



**Veterans Athletic Club
Newsletter
Summer 2022**



**Franck Triolaire in action in the
Shot at the Inter Area Challenge**

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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. A 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.

Editor Angela Kikugawa Writes



I am up in the Midlands now living just outside Birmingham, where the City is frantically preparing for the Commonwealth Games. I grew up in 'Brum' and was working as a quantity surveyor in the early 1980's when Birmingham made a bid to host the 1992 Olympics. They were not successful, the bid eventually going to Barcelona and I have to admit, even those of us sporting our *Bring the Olympics to Birmingham* teeshirts, were not hopeful that it would happen.

So it is nice to see that the City has finally got something, as it's a much derided place and perhaps this will give it a chance to show some of its finer points. Contrary to popular belief it's a very green city with over 8,000 acres of parks and green space. The FA cup was made here, as was the anchor for the Titanic and tennis was invented here apparently in 1859. A common boast is that the City has more canals than Venice! (Probably more shopping trollies and old tyres floating in them as well.) Seriously, it is not that bad and the City Centre has been much improved in preparation for the Games. Additionally Alexander Stadium has been redeveloped and will have a capacity of 30,000 for the track and field events.

The Games begin on 28th July and run through until the 8th August and have a full track and field programme that will be extensively covered by the BBC. Looking at the schedule I suspect it will be wall to wall for the duration of the games so plenty of good viewing. If that is not enough for you the Games will be preceded by the World Athletics Championships in Oregon (15-24 July) and followed by the European Championships in Munich in the middle of August.

And then of course there is the World Cup.....



Message from Peter Kennedy

With 567 members in mid-June, we are still growing and if everyone whose memberships lapsed last March were now to renew, we would pass the 700 mark. This is considerably more than we have had before and makes us much larger than any other area club at present. We are putting on more competitions for our members than the other clubs apart from NEMAA who are also flourishing. Membership rates are unchanged as well. I hope that we can translate this strength into winning the inter-area challenge events.

The major weakness we still have however is a shortfall in qualified Track & Field officials. Your committee is trying to find innovative ways to address the problem, but the simplest way is for members to give up a little of their time to become officials. To those prepared to make a commitment to officiating for VAC, we can offer free membership, free training and free entry to some of our competitions such as the LICC league meetings. The precise details of the commitment expected of you as an official have still to be worked out because we do not want to hinder the achievement of your athletics goals. Please let Ros Tabor or me know via membership@vetsac.org.uk if you are willing to help. The BMAF has a similar challenge to get enough officials for its national competitions and there will soon be an announcement of what they can offer to officials.

Peter Kennedy: Veterans AC Membership Secretary

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2022 Fixtures Refer to the VAC website (www.vetsac.org.uk) for updates and additions.

Date	Organiser	Event	Venue	Entry	Entry Closing Date
Saturday 23 July 2022	Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers on behalf of LICC	London Inter Club Challenge (LICC) Outdoor Track & Field Event	StoneX Stadium, Greenlands Lane, Hendon, London NW4 1RL	VAC members welcome. Full range of outdoor T&F events. Enter on the Entry4Sports website.	17 July
Wed. 27 July 2022	VAC	VAC 5,000m track championships Four seeded races OPEN TO ALL MASTERS ATHLETES	Wimbledon Park athletics track, Wimbledon Park Road, SW19 7HR	Details and online entry through OpenTrack. First race at 6pm 4 seeded races,	22 July
Sunday 31 July 2022	England Masters Athletics Association	British Masters Inter Area Outdoor Track & Field Challenge (VAC team to enter) Competition for members of BMAF Area Clubs. All events listed are for men and women but there may be few events in older age groups.	The Pingles Stadium, Avenue Rd, Nuneaton CV11 4LX	35-49, 50- 59, 60-69, 70+. Events: 100m 200m 400m 800m 1500m 3000m shortH 2km walk, 4 x 100m, LJ HJ TJ PV SP DT JT HT.	VAC Team selected in advance in June. Enquiries to Entries Secretary
Tuesday 2 August 2022	VAC	VAC Battersea Park Summer Series 5mile Masters Road Race and Open Race Walk	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Race HQ at the Bandstand.	7pm start. Details and online entry through OpenTrack.	29 July

