

Veterans Athletic Club Newsletter



Spring 2017

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Stephen Philcox wins the 5m road race at Battersea Park in May and Patricia Thomas takes the W50 title at the Cross Country Championships on Wimbledon Common in January.

VAC Committee Members: 2016–2017

President	Vacant	
Secretary (Committee Chair)	Ros Tabor	secretary@vetsac.org.uk
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Vice Presidents	Chris Flint David Hoben Peter Kennedy	
Auditor	Nick Lauder	

Veterans Athletic Club was established in 1931 and is affiliated to the BMAF, South of England AA, Surrey County AA and the Race Walking 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 for you to compete with other like-minded masters/veterans. The Spring/Summer/Autumn 2017 fixture list is printed in the newsletter. Please support these events. The newsletter welcomes contributions and events always need volunteers, as well as competitors. So if you want to get involved, contact any of the officials listed above.



Message from the Membership Secretary Peter Kennedy to all VAC members about OpenTrack.

We are now using several computer systems that help the club in its membership and competition management, including both our own website and OpenTrack.

Members without access to the information online lose a lot, so if you don't have access to a computer can I suggest asking someone to do it for you; that way you don't miss out. In terms of using the systems I know it can be a bit daunting, but as a first step please read the online user guide, as this will answer the more routine queries such as password resets. If you need further help then myself and Maggie are willing to assist if you phone us.

I appreciate that some of you are hesitant about using OpenTrack or think it is too complicated to understand. Can I reassure you though, that most users, particularly after they have gone through each process once, do find it quick and easy to use. For the benefit of those who have been struggling, we plan to rewrite the registration process as a "wizard" which is jargon for something that steers you through the process easily. In addition there are other improvements in the pipeline.

Finally a recap on what you need to do in OpenTrack:

- Renew your membership once a year
- Don't leave competition entries until the last few hours
- Keep an eye on the status of your UKA registration with England Athletics, which is due every April.
- Update your personal details if they change – address, phone numbers, first claim athletics club
- Add your athletics interests so that we can send you the communications you wish to receive.

Regards

Peter Kennedy: VAC Membership Secretary

Editor Angela Kikugawa Writes

As I travel quite a bit I like to download podcasts onto my phone and listen to them on the train. One of my favourites is Marathon Training Academy. It's an American podcast run by a husband and wife team and usually includes an interview with a marathon or long distance runner. A few months ago they interviewed Ed Whitlock, the British born Canadian who was the first man to run a sub three hour marathon aged over 70. At the age of 85, he became the oldest man to run a marathon in less than four hours.



Ed Whitlock

The interview was in October last year and although his times and achievements are outstanding, what I found most interesting about the interview was Ed's approach to running. The podcast, possibly because it has some sponsorship, does like to highlight the latest running gadget or aid. Compression socks, gels and sports drinks are often promoted as are personal training schedules and personal trainers. The show does sometimes get into the minutiae of running and the questioning of Ed was clearly going in that direction. 'What did he eat' he was asked. 'Nothing special' came the reply, 'just meat and two veg'. They further asked him about alcohol consumption and he informed them he liked a glass of red wine.

'What about his shoes?' Ed replied that he had the same pair for twenty five years. There was a silence on the line and the interviewer asked for clarification. 'You mean the same brand of shoes?' 'No,' replied Ed, 'the same pair. They were uncomfortable when I first got them so I cut them down and they have been fine ever since' Finally he was asked about his training regime and he replied that for six months before a marathon he ran for three hours everyday! This time the interviewer could not disguise his surprise. He clearly felt he had misheard but Ed only repeated the same thing. Three hours everyday for six months.

I found the interview very refreshing. It was nice to see someone achieving so much by keeping it simple. By modern standards he was breaking every running rule in the book, so it does make you wonder whether some of the advice we get these days is really all it's cracked up to be.

In checking some of the details for this article I discovered that Ed died in March of this year, aged 86. You can read more about him on line at

<https://www.outsideonline.com/2165066/there-will-never-be-another-ed-whitlock>

Spring, Summer and Autumn 2017 Fixtures

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

Date	Organiser	Race/Event	Venue	Entry	Entry Closing Date
Saturday 10 June 2017	Osterley parkrun	5km run Featuring VAC "mob match"	Osterley Park. Jersey Road, Isleworth, TW7 4RB.	Start time: 9am	Register with parkrun to obtain a Barcode.
Saturday 10 June 2017	VAC	Jack Fitzgerald Memorial race walks (3 and 6 miles road). RWA Permit. In aid of "Help for Heroes"	Tilgate Park. Tilgate Forest Golf Centre, Titmus Drive, Crawley, RH10 5EU	Start time: 12.30pm See VAC website for entry form. Enquiries: David Hoben	Entries accepted on the day
Tuesday 13 June 2017	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit (Category B)	VAC Champs. 5 mile Masters road race. 3rd Grand Prix event. 5 mile Open RACE WALK .	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Close to Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm £4 VAC and BMAF. Guests welcome. £5	Online entry via BMAF up to 12/6 Entries accepted on the day
24-25 June 2017	BMAF	British Masters Outdoor Track & Field Champs 2017	Alexander Stadium Walsall Rd Perry Barr Birmingham B42 2LR	See BMAF website for event schedule	Online entry via BMAF until 11/6 No entries on the day
25 Jun 2017	Istead & Ifield Harriers, with BMAF	BMAF Multi- terrain Champs, within North Downs Run 2017 (30km trail)	Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, Gravesend, DA12 4LG	Start time: 10.30am Online entry via BMAF.	Closing date: 11/6
Sunday 2 July 2017	BMAF/ England Athletics Masters Association	England Masters Outdoor T&F Inter Area Challenge	Norman Green Sports Centre, Blossomfield Rd, Solihull, B91 1NB	Comp. for BMAF Area Clubs. VAC team to enter.	VAC Team selected in advance. Enquiries to: Nick Lauder

