



**THE MIDLAND MASTER ATHLETE
WELCOME TO NEWSLETTER 269 - June 2021**

BACK TO COMPETITION!

**A huge thank you to all who made the Track & Field Championships a
successful event.**



Tony Bowman after another record breaking run at the MMAC Track & Field Championships at Nuneaton with MMAC President Sue Kneill-Boxley. Full report on the Championships in the next newsletter

These are the minutes from our AGM, which involved welcoming new members to our committee.

MIDLAND MASTERS ATHLETIC CLUB

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(VIRTUAL MEETING) HELD ON 25 April 2021

PRESENT: Graham Lamb (Chair), Jill Lamb, Martin Wilkinson, Irene Nicholls, Adrian Lloyd, Neil Mason, Cheryl Devonish, Sue Kneill-Boxley, Elaine Mee, Rosemary Chrimes, Rita Brownlie (via phone), Carolyn Derbyshire, Nicola Long, Andrea Sexton

APOLOGIES: Mick Smedley, Marcia Smedley, Chris Mason, Arthur Daley, Wendy Kane, Matt Long, Conrad Watson

WELCOME: Graham welcomed everyone to the 49th AGM.

MINUTES: The minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting were approved by the committee.

MATTERS ARISING

1. BMAF has changed its constitution to have BMAF services to organise events
2. Discussions on producing MMAC track suit tops is still ongoing
3. This AGM moved from 24 to 25 April as no events available to align AGM with

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I was thinking for the AGM what can I say about what we did last year, I thought at first not a lot as we didn't have the events we planned but then thinking again there was actually quite a lot we achieved.

Knowing there was going to be a disruption we had just before the last AGM come up with the idea of a virtual grand prix over 5k and 10k. Matt Long & Calvin Scoltock had suggested the idea, Calvin suggested we used the Midlands Masters Strava group he had set up and we moved out non-members to make it a MMAC members only group. Martin Wilkinson though was the main person as each month he did the age grading and we ran this from April to August with Tracey Hinxman being the winner with over 100 people taking part. Matt Long and Kevin Pye put on the perfect distance races which was a 1k and 2k time trial with Russ Parkin won.

It then looked like everything was returning to normality, track and field events were taking place. We considered if we could put on a Track and field event but decided it was going to be very difficult with the covid rules. Thanks to Nuneaton though they ran a Masters Open and we publicised that to our members.

In September BMAF was hopeful of their being an indoor inters areas and Maurice Doogan was having meetings to try and see the covid requirements needed to hold the indoors championships. The next wave sadly put paid to all this planning and sadly this was the last key task that Maurice undertook before he got ill and sadly died. Although not a member of our club our members benefited from all the tasks he did nationally and internationally.

With the virus back we started a winters virtual league which ran from November to February again over a 100 people took part and the winner of this was Ron Cattle who took the first Edgar Nicholls trophy. This our permanent reminder of Edgar who for many years was a member of the MMAC committee and was active in helping out until a few years before his death. We hope that Irene will be able present the trophy to Ron at our T&F championships.

There has also been a lot of newsletters since the AGM the first produced by Lou Satterthwaite who then stepped down. Lou had made a major contribution to the newsletter over many years and was a very hard act to follow. I initially covered the role until Andrea stepping in for the first newsletter of the year. Thanks to Matt Long for his many coaching articles and to Martin Wilkinson for his research into the archives. Kate Satterthwaite also left the committee as minutes secretary and she again has made a major contribution.

We have continued to have committee meetings over zoom and worked on trying to prepare for competition restart. I want to thank Mick Smedley for his continuing attempts to get the England cross country trial race at Derby. Also, to Marcia Smedley for her support. Jill Lamb has covered many roles over the last few years to help where we have gaps. Martin besides the virtual leagues, newsletters, has done his normal excellent role as treasurer and in addition found time to go back to work to help the country with his GP skills. Elaine Mee, Matt Long, Tony Porter, and Chris Mason have been keeping ready to spring into action when competition resumes and hopefully that's going to be very shortly. Sue keeps the website updated and hopefully this year she will get a chance to fulfil the president's role and Adrian is a valuable member of the committee looking at social events.

Irene Nicholls has continued to support me and MMAC with her knowledge and experience and she plays an invaluable role as does Rita Brownlie with her knowledge of the midlands athletics organisation.

Our membership had a small drop last year and we are currently around the same number we had at the last AGM when the MMAC championships at Nuneaton in June are open we expect some more members will return.