Date	Organiser	Event	Venue	Entry	Entry Closing Date
Sunday 14 August 2022	Isle of Man Veteran Athletes' Club	British Masters Marathon Championships To be held within the Isle of Man Marathon.	Ramsey Isle of Man	Details and online entry through OpenTrack.	British Masters entries close 9 August
Sat/Sun 20-21 August 2022	BMAF Services	British Masters Decathlon/Heptathlon Championships	Wavertree Athletics Stadium, Liverpool	Details and Online entry will be on OpenTrack	Closing date to be announced
Sunday 28 August 2022	Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers on behalf of LICC	London Inter Club Challenge (LICC) Outdoor Track & Field Event	StoneX Stadium, Greenlands Lane, Hendon, London NW4 1RL	VAC members welcome. Full range of outdoor T&F events. Enter on the Entry4Sports website.	21 August
Saturday 10 Sept 2022	Tooting Common parkrun	5km parkrun Featuring VAC "mob match" gathering.	Start on the path between Dr Johnson Ave/Tooting Bec Common Café.	Start time: 9am. New parkrunners must register with <u>parkrun</u> to obtain a Barcode. Look out for VAC vests!	Enter on the day (but need your Barcode)
Wednesday 14 Sept 2022	VAC	VAC 10,000m track championships Three seeded races.	Millennium Arena, Battersea Park. London SW11 4NJ	Three races seeded slowest to fastest. First race: 17:50	9 Sept Details and online entry through OpenTrack
Saturday 1 October 2022	VAC	VAC and Surrey, Middlesex, Herts & Sussex 10k Track Walk Championships	Coulsdon Track, Woodcote High School, Meadow Rise, Coulsdon.	1 pm All ages welcome. 10k track walk Enquiries Dave Hoben	Closing date to be announced

Date	Organiser	Event	Venue	Entry	Entry Closing Date
Saturday 15 October 2022	Men's and Ladies Surrey League	Cross Country Races Match 1 (VAC Men's and Women's teams)	Priory Park, Reigate (to be confirmed)	All VAC men and women (1 st and 2 nd claim) are eligible, subject to conditions. VAC vest necessary.	Advance notice to Paddy Clark (men) or Maggie Statham-Berry (women)
Saturday 15 October 2022	England Masters Athletics Association (EMAA)	England Masters Cross Country Trial and Selection Race for the England Team for the British & Irish Masters CC International on 12 November.	Within the North Midlands CC League at Markeaton Park, Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 4AA	Open to all UKA Registered members of BMAF area clubs in England. Athletes must ALSO complete an application form.	Monday 26 Sept for entry to the trial race for the England team Details and Online entry on OpenTrack. VAC members send the form to Mike Mann ..
12 November 2022	Men's and Ladies Surrey League	Cross Country Races Match 2 (VAC Men's and Women's teams)	To be decided	All VAC men and women (1 st and 2 nd claim) are eligible, subject to conditions. VAC vest necessary.	Advance notice to Paddy Clark (men) or Maggie Statham-Berry (women)
12 November 2022	All UK Country Associations Republic of Ireland	British & Irish Masters Cross Country International	Venue: Santry Demesne, Dublin	Each participating country has a selection procedure.	Trial race on 15 Oct. for the England team.

Other information

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

For enquiries and further information please contact the [Entries Secretary](#) or the relevant race secretary.

NEWS

Notice of VAC's Annual General Meeting, 7pm Thursday 22 September

After two years of Zoom online meetings, there will be a return to the customary face-to-face gathering. I hope you will attend. The venue is a meeting room in the Premier Inn, 82-83 Eccleston Square (off Gillingham Street), Victoria, London SW1V 1PS.

The AGM is an opportunity for members to become involved with the club by standing for election to the Committee, making proposals, asking questions and voting on proposals. The Treasurer will present VAC's financial accounts for the year and Committee members will deliver reports on their areas of responsibility.

Please submit any nominations for officers to serve on the 2022-23 VAC Committee and any proposals for consideration at the AGM to [Ros Tabor](#), the Secretary, by Thursday 8 September. The present officers of the Committee may be prepared to continue in their roles, but to deliver an ambitious agenda of events and initiatives, **we need new people and extra help**. Please consider joining the Committee to bring much needed support. If you could provide help in any aspect, make yourself known to a Committee member at any time.

If you cannot join the AGM, you are welcome to feed in your views and suggestions in advance by email, letter or phone call to the [Secretary](#) or another Committee member. Details of the present VAC Committee are listed at the front of this newsletter and on the [Committee Members](#) page of VAC's website.

TCS London Marathon, 2 October 2022

VAC was allocated one place for this autumn's TCS London Marathon. Eleven members expressed interest in taking part and a name was drawn from a hat at the VAC T&F championships. The lucky person is Tom Armstrong of Herne Hill Harriers. Good luck Tom! Good luck also to Robert Scott of Barnet & District who deferred his VAC place to the 2022 event.

STOP PRESS!

World Athletics Championships Tampere, Finland

In the cross country races, VAC's Anna Garnier (W65) and Pauline Rich (W75) have won fine individual Silver medals. Also, Ros Tabor's great performance won her a fantastic Gold medal as a member of the-winning W70 team. There are many VAC members in Finland and we look forward to hearing about their experiences and achievements.

Track and Field

VAC Track and Field Championships, Kingsmeadow Stadium, 5 June

After an absence of 2 years VAC was pleased to be able to resume its track and field championships. Earlier in the year, our T&F Secretary, Giuseppe

Minetti, had stepped in to provide leadership to save the annual Surrey & Sussex Masters match from likely cancellation. The previous organiser had decided the time was right to step back after many years hard work on the successful and popular event. It was logical to combine the Surrey and Sussex Masters event with VAC's championship as it is always hard to recruit sufficient officials and volunteers to help. It would also allow better competition for VAC and County members.