Tuesday 11 July 2017	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit 4 th Grand Prix event	Battersea Park Series VAC Championship 5km Masters road race. 5 mile Open RACE WALK.	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Close to Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm £4 VAC and BMAF. Guests welcome. £5	Online entry via BMAF up to 10/7 Entries accepted on the day
Tuesday 22 August 2017	VAC Runbritain licence and RWA Permit 5 th Grand Prix event	Battersea Park Series 5 mile Masters road race. 5 mile Open RACE WALK.	Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ Close to Millennium Arena	Start time: 7pm £4 VAC and BMAF. Guests welcome. £5	Online entry via BMAF up to 21/8 Entries accepted on the day
Sunday 27 Aug 2017	VAC (And SCVAC Champs)	VAC Track & Field Championships	Kingsmeadow Stadium, Kingston Road, Kingston upon Thames KT1 3PB	VAC/SCVAC £7 first event, £3 subsequent All BMAF members welcome.	Online entry via BMAF. Closing date: 13/8 No entries on the day
Wed. 13 Sept 2017	VAC	VAC 10,000m track championships Two seeded races.	Millennium Arena, Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ	6.45pm Online entry via BMAF (not yet live).	Closing date: 10/9
Saturday 30 Sept 2017	Run- Through Events	VAC 10m Road Champs Incorporated in Lee Valley races	Lee Valley Velopark, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, E20 3AB	Start time 10 mile: 9.15 am. Entry not yet open.	Closing date to be announced
14 Oct 2017	Men's Surrey League Division 4	Cross Country Race Match 1 (VAC Men's team)	Wimbledon Common (Help needed for this event)	All VAC men eligible.	Advance notice to Team Manager Paddy Clark
18 Nov 2017	BMAF and Country Assoc.	British & Irish Masters International XC Champs.	Londonderry Northern Ireland	England Team selected in October.	See BMAF/VAC websites in June.

For other regional/national/international masters events refer to the **BMAF website**.

Road Running News

VAC's 2017 Battersea Park Summer Race Series/Grand Prix.

We know summer is approaching when VAC visits Battersea Park to begin the series of five friendly and welcoming road running and walking fixtures.



Gary Ironmonger best age grading

Each month between April and August there is a Tuesday evening road race and race walk starting at 7pm. Check the fixture list for dates. All the walks are 5 miles. The road runs are also 5 miles, except July's which is 5km.

This year, there is a road race "Grand Prix" for members and each month's finishing times will be 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 which deserves to be on someone's mantelpiece.

You can read the reports of the first two races in the series below and we hope to see you at the rest of the events over the coming months.

5M Road Race 18 April 2017, Battersea Park

There were 27 finishers for the first fixture on a fine, cool evening. The winner was guest runner, Thomas Grimes, who set an M35 all-comers' course record of 26:51, bettering the previous M35 best of 26:59 set by VAC's Mohammed Ismail in 2016. In second place, Gary Ironmonger's time of 27:53 was within four seconds of matching the long-standing M55 course record of 27:49 set by Liam O'Hare in 2005. It was good to see Liam also in the race, running well twelve years after setting his record. Vikki Filsell was the first woman in a time of 34:24, with Marie Synott-Wells pushing her all the way, finishing twenty seconds behind. Carol Jones completed the trio. The women were low in numbers and we hope that the regulars will return for the next fixtures. New women, please join us. Race results, including age grading, are on the VAC website.

5M Road Race and Race Walk 9 May 2017, Battersea Park

The second fixture of the season was again held in perfect racing conditions, on a sunny spring evening. The results showed an emergence of woman power. In the walk, Penelope Cummings from AFD had her second overall



Marian Rayner 1st W65
in the 5m road race

win in four weeks at a VAC fixture in a time very close to her best, and Melanie Peddle of Loughton came third overall and went under 50 minutes for the first time with a new personal best. In the run, ten women swelled the field, led by Carol Jones whose age graded performance topped May's table. For the men, Stephen Philcox M50 pulled away to take a thrilling race victory ahead of Tony Macdowall and Gavin Mackay.

Walkers, Paul King and Chris Flint resumed their previous form and Peter Hannell returned to the distance after a number of months' absence, achieving a better than expected time.

Full results are available on the VAC Website.

BMAF/VAC 10K Championships 9 April, Cyclopark



Martyn Rouse, Ian Johnston and Robert O'Rourke, the VAC M45 Silver Medal winning team

For the first time, BMAF staged its own 10k championship race rather than using an established event. The venue was the Gravesend Cyclopark, recently constructed on land by the A2, a few miles outside the M25 and a couple of miles from Gravesend station. The race had full use of the main cycling circuit, a 2.5k loop on smooth, wide tarmac, with changing and café buildings next to the start/finish area. The 4 laps were testing as the initial downhill slope

was followed by a long uphill second kilometre and another down and up before the end of the lap. Also there was no shade on a sunny morning approaching an unseasonal 20 degrees.