As we said at the start of the meeting this is our 49th meeting and so we are in our 50th year and we have planned a 50th celebration day for 12th September at Nuneaton and we will hold our 10k championship that day as well. We are planning some special events to celebrate and we hope to see you there.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Martin presented the accounts for 2020. He pointed out that it was a very atypical year because of Covid. The members subscription had been reduced to £5 to reflect the lack of events but a lot of people had paid the full amount anyway so the subs income was little different from the previous year. There was no income from events as none had been held after the Spring. The expenditure was much less as there were no Track and Field Championships in 2020. BMAF reduced their subscriptions but EAMA's had remain the same. Less was paid to officials because of the lack of championships. The committee had their meeting virtually so no costs were incurred there. Even though we are trying to reduce the surplus we managed to make a small profit. Our subs will probably go back up to £15 for 2022 but that will depend on how events pan out around the Covid situation. We have some assets including the Presidents chain which is insured. We also purchase a stock of medals so we are ready for the T&F championships. The accounts are in the black with a substantial balance

which we hope to spend some of for our 50 year Anniversary. The accounts were accepted. Adrian suggested we purchase a gazebo for T&F league, this will be discussed at the next Committee meeting

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Jill reported that it had been a very quiet year. Brian Owen had retired as Records secretary. George Smolenski had not responded to the letter asking about continuing as Handicapped so it has assumed he is no longer interested. Irene has offered to cover both these positions.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT:

According to England Athletics we should have at least two Welfare Officers (one male, one female) appointed for MMAC. After discussion, Jill proposed the amendment to add Welfare Officers to the constitution and it was agreed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

2020/2021 MMAC COMMITTEE

The following people were duly appointed to the committee

President: **Sue Kneill Boxley**

President elect: to be agreed

Chair: **Graham Lamb**

Vice Chairman: **Rita Brownlie**

Secretary: **Jill Lamb**

Membership Secretary: **Graham Lamb**

Treasurer: **Martin Wilkinson**

Minutes Sec: **Jill Lamb**

Social Secretary: **Adrian Lloyd**

Walking Secretary: **Carolyn Derbyshire**

Handicapper: **Irene Nicolls**

T&F Secretary: **Elaine Mee**

Asst. T&F: **Cheryl Derbyshire**

Road & CC Secretary: **Chris Mason**

Officials Secretary: **Wendy Kane**

Media website: **Sue Kneill-Boxley**

Committee Members: **Marica Smedley, Irene Nicholls**

Records Co-ordinator: **Irene Nicolls**

Newsletter Editor: **Andrea Sexton**

Asst. N/L , Editor: vacant

Delegates:

MCAAA **Rita Brownlie,**

EAMA: **Irene Nicolls & Graham Lamb**

BMAF **Graham Lamb**

Team/Managers:

CC International: **Mick Smedley**

MVL MMAC Vets team manager **Tony Porter**

Interarea teams - Men - **Matt Long**, Women - **Elaine Mee**

Welfare Officers: **Jill Lamb** will cover role until it is advertised and filled

President's Award

This was awarded to Martin Wilkinson for all his hard work organising and collating results of the virtual events during the lockdowns plus his many years as treasurer and also as a covid hero for going back to work to help during the Covid pandemic

Fixtures

TBC 2021 Road Relays

21-22 August BMAF Track and Field Championships - Derby

12 Sept 2021 MMAC 10K championships and 50th Anniversary Games Nuneaton

30 October Cross country relays Long Eaton TBC

Date for next AGM is provisionally 23 or 24 April 2022.

The meeting closed at 12.05

Accounts for the year 1st January to 31st December 2020

INCOME	2020	2019
Events	£0	£3,676
Subscriptions ¹	£8,252	£9,615
Donations	£570	£274
Bank Interest	£52	£205
MMAC Vest sales ²	£70	£182
Total Income	£8,944	£13,952
EXPENDITURE	2020	2019
EA ³ Registrations	£1,215	£1,275
BMAF Affiliation	£1,625	£3,160
EAMA Affiliation	£488	£474
EA Affiliation	£150	£150
EAMA XC Sponsorship	£0	£200
MMAC XC Champs Entry	£38	£0
Officials	£122	£1,295
Interarea	£0	£325
Stationery	£22	£256
MMAC Committee	£59	£573
Mid Vets T&F League	£165	£160
Equipment	£0	£39
Newsletter	£822	£1,024

¹ Subscriptions are due 1st January with reminders prior to this date, with peak renewals December to January.

