'. But the lure of Blighty has seen them return and they were also at the 2006 Leamington Spa Grand Prix.

APPEAL FALLS ON STONY GROUND

Our May issue appealed for our many 'off the scene' readers to consider a small wager to help UK race walking. Wager? Well you might get back more than you shelled out! CATHERINE TELLING, the delightful honorary organiser of the RWA 200 Club reported that just 1 new subscriber applied to join after our appeal had been published. If you no longer attend races, just think of how much money you save by not travelling. So how about chipping-in just £12 (cheques payable to RWA) for 12 monthly draws. Monthly prizes are 1x£25 and 2x£10. Bonus draws in July and December pay out £50. Send your cheques to: Catherine Telling, 4, Amroth Gardens, Berkeley Beverborne, WORCESTER, WR4 0EP. All profits to go to raise funds for the RWA and race walking.

END OF A GREAT DOUBLE ACT

For over a decade-and-a-half most 24 hours/100 Miles on the UK mainland have seen 2 established Centurions – ALBERT STOKES (451) and JACK THOMAS (606) – appointed as joint Chief Judges. They've proved to be most proficient in the duties as they've headed their teams of judges, and ensured fair play at these lengthy sporting occasions. Now aged 80, Albert has decided to step down from such appointments, but remains in demand as an experienced coach and mentor. We thank Albert for all his efforts. Jack was on a caravan break (in his new caravan) near Weston-Super-Mare in Somerset when he suffered deep vein thrombosis and 3 blood clots near a hip, so resulting in him receiving hospital treatment and anti-coagulation drugs. Jack's on a 6 months course of treatment and has been advised against distance travelling, so he's stepping down from all but local commitments. We hope Jack gets over his setback and will soon be back in harness! PETER MARLOW has accepted a Chief Judge's appointment for the SWC 100 Miles at Battersea Park. Peter is mindful of the average age of many of race walking's officials and helpers; and he recently identified a need to see more new officials and helpers coming into the scene. Only a few issues ago, Essex Walker appealed for the many ex-walkers that are now around, and asked them to consider putting something back into the sport by offering their services.

KEN AND MARGARET LIVERMORE

Sadly, Ken has spent a couple of nights as a hospital in-patient, and has also returned home after a Mediterranean cruise feeling unwell. Margaret has also been under the weather, so we wish both a rapid return to full health. Ken has, unfortunately, needed a number of dental appointments since his brush with the Canvey Island sea wall. They were both so very disappointed to have missed out on the European Cup on account of their health, as they had volunteered for feeding station duties.

EMAILS CARL LAWTON

Thanks for the latest edition.

Having had the opportunity to be at Leamington last weekend and watch all the races I came away with the feeling that disqualification is really just a lottery now. Many of the older brigade are aware that it is a different game. There are no stylists, it seems to be a case of how far can they get off the ground without being caught.

Now a few days later having been able to see some of Tim Watt's photo's I can confirm my comments.

I know I could go on but we have probably gone too far down the road to change anything and I will probably upset those that think the Kings new clothes are wonderful.

Contact Man.

EMAILS OUR NATIONAL COACH

Hi,

Thanks for the June issue of EW, Ed Shillabeer's letter was also sent to UK Athletics and my response to Ed last month is below.

Re: meeting John Webb with a mystery woman on the Bath to Bristol cycleway – should anyone try to guess, it was Katie Stones and she was doing 15 km's worth of 3 min at 20 km pace, 5 min at 5 km pace (Katie is a student in Bath and trains with me most Fridays, although usually up here in Coventry). John came to Leamington so we had time for a longer chat! Katie (like Dom King) has missed training through illness so it was a real shame she (and Dom) wasn't ready for Leamington.

Your e-mail to Chris Broadbent has been passed to me for a response.

For the European Cup this year we dropped the qualifying times back to development level for all senior events to try to get more athletes competing, i.e. if the 2007 European Cup was overseas the athletes mentioned would have been required to walk 20 km or 50 km in 1.27.00 or 4.10.00 for team selection.

Other than those selected no athletes have come close to attaining the standards set and their performances throughout the qualifying period across a range of distances do not equate either.

This winter we included Andy Penn and Steve Hollier in National Squad activity, the message to them was very clear that we thought they could do a job for the team in Leamington. Unfortunately, despite encouragement and support they have not performed at a level that warrants selection by UK Athletics.

Kind Regards

Andi. (Dr. Andrew Drake)

EMAILS DAVE HOBEN

Dave,

Thanks for your June Edition (always cheers me up). I saw in previous month's copy that you did Leicester-Skegness 100 in the seventies, sounds a huge achievement, maybe there are some tales/anecdotes from this for the benefit of readers who only know you in more recent times for another month please?