Tony Tuohy wins the M50 title

There were some great efforts by VAC members, including the following gold medal winners in the BMAF championships for their age group: M55 Gary Ironmonger; M50 Tony Tuohy; W60 Maggie Statham; W70 Pauline Rich; W75 Patricia Cummings; W80 Pam

Jones. Also M45 Silver team medals were awarded to the VAC team of 1st claimers, Ian Johnston, Robert O'Rourke and Martyn Rouse.

The full results are on the Statistics menu of the [BMAF website](#).

VAC 10 mile championships 2016

These were again held as part of the Epsom 10 on 13th November. The turnout was low, even though the weather was normal for the time of year. Runaway winner was Steve Davies M45 in a time of 60:14. The only close battle at the finish was between Ebe Prill M50 and Stephen Vincent M45 with times of 68:49 and 68:55 respectively.

Results of the 10 mile Championship

Name	Cat.	Position	VAC Pos.	Time
Steve Davies	M45	9	1	60.14
Ebe Prill	M50	37	1	68.49
Stephen Vincent	M45	38	2	68.55
Pippa Major	W50	61	1	74.15
Vicky Barratt	W45	64	1	74.56
Michael Mann	M65	74	1	78.00
Keith Brown	M60	76	1	78.13
John Taylor	M75	146	1	96.28
Dennis Williams	M70	149	1	98.46

In 2017, we are going to try a different venue, returning to the Lee Valley Velopark, close to the Olympic Stadium on 30th September. It will be 10 laps of the twisty undulating course and thus challenging and spectator-friendly.

Indoor

Veterans AC Indoor Championships and BMAF Indoor Pentathlon 2017

As in previous years, our indoor championships were held at Lee Valley Athletic Centre as part of the South of England championships. We had a similar turnout of members to last year, ranging from newest M35 members Tony McDowell and Rory MacFarlane to M80s Cliff Taylor and Richard Pitcairn-Knowles.

Sprints and Hurdles

We had South of England wins by Pat Logan (M55) and Rohan Samuel (M50), while Mark White (M50) was a double winner at 200m and 400m (while also getting 60m silver), and Glen Reddington took the M50 60m Hurdles. Walwyn Franklyn (M60) and Allan Long (M70) both won 60m/200m doubles, and David Hinds (M65) competing in 60/200/400 picked up the 200m gold.

On the ladies side, Yolanda Broek (W50) took the South of England 200m, while in the W60 Joan Trimble at 60m and Ed Roe at 200m each took silvers behind Helen Godsell.

Middle Distance/Distance

In some of these events not every VAC entrant had opposition in their age group, but notable performances include Tony Tuohy (M50) who won his 1500m and also did well at 800m and 3000m, Ian Johnston running 9:41.33 in his last year as an M45 and Andy Gannaway returning to indoor competition to take South of England silver

at 800m just ahead of Tony. Gary Ironmonger took the M55 South of England gold at 800m.

Among the ladies, Zoe Doyle(W35) took the 800m gold, while Andrea Sanders-Reece (W60) ran a 400/800/1500 triple, and Ros Tabor an 800/1500 double.

Field Events

As with the middle distance events, quite a few VAC South of England winners didn't have age group opposition, but there was a good tussle in the M70 Triple Jump between winner Norman Rice (who also did the Shot) and Allan Long, who also did the Long Jump (jumping 3.93m in that event in his last year as an M70) and the sprints. David Blunt did all four Jumps, winning the High Jump and getting Silvers at Pole Vault and Long Jump. In the Pole Vault, Brian Slaughter, who was also doing the Pentathlon won the M55 gold, and Sue Yeomans took the W60 Pole Vault. Sue Dassie was another person doing multiple events, winning the W60 Shot, as well as being second at Pole Vault, and doing the 60m.

BMAF Pentathlon

Brian Slaughter and Alan Smith took silver and bronze in the M55 age group, and Fiona Argent took the W60 silver. Chris Ness also successfully completed the event.

England Masters Inter Area Indoor Challenge, Lee Valley, Sunday 26 February 2017

Late February saw more than forty members come together for this year's Inter Area competition at Lee Valley where Alwyn Lombaard and Sarah Burke started the day with fine top three placings in the 60m Hurdles.

Our squad of sprinters built on this throughout the day with impressive wins from Katie Adams, Yolly Broek, Ed Roe, Sarah Burke, Angela Bates, Rohan Samuel, and Mark White across distances of 60m, 200m and 400m. Fine performances also came from Stuart Channon, Alan Perry, Anne Nelson, David Hinds, Aaron Brown, Catlin Shelley and Ros Tabor.

Whilst our team severely lacks throwers and jumpers, those in attendance did Vets AC proud with a plethora of second placings amongst the explosive industry of Alwyn Lombaard, David Blunt, Emmanuel Adesina, Patrick Reynolds, and throws trio, Dan Upton, Renzo Di Libero and Tony Richards.

The distance events of 800m, 1500m, and 3000m saw commanding first places from Sam Amend, Anna Garnier and Peter Giles. Top three finishes were achieved by Gary Ironmonger, Richard Bloom, Zoe Doyle, Aaron Brown, and Andrea Sanders-Reece with plenty of points gained by Ed Connolly, Catkin Shelley, Steve Roberts, Mike Mann, Lisa Webb, Tony Tuohy and Jacqui Reid. A special mention should be made to Tony's pre-race nutrition of a packet of chocolate digestives and a punnet of blueberries which he assures

me is part of a balanced diet and apparently similar to what Callum Hawkins consumes before a race.



