

ESSEX WALKER



ESSEX 50 KILOMETRES CHAMPIONSHIPS (+LEAGUE) – EARL'S COLNE 4TH SEPT.

1	S. Davis	Ilford	4.47.31	1st Essex
2	P. King	Lou	5.38.28	
3	R. Dobson	Ilf	5.47.30	2nd Essex
4	J. Hall	Lou	5.54.51	
5	K. Howard (L)	Sth	6.10.00	1st Essex Lady
6	J. Borgars	Lou	6.00.57	(classified 2 laps short).

What can you say about Kim? If the good lady had decided to put her feet up for a couple of months after completing 100 Miles at Kings Lynn, it would have been a deserved rest. But no... Kim is back tackling the long ones while the 100 Miles is 'still in her legs'. Well done to all.

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ATHLETIC CLUBS

Representatives of a number of concerned clubs recently met to initiate plans to restore democracy to our sport and to establish a unified voice for grass roots athletics. There is rising opposition to The Foster Review, which will see the A.A.A. of England being closed down. Essex Walker has previously fully drawn your attention to the proposals. A Steering Committee has been established and it contains a number of 'big hitters' such as National League Belgrave Harriers and more locally Woodford Green with Essex Ladies A.C. Further details of this opposition group can be obtained by writing to: The Association of British Athletic Clubs, P.O. Box 487, STAINES, TW19 5WW.

Incidentally 'The Foster Review' has nothing to do with prominent former Loughton 2nd claimer CHRIS FOSTER. He is the originator of 'The Foster Theory', which states that your position after 1 mile will usually also be your position at the finishing line.



"WHEN I'M 64"

So sung The Beatles and it could apply to ever-active ALAN O'RAWE, who achieved that milestone a day after August's Enfield League race. DAVE KATES, who cut it fine at that race owing to a typical M25 jam, once referred to 'the total package' aspect of the Enfield League. And he's right, for the start line Master of Ceremonies RON WALLWORK boomed out this celebration and MARTIN OLIVER ('Mr Enfield') arranged for a birthday presentation post-race.

Although not an Essex man, one must admire veteran ARTHUR THOMSON for being 3rd man home in another plus 40 field. The race had a most experienced judges panel, including IAAF OLYMPIC Games adjudicator and 1972 Olympian PETER MARLOW and also former Southern Area judges supremo KEITH READ – among notable others. Essex official MIKE CROFT was selected as Chief Judge which was indeed a plum appointment. Peter is also the Race Walking Association President, and he made the awards. The judges only bagged one – Ilford's ALAN BLEWITT, who lived up to his name before 3 miles was up. Full result in Record, AW, and Enfield Walker.

BEST OF ORDER GAME ON

After much speculation, from last October to recent weeks, our most popular Essex League race on the card is now very much 'on'. It's the Essex Police 5 Miles Championship around the 2 circuits of the Earl's Colne Airfield perimeter track, changing at the upmarket Golf Club with a post race social chit-chat in the Function Room. It's on Sunday 30th October at 11.30 a.m. (note the slightly later start time than usual). Let's go for a **full turnout** to give our support to STEVE KING for continuing with the event – which at one stage looked doomed. See you all there! **Clocks back 1 hour on Saturday night!**

HORSES FOR COURSES

Ilford's STEVE UTTLEY has always liked the Ashtons track in Woodford Bridge, and many a good performance has been recorded there. He maintained his sequence of fine form with a second successive impressive victory on the track during August (having won the LICC earlier in the month). On Wednesday evening Woodford Green with Essex Ladies AC held the penultimate in this season's series of evening graded athletics meetings – with the 'curtain-raiser' being the 3,000 metres' walking race. Steve lead from start-to-finish, clocking 15 minutes and 24 seconds. However he was slightly relieved when his main rival, fast-starting PETER HANNEL of Surrey Walking Club, just missed the start and had to watch and fume among the spectators. Ilford's hard working Walking Section Secretary DAVE SHARPE was a distant second in 16.27, while near-neighbour PETER CASSIDY of Loughton AC completed the frame in 16.51 despite suffering from tennis elbow, which prevented him from swinging his right arm with full vigour. But.. not a good turnout, after some promising earlier season signs at the WWW. Perhaps many were away on the August hols? And what about visiting Kent walking JOHN GODBEER? He finished the walk and then contested the 200 metres sprint! Again we were well looked after by the ladies: PAM FICKEN opened the boot of her car in July, while MARGARET LIVERMORE performed the same much appreciated catering service in August – each time promoting a 'mini-social' in the car park. Thanks to both.

THAT RINGS A BELL

Much respected elder statesman of race waking, CECIL GITTINGS, has complained about the absence of a lap board and bell at Battersea Park track – and also that persons are training on the said track while races are in progress. It was also raised that water and sponges are needed for 10,000 metres events at Millennium Stadium (the re-branded name for this track).



EFFORTS OF AN ESSEX MAN

Rainham-based LLOYD SCOTT, the only one of the 6 Captain Barclay 2003 1,000 Mile Walk challengers to retire (on personal grounds) is best known for traipsing around the London Marathon Course in a diver's suit. Now he's signed up for another charity stunt, running the Great North Run on stilts.

A WIN DOUBLE FOR ESSEX BOYS – ON SUPER SUNDAY

The Commonwealth Games Trial, held in oppressive conditions at the Earl's Colne Airfield, saw DANIEL KING of Colchester Harriers break the tape in 92.55 and, it must be said, that when he hit the front he showed more determination than D'Artagnan on a staircase, as he never looked like being headed. He earned his Commonwealth Games nomination. Sadly brother Dominic, who has already tasted life on the Commonwealth games circuit, was one of two to fall foul of the Judges' panel (Andi Drake being the other). However, both brothers, along with 2nd placed Andy Penn (93.55) already have the necessary qualifying times for consideration.