On the day, thankfully, the forecast rain held off and conditions were good. The meeting was popular and most events had filled up. Kingsmeadow Stadium has two throwing cages which meant that we could offer a full schedule of five throwing events, including the heavy hammer.

A highlight of the meeting was the superb European Masters' record of 3.03m in the M75 pole vault, set by Neal Mason of Midland Masters AC.



There were great performances by over one hundred VAC members. Some of the notable successes are mentioned here, but there were many others. Patrick Reynolds (M70) was one of the most prolific VAC competitors. He completed eight events, including four throws, two jumps and two sprints,

collecting three Gold and five Silver medals. His main M70 opponent, Tony Richards, competed in all five throws, taking Gold medals in each of them. Ever-present Allan Long (M75, but nearly M80 and pictured above wearing 96) claimed Golds in the 100m, 200m, Long Jump and Triple Jump. In-form, Chris Loudon (M35) had a fine win in a class 5,000m race. Stuart Leigh (M55) mixed the short and long hurdles with the three sprints (100m, 200m and 400m) and took four Golds and one Silver medal. In the three sprints, Michael Vassiliou (M60) and Giuseppe Minetti (M50) won Golds in each. In a sparkling 400m race, Michael, Giuseppe and Stuart were pitched together, with Michael claiming the win.



For the women, Tracey Gold (W45) won four Gold medals in the Shot, Discus, Hammer and Heavy Hammer. In the Pole Vault, Stacey Gonzalez Betancourt (W45) achieved a magnificent PB of 2.90m. Kate Carter (W45 and pictured above wearing 122) also set PBs in the 1500m and 5000m races. In the

1500m, she had a clear win in a classy mixed age-group women's race in a time of 5:13.52. In the 5,000m, she was seeded with the fastest men but held her own to clock 18:54.48 as first woman and a Gold medal winner. Lisa Thomas (W55) was rewarded by a Gold medal and a PB of 29.88 in the 200m. She also won the 400m Gold and 800m Silver.

Thank you to VAC members who volunteered and worked hard all day. Full results are available on Opentrack and Power of 10.

INDOOR

European Masters Indoor Championships, Braga, Portugal 20-27 February

Originally planned for March 2020 but cancelled due to the pandemic, these indoor championships were offered again by Braga two years on. Braga is a pleasant city with a historic centre in Northern Portugal, a short trip inland from Porto. The athletics venue was the Altice Forum, a very modern event space a short walk from the city centre and main hotels. Congratulations to our medal winners (known VAC individual winners below).

VAC European Indoor Medal Winners at Braga				
Event	Pos	Name	1st claim club	Perf
400 M35 (22 Feb)	2	Craig Cox	Crawley	50.79
400 M60 (22 Feb)	1	Mike Vassiliou	Enfield & Haringey	58.67
400 W55 (22 Feb)	1	Virginia Mitchell	Guilf'd&God/Walton	63.03
800 W40 (23 Feb)	2	Zoe Doyle	Wycombe	02:18.6
800 W55 (23 Feb)	2	Virginia Mitchell	Guilf'd&God/Walton	02:24.3
800 M55 (23 Feb)	3	Andrew Ridley	VAC	02:07.0
60 M65 (24 Feb)	1	David Elderfield	Lonely Goat RC	8.17
3000 M55 (24 Feb)	3	Ben Reynolds	Thames H&H/Tonbridge	09:43.8
200 M35 (26 Feb)	3	Craig Cox	Crawley	22.87
1500 M55 (26 Feb)	1	Andrew Ridley	VAC	04:25.6

England Masters Indoor Inter Area Challenge, Lee Valley, 13 March

VAC's men's and women's teams performed magnificently at the annual Challenge between seven Masters Area Clubs. VAC was a superb THIRD overall, with the women second in their match. The third-place result was very close, with SCVAC just 5 points behind. The 40 VAC team members fought for every place in highly competitive events, often doubling up and sometimes filling gaps outside their usual disciplines.

A highlight was the Championship Best Performance of 1:53.92 achieved by the M60 Relay team of Pat Logan, Adrian Day, Brian Steene and Liam Mulrooney who are opposite. The W50 Relay team of Sue Wisdom, Rachel Waters, Lisa Thomas and Angela Bates were also first and are shown overleaf.

There were 13 individual 1st places including two by Zoe Doyle who is pictured on the back page (W35 800m and 1500m).

Other firsts for the women were Angela Bates (W50) and Sue Wisdom (W60) in the 60m sprint, Hayley Cargill in the W35 400m, Lisa Webb (W50) and Anna Garnier (W60) in the 800m and Lisa Thomas (W50) and Lucy Woolhouse (W60) in the 1500m.

Firsts for the men were achieved by Mike Cummings (M35 800m), Chris Loudon (M35 1500m), Dave Annetts (M35 2k Walk) and Tony Richards who won the M70 Shot. In addition, there were 14 second places and 12 third places.