Dave

IN OUR THOUGHTS

Missing from the action lately has been Southend's KIM HOWARD, the only lady to have won the overall Essex League individual title, and one of the League's most enthusiastic attenders. Centurion Kim has been in hospital to have a kneecap operation which, of course, we hope has been successful. We look forward to seeing Kim return soon. Another Southend lady who has been off-the-scene is VAL MOUNTFORD, who captained them when last winning an Essex League team title. Val's also been in hospital for an operation and, after resting the good lady has been seen training along Southend's seafront. Val returned her numbers for the 2007 London Marathon and now relishes the challenge in 2008, when a guaranteed start awaits. Val keeps in touch and was by the course supporting at the well attended Nicola 5 Miles on Canvey Island.

EMAILS A WAG

Dear Mr. Answith,

Think you for your litter. It is always good to get bick such niece cumpliments about our predictions.

Somebody within UK athletics will no doubt be surrey that a slite orror was maid in the poblickasion. Wee awl try very hard nut to make mistakes in what are we doo. Unfortunaetly we don't know who that is becus we have so many people who are pade to work four us that we don't have a clooe who it could be.

We will, hooever, fotocopy your litter many times and ciculat to all within the organizasion, if we can find who they are or even ware they are.

Yours cincerly

3rd assistant to the forth hub organizer.

P.S. Maybe you wood lick to wok four us.

(Name and Address supplied)

OBSERVES MIKE HINTON

Dear Dave,

I thought I would log into Race Walking Record and see if there were any photo's on the system of the Leamington Spa events.

What a shock, some of the so called walking actions are appalling, a number of both feet up in the air by inches. If these international athletes are doing a sport called Race Walking, then it's a completely different sport that is being done in this country.

These continentals are just doing another form of running, given a licence to cheat.

Ask anyone what the difference between walking and running is and they will tell you, with walking one foot is always in contact with the ground.

With our best walkers some 12 minutes in arrears over 20kms, and sometimes getting disqualified, how on earth can they compete with this.

Regards Mike.

VANISHING ACT

PICKETTS Lock track saw Enfield League action on May 26th, where over 30 assembled for the London Inter Club Challenge 3,000 metres walk. This was a record turnout for an LICC walk, and it took a couple of laps before the throng thinned out, but only after some bumping and barging. Track record holder DAVE SHARPE saw his name erased and replaced by club colleague SCOTT DAVIS who easily won in 13.22. Some cut it fine, in that STEVE UTTLEY had little warm-up and DAVE KATES had none. He was still getting changed beside the track when 'Mr. Starter' boomed, "Are you ready?" Dave boomed back, "Oi mate, hang on a minute". The starter was in good mood, and tolerated a slight delay enabling Dave to line-up for a distance over which he had not raced much in recent years. As walkers toiled around Britain's newest track, ground staff toiled to position barriers for the 400 metres hurdles. Previous seasons have seen the walk start at 1 pm and the 400m hurdles timed at 1.15 pm. MADNESS! This season a more realistic timetable has been devised, with Event No. 2 now commencing at 1.30 pm. As walking drew to a close the tannoy boomed, "Event No. 2 – the 400 metres hurdles – is cancelled owing to no entrants". Never mind the walk, the London Inter Club Challenge is running into difficulties. On May 26th one club failed to show and several events seemed to be lacking participants.

But where did folk get to after the walk, as hardly anybody was at the presentation? JON MAY arranged for a rendition of 'Happy Birthday to You' as RON WALLWORK entered the café – for Ron had celebrated his 66th birthday by actively continuing his 'ding-dong' tussle with colleague MARTIN OLIVER. We're sure that those not there to wish 'Happy Birthday' will wish to be associated with the message that was sung at the post race presentation! And it was nice to welcome Birchfield Harrier JOHN CONSTANDINOU – he's the hard working chap who compiles our appearance tables which determined our most prolific walkers.

PARTING OF THE RAIN

Hard rain stopped just as walking commenced, and resumed just as walking ceased, but for a second successive occasion, just 8 contested May's LPR 9K Yacht Handicap at Blackheath Park – despite the lure of double points. Where do you all get to? The only way we'll keep races going is **TO SUPPORT THEM!** Rain caused cricket to be cancelled at The Old Addeyans Club, so nobody came to open up the changing rooms. Walkers are hardy and resourceful, and changed where they could. 1 was a YAG entrant leaving just 7 for the main event, meaning that a yacht handicap couldn't be staged. LAURENCE DORDOY led them home and headed the handicap table, so earning 100 points towards his 2007 tally. MICKY SUTTON brought up the rear despite still suffering aches and pains from an ultra-distance race over the previous weekend. But hey folks...WHAT ABOUT GIVING STALWARTS STEVE WYNN and HARRY JEFFORD FULL SUPPORT DURING THE REST OF THE PROGRAMME?