Race Walking Association President PETER MARLOW commented on how large the crowd was – certainly the largest for a walking meeting for ages. Many Essex residents swelled the numbers – even at an outpost like Earl's Colne! It was a plum appointment for Chief Judge JACK THOMAS, the former Woodford Green International walker – even if he only knew of it less than an hour before the 'off', so giving him reduced time to plan the execution of his task.

Two matches, for men and women over 10K between Finland and England saw the visitors secure 2 narrow wins. TONY PERKINS and DAVE KATES were prominent in making them welcome, by meeting them at the airport and showing them the sights of Essex. These included our oldest town – Colchester, and also Walton-on-the-Naze. A welcome also to our great friend HANS van der KNAPP who came from the Netherlands just to help out and officiate by filling a position on the Judges panel.

Ilford's Walking Section went nap on Sunday with wins in 3 different venues.

Pride of Place went to SCOTT DAVIS, the former Junior International who has just commenced his 3rd spell with the Cricklefields-based club.

The NATIONAL 50 KILOMETRES CHAMPIONSHIP proved to be 'just the ticket' for the 29 year old London Underground booking office clerk who strode to victory over the epic 31 miles and 121 yards distance (to the non-metrically aligned) on an oppressively hot day at the Earl's Colne Airfield in North Essex. The gold Medal is his 2nd Senior National award, having stuck bronze in the National 20 Miles Championship while in his 1st spell at Ilford. Scott took it steady early on and advanced to pole position when Welsh Champion Mark Williams and former International Chris Cheesman yielded to the conditions. From then on, Scott was in sole charge as he erased the memory of his only previous outing over the 50K distance, which had resulted in him yielding to the conditions many years ago at Basildon. He broke the tape in 4 hours 47 minutes and 34 seconds – and it had to be said, looked as though he could have continued his pace for much longer. The meeting's Chief Judge, former Woodford Green International walker of the 70s JACK THOMAS, personally congratulated Scott on his performance. An hour later came former event winner BOB DOBSON who clocked 5.47.30, which enabled Ilford to take runner-up position behind Leicester Walking Club in team stakes. The Essex County AAA held their own 50K Championship in conjunction, which saw Scott collect their title to boot.

Meanwhile, over in Guernsey at the annual classic CHURCH-to-CHURCH 19½ MILES' WALK – also in hot conditions – Ilford's distance squad won the Fletcher Sports Trophy as the winning team for the 3rd successive year, being led home by current International KEVIN MARSHALL in 2nd position, clocking 3 hours 22 minutes and 24 seconds. It was a case of 'as you were' for Marshall had to settle for 2nd spot behind the 2004 victor – Plymouth's ED SHILLABEER by a similar margin as 12 months' earlier. The team prize was secured due to fine displays by MICK BARNBROOK 7th in 3.48.01 and LAURENCE DORDOY, 9th in 3.49.27. The odd distance is because the route is devised to visit every Parish Church on this Channel Island!

Meanwhile closer to home, Ilford's STEVE ALLEN won the Southern Counties Veterans' 3,000 Metres Walking Championship at Battersea Park's Millennium Stadium in 15 minutes and 36.6 seconds, with club-mate DAVE SHARPE 3rd in 16.44.3. Yes truly a super Sunday for the boys from Cricklefields.

With a Club like Ilford having to spread its limited resources over 3 different venues on the same Sunday, one wonders if the Fixtures Seminar earlier in the year at Leamington Spa was time well spent?

EARL'S COLNE – THANKS

We thank everybody for making the big meet such and enjoyable day of sport. Many of Essex Walker's readers were there – racing, feeding, sponging, hosting and, of course, coming to support in their droves. It's not often you get this standard of meeting on your doorstep. The officials coped wonderfully with the prospect of having more than one race going on simultaneously. There was also a sumptuous buffet for all attenders, at the post race prize-giving. Essex Walker has concentrated on the Essex successes and major walking points...there really is no point in duplicating the complete report that will be seen in your copies of Race Walking Record. **Thanks again to everybody for all that they did.** And a final word for hard-working R.W.A. Honorary Championships Secretary JOHN HOWLEY. He's been our No.1 Promoter for a number of years, and it is rumoured that he might be stepping down at the next R.W.A. Annual General Meeting. We hope he'll stay on, for as could be seen on September 4th and on many other occasions, his efforts have been not only excellent... **but truly outstanding!**

TRAVELLING MAN

So keen to help out at Earl's Colne was JON MAY, that despite the vagaries of Sunday public transport, he WALKED the final 4 miles of his journey to this remote outpost of British athletics. Hon. Ed. Drove him back to Chelmsford afterwards; and passed the 'T' junction (it used to be a crossroads) near the Springfield Police H.Q. where so many races used to start in the 1970s – including the Chelmsford-to-Southend event. Despite the fact that Chelmsford then lacked a by-pass, the field used to race down to the Army & Navy roundabout and then off towards Southend. Wonderful memories, but nowadays, even the Army & Navy public house is boarded up!

FULL HOUSE

A number of ladies with Essex connections have become Centurions – all having had their successes chronicled in issues of Essex Walker at the relevant times. Since ANN SAYER (Essex Ladies) set the ball rolling, we've had PAULINE WILSON (Loughton AC), PAM FICKEN (SWC/Loughton AC), SUE CLEMENTS (London Vidarians/Enfield & Harringey AC/Essex born), CATH DUHIG (Loughton) and now KIM MARSHALL (Southend-on-Sea AC). And what links this 'super six'? – well every lady walker with an Essex connection who has ever attempted to walk 100 Miles in Under 24 hours has completed the challenge! Ann, Pauline, Sue and Kim did the business at the first time of asking! 6-out-of-6.... now there's an encouraging thought for the other readers seeking to step up to the plate!



