



**Veterans Athletic Club
Newsletter
Spring 2019**

**World Indoor 3000m Record For Clare Elms
British M85 Record for Richard Pitcairn-Knowles**

VAC Committee Members: 2018-2019

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Veterans Athletic Club was established in 1931 and is affiliated to England Athletics, BMAF, South of England AA, Surrey County AA, the Race Walking Association and the South of the Thames Cross Country Association. We offer athletic competition for men and women aged 35 and over. Cross-country, road, track & field as well as race walking - there is something for everyone. Based in London with members across the South East, we can provide opportunities to compete with other like-minded masters/veterans. The Spring/Summer fixture list is printed in the newsletter. Please support these events. The newsletter welcomes contributions and events always need volunteers, as well as competitors. If you want to get involved, contact any of the Committee members listed above.

Message to VAC Members from Membership Secretary, Peter Kennedy

It's that time of year again, when your VAC membership renewal is overdue, if you haven't already paid it. My thanks to more than 2/3 of the membership (our best ever performance) who have renewed to date, many of whom did it online before the expiry date. That still leaves some 180 members who have not yet renewed so can I ask that you do that as soon as possible. The subscription is £12, so great value for money.

I am expecting that we will soon update OpenTrack to make UKA registration mandatory for entry to VAC and BMAF championships. We have always said it is, but if developments go according to plan, after 1st June this will be enforced at the moment of competition entry: "no registration" means "no entry". Those of you who are not yet registered for 2019/20 may not be able to see it at present in OpenTrack, but England Athletics registered athletes can check it by logging into their England Athletics portal. If you leave your competition entry to the last minute, then you will find that you don't have time to sort out a problem with your registration before the deadline is reached.

On a personal note, I now have seven different roles in athletics which highlights clearly how much we need more volunteers— anyone with IT skills, anyone prepared to train as a technical official, anyone prepared to extend

their coaching expertise to cover masters athletes, anyone prepared to help a little with tasks which don't require specific skill but are essential for putting on an athletic event. The VAC committee all work very hard at organizing club events, some of whom are not in good health, but the lack of volunteers is having an impact. Please note that this year's South of England Masters Track & Field Championships, due to be held on 16th June has now been cancelled due to lack of field officials. On a more positive note, the BMAF has ambitious plans for next year to increase the size and types of events they provide, but this will be very difficult without additional people to help. Volunteering has become a major national pastime for all ages, because of the enjoyment and satisfaction of helping others it brings, and if you wish to respond to this plea, then please contact me to discuss how you can help.

Peter Kennedy

Email: pkennedy@bmaf.org.uk

Plastic Free?

We had a note from a member recently informing us that he would rather not receive the newsletter in hard copy and plastic packaging as he is trying to eliminate his plastic waste. The newsletters are available on the VAC website so should any other members wish to stop receiving hard copies, please let us know.

Editor Angela Kikugawa Writes

I was interested to read that some of our athletes who went out to Poland for the World Indoor Athletics managed to do a local parkrun before starting the 'real competition.' I have been thinking a lot about parkrun recently as it has finally got off the ground in Japan. It started a couple of weeks ago on a course that runs along a river in Tokyo. I am the proud owner of a 100 parkrun teeshirt and was somewhat surprised when I looked at the results to see the number of people who competed in the first ever event in Japan who 'had the tee-shirt', with one runner having done 250!

The international reach of parkrun is amazing and it will be interesting to see how well it develops here. Running is very popular in Japan, with many people taking up marathon running when they retire. I have entered quite a few races since I have been here and although they are always brilliantly planned and organised, I miss the informality of the races in the UK and particularly those held in London. How wonderful it was to decide to run the VAC Battersea Summer Series on the evening when you knew work would finish on time; or to just turn up at the parkrun or VAC Wimbledon Common Cross Country because you had a bit more time than you expected. It's very

different here. You need to enter weeks or months in advance and turn up two hours before the race and there is usually an opening ceremony. This is great when you are doing a half or full marathon, but sometimes for the shorter distances it can be a bit wearing, so it will be interesting to see if the informality that contributes to parkrun popularity in the UK is equally attractive here. I suspect it will be.

Tokyo is seven hours by train from where I live so I don't expect to run the new parkrun anytime soon, although there are plans to bring one to a town much nearer to us, supposedly in June. I have also been in touch with parkrun with a view to starting one in our town (Imabari), although I suspect this will take some time. Still I live in hope that I can decide over my Saturday morning cuppa whether I'll do the parkrun or some other training instead. Given that I am in a town of 150,000 as opposed to Tokyo's 10 million I am sure I will be the only one with the 100 teeshirt.

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Spring, Summer and Autumn 2019 Fixtures

Refer to the VAC website (www.vetsac.org.uk) for updates and additions.