INTER-COUNTIES

ESSEX were represented at Bedford Track on a miserable rainy late Spring Bank Holiday Monday. Over 3,000 metres guesting KING twins DANIEL and DOMINIC were 1st and 2nd respectively clocking 11.58 and 12.26. Official representative SCOTT DAVIS came 5th in 13.23. In the ladies event CHELSEA O'RAWE-HOBBS came 6th in 15.57. After being ejected from this Inter-Counties Meeting, race walking campaigned hard to be readmitted. So it's important to keep supporting this one, and it was encouraging to see 28 walkers on show, with most not being veterans. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

WRITES FORMER ESSEX LEAGUE NO. 1 LADY ANNETTE FORKIN

Dear Dave,

Just a brief note to thank you very much for the mention in 'Essex Walker' - goodness, was it really over 20 years ago that I held that title?! Doesn't time fly. I am still secretary of the Southend Music Festival, which keeps me very busy indeed – no road walking these days (although I'm often told that I do not seem to understand the term 'stroll' – you always walk so quickly!...), but I am keeping fit with pilates and tap dancing. Hope all is well with you.

Very best wishes,

Annette F.

EMAILS BOB DOBSON

Dave,

I've just been directed to the website www.racewalkuk.com/home.asp where at last I've found the result of the Bradford '50'kms.

Maybe I should have another go next year, I might win it yet!

Bob.

THANKS FOLKS

JACK THOMAS is most appreciative of the cards, letters and phone calls received since his health setback. He was most touched by such volume – which included fellow Centurion KEVIN PERRY phoning from France!

NEWS FROM ALAN ELLAM

"I am still off work and training on Doctor's orders. I have seen a Consultant, had one test and am due to take another two this week, which I am hopeful will lead to a diagnosis. It's ironic that this happened just as I was getting back towards real fitness, which I can feel slipping away. Ho. Hum, worse things happen at sea. I hope you are all fit and well".

(Taken from Enfield Walker Extra)

CONDOLENCE

We express condolence to Clacton-based KEN EASLEA on the sad demise of his sister Pam.

FIXTURES

Mon Jul 2	Southern Counties T&F League 2,000 metres	Copthall Stadium	6.30 pm
Sun Jul 8	Welsh Masters 3,000 metres	Cardiff	1.15 pm
Wed Jul 11	Sir Sefton Branker 3,000 metres	Copthall Stadium	
Sat Jul 14	Centenary 50 Miles	Blackpool	7 am
Sun Jul 15	LPR Open 9K Yacht Handicap	Blackheath Park	11.30 am
Tue Jul 17	Vets 5 Miles	Battersea Park	7 pm
Wed Jul 18	WWW 3,000 metres + 1K YAG	Ashtons Track	6.40 pm
Wed Jul 25	Tonbridge 3K		
Sat Jul 28	SWC/RWA/BMAF 50K & 100 Miles Champs	Battersea Park	noon
Sat Aug 4	Enfield League 5 Miles Yacht Handicap	Donkey Lane	2.30 pm
Sat Aug 11	LICC 3,000 metres + YAG 1K	New River Stadium	1 pm
Sun Aug 12	LPR Open 9K Yacht Handicap	Blackheath Park	11.30 am
Tue Aug 14	Vets 5 Miles	Battersea Park	7 pm
Wed Aug 15	WWW 3,000 metres + YAG 1K	Ashtons Track	6.40 pm
Sat Aug 18	Dartford Hour	Dartford	12.15pm
Sun Aug 19	Saltburn Sandblaster	Saltburn	noon
Sat Aug 25	Enfield League 20K/10K/5K (all in one)	Donkey Lane	noon
Sat Sep 1	Tom Sharlott 10K + YAG	Leicester	
Sun Sep 2	Church-to-Church 19½ Miles	St. Peter Port	9 am

ANOTHER BIG FAVOUR

Change in race entry procedure for the RWA 50 km Championship 28 July 2007

The RWA has now delegated entries for the 50 km Championship to Surrey Walking Club.

There is now one entry form for both races and walkers just have to tick a box which race they wish to do.