M60 Men's Relay team, winners in a new CBP: Adrian Day, Pat Logan, Liam Mulrooney, Brian Steene (photo Cliff Hide)

The next Inter Area match is the outdoor Challenge at the Pingles Stadium, Nuneaton, on Sunday 31 July. There is a range of track and field events for the 35-49, 50-59, 60-69 and 70+ age groups. Thank you to all who have expressed an interest in joining VAC's team. Initial selections were made in June and hopefully any gaps will be filled before the event. Reserves will be needed. Enquiries about possible places should be made to Entries@vetsac.org.uk (Maggie Statham-Berry).

Full results can be found on the VAC website. The front page shows Franck Triolaire(M45) in action in the shot where he threw 9.55m. Franck also took part in the long jump.



W50 Women's Relay team, winners: Rachel Waters, Lisa Thomas, Angela Bates, Sue Wisdom (photo Maggie Statham-Berry)

CROSS COUNTRY

The 2021-2022 season was completed successfully and included a full programme of Surrey League and championship events. Commendably, Governing bodies and officials found ways of staging safe competitions and minimising the risk of the spread of Covid. The cross country running community returned duly refreshed and enthusiastic, relishing the mud and the hills!

Men's Surrey League

VAC's men fielded full teams of ten scorers in each of the four matches of the season. Indeed, in three of the matches, VAC's teams of nearly 20 men were rewarded by high placings in the B team competition. After the first two

matches in October (Epsom Downs) and November (Denbies Vineyard), VAC was placed 9th out of the 14 clubs in Division Four.

The third match was at Richmond Park in January, starting and finishing at Sheen Gate. The course had its hills and was slippery in places but the weather was benign. A magnificent turnout of 19 men, most of whom were captured in the photograph below, was led by Malcolm Davies (M50) closely followed by Chris Ness (M50). In third and fourth places, evenly matched in the M60 age group, were Tony Harran and Peter Hall. Vic Maughn, Andy Mitchelson, Bruce McLaren, Peter Giles, John Barron and Chris Lee made up the scoring team. After three matches, VAC was still 9th overall.



The final match was at Lloyd Park, Croydon, in February. The course is renowned for being wet, and on this occasion as the photograph opposite shows, it was certainly at its wettest and muddiest. Storm Eunice brought heavy rain and gusty high winds which the runners and officials endured stoically, amidst slips and falls, with saturated shoes and filthy kit. The harsh

weather did not deter VAC's team of thirteen, led home in style by Mark Cursons in 14th position in Division Four, and first M55. He was followed by Malcolm Davies and Chris Ness in 35th and 36th places who are pictured below in numbers 2113 and 2133 respectively. These two have had close contests during the season and were only separated by one second this time. Vaughan Ramsay, making his debut for VAC in the Surrey League, was the 4th scorer. Then came the two top M60s in their customary battle, Peter Hall and Tony Harran. The A team was completed by Bruce McLaren, Duncan Rimmer, Andy Mitchelson and Steve Smythe. The back-up runners in the B team were Dave West, Gary Budinger and John Carter. Gary did well to finish, having collided with a tree in the poor conditions!



VAC placed a magnificent fourth out of the 14 clubs at Lloyd Park and remained a creditable ninth overall at the end of the season. Individual Surrey League season's honours were won by Peter Hall and Tony Harran who were in joint first place in the M60+ category.

Thanks go to the 29 men who ran in the VAC teams during the season. Six of them (Gary Budinger, Malcom Davies, Peter Hall, Tony Harran, Andy Mitchelson and Chris Ness) ran in all four matches. Consistent back-up was provided by Mike Mann, Carey Gray, Clive Walker, Andy Murray, Ed Skinner, John Carter, Ian Strong and Dave West who all ran in three of the matches.

A special thank you also goes to Paddy Clark, the team manager, who mustered the team and provided shelter and support with dedication and good humour at each match, as well as being a willing helper, marshalling and recording.

Surrey League Men's Division 4: Final Standings 2021-22

1	Holland Sports AC (promoted)	779
2	London City Runners (promoted)	1521
3	Tadworth AC	1676
4	Elmbridge	2048
5	Lingfield Running Club	2387
6	Runnymede	2849
7	Optima Racing Team	2978
8	Collingwood	2984
9	VAC	3041
10	British Airways	3285
11	Windrush	3288.5
12	Horley Harriers	3851
13	Epsom Oddballs	4167
14	Dulwich Park Runners	4270.5

VAC Men's and Women's Teams in the Surrey League

It's great news that VAC's women will be able to enter a team in Division 2 of the Surrey Ladies League in October. The races are friendly and supportive, and lots of fun. The men's and women's matches are held on the same day

and there will be four fixtures (October, November, January and February). The recent Surrey League AGM decided that the Men's Division 3/4 matches should, if possible, be staged at the same venue as the Ladies Division 2 matches, so it works out perfectly for VAC's men and women to be co-located and offer mutual support. The first matches are scheduled for 15 October, provisionally at Priory Park, Reigate. The second matches are set for 12 November.

Many VAC members compete for their first claim clubs in the Surrey League, and that's fine. However, if your first claim club doesn't need you, you would be most welcome in the VAC teams. First-claim VAC members are eligible to compete for VAC. Also second claim members are allowed to run for VAC **as long as they do not compete for their first claim club in any of the four league matches in any of the Divisions in the 2022-23 season.** Members from outside Surrey are also very welcome, although the Surrey fixtures often clash with those of other county leagues.