Date	Organiser	Race/Event	Venue	Entry	Closing Date
Sunday 26 May 2019	Vitality Westminster r Mile events	British Masters One Mile Road Champs and VAC One Mile Champs	The Mall, London. Assemble in Green Park, London SW1A 1AA	Select "Masters Mile" entry on Westminster Mile website . Medals in five-year age groups.	5pm 17 May
Sunday 2 June 2019	Dorking & Mole Valley AC	Dorking 10 Also the British Masters 10M Road Champs and the VAC 10M Champs	Race HQ: Dorking Rugby Club Pavilion, The Big Field, Brockham, Surrey RH3 7LZ	Enter via Member Login at BMAF OpenTrack Details on DMV website. BMAF and VAC medals in 5-year age groups.	Closing date for BMAF entry: 19 May.
Saturday 8 June 2019	Old Deer Park parkrun	5km parkrun Featuring VAC "mob match" gathering.	Old Deer Park, Richmond Start close to A316 and the Pools in the Park.	Start time: 9am New parkrunners must pre-register with parkrun to obtain a Barcode.	Enter on the day (need your Barcode)
Tuesday 11 June 2019	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit (Category B) Course certified accurate	Battersea Park Series, VAC 5M Road and Walk Champs. 2nd Grand Prix Event.	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Register outside Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm Online entry via BMAF login. Entries accepted on the day Guests welcome.	Online entry closes on 10 June.
Saturday 22 June 2019	VAC	Jack Fitzgerald race walks (approx. 3 miles and 6 miles road). RWA Permit, Cat. "B".	Tilgate Park. Register at Tilgate Forest Golf Centre, Titmus Dr, Crawley, RH10 5EU	Start time: 12.30pm Open event. Seniors/Juniors/Vets. Profits donated to an appropriate charity.	See VAC website for entry form. Entries also accepted on the day.

Saturday 6 July 2019	England Athletics Masters Association	England Masters Outdoor T&F Inter Area Challenge	Coventry Athletics Track, 98 Frilsham Way, Coventry CV4 8AH	Competition for BMAF Area Clubs. VAC Team selected in advance. Age groups: Men & Women. 35-49 50-59 60-69 70+.	Enquiries to VAC Inter-Area Team Manager: Nick Lauder
Saturday 6 July 2019	Bushy parkrun Also featuring the third annual Octogenarian gathering and celebration	Usual 5km parkrun, open to all.	Bushy Park Teddington Look out for the sign "80 AND OVER. MEET HERE!".	Start time: 9am Course details. Octogenarians and supporters are welcome. Enquiries: Richard Pitcairn-Knowles (rppk@btinternet.com)	Enter on the day (but need your Barcode)
Tuesday 9 July 2019	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit (Category B) Course certified accurate	Battersea Park Series VAC 5km Road Race Champs. 3rd Grand Prix event. Also 5km Open RACE WALK.	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Register outside Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm Online entry via BMAF login. Entries accepted on the day Guests welcome.	Online entry closes on 8 July.
Sunday 14 July 2019	VAC	VAC Track & Field Champs	Kings' dower Stadium, Kingston Rd, KT1 3PB	Medals in five-year age groups. Open to all BMAF members. Entry via OpenTrack.	Closing date 30 June.
Sunday 21 July 2019	Nicework /Rotary Club of Caterham	Caterham Rotary 10k+ VAC 10k champs. Qualifying race for British & Irish Masters XC Champs.	Redhill Aerodrome Redhill, Surrey RH1 5YP	9am start See Caterham Rotary 10k website for details and entry. VAC medals in 5-year age groups.	Online entry up until race day.

Wednesday 24 July 2019	VAC If full, contact the Entries Secretary to go on the waiting list	VAC 5,000m track champs Four seeded races. Limit of 80 (20 in each race).	Millennium Arena, Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ	1st race: 6.00pm 2nd race: 6.40pm 3 rd race: 7.20pm 4 th race: 8.00pm Slowest runners in the last race. Open to all BMAF members.	Entry via BMAF Login. Closing date 17 July or earlier if limit is reached
Tuesday 6 August 2019	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit (Category B) Course certified accurate	Battersea Park Series. 5 mile Masters road race. 4th Grand Prix Event. 5 mile Open RACE WALK	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Register outside Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm Online entry via BMAF login. Entries accepted on the day Guests welcome.	Online entry closes on 5 August.
Sat/Sun 10-11 August 2019	BMAF	British Masters Outdoor Track & Field Champs	Alexander Stadium Walsall Rd Perry Barr Birmingham B42 2LR	Entry via OpenTrack. 100m 200m 400m 800m 1500m 5000m shortH longH 3km walk 5km walk SC LJ TJ HJ PV SP DT JT HT WT	Closing date: 28 July
Tuesday 27 August 2019	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit (Category B) Course certified accurate	Battersea Park Series. 5 mile road race. 5th Grand Prix Event. 5 mile Open RACE WALK	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Register outside Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm Online entry via BMAF login. Entries accepted on the day Guests welcome.	Online entry closes on 26 August.
Wednesday 18 Sept 2019	VAC If full, contact the Entries Secretary to go on the waiting list	VAC 10,000m track champs Three seeded races. Limit of 60 (20 in each race).	Millennium Arena, Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ	1st race: 5.30pm 2nd race: 7.00pm 3 rd race: 8.00pm Slowest runners in the first race. Open to all BMAF members.	Entry via BMAF Login. Closes 11 Sept or earlier if limit is reached