WRITES BOB DOBSON

Dear Dave,

Just a quick note about recent eBay winning bids on athletic/walking related items.

Don Cox/myself/and Brian Ficken found ourselves all competing for the same item when a M.A.S.C. Brighton Walk badge was initially offered at £1-95. Don bid £2-51 – I went to £5 – Don came back at £5.51 but Brian won with £6-01. None of us have yet established what the initials M.A.S.C. stand for – could it be some sports club – so if anyone knows please inform Brian Ficken – the London to Brighton man!

I kept my eye on a 1908 Olympic Timekeepers badge but I was not in contention as it reached dizzy heights and eventually sold at £1,755!!

I lost out on E. Lerner's Text Book on Race walking – originally polled at 1/- sold @ £11.50; and another by Hugh W. Innes 'Walking – a primer of the sport', also originally 1/- sold @ £11.99 both of these books were sold to the same USA bidder.

An RWA 7 Miles in the hour badge only attracted one bid and sold at 99p – cheaper than an entry fee and a lot less effort!

The 1922 RWA 9 ct. gold winners medal for the National 20 Miles won by W. HEHIR sold for £27.

I recently survived 8 days working for Centresport Travel in Lithuania for the European Junior T & F Championships in Kaunas and on Wednesday 10th Aug fly out to Helsinki for the latter half of the World Champs and to turn the lights off and lock up when all the Centresport clients have left. I am due back on 19th Aug. I'm hoping I'll get 'time off' to watch the 50kms in Helsinki – that was part of the 'deal'. I've been buzzing around the UK too. Just back from Lithuania I won the M60 30kms at Coventry on 30th July then headed to Kings Lynn to record at the 100 miles.

This weekend Oliver and I officiated at the 5km track walks in Manchester – i.e. U23 Intl. GB v France v Spain v Czech Rep. The men's race was won by Benjamin Sanchez of Spain in 19.53.14. Dom King was 2nd in 20.14.76, just holding off his brother Dan 20.14.86.

Hope you are going along nicely.
Best Wishes, Bob

EXCURSION

Having covered the proposed trip by Redcar Walkers to Earl's Colne, featuring their desire to also seek out some entertainment and a good non-league football match, we now have to report that the proposed venture never actually took place. The 50K was only a week after the North of England 20K in Manchester – so they put in their best effort there, as it was only a couple of hours away (instead of all-day) and they would not have to cough-up £3 for a pint of Charringtons when they could get Wards or Hydes for half that price in Manchester. The roving Redcar squad hope to support the National 50K in 2006 – if the fixtures can be more spread out! They'll always be made welcome in Essex on future occasions.

WRITES TONY CHALLIS

Dave,



After reading in Race Walking's premier publication (Essex Walker) that walking in Cyprus had a Tony at the helm, I tried to think of who it could be. Not me as my stay on that jewel in the Med was 1956-59.

Did hope to get to KL for the 100. My sister-in-law emigrated to Australia (with son) in 1954. Since then the son has said that one day he wanted to visit England. So, after 50+ years when did he come? On the weekend of 30/31st July. Still that means it will be 2055 before he comes again!

SEXTET.

There was a sextet of Essex-connected athletes at the IAAF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS in Helsinki. IAAF official PETER MARLOW, former International BOB DOBSON (who raced in the inaugural IAAF World 50K Walk at Malmo in Sweden, coming 13th in 4.10.20 to record a British road best, so erasing Paul Nihill's 1964 Olympic Games mark from the record book) and former Essex athletics protagonist Colonel GLEN GRANT (who used to be Officer in Charge of the Military Training Correction Unit at Colchester, and who has been seldom seen since following the drum to pastures new). He's currently serving in Riga, but will be moving to Estonia by the end of the year. Good news for us, is that he intends to purchase property around Ipswich when his Army career ends. Also there were regular big-event regulars PETER RYAN, DENIS and HEIKE SHEPPARD.

CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate CRAIG DAVIS, who was married on Saturday August 20th. Craig is the brother of former Essex 10 Miles Champion SCOTT. Craig



used to walk at races in the 90s when he came along with Scott. He is now an Essex Police Officer and serving on Canvey Island. We wish Craig, and his lucky lady, all success and happiness in their life ahead.

STILL GOING FOR GOLD

Congratulations to sprightly evergreen Loughton AC veteran DOUG FOTHERINGHAM on winning the M75 gold medal in the big Championship meeting at San Sebastian, clocking 2.17.37 over 20 Kilometres.

HUSH HUSH – WALKERS ARE ON THE TELLY



On Friday September 2nd DANIEL and DOMINIC KING appeared on Blue Peter to promote race walking. Good for them and for their initiative in seeking an opening. Was it constructive? ... well we don't know because nobody knew they were going to appear. Had the news been given out most readers would have either made a point of tuning in, setting their videos or asking somebody else to video it for them. Nobody at Earl's Colne knew they had been on. Colchester Harriers (or even Joggers as they once were) used to submit news snippets to Essex Walker – and as readers will know, these were published. It's all very secretive at the Harriers nowadays – except of course for a recent 'right-ding-dong-do' over the Race Walking record's website, where various members let forth their views in a most public manner and where all could see the muck hitting the fan! Essex Walker can now instantly inform almost 150 of it's email recipients of any special happening, i.e. the IOM Parish Walk on Television, a walker's funeral service, a special event etc. But we have to be told (before the event that is). Let's be 100% correct about this – all our readers would have liked to have turned in and watched them receive their Blue Peter badges (they were wearing them at Earl's Colne). With the King twins showing such great promise, we're sure that more media openings will come their way.