Thanks must go to Dave Hoben and John Hall whose efforts in getting all four 2k Walks spots filled for the first time in quite a while was appreciated greatly. This was richly rewarded with top three finishes from John Ralph, Arthur Thomson, Fiona Bishop and Maureen Noel.

Team manager Nick Lauder and Team cheerleader Phil Bell brought their fresh legs to join their speedy sprinting colleagues in the exciting 4x200m finale where again Vets AC excelled with an average of second place and a marvellous win from the W50 team of Yolly Broek, Catkin Shelley, Jacqui Reid and Angela Bates 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 Southern Counties winning the whole competition.

Nick would like to express thanks to Mike May who gave invaluable assistance with the team organisation and made sure that everyone was kitted out in the classic black and white Vets AC vest.

Team selections have been made for the Outdoor Inter Area match in Solihull on Sunday 2nd July. Enquiries to Nick Lauder.

BMAF INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS: LEE VALLEY STADIUM 11 & 12 MARCH

This event is traditionally held shortly before the indoor European or World Masters' Track and Field Championships. This year the world indoor event was in Daegu starting on March 18th, and many athletes seized the opportunity of a final warm up before flying to South Korea.

Competition in most events was good. VAC gold medallists included: Alan Camp, Pauline Rich, Alwyn Lombaard, David Blunt, Geoffrey Kitchener, Stuart Channon, Richard Weekes, Allan Long, Norman Rice, John Kirkham, Chris Privett, Ian Richards, Ronald Penfold, Angela Bates, Rohan Samuel, Barry Ferguson, Dalbir Singh Deol, Charles Eugster, Katie Skelding, Gavin Stephens, Mark White, Susan McLoughlin, Richard Pitcairn-Knowles, Dominic Bokor-Ingram, John Batchelor, Zoe Doyle, Aaron Brown, Gary Ironmonger, Peter Giles, Lisa Webb and Anna Garnier.

VAC members at the Daegu World Masters Indoors



Rob Sargent

With the exception of Sue Dassie, who won the W60 Pole Vault, our highest contested positions came in team medals, with Zoe Doyle being in a gold medal winning relay team, as was Sue, while Alan Roberts got a cross country team gold. Zoe also picked up two silvers in the 800 and 1500. Ian Richards picked up two silvers in the walks, and Ros Tabor two silvers and a bronze at 1500, 3000, and 800 respectively, as well as being in the only W60 cross country team (for a gold). Charles Eugster duly won his Long Jump and 60m, but didn't improve on his records. We are sad to report that Charles died in April. Please see page 25 for a short obituary.

Rob Sargent, pictured above in a UK Race, and Andrew Murray picked up team bronzes in the M60 half marathon and Barry Ferguson a 60m hurdle bronze.

Race Walking



Shaun Lightman, David Bowker (Fairlands) and Dan Maskell

5M Race Walk 18 April 2017, Battersea Park

The first race of the summer series took place in good racing conditions on a bright but cool early spring evening. Mark Culshaw continued his 2016 form to deliver yet another race win in this series, closely followed by Steve Bishop, making a return to the racing scene after a few years' absence, and Stuart Bennett from Ilford using the midweek race as a warm up for the

London Marathon at the weekend. Melanie Peddle from Loughton AC, who has already established herself in her first year in the sport, was the only newcomer to the series and finished in a respectable time of 51:01.

Five Mile Race Walk Results: 18 April 2017				
Pos.	Time	Name	Age	Club
1	48:29	Mark Culshaw	M50	Ilford
2	48:41	Steve Bishop	M50	Stock Exchange
3	48:51	Stuart Bennett	M55	Ilford
4	51:01	Melanie Peddle	W45	Loughton
5	51:16	Shaun Lightman	M70	SWC
6	51:25	David Bowker	M55	Fairlands Valley
7	53:10	Dan Maskell	M65	SWC
8	56:23	Arthur Thomson	M80	Enfield
9	57:18	Paul King	M65	Belgrave
10	58:33	David Hoben	M60	SWC

VAC 10k Track Walk and Counties Championship, 12th April 2017

The annual championships took place at Tooting Bec in good racing conditions. Sean Pender from Enfield AC generously acted as a starter in this race using a clapperboard and then went on to participate himself.

Penelope Cummings from AFD had an excellent race to win outright. She was also first lady overall and first Surrey lady. New Ilford AC signing Mark Culshaw who was racing neck and neck with Penelope at certain times finished strongly in second place and first Middlesex; meanwhile Gary Smith, another Enfield AC regular, finished powerfully in third place to get gold for Herts for the first time since 1998. John Borgars from Herts Phoenix who had competed frequently since his record breaking 100 mile race in 2016, also completed in a good time and position.