Entry to the 100 mile race will now automatically include an entry to the 50 km entry fee £25.00

(anyone who has previously completed two separate entry forms and submitted £7.00 to the RWA will have their entry fee of £7.00 refunded)

Entry fee for the 100 Miles incorporating the 50 km is £25.00

Entry fee for the 50 km only is £7.00

Anyone entering the 50 km race will not be allowed to continue to 100 miles.

All Entries and enquiries to Kathy.crilley@virgin.net see <http://www.surreywalkingclub.org.uk> for details.

Kathy Crilley

WRITES BILL SUTHERLAND

Hello Dave

Here's my mail for the month. Earlier in the week when on a training jaunt up to Parliament Hill Fields track, I met DAME KELLY HOLMES doing a promotion for SPORT ENGLAND with photographers on hand. I had a good chat and she gave me her autograph. I will keep it in a special place with Muhammad Ali's.

Keep walking. Hope Leamington Spa went well.

Yours in sport,

Bill

(Commonwealth Games Bronze)

Edinburgh 1970) – Only 37 year's ago.

Adds Hon. Ed. Glad to read that Bill's out training again and that he advises us to "keep walking", so we hope to soon welcome Bill back into the walking after his lay-off.

EMAILS ED SHILLABEER

Re Leamington, hats off to all concerned. Max and I only saw start of the men's 20K. Yolande Diniz already taking it out on the first lap, but the men's 50K was the best walking and the best race I have seen. Quite a few majors, Kanyakin's last 5K was awesome because Nymark didn't exactly fold, did he?

Look forward to Sky Pports' showings and the dvd now.

Yours in Sport,
Walk Tall, Ed.

EMAILS OLLY FLYNN

(COPY OF ORIGINAL SENT TO RECORD)

Dear Tim,

May I through your columns, congratulate everybody concerned, from all the officials through to all the sponsors, with the marvellous organisation of last weekend's European Cup at Royal Leamington Spa. The fact that it was also our Federation's 100th anniversary, was a fitting testament to all our current fellow practitioners and officials of all those who have gone before us. One that I feel that they too would have had immense pride and joy in watching such feats of amazing athleticism which permeated right through the whole of the racing program of events.

It is also heartening to see so many new nations within Europe competing at the highest levels now, this augurs well for the future of our sport. Additionally having the former Olympic & World Champion Maurizio Damilano as Chairman of the IAAF Race Walking Commission, hopefully this means that our sport can be protected against the travails of seeing any of the Race Walks being dropped from Major Games as witnessed for the 1976 Olympic 50Km. Now we are being faced with the possible elimination from the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in India, notwithstanding, as I am led to believe, the Race Walks were part of the bid entry which was accepted by the Commonwealth Organising Committee. Our sport will not survive if we do not maintain its position as an Olympic sport so we must be ever vigilant of this.

To name everyone involved in making such an event run smoothly would take far more than I have to write here, other than to congratulate Dr. Ian Richard, Mike Smith and Peter Marlow who headed up the committee that made such a memorable weekend for ramblers and spectators such as myself. The weather and course were everything the athletes could have asked for.

There was only 1 disappointment in an otherwise outstanding weekend, was the fact that we were not represented in every event. As we were the hosts this should have been done if only to endeavour to promote our sport and give the current and future Race Walkers a reference point to aspire to for the future. The cost would have been another £100, which I'm sure we could have raised by subscription amongst ourselves. Albeit to have any more who were to far below the general standard is understandable and I am sure a situation that we would have all found acceptable in principal but as the host nation, we all also have an obligation to the future of our sport and to create reference points for others to follow.

Sincerely

Oliver T. Flynn

Montreal 76 & Edmonton 78

BEAR ESSENTIAL



Walkers milling around in Victoria Park, Leamington, for the 'Scrubbers 3K' on the eve of the main event were awaiting an appearance from a 'Mister Starter'. As they waited it was apparent that nobody had been appointed. So when quick-thinking Chief Recorder PETER CASSIDY observed a man (or maybe a woman) dressed-up as 'VIC BEAR', the official mascot of the European Cup, he commandeered the bear as a hurriedly appointer STARTER. The bear commenced action by dropping a paw!

CLICK-CLICK-CLICK

Our last issue reported on DAVE SHARPE's meritorious service as a turnstile operator on Day 1 of the Essex County Championships at Cricklefields. Well, newshound TOM POLLAK performed the same duty at Surrey's Championship. Tom's articles appear in the leading national newspapers but he's also a great and active supporter of athletics at grass roots level.