Saturday 21 Sept 2019	Clapham Common parkrun	5km parkrun Featuring VAC “mob match” gathering.	Clapham Common, London SW11. Flat, 2-lap course. Start and finish close Broomwo d Rd.	Start time: 9am New parkrunners must register with parkrun to obtain a Barcode.	Enter on the day (but need your Barcode)
Saturday 28 Sept 2019	England Athletics Masters Association	Inter Area XC Challenge Points for first 10 Male and 10 Female club members, based on age- adjusted times.	Venue to be announced	Open to BMAF area clubs. VAC men’s and women’s teams. Team selection automatic. Individual entry via BMAF OpenTrack	Closing date: 22 Sept
Saturday 12 October 2019	Men’s Surrey League Division 4	XC Race Match 1 (VAC Men’s team)	Venue to be announced .	All VAC men (1st and 2nd claim) are eligible, subject to conditions. VAC vest necessary.	Enter on the day. Advance notice to Paddy Clark
Saturday 9 Nov 2019	Men’s Surrey League Division 4	XC Race Match 2 (VAC Men’s team)	Epsom Downs (Tattenha m Corner)	All VAC men (1st and 2nd claim) are eligible, subject to conditions. VAC vest necessary.	Enter on the day. Advance notice to Paddy Clark
Saturday 16 Nov 2019	Country Associations of England, Scotland, Wales, N.Ireland and R. of Ireland	British & Irish Masters Internation al XC Champs.	England is host country. Venue: Southport	Details and England team selection application forms on BMAF and EAMA websites.	Closing date of 27 Sept for England team applicatio ns.

For other regional/national/international masters events refer to the [BMAF website](#).

INDOOR

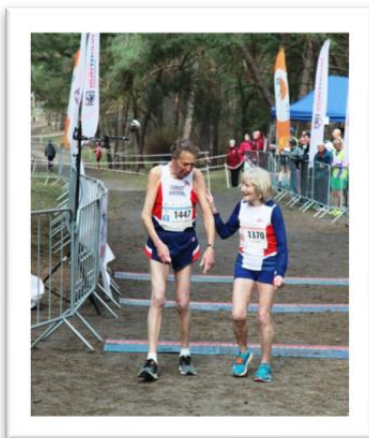
World Masters Athletics Championships Indoors, Torun, Poland, 24-30 March 2019

Nearly 60 VAC members entered the championships held in Torun as part of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland team. Track races were held at the very well-appointed arena, used for an indoor grand prix meet each year and about 2km from the Unesco world heritage-recognised walled old town centre. Races were well supported by spectating athletes and were very entertaining, featuring world-class performances and a few tumbles and disqualifications. Jumps were mainly in the arena, with field events held at an adjacent outdoor track and throwing hall. A few VAC members ran Torun Parkrun on the first or 2nd Saturday, on a forest trail in the eastern outskirts.



Day 1 (Sun 24) saw the 3,000m finals, where VAC members Ros Tabor (W65), Clare Elms (W55) and Zoe Doyle (pictured left) won gold.

Day 2 featured cross country over a tricky 2k circuit (3 laps for over 70's, 4 for the rest) with several short hills and turns in a sandy pine wood next to the track. An early winner was Richard Pitcairn-Knowles (M85 and pictured below with Silver medal winning Pam Jones M80). The pair are also pictured a few moments earlier, when in the spirit of friendship so often seen in Masters athletics the dynamic duo were snapped crossing the finish hand in hand.



Later cross country races featured wins by Ben Reynolds (M55) and Clare Elms (pictured on the front cover with Richard Pitcairn-Knowles at the BMAF Indoor Championships). Michael Johnson (M75), Sue McDonald (W50), Lucy Woolhouse and Clare Elms (W55) were in winning GB age-group teams. Meanwhile, Ian Richards won the M70 3k indoor track walk with a world record.





Day 3 featured 400m finals and day 4 the 60m's where Allan Long won both the M75's race, and a road 10k. Aaron Brown (pictured previous page) won the M35 800m on day 5. Finals for 60m hurdles and 200m plus 10k road walks were on day 6.

Day 7 started with a half marathon, out and back initially on a dual carriageway but later featuring a road and

cycle path through woods; Simon Baines and Paul Cheetham were in the winning GB team in the m45 age group. Indoors, GB won 9 of the 1500m races, including Clare Elms' 4th W45 gold of the championships and Zoe Doyle's second W45 win. Sue Yeomans won the W65 pole vault. 4x 200m relays and a handover to Edmonton, Canada for the Worlds in 2021 completed the championships. Above Paul Cheetham and Simon Baines, part of winning m45 half marathon team are pictured after the medal ceremony.

As well as the above gold medal performances, there were many other medal winning performances by VAC members. This included 3 individual silvers and two pb's by Sue McDonald in outdoor distance events. The full championship results, including medal table with GB fourth, are available at <https://wmaci2019.domtel-sport.pl>

Details of future European and World Masters championships are on the BMAF website. VAC members have BMAF affiliation and are generally able to enter these championships.