² Vests purchased for £14.99 and sold to members for £10

³ EA England Athletics, BMAF British Masters Athletic Federation, EAMA England Athletics Masters Association

Prizes and medals	£1,162 ⁴	£1,011
Postage	£32	£9
Competitor support ⁵	£1794	£2,015
Facilities	£20	£1,409
Website ⁶	£315	£15
Xmas Cards	£62	£42
MMAC Vests	£165	£130
Gifts ⁷	£225	£94
Insurance	£57	£57
Total Expenditure	£8538	£13,713
Income less expenditure	£406	£239

⁴ Includes cross country and Grand Prix vouchers and a large order of medals in March.

⁵ MMAC member competing in England vest or approved away Inter-Area fixtures.

⁶ Licence and copyright.

⁷ Nuneaton Harriers donation (£100), donation in memory of Anthony Satterthwaite (£100), Macmillan Cancer Relief (£25).

BALANCES AS AT 31st DECEMBER

	2020	2019
Lloyds Current account	£412	£260
Lloyds Savings account	£4839	£4635
Lloyds Deposit Account ⁸	<u>£22,238</u>	<u>£22,188</u>
		£27,083
2020 year surplus		406
Carried forward	£27,489	

PHYSICAL ASSETS

President Chain ⁹	£3,300	£3,300
Vests in stock	£200	£200
Medals in stock	£800	£379
Total	£4300	£3879

CHAMPIONSHIPS

	2020	2019
Cross country	(£52)	(£223)
Colin Simpson Handicap	(£123)	(£80)
Track & Field	-	£408
10 kilometres	-	(£110)
10 miles	-	£11
Grand Prix	(£152)	-
Total	(£327)	£6

Martin Wilkinson
Treasurer
April 2021

⁸ 32 day interest account.

⁹ Presidents chain revalued in 2019.



Paula Williams (right) flies the flag in advocating the generic value of hurdle drills.

**WOMENS CAPTAIN PAULA WILLIAMS AND HER COACH
PAUL BEARMAN TELL MATT LONG AND HAYLEY PEGG.**

'TO GET OVER IT' IN UNPICKING HER HURDLE DRILLS.

One of the problems we have as masters athletes is that due to our relatively advanced chronological, biological and training ages, we tend to be more comfortable in pigeon holing ourselves as event specialist athletes – with a few notable exceptions and in begging the pardon of the decathlete and heptathlete community, we are labelled by this stage in our twilight years as endurance, sprints, throws or jumps based athletes. The danger is we stay in the comfort zone of our

event specific disciplines, holding on to the conviction that event specific work is the key to future success. It is however worth reminding ourselves that however long we have been in the sport- decades in many cases- we need to periodically return to the fundamental and foundational levels of the athlete development model- what we call in coach education circles the ABC's of agility, balance and co-ordination. By regressing down the athlete development model (see figure 1) and returning to the fundamentals and foundations which were part of our everyday childhood when we ran, skipped and kicked a ball in the playgrounds, we can prolong our event specific careers in the sport that bit longer.

It is also worth noting that master athletes, either returning to their chosen sport or still performing in their sport are looking for that elusive 'magical' ingredient that can be added to their current training that will enable them to achieve PB's or just better performances. There is no 'magic' formula but drills are one vital piece of a jigsaw- miss them out and your picture can't be complete. On this note, our Inter Areas Women's Captain, Paula Williams, who took a British Masters indoor silver over the barriers last year but more importantly as someone who competes across event specific disciplines, is best placed to help us understand the generic value of one mode of drills- namely hurdle drills.

To understand the physiology of how hurdle drills can develop and sustain our athletic capabilities we offer you the RASP acronym.

Rhythm

Agility

Strength

Posture

Rhythm – By effecting hurdle drills as Paula does, we improve kinaesthetic feedback and learn to keep our rhythm and relaxation of some fundamental movements patterns. Running is a rhythmic activity just as is being able to effect a Fosbury flop or a rotational hammer throw in a circle.

Agility: When we walk and skip over these hurdles, we use an extensive range of motion in our joints and muscles. Paula is both activating and mobilising primarily her hamstrings and hips in the drills being performed. Cross country running requires such agility as does throwing a javelin or effecting a hop, skip and jump into a sand pit.

Strength: Balance is required in effecting the kind of drills Paula performs and this in turn is a facilitator of strength and stability, which are important whether we run, jump or throw.

Posture: The ability to maintain posture and stay on the balls of our feet have a transferable value to running economy and efficiency, as well as for instance, pole vaulting or putting the shot.