WATER WATER EVERYWHERE

An award has been made to hard-working CHELSEA O'RAWE-HOBBS for her long period of duty at the big Earl's Colne meet. Said Southern Area President PAM FICKEN, "On a really hot day, we issued over 200 litres of water and Chelsea helped us to do that by continuously working hard for 6 and-a-half hours". Thanks to those involved are contained elsewhere in this Newsletter, but a double vote of thanks to young Chelsea.

WRITES MIKE HINTON

Dear Dave,

It was good to see Peter Marlow at the last Enfield League race, someone I hadn't seen for some thirty years.

Peter and I go back a long way, to 1957 in fact when we were both sixteen year olds at Southend A.C. I joined the club as a sprinter, but got talked into having a go at walking by the late Johnny Atkinson. Peter at that time was a top youth walker at one mile on the track and Johnny was trying to get a youth & junior squad together.

When I first saw Peter in action I couldn't believe someone could walk that fast, a little over seven minutes for the mile, and yet look so relaxed and effortless. You could see then at sixteen, that Peter would go right to the top, although it would take him another fifteen years to make the Olympic Team in 1972.

I don't think Peter ever reached his full potential, due I believe to injury problems, his shins I think that reduced the mileage he was able to do in training.

Anyway, seeing Peter again, for a few moments I was transported back in time to my youth down at the track at Southchurch Park.

Regards, Mike.

ON THE BEACH



MICK BARNBROOK spent a couple of summer months at his apartment in Algieras – within sight of the Rock of Gibraltar. At a beach 3 miles out of town, Mick and Sharon struck up a conversation with a Romanian lady who spoke good English. Mick mentioned that he'd retired as a policeman in London. "You look too young to be retired" uttered his new found conversationalist. She added, "My husband's father was also a policeman in London. He's CHARLIE FOGG". "What a small world" mused MICK.

THE PERKINS TRIO

Recently we've had readers contributions from all three. Squadron Leader MIKE PERKINS was a stalwart member of the RAF representative team from the 60s-to-the-80s. He walked for Trowbridge AC and became a Centurion at the 1972 Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles. He's been to some of our events – notably the John Hedgethorpe Memorial Walk. He now lives at Ufford near Woodbridge, where he is now a most active ocean going yachtsman and is also a pillar of his local church. Before Hon. Ed's 1974 Centurion attempt over the same course, a most detailed and helpful letter containing both encouragement and sound advice was received from Mike – which was duly acted upon! TONY PERKINS, who lives at Cressing, was a most capable Walking Section Secretary and Organiser and was behind Ilford's National Championship winning teams in the 70s. A talented walker himself (our nostalgia column recently recounted his best London-to-Brighton race) Tony covered that distance 20 times, with many attempts raising money for charity on route. He has taken an early retirement from the Stock Exchange, where he was much respected and among those asked to present awards at the Centenary Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton classic. He also became a Centurion, at the 1979 Ewhurst 100 Miles, which was the best supported 100 Miles race ever. Still very much on the scene, he hosts visiting International walkers and organises the highly successful 'Perkins Tours' to overseas race walking events. Tony also runs the Essex Walker subscription service – and has twice twisted Hon. Ed's arm to take over as the publication's Editor! And then there's 'character' JOHN PERKINS from Rainham, who plays many sports and has recently quit the walking scene again. He has belonged to many clubs. So when it comes to the name of PERKINS, please don't get them mixed-up.

WALK THIS WAY

Race Walking may not be the most aesthetic of disciplines, but it is one of the most technically demanding.

As a spectator sport, race walking is among the most intriguing events. The slightly comical sight of a group of athletes walking down the road is offset by the obvious determination and pain etched on their faces. So why the waddle? It's down to the two main rules that govern race walking: firstly, the walker must always maintain contact with the ground, secondly, the advancing leg must be straight from the moment it hits the ground until it gets to an upright position.

It sounds like a walk in the park, but in practice it's exceptionally difficult, especially as a moment of lost contact with the floor or a slightly bend knee can mean a time penalty. And it's a very long walk home if you haven't got a medal – as favourites Jefferson Perez (Ecuador) and Jane Saville (Australia) will be fully aware!

A step-by-step guide to the technique

Imagine a line stretching along the route. Normally, when walking, your feet would fall either side of the line. When you race-walk both feet land on the line.

Swivel your hips – correct use of the hips can increase your stride and give you speed. Rotating the hips acts as your body's motor, and up to six inches can be added to a walker's stride if they are supple enough.

When your foot hits the ground, land on your heel with your toes pointing up at a 45-degree angle, then roll your foot forward until the entire leg supports your body's weight. This will help you maintain a straight leg. This technique became vital in 1950 after English walkers Allen and Hardy were disqualified over the issue of contact with the ground.

IN THE RUMOUR

MILL

There might be a 100 Miles Walk in 2006, as Isle of Man walking fraternity are thinking of staging one. A plan had been mooted to switch to a bi-annual format for such events. So watch his space.

Timing how you use your arms is essential to how your hips move. Move your elbow not your shoulder, and swing your leading arm above your chest.

Look straight ahead, and keep your shoulders relaxed.

Eat plenty of fuel before you race – mile for mile, you burn more calories race walking than you do sprinting.

Always go to the smallest room before you start a race. There's no time for a 'rest stop' in this event!