EAMA INDOOR INTER AREA TRACK FIELD CHALLENGE

Late February saw more than forty members come together for this year's Indoor Inter Area competition at Lee Valley.

Alwyn Lombaard, Glen Reddington and Wendy Lewis started the team on its way with a fine collection of points from the 60m Hurdles bright and early at 11am. Alwyn built on this with a top three placing in the high jump, being joined in the high jump by Rachel Waters and Anna Garnier. There were a few Vets AC members in action in the north London sands: Franck Triolaire, Hel James (pictured), Richard Weekes and Tim

Carter jumped as long as they could, with David Blunt (also triple jump) and Jon Ladley vaulting high.

Our shot putters scored well, with a win from debutante Jenny Agyepong, second places from Bo Ivanovic, Franck Triolaire, Keith Seldon and Peter Wishart, and somehow Anna Garnier also found time to put a few more points on the team tally.

The distance events of 800m, 1500m, and 3000m saw commanding first places from Clare Elms, Anna Garnier, and Richard Bloom. Top three finishes were achieved by Lizzie Amos, Peter Caton, Pete Crockford, Tony Tuohy, Lisa Webb and Wayne Lashley (pictured on the back page) with plenty of further valuable points gained by Avril Riddell, Darren Franks and Sarah Williams.

Thanks must go to Dave Hoben and John Hall whose efforts in getting all 2k Walks spots filled for the second match in a row was greatly appreciated. This was richly rewarded with a win by David Annetts, and top three finishes by the rest of the Walks squad, namely Penelope Cummings, Stuart Bennett, Seb Parris, and Maureen Noel.

Our squad of sprinters built on this throughout the day with fast first places from Lisa Thomas and Mark White, speedy seconds from Stuart Channon and Jo Flowers, and terrific thirds from Angela Bates, Steven Tester and Derek Wardle. Fine performances also came from Adrian Day, Barry Ferguson, Chuck Isetts, David Hinds, Hel James, Helen Channon, Michael May, Ros Tabor, Steven Tester, and Tim Carter.

Relay specialists Rory MacFarlane, Nick Lauder, Paul Wignall and Phil Bell brought their big match experience alongside their sprinting colleagues for the exciting 4x200m finale where again Vets AC excelled. The M35 team gained first place with a second to spare and the other Vets AC teams got an average of second place resulting from a textbook display of pure speed and crisp baton changeovers.

The men's team came fourth, the women's team came fifth, and overall the team placed fifth with Eastern Masters winning the whole competition.

Nick is currently putting the finishing touches to the team for the summer match that will take place at the famous Coventry Godiva track on Saturday 6 July. Please let him quickly know by email (n.lauder@btopenworld.com) if you'd like to don the classic black and white Vets AC vest to help maximise the team points and to have a great day out in the Midlands.

Lee Valley BMAF Championships – A contribution by Richard Pitcairn Knowles

I was too late arriving at Lee Valley to watch Helen Godsell's fine 200m performance but I started the 3000m with Clare Elms and finished before she went home!

As I age and slow I become ever more grateful to the patient officials who wait for me to finish! In these days of gender equality, and to speed things up, they often sensibly transfer me to run with the older ladies, as was the case in the last event of the BMAF Indoor Championships at Lee Valley on 10th March.

One might think that this move would give me a 'no pressure-relaxed' attitude. However, not one of this group of ladies could be considered old, and lining up behind Clare Elms, going for a W55 3000m Indoor World Record, and nine other young ladies, the oldest being multi-

record holder W65 Ros Tabor, who is young enough to be my daughter, was enough to make anyone nervous!

I 'knew my place', ladies first. They all lapped me several times, and I could hear the excited commentary as Clare Elms covered her last two laps with the World Record in sight, and she took it in 10:13.40 to cheering all round, despite having to overtake me, the long way round, at least six times. I still had over eight minutes to run.

You may think I could have found more pleasure in watching and cheering the new World Record with the rest of the crowd but, believe it or not, I was having a very exciting race as I had set myself the lesser target of lowering my M85 Indoor British Record of 19:46.69 set last year in Madrid. The very

useful 'secondary' large green clock kept ticking on after Clare had finished and told me I was near to my target of 1:15 per half-lap. As I finished it showed 18:55.69, a new British M85 record. I was surprised not to be more embarrassed about my solo laps, and even had a great

welcome by all the ladies who kindly waited for me!

Just keep putting one foot in front of the other – you never know, it might set a record!

Richard is pictured with Clare on the front cover after their success at Lee Valley.

CROSSCOUNTRY

VAC Cross Country Championships, 19 January 2019

Fifty-nine VAC members and guests competed on Wimbledon Common on a seasonally cold, overcast, afternoon. This was the sixth time the annual race has used the "Thatched Cottage" start and it is pleasing that numbers of competitors continue to rise from the meagre 22 starters in 2014.

