



# Race Walking Record

January 2021



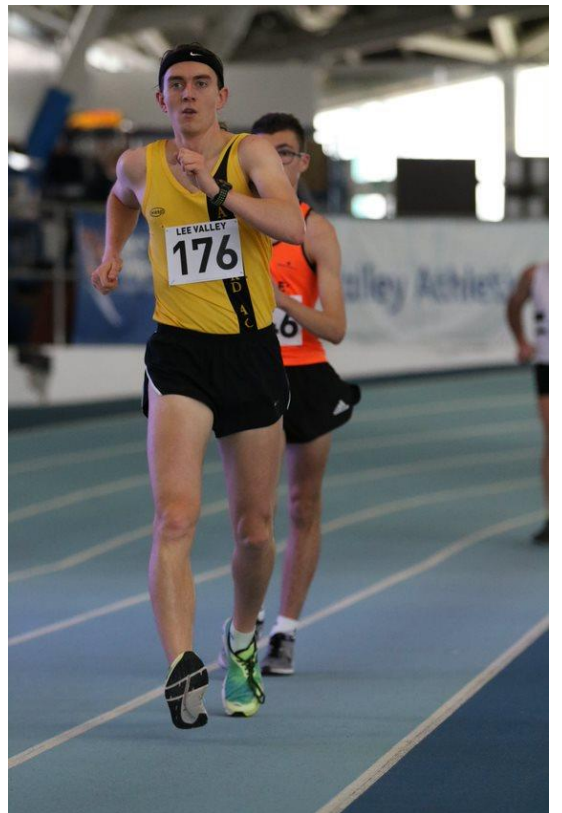
George Wilkinson



Millie Morris



Jacqueline Benson



Jonathan Hobbs

## Leading Walkers from the first Virtual Enfield Race Walking League

Photograph(s) courtesy of Mark Easton (<http://markeaston.zenfolio.com>)

# NEWS

## Olympic Games Trial for the 20km Race Walks to take place at Kew Gardens in March

**21<sup>st</sup> Jan:** UK Athletics has confirmed that the Olympic Games Trial for the men's and women's 20km Race Walk will take place behind-closed-doors on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021, at Kew Gardens, London, on the same day as the Olympic Games Marathon Trial.

Following several postponements in the 2021 race walking calendar, UK Athletics are providing this key competition opportunity for Olympic qualification following discussions with athletes and coaches.

The window for attaining a qualification standard for the 20km Race Walks will remain open until 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Entry will be by invitation only with very limited numbers, and the men's and women's 20km Race Walks will be combined.

Source: *British Athletics*

## British Athletics Confirms Cancellation of Indoor Championships

**22<sup>nd</sup> Jan:** British Athletics has confirmed the cancellation of the British Athletics Indoor Championships, due to be staged at Glasgow's Emirates Arena 20-21 February.

The decision was taken in light of the ongoing pandemic to ensure the safety of all those due to participate; athletes, coaches, technical officials, volunteers, event, and venue staff as well as protecting the Glasgow community. At the present time, the process of testing all those attending the Championships from across the UK, seen as an essential measure, would not sufficiently mitigate the risks.

British Athletics recognises our wider social responsibility to reduce COVID-19 transmission and to not over-burden the NHS. Whilst elite sport has been granted the privilege of an exemption to enable training and competition to continue, the logistics of safely staging a national championships comprising approximately 500+ attendees based across the UK and overseas need to be balanced with the risks to those involved, the local community, and the current medical climate.

With the European Indoor Championships currently scheduled to take place in Torun, Poland 5-7 March British Athletics acknowledges that the cohort of athletes vying for GB & NI team selection will need competition to enable qualification.

Therefore, alternative provision that enables smaller, COVID-19 compliant event qualification opportunities is being explored and will be confirmed to eligible athletes by British Athletics in due course.

Source: *British Athletics*



## Race Walking Association Annual General Meeting

The Race Walking Association Annual General Meeting took place on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2021** via Zoom Conference Call for the first time. The use of this communication medium has become the norm to enable organisations and clubs to continue to conduct business during the pandemic and resulted in an improved attendance. All the associations officers and sub-committee chairs were re-elected unopposed:

### Officers

President	Colin Vesty (Leicester Walking Club)
Vice President	Carl Lawton (Belgrave Harriers)
Chair	Glyn Jones (Coventry Godiva Hs)
Hon. General Secretary	Colin Vesty (Leicester Walking Club)
Hon. Treasurer	Mark Easton (Surrey Walking Club)
Hon. Championship Secretary	Noel Carmody (Cambridge Harriers)

### Sub-Committees

Coaching & Development	Peter Marlow
International	Pam Ficken (Surrey Walking Club)
Press & Publicity	John Constantinou (Birchfield Harriers)



## Centurions 100 Mile Walk 2021

Centurions, subject to COVID-19 guidelines, are hopeful of staging a 100 mile track race at Southend in early August, (provisionally 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>). As the foreseeable future remains uncertain, they cannot give definite confirmation now, so please check their website for updates.