VAC, Surrey, Herts & Middlesex 10k Track Walk					
Race Pos.	Time	Name	Age Cat.	VAC/BMAF position	First Claim Club
1	59:24	Penelope Cummings	W40		AFD
2	61:59	Mark Culshaw	M50		Ilford
3	62:48	Gary Smith	M60		Enfield
4	66:17	Dan Maskell	M65	1	SWC
5	66:31	John Borgars	M70		H. Phoenix
6	67:54	Shaun Lightman	M70	1	SWC
7	68:58	Fiona Bishop	W55	1	Woking
8	69:40	Mick Harran	M75	1	SWC
9	71:03	David Bowker	M55	1	F. Valley
10	72:43	Paul King	M65	2	Belgrave
11	75:37	Sean Pender	M60		Enfield
12	77:58	Dave Delaney	M70	2	SWC

2nd Cecil Gittins Memorial Walks incorporating Enfield league, Cyclopark, Gravesend, 1 April 2017 (This event is dedicated to the memory of Cecil Gittins 1928 – 2014)

Veterans AC were pleased to host the second running of this event on a dedicated cycle circuit which in shape and gradients resembles a large Scalextric set.

We were also pleased to welcome, for the second year, Olympic silver medallist Paul Nihill MBE and his wife Pauline who attended as special guests. In all there were 50 entries, and 47 on the line.

The weather was favourable, just the right combination of sun and wind; the 15k was won in 75.10 by a very in form Luc Legon from Cambridge Harriers in his first attempt at this distance. This was 10 minutes faster than the previous year's record set by Malcolm Martin, and 14 minutes ahead of Seb Parris from Ilford in a creditable second place.

The 10k headline race which was to score in the Enfield League 2017 series was also won by Luc Legon in 49.13. The runner up was Jonathan Hobbs from Ashford AC, and in third place fast finishing Marshall Smith also from Ashford achieved a personal best.

The ladies 10k was convincingly won by Emily Ghose from Tonbridge AC in 56.53, also in a personal best, and who managed to beat nearly all of the men.

In the 5k race George Wilkinson had a victory in 28.50 not far in front of first place Isabelle Bridge from Blackheath Harriers coming in at 29.22 with a personal best.

First female in the juniors 2.5k race was Devina Nova from Ashford AC finishing in 15.21 in her first attempt at this distance.

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

Full results of the race are available on the VAC website.

PARKRUN

Mile End Parkrun 5k 18 February 2017

The quarterly VAC visit to a Parkrun was to the East End this time. Mile End Park was created towards the end of the 20th century by clearing land to the east of the Regents Canal between the Thames and Victoria Park. Whilst the land started off being flat, several small hills were created, including one incorporating a bridge over Mile End Road. The Parkrun starts outside Mile End track, with changing, toilet and locker facilities, and heads north over two small hills, turning at a third to return, initially by the canal, to the start for a second full lap.



**John Carter, Andy Murray, Ros Tabor, Peter Hall,
Lloyd Bevan, Martin Garrett, Mike Mann**

Eight VAC runners met at the start on a grey but mildish morning. First VAC runner to finish was Alan Camp, who set a course M60 record. Further back Ros Tabor improved the course's age graded record, set by her there in 2015, to 94.65%.

Next outing is to Osterley Park (National Trust-owned in west London) on Saturday 10 June. All welcome - Parkrun registration/barcode required - see www.parkrun.org.uk/osterley.

Some Parkrun Stats

- The top age grading for Parkrun on 6th May was 94.23% by none other than our very own Ros Tabor who ran 22.31 over at Burgess.
- The biggest Parkrun on Saturday 13th May was Bushy Park with 1330 runners. The smallest was Drumchapel with 20. On that day there were 439 Parkruns and 117,457 runners.
- The Global record holder has run 606 Parkruns.
- Clare Elms is second in the global table of first place finishes, having clocked up 123 top spots as of 6th May 2017

Other News



Where's the VAC trophy? Members may have noticed that fewer trophies are awarded nowadays at presentations. Some are held in storage by VAC Committee members but sadly, many have gone missing. We have records of some trophies but others are unknown. We are now compiling an inventory of VAC trophies with a view to reinstating their presentation.

Most of the missing trophies are for age group winners, particularly at the annual cross country and T&F championships. It's probably fair to say that many were quite cheap and cheerful. It may not have been obvious that they were annual trophies which should be returned.

Please take a look in your cupboards, or wherever you store your running memorabilia, and check whether you have any annual VAC trophies. Get in touch with Maggie (entries@vetsac.org.uk) if you find any. We'd be delighted to see them again.

Parkrun for the 80 year olds!

The Bushy parkrun on Saturday 1 July is set to be a celebration of the octogenarians. VAC member, Richard Pitcairn-Knowles, age 84, is helping to organise the gathering of 9th decade runners and walkers. "It's to celebrate that we are still alive and before we fall off our perches", says Richard. All aged 80 and over are welcome to join in the fun. It's a regular parkrun too, attracting a huge following, so of course everyone of whatever age is also welcome to come along to run/walk and give support.

Paul Cheetham in his VAC vest after achieving a magnificent 8th place in December's Pisa Marathon in a time of 2:37:24.



We received some congratulations for Brian Harlick for his one hundred blood donations reported last newsletter. Also one member, who wishes to remain anonymous, has been giving blood since 1960 and has clocked up 180 donations! Well done!

The London Marathon

VAC Members at the Virgin Money London Marathon: 23 April 2017

Over 30 VAC members completed the Marathon in ideal cool and dry weather conditions. Thomas Payn (M35) once again led the way in a super-fast time of 2:22:19 to place 13th of all the non-elite men. VAC cross country champion, Richard McDowell (M35) was next for VAC, setting a PB of 2:35:17. Nine VAC men went under three hours with some fine placings by Andrew Mitchell (M45), Stuart Fraser (M50) and Len Reilly (M55) in the top 20 for their age groups.