Earlier in the day, marking the course had been thwarted by tree felling alongside the Beverley Brook, forcing the closure of the track and a hasty rerouting of the two-lap course into the playing fields on the other side of the brook. The new route added a couple of hundred metres to the 7.5km (around 4.5 miles) course, possibly worth a minute's running. Post-race feedback was that the grassland was preferable to the alternative tree roots and mud. Some suggested that we should adopt it as our regular course. This would mean a break with the 30 year tradition of incorporating the Beverley Brook trail into our races and would confine the last five years of course records to history. If you have strong feelings, feed them back to a Committee member.

Richard McDowell (M35) repeated his 2017 win and held off the persistent challenge of last year's winner, Paul Cheetham (M45) to become the Men's Champion by a margin of 13 seconds. Robin Jones (M45) was less than 30 seconds behind in third. Other VAC Gold medallists were Dan Hallam (M40), Terry Booth (M50), Mark Tennyson (M55), Steve Smythe (M60), Gerry Smith (M65), Peter Giles (M70),

Doug Milsom (M75), Joe Aspinall (M80) and Richard Pitcairn-Knowles (M85).

Sue McDonald was the Women's Champion and W50 Gold medallist in a very fast time of 30:14. Nikki Sturzaker (W45 Gold) was thirty seconds behind, followed by Lucy Woolhouse (W55 Gold and pictured). Other VAC Gold medallists were Anna Garnier (W60), Margaret Moody (W65) and Lesley Bowcott (W70).



Times could not be counted for course records because of the course diversion, even though the rerouted course was slightly longer. This was disappointing for Sue McDonald and Joe Aspinall whose times would have easily set new VAC W50 and M80 championship records.

Men's Surrey League Cross Country

It's fair to say that the VAC team struggled in the League standings this season. We ended up a distant 11th out of the 12 clubs in Division Four. At the League's AGM in March, there was a fierce debate about weeding out under-performing clubs. The proposal was

shelved but VAC cannot take its membership of the League for granted. It is acknowledged that we face difficulties in being a club largely made up of 2nd claim athletes who understandably prefer to run for their 1st claim clubs. Also, VAC's membership is geographically spread and there are clashes with other cross country Leagues such as the Met, Essex and Kent Leagues. As a club, we value every runner and everyone is welcome but to do better in the League table, we need more, faster, runners who can finish higher up in the field. Please consider running for VAC in the 2019-20 season.



In the 2018-19 season, VAC fielded nearly-full teams at Roundshaw Downs, Epsom Downs, Oxshott Woods and Lloyd Park (pictured left). Carey Gray and Gary Budinger competed in every match. Carey extended his attendance to seven complete

seasons without missing a match. His times have also been remarkably consistent. Richard Batchelor, Ian Kitching, Andy Murray and Ian Strong competed in three of the matches. Ian Kitching's fine individual placings won him the Division Four M60+ trophy.

VAC contributed fully to the organisation of the season's Div 3/4 matches by co-hosting and compiling the results for two of them. Thanks go to Paddy Clark, the team manager, who rallied the team, provided the essential practical support and kept spirits high, as well as being a reliable race marshal.

Surrey League Division 4: Final Standings 2018-19

1	Sutton Runners (promoted)	1387
2	Tadworth AC (promoted)	1447
3	Elmbridge	1542
4	Lingfield Runners	1747
5	Tri Surrey	1926
6	Windrush	2366
7	Horley Harriers	2462
8	Holland Sports AC	2850.5
9	British Airways	2916
10	Barnes Runners	3020.5
11	VAC	3424
12	Epsom Oddballs	3952

British & Irish Masters Cross Country Championships

In November 2018, it was Wales' turn to host the annual challenge between teams from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Competition for places in the five-year age group squads was as fierce as ever. Thirteen VAC members were selected as team members or reserves (11 for England and 2 for Scotland). The course in Singleton Park, Swansea, was typical grassy parkland and described as "very undulating". The weather was fine and sunny. The women and men over 65 ran 6km and the younger men ran 8km.



VAC's Jessica Franklin who is pictured left (photo courtesy of Robert Gale) had an outstanding run to finish fourth in the women's race and win the individual W35 Silver medal. Clare Elms (W50) and Lynda Hembury (W60) both won individual Bronze medals. For the men, Simon Baines won the individual M45 Bronze. England's strength in depth secured nearly all the team gold medals as well as the separate overall men's and women's awards and combined trophy.

Jessica Franklin (England)	2 nd W35	Team Gold
Clare Elms (England)	3 rd W50	Team Gold
Sue McDonald (England)	5 th W50	Team Gold
Ange Norris (England)	8 th W55	
Lynda Hembury (England)	3 rd W60	Team Gold
Ros Tabor (England)	8 th W65	
Pauline Rich (England)	10 th W70	
Ann Bath (Scotland)	16 th W70	
Simon Baines (England)	3 rd M45	Team Gold
Ian Johnstone (Scotland)	30 th M50	
Michael Johnson (England)	6 th M75	

Anne Stewart-Power and Steve Smythe both ran well in the open race. Anne was first W55 whilst Steve was third M60.