As well as the above, hurdle drills are paramount in terms of developing mobility around the hip and this alone is worthy of attention.

Hip Mobility

Whether we run, jump or throw, the whole makeup of our body and its joints and muscles are important to us all. The hip in particular allows motion that enables us to

perform actions that are required in our chosen disciplines across the three event groups. According to Rocklin (2018) in Importance of Optimizing Hip Mobility in Elite and Professional Athletes: "When the athlete's hip joint is restricted, either through capsular tightening and/or muscle imbalances, that decreased force production and increased compensations occur". Not only may performance be compromised but these compensations tend to lead to injuries which is not a result any athlete wishes to incur.

So let's unpick some of Paula's drills.....

Paula's drills

Take a look on our Midlands Masters Facebook page and you will be able to locate the visual drops of Paula effecting the following drills in her own words (Videos filmed with thanks to Brian Gravelsons).

1. Over the top - lead leg trail leg Hamstring, hip flexors and core stability. Knee drive and up onto the toes without leaning back. I like it for high, long and triple jump as well as the obvious hurdles position over the hurdle.
2. Down the sides can cans - straight/bent knees Hamstrings, rhythm and coordination. Great for getting my feet back down to the track quickly with sprinting.
3. Lateral high knee down the middle - rhythm and coordination as well as hip flexors and switching on the glutes for power. Great for lateral movement and keeping hips high for sprinting and crossovers for javelin before the plant and throw. Sometimes I do this drill holding the javelin. I'm still a bit all over the place with it but getting better with isolating my footwork.
4. One in, hold, one over -Like over the top with the hamstrings and hip flexors but with the additional hold with the foot dorsi-flexed with the focus on striking straight in front. Great sprinting position. Also pulling that leg into position works in the adductors.
5. Charlie Chaplins- The focus here is not to sway from side to side and really isolate the lower body. Great for the core, glutes and back as you're fighting the pendulum motion created by the legs. Toes are up and feet dorsi-flexed

again. I do this holding a medicine above my head or in front of me when I'm feeling adventurous!

6. 2 forward, 1 back- Focus on keeping hips facing forward. Great for high hips and stability and posture for my throws and jumps too. Helps me to work on my range of motion and rotation with shot putt.
7. Over and under-Increase range of motion in the squat. Hip strength and flexibility.

Try the above out with a training partner if not a coach as it is useful to have visual and verbal feedback when beginning to habituate drills. Working together on drills will ensure it becomes part of your training makeup and will hold you both accountable for getting over it and getting it done!

So having looked at the 'What To' lets move on to consider the 'How To':

How To:

Paula's well respected hurdles coach, Paul Bearman was instrumental in the

development of 2018 World Indoor hurdles champion, Andrew Pozzi. In his own words, the Stratford upon Avon based coach explains how his group effect the drills:

- We set the hurdles up generally 12 pigeon steps apart at a height commensurate with the athlete's age and size.
- It's important to balance the drills i.e. if you do the right side/leg also do the other, that way both sides of the body are exercised and strengthened.
- Posture is a key component of the drills and helps to develop the concentration required to hurdle and thus the repetition helps to also lock technique into the memory muscle.
- Look forward and from slow and deliberate to fast, accuracy in the execution of the drills helps to develop concentration and spatial awareness.
- Stay relaxed, light on your feet and generally on your toes and generate feet legs with the drills that require faster movement.
- Use your arms at a 45 degree angle as in a sprinting action.
- Exaggerate lifting the knees.

Having taken's Paul's advice, its worth us all reflecting that the late, great Peter Coe once famously said, "Athletes that train the same, stay the same", so you must learn to progress and at times regress them accordingly.

Progressions and Regressions

Paula is an elite masters athlete and what is simple for her may be a complex skill for the likes of you and I. We may have to regress some of the drills effect by Paula. One simple way of regressing hurdle drills is to remove the obstacles themselves. Sound silly? Well have a think about the amount of times you have done 'opening and closing the gate' drills as part of your warm up without giving a second thought to a wooden barrier being in front of you. Ways to progress the drills demonstrated

by Paula could include (a) speeding the movement patterns up; (b) raising the height of the barriers; (c) increasing or decreasing the distance between the barriers or (d) increasing the number of barriers and thus time and distance over which the drill is effected.

Matt Long and Hayley Pegg work together as England Athletics Coach Education Tutors and both were recently awarded selection onto the England Athletics Team Staff Training Programme as team manager and coach respectively. Matt welcomes contact for support through mattlongcoach@gmail.com

IN 'TAKING A BRISK WALK' **MATT LONG** FINDS OUR RACE WALKING SQUAD A BREATH OF FRESH AIR TO TALK TO.