The first three VAC women posted times within two minutes of each other. Ange ran 3:08:29 to place a magnificent 3rd in the W55 age group. Fiona Russell's 3:09:07 put her 9th W45 and Susanna Harrison was 5th W50 in 3:10:14. For the W60s, Avril Riddell was a fine 10th in 3:48:18.

VAC's walkers were represented by Dave Hoben who race-walked each mile in less than 14 minutes to achieve a time of 5:54:03.

Special congratulations go to Bill O'Connor who is one of the eleven remaining London Marathon "Ever-Presents". He kept up his amazing record and competed for the 37th time, completing the course in 5:30:48.



Victoria shows off her fastest nun certificate

The prize for the most extraordinary VAC performance must go to Victoria Carter who posted a decent time of 3:26:53. Even more commendable is that she ran the course dressed as a nun and was awarded a "fastest nun" certificate from the Guinness Book of Records!

The VAC members' results, below, have been compiled by scanning the Virgin Money London Marathon results website. Apologies if you are not included. Please let Maggie at entries@vetsac.org.uk know your placings, and we will amend the list.

VAC Members at the Virgin London Marathon: 23 April 2017

Name	Time	Age Group	Age Cat Pos.	First claim club
Thomas Payn	2:22:19	M18-39	13	Run Dem Crew
Richard Mcdowell	2:35:17	M18-39	123	Hercules Wimbledon
Andrew Mitchell	2:41:08	M45	15	T. V. Harriers
Stuart Beaney	2:42:07	M40	64	Kent AC
Steve Davies	2:44:17	M45	24	Dulwich Runners
Stuart Fraser	2:46:13	M50	20	Hercules Wimbledon
Paul Holloway	2:53:28	M45	94	Ilford AC
Martin Shore	2:58:15	M40	361	Thames Hare & Ho.
Len Reilly	2:59:11	M55	18	Kent AC
Ange Norris	3:08:29	W55	3	Dulwich Runners
Fiona Russell	3:09:07	W45	9	Mornington Chasers
Susanna Harrison	3:10:14	W50	5	Guildford & God.
Steve Smythe	3:13:45	M50	77	Dulwich Runners
Richard Tweddle	3:14:47	M55	88	VAC
Ebe Prill	3:21:43	M50	435	Dulwich Runners
Neil Crisp	3:21:45	M50	436	Ilford AC
Kate Williams	3:21:48	W50	25	Kent AC
Colin Brett	3:26:50	M50	498	Ranelagh Harriers
Victoria Carter	3:26:53	W45	74	T. V. Harriers
Andrew Simms	3:34:38	M50	618	Herne Hill Harriers
Doris Gaga	3:36:41	W50	75	Ilford AC
Steve Clancey	3:36:43	M45	1001	S. London Harriers
Steve Vincent	3:39:37	M45	1068	S.London Harriers
Dennis Briggs	3:42:43	M40	1504	Ilford AC
Avril Riddell	3:48:18	W60	10	Mornington Chasers
Pippa Major	3:50:19	W50	161	S. London Harriers
Caroline Helder	3:55:42	W55	75	Wimb. Windmilers
Nichola Atkins	3:56:12	W50	241	Kingston & Poly
John Carter	4:42:12	M70+	62	Wimb. Windmilers
Bill O'Connor	5:30:48	M70+	117	Queens Park
Dave Hoben (walker)	5:54:03	M60	513	Surrey Walking Club

CROSS COUNTRY NEWS

VETS AC CROSS CHAMPIONSHIPS, 21 JANUARY

These championships were held on a cold winter's day on the 4.5 mile course on Wimbledon Common that has been used in recent years. The ground was frozen in places and particularly challenging over a solid rutted section with frozen puddles alongside Beverley Brook. Apart from this section which required caution, this made for faster running conditions than usual for these championships.



Richard McDowell sets a course record

The race winner, Richard McDowell, (left) led the field by over 30 seconds to set a course record of 25:07. Second placed Tony Tuohy had an excellent run to break the M50 course record by over 20 seconds, while Gary Ironmonger set a new M55 record. Next was Ian Johnston, first M45, followed by Alan Camp, who improved on Dave Cox's M60 record by 18 seconds. Mike Mann and Peter Giles had a close tussle, with Peter winning out and both retaining their M65 and M70 titles. Another course record, this time in the M75 category was achieved by Doug Milsom.

For the women there was a close contest for the top 3 placings, which were taken by runners in three different age categories, with each setting new championship course records. First woman was Liz Stavreski, taking 24 seconds off the previous course record. Rachel Badham followed close behind, knocking 11 seconds off the course record, with Ange Norris in third place also setting a new record. The W50, W60 and W65 gold medals were won convincingly by Patricia Thomas, Jane Georgiou and Margaret Moody.

The clubs with the strongest representation were Herne Hill Harriers fielding 8 runners, followed by Dulwich Runners with 7. Top age group finishers are shown below.