Selection for the 2019 British & Irish Masters Cross Country Southport, Saturday 16 November 2019

England is the host country for the 2019 races. VAC members are encouraged to put themselves forward for selection for the various teams. The standard is high, but consistently good performances in the right races help to indicate form relative to others in the same age group. Six men are selected for each of the M35, M40 and M45 age groups. Four men are picked for each of the remaining age groups up to M75. Four women are selected for each age group up to W70. Each country has its own means of application and selection. England, under the auspices of EAMA (England Athletics Masters Association), convenes a selection meeting in early October with one representative from each of the eight area Masters clubs. The English selectors base their team selections on 5k and 10k performance information supplied by athletes in an application form, which is available on the BMAF and EAMA websites. They will also look closely at various qualifying races advertised on the BMAF fixture list. Notably, the races include the Caterham Rotary 10k at Redhill Aerodrome on Sunday 21 July. This is also the VAC 10k road championship race.

VAC Committee Member, Mike Mann (mcmann90@yahoo.co.uk), is on the England selection panel and will handle VAC members' applications. He is happy to provide further advice.

ROAD RUNNING

VAC's 2019 Battersea Park Summer Race Series

Our Tuesday evening road runs and race walks in Battersea Park during the summer months are friendly, sociable and inclusive of all ages and standards, as well as being highly competitive in every age group. They are a great opportunity to meet fellow members, both runners and walkers, and to say hello to the Committee members, Dennis Williams, David Hoben, Mike Mann and Maggie Statham, who will make you very welcome. Typically, there are around 40 to 60 competitors.

The races are licensed and held under UKA rules and Race Walking Association permits. Online entry is available through the OpenTrack member login but entries on the day are readily accepted from members and guests. Register and pick up a number from our table outside the Millennium Arena athletics track in Battersea Park. The races start at 7pm so please allow plenty of time for this.



The series began in April with a 5 mile race (see report below). Clashes meant that we couldn't find a date for a May race so we have two scheduled races in August. The 11 June 5M races and the 9 July 5km races are the VAC Championships. Medals will be awarded to the first three men and women in each age group. We also have trophies for the first VAC man and woman in each. The August races (6th and 27th) are both 5 miles.

The 2019 series features new 5M and 5km courses in Battersea Park. To gain permission to stage races, VAC and all other race promoters were required to use the route approved by Wandsworth Borough Council, avoiding the Peace Pagoda. Our new courses have been measured and certified accurate by Hugh Jones of the Association of UK Course Measurers.

VAC 5M Road Race 16 April 2019, Battersea Park

The new, compact, 3.5 lap course, coupled with favourable, cool, weather conditions inspired some fine performances from the 37 competitors, including two new records. Stuart Beaney pulled away from Robin Jones to win in a very fast time of 27:10, only 11 seconds short of Simon Baines's M45 record of 26:59 on the old course. Sue McDonald (pictured left) was the first woman, continuing her fine medal-winning form from the World Indoors in Poland. Her time of 30:45 shattered the previous W50 record of 32:49 set by Carol Bowker in 2011. It was only 8 seconds short of the all-time fastest Battersea 5M

women's time of 30:37 set by Marilyn Clarke as a W40 in 1997. Will that record be broken?



Bob Bradbury of SCVAC was also in record-breaking form. His time of 29:31 set an M65 Battersea Park 5M all-comers record, ahead of the 29:58 mark set by VAC's Ron Higgs way back in 1998. Bob's remarkable time also places him at the top of runbritain's list of All Time M65 5M performances. Other notable performances were from Tony Tuohy (M55) and Penny Elliott (W75 and pictured left) whose times were not far off matching the 5M records set by Gary Ironmonger in 2018 and Pam Jones in 2012.

The table of Battersea 5 Mile records printed below shows some excellent marks which have stood the test of time, although today's runners are closing in....

Race results, including age grading, are on the VAC website.

VAC Battersea Park 5 Mile Run: Members' Age Group Course Records

Age Group	Name	Time	Date
M35	Mohammed Ismail	26:59*	14-Jun-16
M40	John Rye	25:34	17-Aug-99
M45	Simon Baines	26:59	17-Apr-18
M50	Ben Reynolds	27:30	14-Apr-15
M55	Gary Ironmonger	27:47	17-Apr-18
M60	Gareth Jones	29:23	12-Jun-07
M65	Ron Higgs	29:58**	18-Aug-98
M70	Steve Charlton	31:59	17-Aug-99
M75	Joe Aspinall	40:38***	13-May-14
M80	Steve Charlton	35:41	17-Apr-07
M85	Steve Charlton	41:14	31-Jul-12

Women			
W35	Bernie Pritchett	30:58	14-Jun-05
W40	Marilyn Clarke	30:37	19-Aug-97
W45	Danielle Sanderson	30:44	15-Apr-08
W50	Susan McDonald	30:45	16-Apr-19
W55	Ange Norris	33:20	13-Jun-17
W60	Maggie Statham	34:50	12-May-15
W65	Margaret Moody	36:33	10-Jun-14
W70	Sue Lambert	41:09	26-Jul-11
W75	Pam Jones	43:03	19-Jun-12
W80	Pam Jones	51:29	13-Jun-17

*Allcomers M35 Record of 26:51 set by non-member, T. Grimes, 18/4/17 ** Allcomers M65 Record of 29:31 set by non-member, B. Bradbury, 16/4/19 *** Allcomers M75 record of 39:53 set by non-member, D. Moorekite, 22/8/17

Battersea Park Road Race Grand Prix

Each race's finishing times are converted to age graded percentages. The member with the best average of three performances will be presented with the Snow Cup, an impressive longstanding VAC trophy currently held by last year's winner, Ian Kitching (M65).