Derbyshire (left) goes South and Wendy 'Kanes it' in both winning at the Inter Areas in Lee Valley. March 2021.

If you have ever pondered the idea of dipping your big toe in the pool of race walking, in sticking firmly to the rules of the game, our Fab 5 put their foot down and insist you come up to speed as I found out one afternoon in May.....

Matt Long: What made you get into race walking in the first place?

Wendy Kane: I first got into race walking at my middle school - Whitehouse Common in Sutton Coldfield. I cannot recall why I did - but guess it was part of our PE. I then continued to do race walking when I moved to secondary school at John Wilmott and had a coach come up and train me on the school field at lunchtime. I recall doing some races against other schools. I moved secondary school to Sutton Girls School and continued race walking but it was only inter school competitions. Once I left school I stopped race walking and didn't resume until 5 years ago. My running was not going as well and someone had spotted that my walking which I used in some circuit training sessions, was quite good and suggested that I did it at masters league fixtures. I signed second claim for a club as my then club didn't have a team in vets league and headed off to Kettering for my first race. I thoroughly enjoyed it and couldn't believe how well I had done!

Paul Hawkins: I was always a runner competing up to marathon. I was never that good, just an average club runner. I had a PB of 2.53 for marathon and similar down to 2.15 for 800m. I got a knee injury, torn meniscus, and was recommended a minor op in 2013. Unfortunately the surgeon found the meniscus was pretty damaged so he took most of it out. Following that I was never able to run properly. I tried various other things but disliked swim and bike. I gave throwing a go but if you know me, I'm really not built for it.

Carolyn Derbyshire: I was asked when 20 years to help out to fill a team in a couple of races for Nuneaton. I hate to see events not full so offered to help I was shown how to walk by the experienced Ann Wheeler and I seemed to be able to do the motion without too much difficulty. I then didn't walk again for a few years. I came back to it as a V35 to fill a slot on the team sheet and have been walking

ever since. I started more focused walk training thereafter following encouragement from my husband.

Peter Boszko: I was at a Birchfield Harriers event in about 2007 watching my wife who was Masters sprinter and it was suggested that I should participate. I asked what they needed and was told racewalkers and javelin throwers! I tried both and enjoyed trying both, but with back problems in the past throwing a javelin didn't seem a wise choice, hence I became a racewalker.

Ann Wheeler: It was a vets league. I first saw race walking thought it looked good and i would like to have a go, so Jill Langford gave me a quick lesson. I went away practised must admit the race walk action is natural to me so I did the next league match and went on from there I was lucky enough to have Andy Penn's coach advising me.

Matt: What do you consider to be your best achievement as a race walker?

Wendy: There is no doubt that my bronze medal in the European Masters Championships in 2019 has been my best achievement. I represented Great Britain for the first time. I was part of the 10k team and the first GB athlete in my team over the line and we won a bronze team medal. I had never achieved anything like this before. It was such a huge boost to my confidence and I think I didn't stop smiling for days!

Paul: Two races - Probably the BMAF 20k in 2017 where I was 7th overall but won my age group. The time was quite slow but a win is a win. The other one was the 2018 European Indoors. Despite the title there is an outdoor 5k walk and I finished 13th but GB won the team bronze. A European medal! Obviously being selected for the MMAC team ranks pretty high up too.

Carolyn: Winning a team Gold in the v 40 10km GB team, Silver in the individual 10km race walk and Bronze in the individual 3km race walk at the World Indoor Masters in Toruń in 2019. The medal set are proudly placed in our home bar as a memento.

Peter: In 2019 I set a new M70 2km record in the MVTFL of 10:43 and in 2019 I got an individual silver in the 20km at the European Championships at Jessolo in Italy in 2:00:49.

Ann: My best achievement as a race walker would be the European Masters champs in W55 age group winning 5k 10k and 20k plus team golds.

Matt : What technical challenges does race walking present say compared to running?

Wendy: Obviously race walking is technical and getting speed up you have to be so careful not to lift. So challenging particularly towards the end of a race when potentially you are getting faster. Also as you get older the other challenge is flexibility. Trying to keep the knees straight can be a nightmare - as mobility can challenge us in later years!

Paul: I think it is much more difficult. In running I never had to really focus but to maintain technique I have to concentrate all the time. As a runner you can run comfortably without focus in training but walking is much more difficult. Especially when you are a relative newcomer with poor technique and a bad knee! I have found it difficult to stay legal with a straight leg and suffered a few DQ's but I keep trying.