"KEEP RIGHT ON TO THE END OF THE ROAD"

So sung Sir Harry Lauder. At Pickett's Lock, reigning National 50K Champion SCOTT DAVIS asked Hon. Ed., "Some years ago a proposal to stage the Essex 20 Miles with the National 50K failed because it was ruled that 20 miles finishers also had to complete 50K. Does that mean National 50K finishers also have to finish the 100 miles as well, in order to count?" Well Scott, the 'Chief Farceur' of that cock-eyed piece of logic was never unmasked, but letters from readers that were published in Essex Walker at the time, were highly critical of this decision – which effectively killed-off the 2004 Essex 20 Miles. Now, courtesy of many of the same people who were in the 2004 'smoke filled room' we have the exact opposite this July! 2004 is water-under-the-bridge and now you can race the shorter distance and have your performance recorded – without having to follow Harry Lauder's advice. So please, please support the 50K if you can. We need a good field to keep the event going...and reverse the decline of recent years.

OFF TRACK

London Business Houses and City Charities meetings in June were hastily switched from the Police Training School at Hendon to Willesden track in NW10. The Police rescinded all bookings at short notice, as they're closing their track and converting it into a students car park. One hopes that the John Bromley Memorial Clock, which overlooks the stadium, will be relocated to a suitable place.

PUTTING YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY

Our June issue showed a photograph of a past Stock Exchange Walking Team. In response to requests TONY (Mr. Memory) PERKINS has captioned it. Left-to-right: Dave Railton, Mike Bateman, Ray (CASH) Hague, Tony Perkins, Paolo Masoni, Dave Stevens, Simon Davis, Pat Browning (been bald for 30 years), Adrian James, Paul Jarman, Roger (Legs) Lancefield and David Jarman. Who took the photo?

NAMING CEREMONY

Last year we reported that Sir Ian Blair has opened the newly constructed Sir Philip Game Centre in Croydon. The main hall in the complex is THE PAUL NIHILL HALL, named in honour of one of Croydon's finest. Paul was a member of the old Sir Philip Game Club, as was fellow Olympian CLINTON MCKENZIE and light entertainer ROY HUDD.

ON SALE

Been there, got the T-shirt. So why not get the DVD as well? A DVD of the 2007 EUROPEAN CUP OF RACE WALKING at Leamington is now on sale for a tenner. Send cheque, made payable to 'RWA Leamington 2007' to: Dr. Ian Richards, 39 Gledhow Park Road, Chapel Allerton, LEEDS, West Yorkshire. LS7 4JW. Cancel the babysitter, order a takeaway and have a good night in – with your Leamington DVD.

CONGRATULATIONS

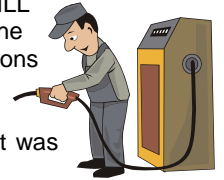
These go to ANN SMITH, one of walking's true friends, a hard working official for decades and much appreciated stalwart. Ann was 70 on May 30th. Ann was prominent at Leamington and performed a number of tasks including taking entries for the popular all-comers 3K just prior to the opening ceremony. We hope the good lady celebrated in style. So, on behalf of all readers, our profound congratulations.

A COMMITTED MAN

Former Southend-on-Sea AC 2nd claimer PAUL WARBURTON, aka 'Scoop', is a sports journalist by profession and for many years used to pen a walking column in editions of Athletics Weekly and Athletics Today. He walked the Open 3K at Leamington and provided excellent accounts of the European Cup Races for the IAAF website (well worth looking up). Paul has been a supporter of London Inter Club Challenge since its inception, being a frequent sight on their start lines. Asked if he'd be racing in the 2007 series, Paul gave an emphatic "Yes" and added, "I believe in supporting walking races that are part of athletics meetings".

PETROL BILL

We recently reported that BILL SUTHERLAND's car had conked out after he filled-up with rogue fuel (Tesco/Morrisons rumpus). Now GEORGE NIBRE has gone one better; for he filled-up his new top-of-the-range company car with petrol. But....it was a diesel car. Oops!



AND THEY GET PAID FOR IT

Arsene Wenger: "You can't recover from a European defeat. You recover by winning the next game".

CONTINENTAL SCENE

It was interesting to meet walkers and officials from 29 countries at Leamington. Amazing how many can speak some English. Equally amazing how many appear to be walkers...and do little or nothing else. Full time walkers – could that be Britain's way back to the top? Most European countries have really good top class walkers – **but no Club scene worth speaking of**. They admire our Club scene, which of course is only kept going by the introduction of a different set of Laws to govern it (i.e. 'B' races). Word that GB has a different way of conducting it's domestic races has spread to those countries, many of whose officials admire what we've done to keep matters ticking over at grass roots level. And when you converse with foreign officials, it's amazing how many of them wish that there was just one clear and easily digested regulation to cover all walking races. i.e. 'Walking is steps so taken so that unbroken contact is made with the ground', i.e. the front foot must be on the ground before the rear foot leaves it! Everybody understands that, spectators, athletes and even novices thinking of trying out walking (who really just get frightened off by this technical jargon about the straightened knee). Besides those odd 'Groucho Marx' type race walkers soon get their numbers called as their speeding along brings about a break in contact.