Ten are required for a complete men's scoring team, and five for a Ladies team, but there is no limit on the VAC turn-out. The more team members we have, the greater the strength in depth and the bigger the impact. Every VAC runner is welcomed and appreciated. Please let men's team manager Paddy Clark (paddyclark@hotmail.com) and Maggie Statham-Berry (for the women) know if you plan to join the teams.

VAC Cross Country Championships, 22 January

VAC's championship race made a welcome return to Wimbledon Common after the cancellation of the 2021 event. It attracted an entry of well over 100, with 93 finishers on the day.

The course was a new one, devised to avoid golf holes and to present a fast, challenging route using Wimbledon Common's classic trails. The two-lap course, totalling around 5 miles, started and finished at the grassy area

adjacent to the Fox and Grapes pub near the Causeway. It included a scenic tour of the Queensmere pond and a steep climb back up to the Windmill on the plain.



Richard McDowell (M40) regained his title as VAC's Men's Champion which he last held in 2019. He completed the course in a time of 25:49, comfortably ahead of second placed Chris Loudon (M35) in 26:37. Chris (pictured in number 67) was pushed all the way by Micah Evans (M40 and number 40) with the effort clearly showing!

Sue McDonald (W50), 18th in the race, was the women's Champion in a fine time of 31:58. Lydia

Birch (W35) was second in 32:43 followed by Rachel Berry (W50) in 33:08.

VAC Gold medals were won by Oliver Morrison (M45), Gareth George (M50), Mark Tennyson (M55), Mike Boyle (M60), John Barron (M65), Julian Spencer-Wood (M70) and Peter Giles (M75).

For the women, VAC Gold medals were won by Pippa Major (W55), Lucy Woolhouse (W60), Anna Garnier (W65) and Margaret Moody (W70).

The times recorded by the age group winners will form the inaugural course records so there will be the added incentive to break the records in 2023's race.

British Masters Cross Country Championships, 12 March

The finale of the domestic Masters cross country season took place in the extensive grounds of Somerhill School, Tonbridge. The course was mostly firm grassland but very hilly, with a notable climb which was a severe test of strength and will power.

Forty-three VAC members took part. As a club, we topped the medal table with four Gold, two Silver and four Bronze medals.

In the first race, for women and the 65+ men, Clare Elms won the W55 Gold medal with a superb 5th place finish behind four runners all in the W35 age group. Maggie Statham-Berry won W65 Gold in a close contest with a rival from South West Vets. Pauline Rich had a fine run to claim the W75 Gold. For the men, Richard Bloom was a clear winner in the M75 category. Other medal winners were Pam Iannella (W60 Bronze) and Stephen Plested (M70 Bronze).

In the second race for the M35 – 64 age range, three VAC members made the top ten, a great achievement in a high-quality field. Chris Loudon was 8th (5th M35), Duncan Woolmer was 9th (M40 Bronze) and Jim Allchin was 10th (6th M35). Silver medals were won by Simon Baines (M50) and Ben Reynolds (M55). Mark Cursons won M60 Bronze.

Selection for the 2022 British & Irish Masters Cross Country International

Coronavirus restrictions forced the postponement of the international match first scheduled for November 2020 and then 2021. Thankfully, the host

country, Ireland, has been willing to stage the match in 2022 and it will return to Santry Demesne near Dublin on 12 November.

The match features five teams: England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland. For selection for the England team, there will be two trial races on 15 October 2022, held within the existing North Midlands Cross Country League races. The venue is Markeaton Park, Kedlesdon Road, Derby. Entry is via the BMAF Open Track system and the closing date is 26 September. Further details are on the competition entry page.

In order for the area selectors to have sufficient information about an athlete's 2022 achievements, it will also be necessary to complete an application form. This will be required from both those competing in the selection race and those who are not able to compete in the event but still wish to be considered for selection. Mike Mann (mcmann90@yahoo.co.uk) is the VAC contact and will be a member of the England team's selection panel.

It's an honour to be picked to represent your country and VAC is proud of those who are selected to represent any of the five nations. It would be great to see lots of VAC members wearing the VAC vest in Derby for the England selection races.

Road running

Battersea Park Summer Series

The 2022 series features four races from April to August, with two at the 5k distance and two at 5 Miles. Thankfully, we have returned to mass starts and can once again gather and chat in our friendly races. April and May's races reached their limits, and we are looking forward to a successful 5k championship on 12 July. Check out the 5k Records table below. Some are achievable but some have stood the test of time and look unbeatable.