Carolyn: In my opinion it's the judging not only do you have to race to compete against fellow athletes but you also have to have technical skills to ensure you are performing the race walk to the required standards and not seen to be having a bent knee or lifting which can result in disqualification.

Peter: Really good race walking technique is quite difficult to master; I am still working at it but fortunately a moderately good technique is more than adequate to enable you to race and get a lot of benefits in terms of fitness and enjoyment. Getting the cadence that is right for you seems difficult at first and if you don't get this right then the other aspects of the technique won't fall into place. It's made harder by the fact that one intuitively feels that a longer step in front of you will help you go much faster, and it doesn't quite work like that! I don't know anything about running technique but I am now sure that, in spite of its apparent simplicity, it is in fact every bit as technical as racewalking.

Ann: The most important technical aspect is not to break contact with the ground. also the knee should be straight on contact something older athletes have problems with.

Matt: How has race walking helped your overall athletic ability in other areas of our sport and beyond?

Wendy: As I currently cannot run or barely run - race walking is the way I can keep some level of fitness. It provides me with my only form of competition - which is something that is important to me. It has also given me the opportunity to compete at a high level which I would never have been able to achieve within running.

Paul: Enormously! Mental well being is great. General fitness too. I feel much more at ease with myself. I do quite a lot of coaching, a middle distance group at Stratford, and I think they can relate to me as a competitor as well as just a coach.

Carolyn: It helps my overall fitness and well being my race walking complements my running and triathlons allowing me to train at different distances speeds and using different muscle groups leading to a rounded fitness.

Peter: Training for race walking has been a really good way to get fit. Racewalkers can race a range of distances, most commonly 2km, 3km, 5km and 10km, and therefore training involves speed work and endurance. Outside of racewalking I enjoy tennis and hillwalking and my racewalking training is certainly good for both of these.

Ann: Race walking has helped me stay fit and active well beyond running may have done, but most of all its the camaraderie we have as a race walk family. We are competitive on the track and road but great friends off it.

Matt Long: What words of advice would you offer to those nervously thinking about dipping their toe into race walking?

Wendy: I would encourage anyone to give race walking a go - but don't ask me to coach you!!! If you are struggling with running or having back issues try it out. For me it has been a lifeline - I have just found the pounding my back got from running was too much but this has enabled me to remain in competitive athletics. The race walking community are a friendly bunch too.

Paul: It is a very friendly, welcoming scene. Everyone is really supportive so don't be nervous and give it a go. In the last few months I've got four others from Stratford AC to give it a go and they enjoy it and have done really well. The women's team has had several second & third places in the Virtual Racewalk League which they are very happy with. I'm not a race walk coach but I try to guide them.

Equally racewalk coaches have been really helpful to me, for example Ann Perry at Worcester has always encouraged and guided me

Carolyn: You could say it's a walk in the park... on a serious note I think that race walking is inclusive for all ages and abilities. It has less stress on the joints overall so is definitely an alternative if running is difficult. It is a technical event but once the technique is achieved can be very rewarding. We in the race walk community are a friendly bunch and always willing to support and welcome anyone wanting to have a go at race walking. I'm hoping to arrange in the future as part of my new role as walks secretary for MMAC some training / workshop to raise awareness and help anyone wanting to start their race walking journey.

Peter: Try it and prepare to be hooked! Also chat with someone who can racewalk so that you start off in the right direction.

Ann: I would love to see more athletes having a go at race walking, start with power walking then progress by improving action. Our problem is lack of coaches and a lack of clubs who are willing to do it.

Matt Long is a team manager for Midlands road, cross country and masters. As author of more than 300 coaching articles listed on his Power of 10 entry he willingly shares these for no cost with athletes and coaches and is contactable through mattlongcoach@gmail.com

THE NEW VERSION OF OPENTRACK

Some people will have seen that a new version of Opentrack has been installed to make it consistent with the company's standard offering.

It means renewal is not different and requires that people do the following

Click on the Clubs tab and select the club for which the membership is due for renewal. Then click on the Renewal button in order to pay the current renewal fee for the membership category.

People will also need to read the instructions on entering a competition in the new version of OpenTrack – both the event description and each step in the process.

Peter Kennedy says, It is very easy to enter a competition once you are used to the process but if you don't take care to select your BMAF area club as your team code, then you will pay the non-member supplement. If you can see that you are about to pay the wrong amount, then you can step back and correct the mistake. There are no refunds for anyone paying too much.