Adhering to the Government guidelines current at the time will be a mandatory requirement for everybody attending – walkers, supporters, organisers, officials, and spectators – so the event may be slightly different to those held previously but they are committed to providing everybody the opportunity to take part in this unique race.

Source: [www.centurions1911.org.uk](http://www.centurions1911.org.uk)



## National 10km & Young Age Group Championships 2021

The Race Walking Association is looking at holding the National 10km & Young Age Group Championships in Coventry on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Of course, this will be subject to the lifting of lockdown and authorisation from the athletic governing bodies to resume competition. A final decision will be made in early March but it is likely that even if a return to competition is sanctioned the event will need to be held under COVID-19 guidelines.

### Winners in the recent R.W.A 200 Club draws

	£25.00	£15.00	£10.00
Jan. 21	Stuart Elms	Olive Dobson	Ron Wallwork
Feb. 21	Carl Lawton	Penny Darton	John Constantinou

It is £12 per number per year, so if you wish to join please contact Mark Easton ([rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk)) for further details.

## Rest in Peace

The Race Walking Association is saddened to have to report the passing of the following:

**David (Dave) Stevens** a member of Steyning AC & Stock Exchange AC passed away on 31<sup>st</sup> January aged 83, having been in poor health for a while.



In his earlier years of racing he had great successes, winning many Sussex AAA, and Stock Exchange titles, and then World and European titles as a Veteran/Master.

Without doubt Dave (*Bib 5 in the photograph above*) was a true club man and he committed his life to Steyning AC from its earliest days. He was always on the fringe of getting a GB vest but possibly his desire to support his club worked against him. He raced always near the front from 3km through to the London and Brighton. He would race most weekends, often during the week as well to support the club. It was the same when he became a masters regularly competing in the internationals not quite making it to 50 years. But he was not just a walker he was equally committed to running the club holding a position and officiating at club events (not just walking races) for all his career. At age 82 he was out there on the road officiating last January

for the Steyning 15km and one of the last to leave the club house after the clearing up. I shall miss him greatly both as a friend and one of the stalwarts of racewalking.

*Ron Penfold & Ian Richards (Steyning AC)*

**Bill Garrett** a member of Ilford AC between the mid-70s and mid-90s.



Although never a leading light, Bill was a good solid back-up walker who could be relied on. Twice he closed home winning Ilford teams in Southern Area 50 Kilometres' Championships, on both occasions around a bleak deserted Basildon industrial estate. On a more popular course around Battersea Park's Queen's Carriageway, he was the Club's 3<sup>rd</sup> scoring finisher (of 4) when winning a Southern Area 10 Miles' Championship so claiming the coveted "Garnet Cup". He was proud when awarded race walking's 10 kilometres-in-an hour badge, achieved in an Essex County AA 10,000 metres championship on the Hornchurch Stadium track. Bill twice race walked London Marathons, raising money for "The Marriage Guidance Council" and "Relate" - being the same charity, having changed names between his first and second completions. He also competed in triathlons.

*Essex Walker – Issue 403*

**Dave Jones C458** who had been battling cancer for some time. Dave was a charismatic member of Leicester Walking Club back in the 1960's and 70's when he was an enthusiastic regular competitor in the local race walking scene. Dave qualified as Centurion 458 in the Leicester to Skegness 100 mile walk in 1970 with a finish time of 23:03:25 at the time as an unattached athlete, but soon after joining Leicester WC.

Dave completed a further six 100 mile races, four more over the Leicester to Skegness course: 1972 (21<sup>st</sup> 21:54:09), 1974 (6<sup>th</sup> 19:51:54), 1976 (6<sup>th</sup> 19:50:51), 1978 (30<sup>th</sup> 23:18:04) and two at the Leicester 100, Congerstone: 1980 (4<sup>th</sup> 18:56:41) and 1982 (18:45:55 PB).