This is extracted from the Toyota Guide to the IAAF World Athletics Championship (which they sponsored). It was spotted in a dealer's showroom by eagle-eyed BILL SUTHERLAND.

DAVE SHARPE – BENEFACTOR



There are many Clubs, on the mainland and as far away as the Channel Islands, which have benefited from Dave's generosity. Dave has dug into his own pocket to donate trophies to various promoting Clubs (including his own Club). Latest to receive such favours are the ever expanding Enfield League. He has given them 5 trophies. We salute DAVE SHARPE – true benefactor!

STILL IN THE RUNNING

As Editor, one hopes that readers will send in news items...but it's sometimes 'skating on thin ice' when one walker announces another walker's retirement. This happened some years ago with DON COX who was not amused and carried on walking with such effect that he regained his International status. He's a current International now, but we've now been advised that he's withdrawing from walking and is continuing his running (he's talented at that mode of progression also). We hope he'll continue walking as we need a good Colchester Harriers team supporting Essex events – they are former Essex League champions and, when JOHN HEDGETHORPE was cracking the whip, closed home both 'A' and 'B' teams in the Essex 50 Kilometres. Now that takes some doing!

EDITORIAL – THE 50 KILOMETRES FUTURE

While all praise is due to SCOTT DAVIS for his emphatic victory, the National 50 Kilometres Championship deserves further scrutiny. For years, respected statistician PETER MATTHEWS has charted the decline of this event and... just as interesting as his accurate figures are his yearly wise words of penned commentary. His words should be heeded! The National 50 Kilometres Championship was first staged in South Croydon on July 12th 1930, when it was won by a ten future Olympic 50K gold medallist TOMMY GREEN. Two other G.B. athletes were to gain the Olympic 50K gold medals (HAROLD WHITLOCK and DON THOMSON) and you could add one more if you were to include NORMAN READ, who was as well-known here as he was in New Zealand. **The 2005 National Championship saw a record winning margin of almost HALF-AN-HOUR!** The event is losing credibility as a contest. Thank goodness for SCOTT DAVIS, for had he not made his surprise appearance, then the 3 individual medals would have gone in 5.16, 5.29 and 5.38. Let's face it, many of Essex Walker's readers will have bettered 5.16 in National 50 K races, and most – even including Hon. Ed. – have bettered 5.38 in a National 50K. And.. you can't blame the weather, for the National 50K is always held during high summer and, as such, most Championship races have brought discomfort to those starting out. And most previous races will have certainly been more difficult than the 'billiard table' on the Earl's Colne perimeter track. Readers are complaining that Athletics Weekly has not been publishing many of our walk results of late, but in truth, do we really want this one blasted all over the place? This event is now lacking credibility, but with so few in contention it now offers real prospects for any walker seeking to step up their distance and 'give it some wellie'. **That's the challenge for those seeking to make a name for themselves. Let's get this event back as a respected one with British success guaranteed.**

BILL'S BEEF

BILL SUTHERLAND's been on BBC Radio Five Live, again, giving his views on law-and-order and putting the world right. Did you hear it – for this time he got given more time than most phone-in callers get?



GET WELL SOON

We wish leading light, and noted fast starter, ALAN ELLAM well as he is currently suffering from gout. This is very painful, as sufferers will confirm and – in truth – has little or nothing to do with aging old men downing too much port (as is the popular but misguided image).

FAREWELL

We send a big fond farewell to former International Walking Judge and RAF stalwart GEORGE TOWERS who has moved from Lowestoft (making room for Steve and Eileen Allen?) back to Ruskington near Sleaford. It was at Sleaford where he promoted National events – including a wonderful National 50 Kilometres Championship in the 1980s which saw 102 starters (far, far in excess of the handful who supported the 2005 National Championship). We wish George and his good lady well for the rest of what we hope will be a long and contented retirement. And... of course...we hope to see George at our events from time-to-time.

TOP ATHLETE'S VIEW

Welsh athlete JAMIE BAULCH, who is quitting after nearly 15 years, has slammed the state of British athletics, and admits that he was not surprised by the British team's awful performance at Helsinki. He states, "In Britain, the athletes are getting lottery money and they're spending it on a new car or something. If I was in control, I'd be giving the money to the coaches and making sure the coaches put the money into the right things". One notes that he issues such views just as he is leaving the sport!

ANY ROOM AT THE INN?

Just a reminder folks, that former Essex 50K Champion GEOFF HUNWICKS is seeking some diggings in the Essex area for his next U.K. visit. If you've got some spare space, please get in touch with Geoff at P.O. Box 3139, Serrakunda, The Gambia, West Africa. 00220-926258 or email geoffharth102@hotmail.com



GRAND PRIX WINNERS

The British Grand Prix meeting at Sheffield's Don Valley Stadium saw an appearance by KEN & MARGARET LIVERMORE who had won a pair of top-priced guest tickets in a competition. We hoped they enjoyed their V.I.P. trip. In the televised spectacular, just a week on from the IAAF World Championships at which she was unable to appear through injury, DAME KELLY HOLMES made an effort and this time showed-up for her start money. The opening race on television was the women's 400 metres. T.V. commentators really do tell us the obvious don't they? "It's a stadium record" boomed STEVE CRAM, who then felt the need to further explain, "That means it's the fastest time ever run in this stadium". Yawn!

The saddest sight on television was witnessing the EMSLEY CARR MILE, which most readers will remember as once being one of the highlights of any athletics season. Great names used to really race for the honour of winning this trophy. Well, in 2005, we did see the first U.K. victor for 11 years – but in a race many thought was 'bent'. Well it looked rigged as athletes faded in the home straight (unlike Helsinki) as a Briton appeared to make something of a late surge. Oh why can't these Grand Prix races reintroduce the ONE MILE WALK?