Battersea Park 5k Records

VAC Battersea Park 5 Km: Members' Age Group Records 2002 - 2022			
Age Group	Name	Time	Date
M35	Jim Allchin	15:11	18-May-21
M40	Steve Surridge	16:19*	22-Jul-03
M45	Richard Tomlinson	16:17**	15-Jul-14
M50	Mike Boyle	16:34	21-Aug-12
M55	Neil Danby	16:33	18-May-21
M60	David Ogden	17:39	13-Jul-21
M65	John Batchelor	18:51	12-Aug-08
M70	Peter Giles	19:25	11-Jul-17
M75	Steve Charlton	20:56	20-Jul-04
M80	Steve Charlton	23:54	28-Jul-09
M85	Steve Charlton	24:57	21-Aug-12
WOMEN			
W35	Bernie Pritchett	18:15	18-Jul-06
W40	April James-Welsh	18:07	08-Jun-21
W45	Debbie Jackson	18:43***	08-Jun-21
W50	Anna Critchlow	18:45	03-Aug-21
W55	Lisa Thomas	19:55	13-Jul-21
W60	Jackie Balfour	20:24	05-Apr-22
W65	Anna Garnier	22:06	05-Apr-22
W70	Pam Jones	24:56	12-Aug-08
W75	Penny Elliott	25:55	18-May-21
W80	Pam Jones	31:17	12-Jul-16

* Allcomers M40 Record of 15:23 set by non-member, Kevin Quinn, 8 June 2021

** Allcomers M45 Record of 16:14 set by non-member, Raj Paranandi, 5 April 2022

*** Allcomers W45 Record of 18:32 set by non-member, Gina Galbraith, 3 August 2021

The final race will be 5 miles on 2 August. Please don't neglect this one! If members run in at least three of the races in the series, they are eligible to

win the Snow Cup which is awarded to the person who has the highest average age grading for his/her best three performances.

5km Road Race and Race Walk, 5 April



The first race of the summer series took place in fair weather, with little breeze, making good racing conditions. There were 75 finishers in the road race. Chris Loudon (M35) pictured left (107) won emphatically with an impressive sub-16 minute time of 15:51. Over twenty seconds behind, Raj Paranandi (left 78) (M45) edged ahead of Alex Gibbons (M45) for second and third places. Nine men went under 17

minutes in the strong, competitive field. High-ranking age group times were achieved by David Ogden (M60) (17:55), David Pitt (M65) (20:00), Julian Spencer-Wood (M70) (22:09) and Michael Johnson (M80) (25:43).

The women's winner was Jenny Heymann (W40) from Eton Manor AC in 18:41, having tracked second-placed Kay Sheedy (W35) throughout and

passing her in the closing stages. In the W60 age group, Jackie Balfour won a close contest in 20:24, followed by Pamela Whitter in 20:35 and Lucy Woolhouse in 20:51.

In the Walk, the men's winner was Dave Annetts (M55) from North Herts RR in a time of 24:17, only a few seconds slower than his personal best. The ladies' winner was Melanie Peddle (W50) from Loughton AC in another good time, 28:10. We were pleased to welcome Artur Olszewski who was a complete newcomer to the event and to race walking. He was just outside 12 minutes for each mile, which is very respectable.

5 Mile Road Race and Race Walk Championships, 10 May



Conditions were good for the 5 Mile Championship races which used a 3.5 lap course, taking in the Park's Carriage Drives and leafy Central Avenue. There were 69 finishers in the road race. Andy Bond of Dulwich Runners won in fine style. His time of 26:03 shattered the M45 record of 26:59 for 5M courses in Battersea Park, held by Simon Baines since 2018. In second place, Andrew Perfect (M45) was also within the old record, clocking 26:22. Terry Booth

(M55) was an excellent third with 28:05, eighteen seconds off Gary Ironmonger's M55 record of 27:47 set in 2018. Even closer was David Ogden (M60) whose time of 29:24 was only one second short of the long-standing record of 29:23 set by Gareth Jones in 2007. Other age group winners were Sam Jamieson (M35), Eddie Ware (M40), Martin Carmack (M50), Mike Forder (M65), Alan Davidson (M70), Peter Giles (M75) and Michael Johnson (M80).

There was an intense contest at the head of the women's race between Sue



McDonald (W50 and pictured left) and Kate Carter (W45) with Sue winning by two seconds in a time of 30:57, only twelve seconds off her own W50 course record set in 2019. For the W60s, Pamela Whitter blazed round in 33:56, pursued relentlessly by Lucy Woolhouse who clocked 34:11. Pamela's time set a new W60 record, with both Pamela and Lucy inside Maggie Statham's record of 34:50 set in 2015. Other age group winners were Lindsay Rice (W40), Pippa Major (W55), Anna Garnier (W65) and Penny Elliott (W75).

In the Walk, the overall winner was Melanie Peddle (W50) from Loughton AC, in a really good time of 45:50, just outside her personal best. Stuart Bennett (M60), Ilford AC, won the VAC championships for the men and Maureen Noel (W55) (Belgrave Harriers) was the women's VAC champion.

Vitality Westminster Mile 1 May

The Westminster Mile (around St James Park) is an Olympic Heritage race and (except for the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021) has been held annually, in central London. The race is run in different 'waves' for club runners, families, Parkrun etc. A highlight was always the Olympic wave where GB Olympians would run or walk the course, wearing their GB kit and often carrying oars, canoes, hockey sticks, fencing epees. VAC Olympic walker Ian Richards often participated.