*Colin Vesty & Brian Adams*

## Domestic Results

### Sarnia Walking Club, Bob Wright Handicap Series, 5km Road Walk, Les Amarreurs, Vale, Guernsey (Sun. 10<sup>th</sup> Jan)

Kevin Le Noury moved into the lead in the Bob Wright Handicap Series after five of the seven races, **reports Rob Elliott**, in a race held in cold and wind free conditions. Repeating his race win from the corresponding race last year he held off the faster finishing Donna Allan by sixteen seconds to cross the line in an actual time of 35:04. Mick Le Sauvage took third place ahead of Stuart Le Noury who recorded the fastest time of the day with his 26:37.

#### Mixed Handicap 5km (B)

Pos	Athlete	AG	Club	Watch/Actual
1	Kevin Le Noury	M60	Sarnia Walking Club	37:04/35:04
2	Donna Allan	W45	Sarnia Walking Club	37:20/30:30
3	Mick Le Sauvage	M80	Sarnia Walking Club	37:49/37:49
4	Stuart Le Noury	M35	Sarnia Walking Club	38:37/26:37
5	Phil Lockwood	M45	Sarnia Walking Club	39:10/35:10
6	Rob Elliott	M60	Sarnia Walking Club	40:27/33:57



### Virtual Enfield Race Walking League (Sat. 30<sup>th</sup>/Sun. 31<sup>st</sup> Jan.)

Over 25 people responded to the enquiry about initiating a Virtual ERWL, with all but two expressing a positive view towards the suggestion, **reports Ron Wallwork**. There was a vehement objection, that wasn't sent to me, which expressed a deep concern about the standard of walking and course accuracy, which is a legitimate view that people are entitled to hold.

However, the ethos of the ERWL since its inception by Martin Oliver 23 years ago, has always been too welcome and engage walkers of all standards and that's why it operates under the B rule. This is not to say ERWL is apposed to the A standard, but it should be remembered that it was born out of the need to judge elite and often full-time athletes.

The vagaries of tracking devices are well known, so of course results might well be skewed, but so long as the intent is honest the integrity of the competition remains. As for deliberate cheaters, well they only deceive themselves and when the pandemic is over, all the virtual performances will be judged against times set in real ones.

#### Mixed Virtual 5km (©=Centurion)

Pos	Athlete	AG	Club	Perf.
1	George Wilkinson	U20M	Enfield & Haringey AC	23:20
2	Jonathan Hobbs	SENM	Ashford Athletic Club	24:50
3	David Crane	M40	Surrey Walking Club	25:28
4	Millie Morris	U20W	Ashford Athletic Club	25:40
5	David Annetts	M55	North Herts RR	25:40
6	David Kemp	M60	Arena 80 Athletic Club	26:00
7	Jacqueline Benson	U23W	Ashford Athletic Club	27:55
8	Ian Torode	M60	South West Vets AC	28:32
9	Stephen Crane	M40	Surrey Walking Club	28:36
10	Grazia Manzotti	W50	Tonbridge Athletic Club	28:55
11	Steve Taylor	M50	Manx Harriers	29:07
12	Ian Tolchard	M50	Unattached	28:08
13	Emma Dyos	W45	Ilford Athletic Club	29:14
14	Christopher Hobbs	M65	Ashford Athletic Club	31:24
15	David Kates ©	M70	Ilford Athletic Club	31:28
16	Richard Emsley	M65	Crawley Saints & Sinners	31:54
17	John Ralph	M60	Enfield & Haringey AC	31:55
18	Helen Middleton	W55	Enfield & Haringey AC	31:59
19	Cath Duhig ©	W65	CA Mill/Torrevieja	32:01
20	Jonathan Ellerton	U17M	Blackheath & Bromley	32:27
21	Sarah Sowerby	W55	Unattached	32:31
22	Tony Bell	M55	Lancashire Walking Club	33:02
23	Stuart Bennett ©	M60	Ilford Athletic Club	33:57
24	Paul Gaston	M70	Surrey Walking Club	34:05
25	Marco Bernatzki	M50	LA Herten/Germany	34:06
26	John Borgars ©	M70	Loughton Athletic Club	34:06
27	Andy Cox	M65	Surrey Walking Club	34:13
28	Ron Penfold	M75	Steyning Athletic Club	34:34
29	Simon Morgan	M50	Ilford Athletic Club	34:34
30	Rob Elliott	M60	Sarnia Walking Club	34:40
31	Jürgen Spencer	M55	Unattached	35:04
32	Noel Blatchford	W70	Abingdon Athletics Club	35:08
33	Colin Vesty ©	M55	Leicester Walking Club	35:47
34	Judy Howard	W60	Abingdon Athletics Club	36:19
35	Fiona Bishop	F60	Enfield & Haringey AC	36:32
36	Brian Adams ©	M70	Leicester Walking Club	36:44
37	Malcolm Blackwood	M70	Trent Park Running Club	36:58
38	Angela Martin	W55	Surrey Walking Club	37:09
39	Dave Fall	M75	Birchfield Harriers	38:18
40	Amalia da Silva	W55	Barnet & District AC	38:26
41	Tom Casserley	M80	Enfield & Haringey AC	38:26
42	Stephen Cartwright	M60	Colchester & Tendring	38:33
43	Karen Williams	W65	Birchfield Harriers	38:41
44	Mark Williams	M55	Birchfield Harriers	38:41
45	Sue Clements ©	W65	Cambridge & Coleridge	39:39
46	Steve Kemp ©	M60	Eastern Masters A.C	40:06
47	Diana Braverman	W65	Enfield & Haringey AC	40:13
48	Chris Flint ©	M75	Surrey Walking Club	40:15