FAREWELL TO A GOOD OLD BOY

Not one with Essex connections, as far as we know, was Blackpool resident FRANK O'NEILL (aged 88) who was Centurion No. 136 – having qualified in the 1947 London-to-Brighton-and-Back. RON WALLWORK knew him better than most, and remembers that Frank used his house as the changing room for Lancashire Walking Club races from Swinton (his lounge being the changing room) using roads that could never be walked upon these days owing to traffic levels. This year was the first that anybody could remember him not being recording at the Lancashire long-distance classic (Once the Manchester-to-Blackpool, but nowadays the Blackpool 50 Miles). We say farewell to another worthy who has served the sport both long and well.

IAN GARMSTON – IN THE ROUND

The Newmarket Rotary Club are key players in staging the South's most popular walking race – the Moulton 5 Miles. Well Centurion IAN GARMSTON is now the Club President, so in 2006, it'll be he who crisply shakes the prize winners hands while donning a Chain of Office around his neck. Ian qualified as a Centurion at Hungarton in 1992 on the same day as near-neighbour RON WALLWORK who promotes the Moulton event with great enthusiasm. Ian is a pillar of Newmarket's business community and is well-known in Moulton Village life. **Congratulations!**

WORTH A VISIT

Veterans AC news, and entry forms for their events, can be found by visiting www.vetsac.org.uk



ESSEX LEAGUE EVENT

Sunday 18th December at 10.30 am. Ilford Open 10 kilometres ('B' race) at Chigwell Row.

FULL HOUSE

Havering Mayesbrook A.C. have over 600 members and have closed their book to new members. New applicants are now placed on a waiting list. Boom Time?

SO VERY NICE TO SEE YOU

Among visitors at the Havering Bank Holiday Town Show were DEREK & SHIRLEY ROBERY, the Corringham-based officials who were behind a most successful Havering A.C. walking squad of past days. Good to see you both looking so well.

IN THE WINDY CITY

Essex athletes STEVE ALLEN and DENNIS JONES are lining up in the famous Chicago Marathon during October, with ALEX ALLEN as their Team Manager. The hardy lads are also running for BENEDEN HOSPITAL, which is the official charity of the Mount Pleasant Sports & Social Club. So please readers, put your hands into your pockets and purses and – if you can – dig deep for a worthy cause. Make your contributions when you see the trio at the meetings, or send your cheques/postal orders to Steve Allen at 82, Bruces Wharf Road, GRAYS, Essex. RM17 6PF. Make payable to Beneden Hospital please.

300TH BLACKHEATH 9 KILOMETRES RACE

This was a great occasion – and a full report will appear in next month's edition, which should be on the news stands just prior to the Essex Police 5 Miles event.

VICTORIA PARK

Recently Edbanger suggested a great walking course past well-known London landmarks, should we get the 2012 Olympic Games. Well they're now ours to stage, and according to Southern Area Minutes, VICTORIA PARK is where walking races will be staged. What – another games with no start and finish in the Stadium? Still, we won't mind where they walk as long as we can get some Brits among the medals will we?

WRITES FORMER INTERNATIONAL MIKE HOLMES (EX-SOUTHEND)

Dear Dave,

Many thanks for the copy of 'Essex Walker', which brought back many happy memories for me with the names from the past.

The year that was mentioned, I remember well as Geoff Hunwicks stayed over for a couple of nights with us before the race and after.

I'm still in touch with Bob Dobson and Roger Mills, both being good friends.

Best Wishes for the future, Mike Holmes.

PLENTY OF PRACTICE

Loughton's PHIL PRASHNER is a regular at our walking races, and he's a retired General Practitioner. His place of consultation was at Loughton Health Centre, in The Drive, Loughton. We wish him well in his retirement and are most pleased that he now supports our events with enthusiasm.

DAVE SHARPE'S VIEWPOINT

Dear Birdseye,

So we are near to the end of the year and the fixture list is still crazy. The number of events that clash is beyond words. Why cannot people get their acts together?

The numbers are up in the 'B' races. You only have to look at the Enfield League results, but the only problem is that most of the walkers are veterans. There is not a lot of new blood, so Count Dracula won't have much business there. The knock-on effect is when people stop walking due to old age or when they are worn-out, there are not many people to replace them. It shows when we cannot find walkers that are good enough to represent Great Britain at major games. You only have to look at other places, like Ireland, to see the class walkers that they have got with a much better system.

Yours in Sport,

D.W. Sharpe, (Dagenham Dave – Centurion 578)

Ps. I recently found a programme and result of the 1976 Leicester 20 Miles, where there were 450 finishers. 200 of them were novices. If only we had races like that now.

ANOTHER ATHLETE IN THE HOUSE

Harlow's M.P. BILL RAMMELL finished 374th out of 418 starters in the 16th Harlow 10 Miles Run during August, clocking a respectable 1 hour and 38 minutes. Do any of our readers know him, so he can be persuaded to attempt pedestrianism?

OFF THE ROAD AND ON THE BOARDS

Kings Lynn 100 Miles finisher CATH DUHIG is starring in 'STEEL MAGNOLIAS' as staged by an all-female cast of the Downham Amateur Dramatic Society. Come to think of it, we haven't heard that much lately about CHRIS FOSTER's performances on the stage. Perhaps he's 'resting'?