At least 30 VAC members raced as photographed above. Mike Cummings (M35) was first for VAC in a splendid time of 4:23. He was fifth overall in the wave and the first Masters' athlete. He was closely followed by Edward Chuck (M35) in 4:25, Chris Loudon (M35) in 4:28 and Richard McDowell (M40) in 4:32. VAC's first woman was Susan McDonald (W50) in 5:31, a time which scores a magnificent 95% age grading. VAC's oldest runner was Richard Pitcairn-Knowles who is 90 this year. He finished in 14:41 and was pleased to be faster than in 2019. Full results are on the VAC website.

European Masters Non-Stadia Champs, Italy, 13-15 May: Triple Triumph for Clare Elms!



The venue was Grosseto, Tuscany, which is an hour south of Pisa and about 20k from the western coast. Temperatures were in the mid-twenties, warmer than we had been used to at home. The 10k races were held on Friday over two laps of an urban loop. The 5k was on the following morning, featuring two laps in a park. The half marathon was on Sunday morning, heading out on long roads and a cycle path by farmland, returning round the 5k park into the old centre and up around its walls.

VAC had a small contingent amongst the other GB runners. Clare Elms (left) delivered amazing performances, especially considering the heat, winning her age group in all three road runs on consecutive days. Ian Richards also medalled, gaining bronze in his age-group in the 10k walk.

Positions and times		10k 13.05.22	5k 14.05.22	1/2m 15.05.22
Clare Elms	w55	1 41.09	1 18.41	1 1.27.48
Ros Tabor	w70		4 26.25	
Alan Roberts	m55	27 49.39	24 23.13	31 1.58.01
Andy Murray	m65	22 58.06	24 26.56	25 2.05.59
Rob Sargent	m65	24 65.01	25 27.54	
		10k road walk 13.05.22		
Ian Richards	m70	3 59.43		

VAC 10k Road Championship, Richmond 10k, 26 June

47 VAC members took part in the Ranelagh Harriers Richmond 10k which was also VAC's 2022 road championship and Surrey County's championship. The attractive two-lap race, held partly on the Thames towpath alongside Teddington Lock, had 469 finishers, taking advantage of fine weather.

Simon Baines was the first VAC finisher in a time of 32:53. He was a magnificent 4th overall and first in the race's M50-59 age category. Also in the top ten was Ben Goddard who was 6th overall and first VAC M35 in a time of 33:31. Anna Critchlow (W50) was the first VAC woman and 8th in the women's race, winning the W45-54 age category in a time of 39:03. Sue McDonald (W55) was VAC's second VAC woman in 39:49.

VAC members were prominent in the race's age group awards. David Ogden was first in the M60-69 category and Jim Brown, Mike Mann and Gerry Smith took the top three places in the M70+ category. In the W65+ category, Jo Quantrill and Jane Rowden were first and second.

Other VAC Gold medals were won by Peter Robertson (M40), Andy Bond (M45), Mark Tennyson (M55), Michael Barrett (M65), Madeleine Armstrong-Plieth (W40), Ginevra Stoneley (W45), Michele Coe-O'Brien (W60), Ros Tabor (W70) and Sue Garner (W75).

Race Walking

7th Cecil Gittins Memorial Walks, 21 May

Veterans AC were pleased to host the seventh running of this event at Cyclopark, Gravesend, a dedicated cycle circuit with many gradients and bends, which has hosted Olympic BMX champion Beth Shriever.

There were 21 paid entries which was a decrease from 2021. However the number of finishers, some of whom are pictured below, was slightly up. The weather was fine and sunny, and temperatures well above average for mid-May.

There was a moment of silence before the start in memory of long-time runner and race walker Lyn Atterbury who had recently passed away.



Trevor Jones, David Walsh, Emma Dyos, Melanie Peddle, Rachel Lawless, Shaheda Arthur

There was a new winner of the ladies 5k, Amalia Cristina Silva (Belgrave Harriers) in 34:29, a new personal best, and the 5k was won by the present RWA President, Chris Hobbs (Ashford AC) in a fine time of 32:47.

The new winner of the ladies' 10k was Melanie Peddle in 58:36, again a new PB, and her second win in a VAC event in two weeks. There was also a new winner of the men's 10k, Dave Walsh from Enfield & Haringey AC, in 59:02. By far the most successful outcome was Lesley Morris (Ilford AC) who had a significant PB lopping 7 minutes off her previous time.

Parkrun

Wimbledon Common and Sutcliffe Park

At least 15 VAC members visited Wimbledon Common on a cold day in February to run or walk the parkrun, having been warmly welcomed in the briefing beforehand. The two-lap course had some muddy puddles but was wide and flat, with a pleasant view of the Kingsmere pond and the Wimbledon Windmill as a back drop. VAC members achieved the top four age graded positions for the day's event. Top of the list was Lucy Woolhouse (W60) (87.50%) followed by Maggie Statham-Berry (W65) (81.78%), Jane Rowden (W65) (81.73%) and Marion Rayner (W70) (78.38%). There were 424 finishers.