ARE YOU A DEPRESSED WALKER?

A study, conducted by Essex University, has found that country walks can help reduce depression. It compared a 30 minutes stroll in a rural park with one taken in an indoor shopping centre. Fourteen of the 20 patients surveyed reported less depression after their country walk. Paul Farmer of MIND stated, "Eco-therapy's a credible treatment". So if you're feeling down, go training along country roads!



FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Due to a clerical error on Hon. Ed's part, the name of S. Bishop was unintentionally omitted from our list of subscribers towards a gift for Eileen Allen's decade with Essex Walker. Sorry – the matter's now rectified with thanks.

EMAILS MIKE HINTON

Hello Dave,

I enjoyed the Amos Seddon article in the June edition. Such a shame that politics got in the way of his best year. Looking back at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, I presume Amos was going for the 50kms selection. I notice we had one entry in the 50kms, that being Ian Richards who finished 11th in 4hrs 22mins 57secs. So, but for Maggie Thatcher his 4hr 10mins performance would surely have got him there. No mention was made of Amos's Commonwealth Games performance in the 1978 Edmonton Games, where he came 6th in the 30kms in a very credible 2hrs 29mins 57secs.

All the Best,
Regards, MIKE

WHERE TO SIR?

At very long last the famous ROBERT KORZENIOSKI put in a Leamington appearance, and was wonderfully received. Essex man DAVE KATES twice drove him to wherever he wanted to go!

THE WRIGHT STUFF

A nagging foot injury has prevented the name of BILL WRIGHT from appearing in result sheets of late. But the long serving Honorary RWA Treasurer, former Welsh International and one time star member of Southend's team-of-all-talents intends racing a Midland League race in order to actively celebrate 50 years since he first stood on a race walking start line. We look forward to reporting the outcome of his efforts. We salute Bill Wright – truly a great supporter of UK race walking!

VIEWS OF TOM POLLAK

Quoted respected sports journalist and broadcaster TOM POLLACK reference not selecting a full GB team at Leamington, "It was crazy not to fill all the places. In fact it was daft, as one of the advantages of staging a meeting in your own country is that you put out a full team". Too right Tom, as a full squad would have pulled in more home-based supporters. Talk among rank-and-file walkers is over 90% against the decision to field a short team (described by Tom as both crazy and daft).

GREAT PUBLICITY (SIC)

Many people have questioned the commitment of UK Athletics towards the big Leamington meeting? But you can't fault their own magazine, which contained a full page advert for the European Cup of Race Walking. But...it arrived on recipients doormats on Saturday 26th May – a whole week after the event! And...it encouraged folk to turn up and support our British walkers including SCOTT DAVIES (their erroneous spelling). Hang on! Scott Davis wasn't even selected. Who writes this tosh?

ATHLETICS MEEKLY

This used to be called 'The Bible' when it came out as a small booklet. In the edition of May 31st, an eagle-eyed reader noted an article containing these words, "Glasgow hosts Britain's first major event of 2007". Peter immediately wrote in and pointed out that Britain's first major event of 2007 was at Leamington Spa on May 20th. Too right!

GREAT WEBSITE

Get the results first – and much, much else on
www.racewalkuk.com

"DINNER DINNER DINNER DINNER"

That's how Batman's mother calls him in for his meal! Well the RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION are calling you into dinner. The RWA is 100 years old this year, and a Centenary Dinner is to take place at the Royal Air Force Club in Piccadilly (nearest station is Hyde Park Corner on the Piccadilly Underground Line). It was to have been Saturday 20th October, but owing to circumstances beyond the Organiser's control, it has been brought forward to Saturday 13th October. There will be a 5 Miles Enfield League race in the afternoon, in which you can work up an appetite while celebrating our Centenary by being active. PETER MARLOW will be taking the bookings, which will be limited to around 70 or so. So get in early. Prices and booking details to be issued when finalised.

TOM'S TIPS

Much travelled TOM POLLAK advises that there's free parking in the streets south of Gospel Oak Station (for Parliament Fields Track) and south of Battersea Park (for those racing in the Park and on the track).