VETS AC Cross Country Championships, Top Age Group Finishers

Pos.	Time	Name	Category
1	25:07	Richard Mcdowell	M35
2	25:46	Tony Tuohy	M50
3	26:12	Gary Ironmonger	M55
4	26:31	Ian Johnston	M45
5	27:40	Alan Camp	M60
8	29:19	Elizabeth Stavreski	W40
9	29:35	Rachel Badham	W45
10	29:54	Ange Norris	W55
21	32:01	Patricia Thomas	W50
22	32:03	Peter Giles	M70
23	32:06	Michael Mann	M65
38	34:43	Margaret Moody	W65
43	35:25	Jane Georghiou	W60
49	39:06	Doug Milsom	M75

British & Irish Masters Cross Country Championships, Glasgow, 12 November 2016



England team: Lesley Bowcott, Maggie Statham, Peter Giles, Anna Garnier

Fourteen VAC members represented England and Scotland in this keenly fought international match, with a further two running in the Open race as reserves. The multi-lap course for the three races weaved around Tollcross Park, incorporating some testing inclines and heavy ground, in cool, dry, weather. Julian Critchlow (M55) and Clare Elms (W50) won individual gold medals with Ben Reynolds taking the M50 silver medal.

England won both the Men's and Women's combined competitions although the contests were close. Scotland's women were strong and made home advantage count in winning three of the age groups. Ireland's men were tough to beat and were victorious in three of the men's age groups. VAC results are below:

British & Irish Cross Country Championships: 12 November 2016

Age	Name	Pos.	Time	Medals
M45	Ian Johnston (Scotland)	14th	26:41	
M50	Ben Reynolds	2nd	25:07	Indiv Silver & Team Gold
M55	Julian Critchlow	1st	26:20	Indiv Gold & Team Gold
M60	Dave Cox	7th	28:45	Team Bronze
M70	Peter Giles	4th	24:30	Team Gold
W35	Sophie Carter	13th	21:42	Team Silver
W45	Victoria Carter	10th	22:33	Team Gold
W50	Clare Elms	1st	21:01	Indiv Gold & Team Gold
W60	Maggie Statham	5th	24:47	Team Silver
W60	Anna Garnier	6th	25:11	Team Silver
W65	Ros Tabor	4th	25:59	Team Silver
W65	Margaret Moody	7th	27:40	Team Silver
W70	Pauline Rich	7th	31:10	Team Silver
W70	Lesley Bowcott	8th	31:19	Team Silver

Selection for the 2017 British & Irish Masters Cross Country

Venue: Londonderry, Northern Ireland

Date: Saturday 18 November 2017.

VAC members are encouraged to put themselves forward for the annual Masters' championship between five countries: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The standard is high, but not as high as you might think in some age groups (younger as well as older), bearing in mind that four athletes are selected for each of the five-year men's and women's age groups 35 to M75+ and W70+.

There are three races: 6km for all the women and the men in the M65, M70 and M75 age groups; 8km for the M50, M55 and M60s; and 8km for the M35, M40 and M45s.

How to apply

Each country, except England, holds a selection race in September or October to pick their teams. 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 performance information supplied by athletes in an application form, which will be available on the BMAF website in May or June. VAC Committee Member, Mike Mann (mcmann90@yahoo.co.uk), will handle VAC members' applications for selection. He is happy to provide further advice.

VAC's Successful Season



The VAC team at Cranford Park (from left to right): Steve Clancey, Peter Hall, Paddy Clark (team manager), Simon Williamson, Ian Sesnan, Andy Murray, Gary Ironmonger, Carey Gray, Mark Cawood, Philip Jones

VAC's team contested Division Four of the Men's Surrey League with spirit and commitment.

The four fixtures at Wimbledon Common, Epsom Downs, Cranford Park and Lloyd Park presented an assortment of terrain and weather conditions for

those who like variety and a challenge. VAC finished a very creditable 6th out of the 10 teams in the division. Fielding at least ten men in each fixture and creating an excellent team spirit makes a huge difference. Credit goes to Team Manager, Paddy Clark, who provided invaluable practical support and advice at the "base camp", by the large wooden VAC sign. Mark Cawood, Steve Clancey and Carey Gray once again ran in every fixture. Carey hasn't missed a match since 2011!

AN APPEAL!

VAC Men, please consider running for VAC in this season's Surrey League CC. First match: Wimbledon Common, Saturday 14 October 2017

First-claim VAC members are eligible to run for VAC. Also second claim members are allowed to represent VAC as long as they do not compete for their first claim club in any of the season's four Surrey Cross Country League matches in Divisions 1, 2 or 3/4. If you are not needed as a scorer for your 1st claim club, you could provide welcome support for our Masters club in the less frantic, but no less competitive, races in Divisions Three and Four (run as one combined race of approximately 5 miles).

BMAF CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS, LIVERPOOL, 18 MARCH

These championships held in Liverpool for the first time took place in wet and windy conditions. Although the course was mostly flat parkland, it was heavy going in places, so that for considerable parts of the race runners were faced with strong headwinds and boggy ground, and sometimes a combination of the two.

This was a highly competitive field across pretty well all age categories, with most of the strongest athletes nationally taking part.

The first race, slightly over 6km, included all the women and men over 65. Highlights were an excellent second placing by Anna Garnier, Pauline Rich and Lesley Bowcott finishing first and second W70s, and Ann Bath third W65.

The second race was over a longer course, though shorter than the 8km billed. First VAC runner was Simon Wurr, 6th M40. Ben Reynolds finished third M50 and Simon Baines third M45. Other strong performances included Martin Shore, 7th M40, Andy Weir, 6th M45, Mark Cursons, 4th M55 and Tony McDowell (winner of the VAC champs in January), 5th M35.