In May, eleven VAC members gathered in the sunshine at Sutcliffe Park, near Eltham. The three lap course on tarmac and gravel encircled the perimeter of

the park's attractive nature reserve which featured wetlands, wild flowers and a family of swans. VAC's Chris Loudon was the fastest finisher of the event's 193 parkrunners. His time set a new M35 age group record and was only four seconds off the all-time male record for the course. Anna Garnier's time of 22:20 was also a new record for the W65 age group. She also achieved the top age graded performance for the day's event (95.00%). Maggie Statham-Berry (86.55%), Ros Tabor (86.53%) and Julie Backley (85.54%) were 3rd, 4th and 6th on this list.



Maggie Statham-Berry, Andy Mitchelson, Matthew Preston, Anna Garnier, Chris Loudon, Ros Tabor, Mike Mann, Andy Murray, John Carter, Peter Hamilton, Julie Backley

For VAC's next parkrun gathering we will be visiting the Tooting Common parkrun on 10 September. Please come along if you're from round that way or be a tourist and tick it off your list. Look out for the VAC vests. It's a great way to meet fellow VAC members and feel part of the club.

Bushy Park Octogenarians: YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD

On a fresh, sunny, 2nd July morning, at the birthplace of Parkrun, Bushy Park, 41 of the 1113 finishers were aged over 80. Grateful thanks must go to George Frogley, as this was the fifth successful gathering of athletes over 80. The idea was originally created by him in 2017.

There were excellent times set in all three 80, 85 and 90 age groups. First W80 was Eva Osborne with 29:56 and an extraordinary Age Grade score of 93.54%. For the men Martin Gillett was first M80 in 26:45 and Ramon Saiz topped the M85 group with 36:54.



However, top honours must go to the two first home in the oldest age groups, both having travelled from afar. Mary Anstey, from South West Vets, set a new W85-89 age group best of 34:44 and Geoff Jackson, from Didcot, did the same with 49:48 in the M90-95 age group.

Members: Alan Dolton

Alan Dolton has been a member of VAC since 1996 and has competed in Masters' track events for many years. He supports his club, Striders of Croydon, in competition and coaching, as well as being a prolific parkrunner, reaching the milestone of 500 parkruns in February, with nearly 400 of them at the Lloyd parkrun, Croydon. However, there is much more to tell, as he explains....

I began running to try to improve my fitness for football, and soon discovered that I showed more ability at running than at football. I joined Croydon Harriers in March 1980 and competed in my first track race that summer: a 1500 metres where I placed fifth out of eight runners in 4 minutes 35.2.



I ran my first 10-mile road race in October 1980 at Epsom, recording 65.02 after which I decided to increase my mileage. In April 1981, on training of between 40 and 50 miles a week, I ran 58 minutes 53 in the Herne Hill 10-mile road race at Brockwell Park. In October 1981 my name appeared in Athletics Weekly for the first time when I placed tenth in an East Surrey League cross-country race at Lloyd Park. In the equivalent race 12 months later, I was pleased to finish second, although I was over a minute behind the winner, Bob Treadwell.

I increased my mileage further to about 60 miles per week, running every day, and was rewarded with some good results in 1984. In the summer I set lifetime bests of 3 minutes 56.1 for 1500 metres and 8 minutes 25.3 for 3000 metres and in September I came home first on the opening leg of the Walton Road Relay, after Martin Duff had led for most of the leg.

In February 1985 I ran the Woking 10-mile road race and finished 27th in a lifetime best of 51 minutes 32. I did not make any further improvement for a couple of years, but in 1987 I ran lifetime bests at 10000 metres and 5000 metres (31 minutes 01.9 and 14 minutes 45.5). This was the peak of my running career.

I entered the 'veterans' ranks on my 40th birthday in December 1996. In May 1997 I was very pleased to win the Surrey Veterans 1500 metre championship. Three months later I ran in the South of England Veterans

Championships at Enfield. In the 1500 metres I finished second but managed to win the 5000 metres.

I had a disappointing year in 1998 and decided that it was time for me to attempt a marathon. I began training with Striders of Croydon, who did regular long Sunday runs. I soon discovered that I did not really enjoy the marathon, and only ran three of them, recording my lifetime best of 3 hours 25 in Barcelona in 2002. After this I reverted to training for shorter distances.

As I have aged, I have found it takes me much longer to recover from races and track sessions, and have had to reduce my mileage. I also race much less frequently than I used to. I am still active with Striders of Croydon, having coached the club's track sessions since September 1999 and having edited their club magazine since 2012. I have run a total of more than 90,000 miles since beginning serious training in 1980, and I am hoping that I will be able to reach 100,000 miles before my 75th birthday in ten years' time.

Photographs

Many thanks to Cliff Hide for his photographs. For copies contact cliffhide10@aol.com.



Zoe Doyle who had first place finishes at 800m and 1500m in the indoor Inter Area match. She also won W40 Gold medals at these distances at BMAF's indoor championships as well as a Silver medal at 800m at the European indoor championships.