After April's fixture, Tony Tuohy tops the table with a performance which equates to an age-graded percentage of 90.25%. Sue McDonald (W50) is in second place with 89.70%, followed by Penny Elliott (W75) in third with 89.51%. Note that three performances are needed for the Snow Cup competition.

Virgin Money London Marathon, 28 April



At least 34 VAC members appreciated the cool conditions at the 39th London Marathon. Richard McDowell of Hercules Wimbledon (pictured left as VAC's Cross Country champion) was the star performer, achieving distinction as the first Masters athlete over the line in the non-elite race. With the VLM defining Masters as 40 and over, Richard qualified by just nine days. His time of 2:23:08 placed him 10th in the non-elite field. Another VAC star was Kent AC's Chris Greenwood who

came in as 1st M45 in a fine time of 2:25:50. Fellow Kent AC runner, Robert Laing, was 6th in the M40 category with 2:27:17. In the older age groups, Liam O'Hare's 3:48:21 placed him 11th in the M70 category, whilst John Foss was 12th in the M60s.



VAC's women had their stars too. Ange Norris from Dulwich Runners and Susanna Harrison from Guildford & Godalming dominated the W55 age group. Ange was 2nd in a time of 3:12:58, whilst Susanna was 3rd in 3:14:35.

VAC's club place had been won in a ballot by Alan Roberts who is in the M55 age group. He completed the course in a creditable 3:55:09.

Special congratulations once again go to VAC's Bill O'Connor who is famous as one of the dwindling band of London Marathon "Ever-Presents". He kept up his amazing record and competed for the 39th time, completing the course in 5:33:13. After this year's marathon, ten ever-presents remain.

And finally, could you run the VLM as the tail-end of a sausage dog? Well, that is exactly what VAC's Victoria Carter did. The three-person team (photo above) completed the course in a remarkable 3:26:53.

A list of members taking part, and their times, is on the VAC website.

RACE WALKING

4th Cecil Gittins Memorial Walks, Cyclopark, Gravesend, 9 March 2019. Veterans AC 2.5k/5k/10k/15k road race incorporating Enfield League

Veterans AC were pleased to host the fourth running of this event on a dedicated cycle circuit with many loops and gradients. In all there were 34 paid entries with 28 on the line, a little down on 2018, with ages ranging from 13 to 80.

The conditions although bright, sunny and not too cold were hampered by unrelenting high winds on this very exposed course which was testing for athletes, officials and judges. Given the conditions the biggest success of the day was the ever-improving Jacqueline Benson (Ashford AC) who chopped 5 minutes off her 2018 time to win the ladies' 10k in 1:00:07 to record her first Enfield League win.

George Wilkinson (EHAC) convincingly won the men's 10k race in 50:58, with a margin of nearly 9 minutes ahead of the next walker, and added the win to his growing list of achievements.

The men's 15k was won in 1:24:31 by SWC's Francisco Reis with a commanding lead of nearly 13 minutes over the second finisher, Stuart Bennett. For the ladies' 15k VAC were pleased to welcome Cath Duhig (Ryston Runners) who finished in 1:45:00.

The supporting races included the only other athlete to improve their 2018 time, Charlotte Wallis (AFD) in the 2.5k. The ladies' 5k race was won by Isabelle Bridge (Blackheath). Her club colleague Abi Smith's made a first attempt at the distance.

Other first timers were Belgrave's Stefano Zennaro who completed his first 10k in 1:00:48 meaning that going under the hour is now a very real prospect. Centurion aspirant Don Arthurs (Ashford) finished his first ever road race in the sport with a 'baptism of fire' in the 15k.

VAC are grateful to Ron Wallwork for allowing this race to be incorporated in the Enfield League series.

Full results are available on the VAC Website.

NEWLETTER PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs on the Front and Back Page and on Page 12 and 27 were supplied by Tom Phillips: www.tomphillipsphotos.co.uk and www.thegreatdolomiteroad.co.uk

BIOGRAPHY

Shaun Lightman is well known for his appearance in the Mexico Olympics in 1968, but there is much more to tell. This is his story.

I was born during an air raid on 15th April, 1943. My granny delivered me. In 1944 the family were narrowly missed by a V1 bomb. My father fought at D day, Caen, Falaise, towards Arnhem and finished in Ludensheid.

After the Second World War my parents cycled most Summer Sundays from Hounslow to Littlehampton, where we would camp overnight – so I was brought up expecting to spend hours on the road. My parents' philosophy was, "Do the best you can – that is all we ask".