BARKING & DAGENHAM 5 MILES

DAVE SHARPE walked in June's 'BAD 5 MILES', a 2 circuits event organised by Dagenham 88 Joggers. He clocked 47 minutes on poor surface and 'showed the flag' for walking at a well-attended running race. Dave has a number of interests on the go at present, one of which is the coaching of ever-improving STEPHEN CRANE.

YOU CAN NEVER FIND A POLICEMAN

Late May saw the annual Essex Police hold their Athletics Sports Day at Colchester Garrison Track. It's open to all Essex Police, civilian staff and retired personnel. Despite so many folk eligible not one recognised walker faced the starter. What would the late and great John Hedgethorpe think? RUSS WELSH won in 20.07 with Ilford AC runner JOHN MacKENZIE changing codes to place 2nd in 20.52. John is Ilford's President Elect and he was also 2nd veteran in the 1,500 metres run and 1st super-vet in the 5,000 metres. 3rd was A.N.OTHER and 4th was retired Police officer AL BARLEY. But where were recognised walkers? Let's hope they can appear next year to show our event in good light.

MR. STARTER

Sad to report that long-serving Ilford A.C. starter DAVE SEARLE has had a heart attack and has been admitted to The Queen's Hospital (it replaced Oldchurch) in Romford. The Upminster-based official has had a pacemaker fitted and is now resting. JOHN HEDGETHORPE once stated that he possessed the loudest gun in Essex and likened it to a howitzer. We all wish Dave well.

CALLING PAUL DYBLE

Paul designed the official emblem for the 1977 Lugano Cup Final at Milton Keynes. This popular former Woodford Green AC walker is being sought after by fellow former WGAC member VIC COLLINS, the 1979 Essex 50K Champion. If anybody sees Paul could they please ask him to get in contact with Vic at: 130 Rothbury Avenue, RAINHAM, Essex. RM13 9HZ. 01708 – 508916. Vic is now a leading member of Havering 90 Joggers, the same Club which also boasts fellow Rainham resident JOHN PERKINS among their activists.

MORE SUCCESS FOR MARTIN

Chafford Hundred resident MARTIN FISHER made the long journey to Bradford for their long established Open 50K on late Spring Bank Holiday Monday. A large and testing loop awaited entrants, 10 of whom finished (last home in 6.43.08). STEVE ARNOLD won in 5.25.59, JOHN CONSTANDINOU came 2nd in 5.31.44 with our Essex man completing the frame completing the frame in 5.36.21. As an event 50K is at a low ebb. BOB DOBSON used to beat 5 hours with regularity and still failed to bread the tape (he came 2nd on 5 occasions). *Get training for the 2008 event Bob!*

"I HAVE A CUNNING PLAN"

Baldrick had several, so does National Walking Coach ANDI DRAKE, as explained on Sky Sports television. He wants runners and tri-athletes as potential top race walkers. The incentive makes sense as there are less athletes involved in walking (indeed we can't field full international teams in Major Games and even in our own country – Ed). In short, Andi can offer top class athletes a quicker route to the top, as there's less competitors also seeking representative honours. We look forward to welcoming such converts into our midst.

NOT OFF ON THE BEST FOOT

The 2006 WWW series collapsed after 1 race, as the Ashtons track needed replacing. But you certainly didn't show great enthusiasm to try out the new track when the 2007 WWW Series opened for business on June 6th did you? Where were you all? 1 youngster, 7 not so young and no women at all! Total = 8. It could have been 7, but injured PETER CASSIDY (bad back) got changed just to try and pad out the field. He then padded out his 3,000 metres – that's dedication. STEVE UTTLEY won after a close tussle with STEPHEN CRANE, with LAURENCE DORDOY completing the frame after overcoming PETER HANNEL's trademark fast start. The initiative award goes to Loughton's PHIL PRASHNER. With the 3,000 metres starting on one side of the track, and finishing on the other – he carried his tracksuit around his neck and discarded after the opening ½ lap, so as he wouldn't need to return to the start line to collect it. Full result in AW/Record/www.racewalkuk.com These races are put on for you, so please support your officials who give up their time to do so. Next race is on Wednesday 18th July, Ashtons Track, at 6.40 pm. Let's ring-fence that date now and go for a full turnout!

WRITES BILL SUTHERLAND BEM

Hi Dave,

There is simply no way we can WALK and do the times done today. I am so glad that I walked in the days when we saw TRUE WALKING, which produced TRUE CHAMPIONS. I feel G.B. should withdraw from this farce! European Cup seemed to be superbly organised with low level interest. Well done Ian Richards. They needed you as NATIONAL PRESS OFFICER. With best wishes. Keep up the good work.
TARTAN BILL (Charlie Megnin's alias!)