We welcome these new members to MMAC:

Abayomi	Adedimeji
Tunde	Adeyemo
Laura	Allen
Richard	Banks
Paul	Beeson
Angela	Bryant
Damian	Carr
Jonathan	Carter
Sarah	Christian
Yvette	Clayton
Gemma	Collier
Patrick	Corcoran
James	Denne
Kelly	Fairclough
Martin	Foster
Lee	Hardy
Steve	Hillman
James	Hodge
Tom	Holden
Alex	Hope
Krisztian	Karasz
Emily	McBride
Patrick	McBride
Ray	Mckenna
Peter	McNally
Jeannie	Noonan
Ashley	Steventon
Branka	Sukara-Fielding
Jan	Timberlake
Liz	Vaughan

BRITISH RECORD ATTEMPT BY MIDLAND MASTERS AC



We are delighted to announce that thanks to Head of Athletics at Birmingham University AC, Luke Gunn, and courtesy of James Marshall, there is to be an attempt by Midland Masters at the M35 British 4 x 800m relay record at Birmingham University on Wednesday July 14th. The current record of 8:07.1s has stood for a quarter of a century and news updating! For expressions of interest in joining a team in an attempt at making history contact both James at jdmars400@hotmail.co.uk and copy in team manager Matt Long (mattlongcoach@gmail.com) who will form part of the selection panel for the squad and reserves. As long as you are 35+ you are eligible so don't let chronological age be a barrier.

Midland Masters Memories Chariots of Fire!

Dipping into the newsletter archives has been another interesting experience. I now have come to realise we have quite a historic record of athletics over the past 50 years. As a result I am in the process of ensuring we have an appropriate backup of old newsletters. We are now in the early 80s and this is the beginning of the Coe-Ovett years and the rise of the marathon as a popular competition and jogger's goal. The first Peoples' Marathon was organised by the late John Walker in 1980. Originally it was called the "Centurion Joggers Peoples' Marathon" held at 12 noon on Sunday 11th May 1980, a year before the first London Marathon. Indeed the experience of this event and John Walker's advice was used to inform Chris Brasher, the race director for London. John's race, for joggers required a minimum qualifying time in a marathon over the preceding 12 months of 2 hours 50 minutes ruling out most joggers! I remember it well using the new M42 before it opened to traffic and my father (the local GP) was the medical officer, he was offered honorary membership of Centurion Running Club as a result. The event was held twice before coming the Birmingham Marathon in 1982 later to be abandoned until recent times.

<u>The first People's Marathon - Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, Sun.11th May.</u>		
25.	487	Donald Reay - Halesowen 2.59.45
29.	262	Bob Bradley - Northampton 3.00.24
35.	549	George Douthwaite, Clevedon 3.02.07
49.	576	Colin Simpson, Smallheath 3.05.24
61.	393	Brian Webster, Warley 3.09.55
101.	638	Robert Froggatt, Smallheath 3.20.38
120.	147	Bryan Rogers, Sutton Coldfield 3.24.04
132.	480	Raymond Bunn, Halesowen 3.25.32
144.	135	M. Langrish, Coventry G. 3.27.36
151.	102	Graham Lovell, Smallheath 3.29.59
183.	107	Raymond Potter, Sutton Coldfield 3.34.49
210.	651	Robert Evans, Wol. & Bilston 3.38.34
211.	713	John Powell, Lozells 3.38.39
224.	416	David Unwin, M.V.A.C. 3.40.53
299.	142	Stanley Willetts, Sutton Coldfield 3.54.08
336.	36	John Culshaw, Tamworth 4.03.41
340.	790	Frank Mone, M.V.A.C. 4.05.26
350.	614	Barry Beech, Sutton Coldfield 4.07.02
393.	479	Radcliff Gore, Halesowen 4.23.26
429.	688	Roy Humphries, Rugby 4.42.50
458.	601	John Hall, M.V.A.C. 5.08.06
461.	103	Peter Eames, Centurion Joggers 5.10.33
469.	564	Trevor Hughes, Leamington 5.23.22
Apologies to those missed off the list - please forward information		
No ladies results available.		

Figure 1: MAMC results for the First Peoples' Marathon

In the athletics world the professionalisation and issue of sponsorship was raging. The AAA steadfastly refused open competition. Other sports had gone professional (football, tennis, cricket) and we had the world of Kerry Packer cricket. A select few amateur athletes somehow found ways round the rules and were able to train full time. We were also getting to grips with "older women" competing in athletics.