49	Alison Clements	W60	Abingdon Athletics Club	40:22
50	Gary Smith ©	M60	Enfield & Haringey AC	41:10
51	Tracey Wilkinson	W55	Unattached	41:16
52	Tony Wilkinson	M55	Unattached	41:16
53	Ed Shillabeer ©	M80	Ilford Athletic Club	41:50
54	Bill Sutherland ©	M75	Highgate Harriers	45:00
55	Terry Braverman	M75	Enfield & Haringey AC	48:27
56	Anthony Perkins	M70	Ilford Athletic Club	51:31

## WA STANDS FOR WRONG-HEADED ATHLETICS UNLESS THE SPIRIT OF '76 IS REVIVED

By Paul F. DeMeester

I first learned of the proposed elimination of the Olympic 50K Race Walk Event at the World Masters Championships athletes' reception held at the Perth Zoo in late 2016. The news was just a whisper then and would remain so as World Athletics headquarters (then called IAAF) quietly worked to get rid of the 50K at major championships. The secret ploy would have worked but for Heel and Toe having exposed the duplicity in a special issue on 6 April 2017. Exactly one week later, the IAAF Council refused to go along with cutting the Men's 50K for Tokyo 2020. The Council asserted itself further in launching a December 2018 demand to make the Tokyo 2020 50K gender equal and in committing to two race walk distances at its March 2019 Doha meeting, where Seb Coe's second 50K elimination attempt sparked heated discussions behind closed Council doors.

We know why the International Olympic Committee (IOC) wants to get rid of the 50K. They need to cut athletics at the Olympics so as to be able to accommodate other sports that are new to the Olympics without taxing host cities that need to accommodate athletes, officials, journalists, and spectators. The IOC has therefore downsized by capping the total number of Summer Olympics athletes to 10,500 (compare to 11,238 at Rio). The IOC has become an entertainment conglomerate, no longer interested in sports other than as a medium to increase broadcast revenue. The IOC viewed 50K elimination as easy prey. After the 2016 Rio Olympics, the IOC provided three disingenuous reasons for doing so: 50K was not gender equal; there was too much doping in it; and it did not generate sufficient broadcast interest. None of those reasons withstood scrutiny. The gender equality argument was pure dishonesty, as it was the IOC that fought the legal effort to include 50K women at Tokyo with all its might. The IOC feared that their inclusion would make it harder to get rid of the 50K. The doping argument had more to do with Russia than with the 50K. We don't see the IOC try to eliminate the 100m or the marathon, events that have seen an inordinate amount of doping violations by athletes from different countries. The broadcast interest argument falls flat in light of the thrilling 50K finishes at Rio (2016) and Doha (2019).

The IOC may have tried to put some faulty reasoning behind its 50K cutting effort but their real purpose has never been a secret. But what about World Athletics? President Seb Coe is the first athletics leader to permit the Olympic athletics footprint to shrink. He's done so by championing the elimination of the 50K and by instituting World Rankings, the surest way to implement the Olympic directive to reduce the number of Olympic runners, walkers, throwers, and jumpers. Now that Coe has joined the IOC as a member, one may wonder which athletics event he will sacrifice next to fulfil his ambition of becoming Thomas Bach's successor as IOC President when Bach term limits out four years hence. Or which sports Coe will favour at the Olympics over athletics?