I attended Hounslow College, where Bill Hamblin was sports master. He produced Don Thompson, Buster Watson and Ade Mafi amongst others. I first set foot on an Athletics track on Friday 24th April 1953. The crunch of spikes on cinders and I

was sold. That Summer I won my first certificate for 2nd place in the 440yards.

At the age of 13 I joined Thames Valley Harriers and was a member of their Cross Country teams and ran the mile for them on the track. Also training there was Metropolitan Walking Club which I joined. A small group coached by 1936 Olympic gold medalist Harold Whitlock, consisting of Don Thompson, Tom Misson, Arthur Thompson, Nigel Thompson and several others.

I continued running and walking racing against Peter Marlow, Peter Selby and Dave Delaney. By the age of 17 I was training with Don, Arthur, Martin Higgins and Jim Richards; 20miles most Sundays and speed work and circuit training in the week. I would also feed Tom Misson on his races. A huge inspiration at that time was Don winning the Olympic Gold Medal in the Rome Olympics in 1960.

My first long race was the Garnet 10miles 3rd February 1961 where I finished 37th in 89m 01s. 108 finished. That year I won the 1 mile National Junior Championship in 6m 54.5s. from John Paddick and Martin Higgins. The following year I came 9th in the Birmingham Outer Circle 25+miles in 4hrs 0m 4secs. The next year I competed again in the Birmingham Outer Circle finishing in 6th place in



3hrs 52m 54s. Met won the team race. That same year I won the 1mile national championship in 6m 46.6s.

I studied for my degree at St David's College Lampeter. On completing my degree Tom Misson said that I could, if I wanted to, make the international team. I stayed with him in the Summer of 1966. In September I began teaching PE and RE at Winton House Croydon. That year I won the Met 20km, beating Paul Nihill and John Webb. I won the National 50km at Redditch by 7 minutes from Don and Ray Middleton. I subsequently beat Don over the Hasting to Brighton course by just over 1 minute. This qualified me for the Lugano Cup final in Bad Saarow. In that race I tried to beat Christoph Hohne but slowed down in the second half to finish 9th in 4hrs 30mins. GB finished 3rd team.

The next year I finished 3rd in the National 50km behind Paul Nihill and Bryan Eley and so qualified for the Olympic Games in Mexico. This was a first for many reasons: it was the first games to be held at altitude. The press said we would die. It was the first use of a synthetic track, the first use of colour television, there

was Dick Fosbury with the Fosbury Flop, Bob Beamon's world record long jump and Al Oerter's 4th Olympic gold in the Discus. There was a students' uprising and someone might be shot. The temperature on the day on the track was approaching 100 degrees. I finished in 18th position.

In 1969, I trained with Paul Nihill and qualified for the European Games 50km in Athens. The race was held in August at 2.00 pm. I collapsed at 35 km. Paul, who had won the Gold medal in the 20km, said "I can't find his pulse – I think he's dead!" I came round 2 hrs later.

In 1970 I qualified for the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. I roomed with Ron Wallwork and we walked together for the first 10miles when I faded and finished 7th (2hr 44m 50s.)

In 1972 I failed to qualify for the Munich Olympic Games – the trial at Badminton was very hot and I finished 8th. In 1973 I qualified for the Lugano Cup in Lugano and finished 12th in 4hr 15m 14s.

I continued to make B internationals but never again reached the top flight. My final international appearance was in the Airolo to Chiasso relay for the British Race Walkers Club where we finished in second position.

In 1979 I decided that I would remain in Race Walking as a competitor and a coach – helping Mark Easton, Chris Cheeseman and Sean Sullivan (NewZealand) and more recently juniors from Blackheath and Bromley – Isabelle Bridge, Abi Smith, Katie Brash and the others in the hope that they can succeed in friendship of a great world wide sport.

PARKRUN

CALLING ALL OCTOGENARIANS TO BUSHY PARK ON 6TH JULY

This year, what has become an annual fixture on the Parkrun scene, the summer gathering in Bushy Park of many male and female masters athletes, will take place on Saturday 6th July.

15 octogenarians celebrated together in 2017, and 38 were there in 2018. We will be surprised if less than 50 take part this year, so put the date in your diary now and look forward to celebrating after the 'timed run' with a glass of Prosecco and a cup cake.

We hope that many youngsters who have just qualified by celebrating their 80th birthday will join old timer octogenarians such as Olympic steeplechaser, Eric Shirley, by then 90, together with Hugh Dunwoodie all the way from Scotland, and the many others over 85. We meet at the Eastern end of the car park.

AND FINALLY.....AN UPDATE FROM ARTHUR KIMBER BRITISH RECORD IN 4X400 RELAY



The last newsletter included a summary of medallists at the World Masters Athletics Championships in Malaga. I was pleased to receive an update from Arthur Kimber who competed in the M75 4x400m relay. Not only did the team win the bronze medal but they also

set a British record of 5.57.57. Congratulations to Arthur and the team (photo left, with Arthur on the right).



Wayne Lashley in action in the 800m at the Inter Area Indoor at Lee Valley