Internationally, veterans or Masters sports were now gaining international popularity. The term "masters" was a transatlantic term where "veterans" refers to the ex-military. The rising popularity came with the launch of a new international athletics newsletter published in Canada and the US masters' newsletter was now 2 years old. Penn Mutual, an US insurance company ploughed \$350,000 into US masters' sports in 1980. The executive director of this sports programme was the 1968 Olympic decathlon champion, Bill Toomey, who at 41 had decided to return to "veteran" athletics (as we still said in the UK in 1980!). Obviously the world of masters and potential monetary gains was also very different to the amateur status and view in the UK at the time.

Our newsletters have a number of articles about the emerging science of training as a veteran, sports nutrition and the differences between men and women (!). In World records, for swimming and athletics, the disparity between the performance between male and female athletes had greatly diminished. The gap now across all records was about 10%. Would the lines cross in the future? The record for ultra-long distance swimming favoured women with two way cross channel swimming now two hours faster than men probably due to body fat differences. On the track physical differences favoured men except in gymnastic ability and tolerance of altitude.

In terms of training it was clear that some of the early world record holders in the past trained very little compared to the modern athlete. Fanny Blankers Koen, winner of 4 gold medals in the 1948 Olympics (100m, 200m, 80m H and 4x100m relay) only trained twice a week and a race on Saturday. In the 80's marathon training largely involved "getting miles in the bank" or boasting about your high mileage. It was thought to beat 3 hours training 100 miles a week was the expectation. In an

article entitled "Training or Torture - Method or Madness" (March 1981) K Westley describes two conversations with fellow members X and Y both approaching a half-century in age. X had a good past marathon history and his performances were impressive with his increasing age, what was surprising was he was doing this by depleting his mileage as he got older, in fact, only 30 miles per week! Y on the other hand was running 15-20 miles per day, including running to and from work, getting recurrent injuries, looked tired and rarely fit enough to compete. On the rare occasions he did compete he then disappeared for weeks. Sounds familiar? This and other articles underlying the importance of quality, rest days and the emergence of cross training.

Sports drinks were now heavily promoted but largely were sugar, flavourings and a few minerals or vitamins. Sponsorship was often controversial e.g. The Mars London Marathon. Science was suggesting it was the water that was important during exercise but possibly a small amount of glucose helped intake of water plus cold drinks worked better than hot. People were experimenting with legal nutritional stimulants eg phosphates, caffeine, gelatin. Pre and post exercise nutrition was a big talking point and gels appearing on the market for fuelling on the run. There are a lot of articles about carbohydrate loading pre-marathon and this was a new and popular pre-race diet with more of a psychological benefit for most than any true improvement in performance. We were also discovering our need for calorific intake decreases with age as does our activities. Unless we do more exercise or reduce intake we will naturally gain weight. According to Harry Price (1980) typical calorific needs are:

Age 20-44	2700 kcals
Age 45-74.	2300 kcals
Age 75+.	2100 kcals

Finally, returning to our Track & Field Championships, held at the Dell in 1982, reported by Alf Sparkes, were blessed with better weather except for the torrential downpour for the 5000m providing unwanted refreshment. In the 200m Colin Fairey had a rare old scrap with the only lady entrant, Christine Vaughan, but had to give best a few yards from home, Christine beating the previous best W35 time by 0.3sec recording 27.7 seconds. In the 800m M40/M45 event, Wilf Morgan looked beaten when J.W.Lewis attacked in the back straight, but Wilf found a turn of speed to pass the new member from Rowheath just before the line, to beat the record he previously held jointly with Alan Hughes - his time 2min 5.6 seconds - *"as fast as we could run when we were youths Wilf!"* (Comment by Alf Sparkes). In the 5,000 metres Pascal Morris cut out quite a sharp pace from the start and dropped the rest of the field by some distance in the early laps. However, the younger legs of Doug Fownes prevailed and he soon caught Pascal to finish some 500yds ahead in 16min 2secs, Pascal the Bionic Postman broke the previous best performance by some 38 seconds, recording 16min 25secs - *"Can you transfer to Stourport, Pascal, so I can get my post delivered earlier?"* (Alf Stokes comment). One race in particular epitomised veteran track and field. This was the 100m M60/65 - just two runners, C.T.R. Fairey and W.L.T Williams coming hell for leather down the track, neck and neck, both recording the same time of 17.4 seconds but Cliff just getting the verdict. Chariots of Fire!

Martin Wilkinson