The recent request by World Athletics to add a Women's 50K at the Paris 2024 Olympics underscores the point. That request was not a change of heart for Coe with regards to his antipathy to the 50K. Not at all! The request was simply a way for Coe to look like he supports gender equality, placate the Council members who support long distance race walking, and shift blame for the 50K demise to the Olympic Movement. The circumstances of the Paris request demonstrate that nothing has changed for Coe.

When World Athletics CEO Jon Ridgeon announced on 2 December 2020 that the governing body was asking the IOC to keep the Men's

50K race for 2024 and to add a Women's 50K, it was news to the race walk community. Ridgeon answered a question asked by a journalist whether World Athletics was seeking to add any events besides cross country to the 2024 program. Coe had not volunteered the information in his initial comments. A top international race walker first read about it on the [insidethegames.biz](https://www.insidethegames.biz) website and told Heel and Toe about it. The author of the [insidethegames](https://www.insidethegames.biz) article, Liam Morgan, later interviewed the former World Athletics Athletes' Commission chair Iñaki Gomez (2018-2019), who seemed equally surprised and reportedly faulted the IOC for a "lack of engagement with athletes." ([Insidethegames.biz](https://www.insidethegames.biz), 9 December 2020.) I join the Canadian two-time Olympic 20K race walker and fellow lawyer in his criticism of the IOC. But we must look in-house first, which Gomez may be reluctant to do given that Coe appointed him to his chairmanship.

Note that World Athletics proposed two new events for Paris 2024: The Women's 50K Race Walk and a mixed cross country relay. We never heard about the Women's 50K until the eve of the IOC meeting in December but Coe used his bully pulpit to push for cross country inclusion at his press conference following the 222nd Council meeting last July. (See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUJSCBX11U>; cross country proposal discussed by Coe between 15:56 and 16:52 and press question about it answered by Ridgeon between 31:43 and 33:25). The unequal treatment should surprise no one. Cross country has been Coe's pet ever since 1969 but Coe dislikes the 50K so much that he refused to accept the booklet about the Women's 50K that I tried to hand him at the Monaco Council meeting in December of 2018, despite Coe's responsibility under the 2017 IAAF Constitution to "liaise and facilitate effective communication and relationships with Member Federations, Area Associations, sponsors and other stakeholders." (2017 IAAF Const., Art. 8(4)(j).) In my capacity as the legal and lobbying representative of women 50K walkers, I certainly fit the bill of "other stakeholders." (In fairness to Seb, he was most gracious when I introduced the members of our lobbying party to him - including five top 50K walkers - shortly before I tried to hand him the booklet.)

Needless to say, had World Athletics announced that they were asking the IOC to add a Women's 50K Race Walk Event for Paris 2024 besides a Men's 50K Event, the wider race walk, athletics, and gender equality families could have made themselves heard in favour of the proposal. But World Athletics was mum. So much for Coe's broken promise of transparency. And thanks to the changes Coe brought about in the IAAF Constitution, Council Members were prohibited from openly discussing any 50K Olympic addition request; only Coe could do so and ... he chose not to. (See my discussion of Coe's authoritarian muzzle rules in [Don't Speak Up: Anything You Say Can and Will Be Used Against You, Heel and Toe Online 2019/2020 No. 32, 4 May 2020.](#))

### Email from Peter Marlow to Sebastian Coe:

I write to you as both interested and concerned party in relation to the "abolition" of the 50km walk from the athletic programme.

I was a member of what was the IAAF race walking committee for over 40 years and I honestly believe that getting rid of the 50km was the single biggest mistake made in that time. The decision to do so forced me to resign my position in protest.

Although an alternative has been put forward by way of a 35km walk, the idea of a 35km walk has not been welcomed by the race walking community. It is considered too close to the 20km and therefore offers a distinct advantage to the sprint walkers. The 50km is considered the purest form of race walking by all those involved with the sport and yet World Athletics seem it to be worthless. Currently there are no events across the globe allowing athletes to attain qualification standards for a 35km event. Of course, this may change in time but at a cost to long established events. The 50km has a great history in athletics and if the IOC doesn't want it, that doesn't mean that it has to be removed from the World Athletic Championships.

The Mall at the 2012 Olympics and 2017 World Championships showcased walking at its best. Likewise, in Rio the 50km was possibly the most exciting athletics event. So rather than cow towing to the demands of the IOC, why not rise above and stand up for the whole of athletics and give the 50km a future starting with the World Championships in 2022?