TOP APPOINTMENT

JONATHAN EDWARDS (star of the triple jump – or its more correct title of hop, step and jump as it used to be known) has been named as the athlete member on the board of the London Organising Committee for the 2012 Olympic Games. That's a relief, for although we're not quite sure what he thinks about race walking – at least they've not appointed STEVE CRAM who thinks that it should be ditched from the Olympics!

PARK 'N' STRIDE

DAVE SHARPE increased our profile by **walking** the Bank Holiday Monday 5K in Barking Park, clocking 29.35 for 80th position (out of 150) so beating many of the fun runners.

ENFIELD – BACK END OF THE CARD

All races commence at 2.30 pm, from The Queen Elizabeth Stadium in Donkey Lane, Enfield. Enter on the day. Full support please.

League Race 10 -	Sat 8th October	-	5 Kilometres (incl. SCVAC & VAC Champs)
League Race 11 -	Sat 12th Nov	-	7 Miles (Open race with <u>double</u> points)
League Race 12 -	Sat 10th Dec	-	5 Miles (+ Series Presentation by dignitary).

ON THE BALL

That's popular MICK BARNBROOK; whose name was used in 2 issues of the TIGER magazine, as part of the ROY OF THE ROVERS series – devised by the late Derek Birnage. Mick knew the illustrator, who slipped his name into 8th and 15th February 1983 issues.



Although the career of Roy Race (Roy of the Rovers) has nothing to do with athletics (bar a tenuous link with MICK BARNBROOK) IT MAKES INTERESTING READING. His 39 years span commenced in 1954 and ended in 1993 when he lost his left foot in a helicopter accident. During this period, he notched up 9 league titles, 9 FA Cups, 3 League Cups, 4 European Cups, 3 European Cup Winners Cups, a UEFA Cup and 2 World Club Championships. He was exemplary, having never been sent off or even having his name taken!

GLOBE TROTTER

Among many letters of apology sent by those who couldn't make the 300th Blackheath race was one from ALEX ROSS. He had good reason to be absent – he was touring Canada at the time!

SUPPLY LINES

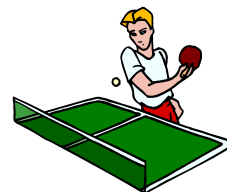
Perkins Travel, the travel agent who specialises in getting to venues in the twilight zone, was employed to transport the Finnish athletes to the Earls Colne on the race day. Due to the very hot weather, the feed stations were running low on water so Mrs Perkins Travel was deployed from her home to clear out the local Braintree Tesco with 200 litres of water.

'PHOENIX FROM THE FLAMES'

This was a regular feature on BBC2's 'Fantasy Football', and it could apply to the now defunct METROPOLITAN WALKING CLUB, who were a high-rated outfit for decades. This year, 6 of their one-time members have been on the active list – Messrs. ALAN FLAVELL, BARRY INGARFIELD, SHAUN LIGHTMAN, JON MAY, DON THOMPSON MBE and ARTHUR THOMSON. Any more out there?

IT'S ALL BALLS

Man of many talents, ex-race walker JOHN PERKINS, has recently been doing some juggling at Cranham Evening Institute. He's also changed his table tennis club again – switching his ping-pong career from Maylands to Cranham.



BOOT AND SHOE MONEY

Readers will have noted that the World's No. 2 sportswear manufacturer ADIDAS from Germany has made a successful acquisition of No. 3 manufacturer REEBOK. The combined turnover of this business is £6 billion-a-year; which puts it within striking distance of World brand leader NIKE, whose yearly turnover is £7.2 billion. Adidas/Reebok now has 25.1% of the athletics footwear market, not far short of Nike's 33%. PUMA's rise over the past 5 years has been meteoric, with group sales of £1 billion in 2004. Financial experts are now tipping a NIKE bid for PUMA to ensure that they stay ahead of the pack.

Reebok traces its celebrity roots back to 1924 when this British company created running spikes for HAROLD ABRAHAMS gold medal victory – and the film Chariots of Fire immortalised the Company, which took to putting union jacks on its shoes.

What will be the benefit for the sporting fraternity of such mega deals? Sadly little – the main effect being that the companies will be pitted against each other in an even more bitter power struggle for celebrity-name endorsements. That will further line the pockets of the elite few and certainly won't benefit the queue at the back of Amos Seddon's camper van. And... it certainly won't benefit the army of pittance-paid paupers who slave away in Far East sweatshops, where an ever increasing amount of these products are knocked-up!

WRITES JAMIE O'RAWE ABOUT BLACKHEATH

I'm sorry but I won't be able to make the race – on holiday that week.

Sounds like it's going to be a bumper day – I would like to say I have fond memories of the course but that short little hill at the bottom of the first straight prevents me!!

I'm sure Dad will bring a car load. Let's hope Essex fields the most entrants.

DO YOU READ ME

At September's WWW race, one competitor came to race 3,000 metres – and only found out that it was a 5,000 metres when he arrived. It got worse, for one character who was racing only realised that he was in a 5,000 metres race when – having completed 4 circuits – he observed 8 on the lap score board. The distance had been mentioned in 3 successive editions of Essex Walker, with 2 such editions using **bold type** to emphasise the earlier starting time in order to accommodate the extra distance!!!