JULY'S 100 MILES – LATE NEWS

Sadly injury will prevent STEVE ALLEN from lining-up. Colleague MICKY SUTTON will have a good man 'in his corner', as Post Office sexagenarian STEVE WYNN will be attending. Also...more helpers are urgently needed. Can you help? If so please call PAM FICKEN on 01223 207411.

LATE NEWS

NATIONAL 50K and DARTFORD HOUR ARE
ESSEX LEAGUE EVENTS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

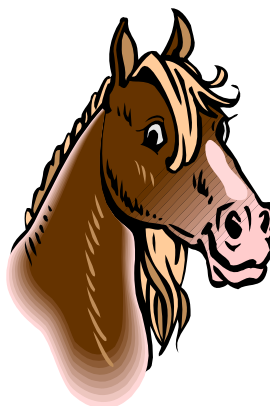
Typing/Layout and email distribution, Eileen Allen at TheEssexWalker@aol.com, please email here if you would like an email copy. Subscription copies: Tony Perkins, Courier: Steve Allen, Photocopying: Peter Cassidy (for Loughton AC, Havering/Mayesbrook A.C. Essex and Southern Officers), Ron Wallwork (for Enfield League regulars), Val Mountford (for Southend readers), Tony Perkins (for Direct Subscribers), Alan O'Rawe (for Canvey Island and locality), Jerry Everett (for Colchester Harriers), Steve Wynn, Steve Uttley, and Dave Sharpe. Hon. Ed Dave Ainsworth, 18 Angmering House, Barnstaple Road, Romford, Essex. RM3 7SX, 01708 – 377382, dave_ainsworth@yahoo.co.uk

A FEAST OF FINE WALKING

With fields in single figures at our County 3,000 metres, Blackheath and elsewhere – OVER 80 faced the starter at Moulton for the annual 5 Miles on a typical summer afternoon. Every year since its 2002 beginning Moulton has been the South's top attraction, pulling-in punters from all over the UK. The event offers a near traffic-free course, an opportunity to walk along country roads, a wonderful social scene, excellent organisation and marshalling, plenty of prizes for all ages...and so on...and so on! *And all in idyllic surroundings.*

Thanks are due, in abundance, to RON & JOAN WALLWORK, IAN & LINDA SPINKS, IAM GARMSTON and an enthusiastic team of helpers and supporters. As before we won't 'steal the thunder' of ENFIELD WALKER EXTRA by publishing detailed results as we'd only be duplicating their efforts. After all it's an Enfield League race offering double points! But we must praise DOMINIC KING for winning 'by a distance' (to use the parlance of the turf) in course record time. Moulton regular STEVE UTTLEY (5th) was the first Essex entrant home as Ilford went 'nap' earning 1st and 3rd team awards.

Foot racing gave way to horse racing later on as RON WALLWORK used his turf contacts to get us walkers into the busy yard of CHRIS WALL. Personally showing us around was one of Ron's friends – Head Lad RAY SWALLOW, whom he'd known since first arriving on the Newmarket scene. Ray showed us what goes on, the care taken in the welfare of such valuable horses, their feeding, training and many other aspects. He introduced us to many of the 61 racehorses, 3 of which he emphatically stated 'WILL WIN' on their next outing. Notes were taken. ALL 3 WON. Expensive (6/4), Night Cru (13/2) and Royal Rock (5/4) obliged and many walkers were 'quids-in'. Hon. Ed. last bet on a horse in 1991, but he laid out £20 on each of the first 2 mentioned and a £20 double. Outlay = £60. Winnings = £423.57p. For good measure another £20 winning bet was wagered on the 3rd horse. Horse racing has plenty of bluffers (just tune-in to 'The Morning Line' where well-paid presenters give out duff tips with regularity). But in RAY SWALLOW the business truly has a man who knows what he's talking about. On behalf of all walkers who took the tour – **OUR PROFOUND THANKS.**



Please ask our staff if you need any help

WINDSOR 7.35 PM

NIGHT CRU
£20 WIN

PONTEFRACT 8.15 PM

EXPENSIVE
£20 WIN

£10 EW DOUBLE NIGHT CRU
AND EXPENSIVE

total stakes **£ 60 : 00 P**

all bets are subject to Ladbrokes rules

10% BONUS TO VIRTUAL WINNERS AT LUCKSIN DOWNS
Available during HAPPY HOUR : 1 - 2pm & 5-6pm today
See screens or ask staff for more details.

0758 0001161800 60.00 H
16:09:38 11/06/07
S0758 Cashier: Mark