Strong runs by the TH&H trio of Ben Reynolds, Simon Baines and Andy Weir resulted in a comfortable M45 team gold medal.

Race 1

Steph Robson	26:54	10 th W45
Mike Mann	27:39	9 th M65
Vikki Filsell	28:15	12 th W45
Anna Garnier	28:35	2 nd W60
Stephen Plested	30:50	21 st M65
Jane Georgiou	31:37	5th W60
Steve Knight	31:51	22nd M65
Pauline Rich	35:12	1 st W70
Lesley Bowcott	36:48	2 nd W70
Ann Bath	37:15	3 rd W65

Race 2

Simon Wurr	26:35	6th M40
Ben Reynolds	26:52	3 rd M50
Martin Shore	26:58	7 th M40
Simon Baines	27:26	3 rd M45
Andy Weir	28:33	6 th M45
Mark Cursons	28:51	4 th M55
Tony McDowell	29:43	5 th M35
Paul Lemmon	32:03	19 th M50
Valdis Pauzers	37:23	16 th M60
Nigel Goodwin	51:17	20 th M60

Obituaries

Charles Eugster (1919 – 2017)

Charles Eugster joined VAC as a sprinter a few years ago so that he could compete in British Masters events. He had previously rowed competitively, but took up sprinting at the age of 95. He set age group records in both the 100m and 200m and competed at several World and European masters' championships. He has written a book called Age is Just a Number which was published in January 2017. He died on 27th April 2017.

Jack Braughton 1921 to October 2016 (Contribution from Mike Martineau)



1948 Olympian, Jack Braughton, a former VAC member died recently at the age of 95. He is pictured left with Bert Martineau, also a former VAC member and 1948 Olympian at an event held in 1991 for all living Olympians.

The two men had much in common. They were both blue collar workers; Jack as a builder and Bert as a printer's warehouseman and both had to juggle their athletic performances and training around full time jobs that rarely gave them time off. Both competed only once for GB, on the same day in July 1948.

Jack was a quality athlete but he was not at his best in the 1948 Games. He also won a bronze team medals in the 1948 National Cross Country. He ran 13.51 for 3 miles, 30.01 for 6 and 2.36 for the Marathon. He raced until he was 80.

Bert Martineau competed in the 50k race walk in 1948. He died in 1994.

Track and Field

World Masters Athletics Championships, Perth, Western Australia October/November 2016

This outdoor championship took place just over a year after the last one at Lyon but will revert to every two years (next at Malaga 2018), with the European version in intervening years (e.g. Aarhus 2017). The championship at Lyon had been very successful in terms of numbers and host city attractions, with good venues and reasonable travel connections.

Perth had good numbers competing -over 4000 from 92 countries. The city has a good waterfront and was easy to get around. Athletes had free local travel and were able to visit the surrounding area, including Indian Ocean beaches, islands, wineries and the port of Fremantle about 15k away. The weather was nearly always sunny, with the wind speed and direction affecting maximum daily temperatures, which varied from 18-37 degrees C.

There were two tracks used, the main one at a sports complex west of Perth with a shaded grandstand and outside 'athletes village' eating/seating shopping area, the second one (used for distance races) south of the city with a temporary marquee. Cross Country and shorter road walk events were at Perry Lakes, wooded parkland across the road from the first stadium. Half and full Marathon runs plus longer walks took place along the south side of the Swan River waterfront, with good views back across to the city. The organisers provided ample free shuttle buses to transport athletes from stations to the venues.

The first main event was cross country, 4x2k laps of a flat loop around playing fields and woodlands. Over the next ten days there was a full programme of track and field events, walks and, on the final day, marathon, half marathon and relays.

VAC medallists are shown below, with gold medallists highlighted in bold.



Cross Country 8k: w65 3 Ros Tabor

100m: w70 2 Brenda Fee; m90 3 Dalbir Singh Deol

200m: m90 3 Dalbir Singh Deol; **w70 1 Brenda Fee**

400m: m60 2 David Elderfield; **m90 1 Dalbir Singh Deol**; w70 2 Brenda Fee

800m: w65 3 Ros Tabor

1500m: w65 3 Ros Tabor

5000m: w70 3 Pauline Rich; **m50 1 Ben Reynolds**

10000m: m50 2 Ben Reynolds; w70 2 Pauline Rich

5000m walk: m65 2 Ian Richards

Pole Vault: **w60 1 Sue Yeomans**, 2 Sue Dassie

Marathon: m65 2 Ian Kitching; w45 2 Susan McDonald; w65 3 Liz Neville

Royal Albert Hall, Dorando Pietri and 1906 'Olympics' in Athens.



Mike Martineau has made an interesting contribution to the newsletter about a Marathon race that was staged at the Royal Albert Hall in December 1909. There were just two runners; the first was Dorando Pietri, the athlete who was famously disqualified after being helped over the finishing line at the end of the 1908 Olympic Marathon in London. The other competitor was C W Gardiner from London who won the race in 2 hours 37 mins. The pair ran laps of the Albert Hall in front of a large crowd; there would have to have been at least 10 laps to the mile! Pietri did not finish, dropping out in his 24th mile. The lap was boarded, with the boards covered in coconut matting.

I love to watch running events, but I have to admit this does not sound too great a race, although probably still preferable to the Eurovision Song Contest.



Valdis Pauzers, 1st M60 in the Battersea Park Road Race on 18th April, shows his determination