WOODFORD WEDNESDAY WALK

14th September, 2005

5,000m walk

(incorporating the Essex League)

1	John Hall	Bel/Ltn	25.45
2	Steve Uttley	Ilf	25.51
3	Philip Barnard	C.Point	26.47
4	Dave Sharpe	Ilf	27.54
5	Ollie Browne	Ilf	28.31
6	Peter Cassidy	Ltn	28.44
7	Chris Bent	Pitsea	30.22
8	Cath Duhig (L)	Ltn	30.28
9	Laurence Dordoy	Ilf	30.38
10	Maureen Noel (L)	Bel	30.56
11	Alan O'Rawe	Ilf	31.21
12	Kim Howard (L)	Sth	32.26
13	Mick Barnbrook	Ilf	32.39
14	Francoise Fernandez (L)	Ltn	34.08
15	Ken Livermore	Enf/Ltn	35.13
16	Brian Boggenpoel	Unnat	35.25
17	Dave Ainsworth	Ilf	36.17
18	Philip Prashner	Ltn	37.10
19	Pam Ficken (L)	Surrey/Ltn	37.16

TROPHY DISCIPLINE

One wonders how many readers read BOB DOBSON'S article on trophy discipline, which in Essex walking circles is truly appalling. The final event of this year's WWW series saw just 2 out of the 4 trophies returned for the Presentation (by the Southern Area President PAM FICKEN) **That's 50%**. Of the 2 trophies which were returned, only one had been engraved. **That's 50%**. And who was the only one who got his trophy back on time, cleaned, engraved and ready for presentation (ironically to himself again) but DAVE SHARPE who is truly a good example to all. Dave regained the GEORGE WOODS MEMORIAL TROPHY, for the leading Essex-resident Centurion at the WWW 5,000 Metres. The 2005 series winners were Men: 1. DAVE SHARPE, 2. PETER CASSIDY, 3 LAURENCE DORDOY. Ladies: 1. KIM MARSHALL, 2 FRANCOISE FERNANDEZ, 3. CATH DUHIG. Team – Ilford AC. Pam had plenty else on that night, as well as shaking hands and presenting awards for the good lady completed and also – along with MARGARET LIVERMORE - provided their now famous car boot catering service, which enabled a pleasant post race social to take place in the car park. The fields were up in numbers this year, and again we thank PETER CASSIDY and PAULINE WILSON for organising the series and all the officials who have given up their time throughout the summer.

WRITES DON THOMSON MBE

Dear Dave,

Regarding the Blackheath 300th 9 Kms, my wife said that our granddaughter would be with us on that day and that we (inc. me!) will be taking her out to Howlett's Zoo near Canterbury. So that rather puts the dampener on any competitive outings! In any case, with a flat-out pace of around 4½ mph, I'm not fast enough to compete at this short distance and, though I hope to turn out in more long distance walks in 2006, these will be in the range of 100 Miles/24 Hours.

Yours sincerely, Don Thompson.

CLUB NEWS

The AGM of Ilford Athletic Club was held at Ilford Sports Club, Cricklefields Stadium. Ilford's new President is much respected Track Official Mrs. Claire Levey who lives in Romford. Upminster-based retired schoolmaster Dave Searle – the Club's official 'Mr Starter' – stepped down after 29 years meritorious service as Honorary Treasurer, for which he was given a much deserved Vote of Thanks. Taking over the Club's ledgers is the Immediate Past President Wesley Clarke, the Champion hammer thrower who is perhaps better known for being the current Mr. Universe. The Club also rewarded veteran race walker. Dave Kates, the current Walking Section Captain, with Life Membership status.

AN ARTICLE FROM INTERNATIONAL CATH DUHIG

Dear Dave,

The fortune cookie I opened on the evening of the King's Lynn 100 mile walk read: "They are not problems, they are opportunities". Great. Attempting to walk 100 miles (in a decent time, of course) with a not-yet healed torn piriformis or inflamed gluteal burse, depending which diagnosis I was listening to at the time, was not going to be a problem. It was going to be an opportunity~~

~~ to experience unprecedented pain?

~~ to see what life is like at the back of the field? (It's very friendly)

~~ to admit defeat and drop out....?

But I started. Because what was the alternative? 24 hours of feeding, marshalling, and any other jobs dreamed up by the organiser, my beloved hubby. RON WALLWORK said to me, after about 20 hours, "What other husband would organise an event so his wife could walk 100 miles virtually on her doorstep?" Hmmmm, sounds like grounds for divorce to me. And I don't mind helping and supporting, but not when I've paid and prepared (sort of) to take part. Best give it a go then.

You don't really want to know what it's like pounding out 50 x 1,999 mile laps of Lynnsport (the 100 x 0.001 mile deficit was made up on the track at the start, for you mathematicians). You've either done it, would never consider it, or think it's too darned stupid to merit interest. So I'll spare you the details, especially as after about lap 33 I was pretty much incapable of knowing myself, but there were a few noteworthy little quirks that I'm sure will stay with me as part of my recollection of the event long after the pain and feelings of idiocy are forgotten:-

The feelings of idiocy come from having walked the last 20 miles with a definite lilt to port – the photos I've been shown prove it – but, curiously, having no mental picture of this. My mind told me I was upright and I had to ask someone – bless you, Brian Ficken, to tell me which way I was leaning. Not that I managed to do anything about correcting it.

Music had a strange way of being grotesquely appropriate. I played a lot of Green Day, Weezer, and Scissor Sisters, very loudly, to keep myself going, and the tracks took on too much significance. As the rain began, Green Day went into 'Hear the sound of the falling rain' (the opening line of 'Holiday'. Track 3 on the 'American Idiot' album, for you anoraks and music buffs), 'Wake Me Up When September Ends' and 'Comfortably Numb' actually made me smile at their suitability, 'Walking Alone with only my shadow for company' practically summed up the whole event, and as for 'We Are All On Drugs', well.....

Rice Pudding. Not keen. Rarely eat it. Wouldn't have made it through the night without it.

2 Days after the race a half mile swim and a heavy lawn-mowing session had no ill effect, but pruning a cotoneaster clicked my hip out again.

Cath.