



# PAWPRINTS

The Newsletter of  
**Altrincham & District Athletic Club Ltd**  
(Altrincham & District AC since 1961)



**JULY 2020**

Club website [www.altrincham-athletics.co.uk](http://www.altrincham-athletics.co.uk)

## **Jeff Norman is the fastest 75 year old in the UK !**

Jeff Norman, who had his 75th birthday in February, took a drop in age to be part of the Altrincham M65-74 team in the recent British Masters Virtual Road Relays. Not only was he the fastest member of the Altrincham team but he recorded 22:50, which was the fastest M75 time of the competition!

*Full results & report on pages 3 & 4.*



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## ADAC Committee 2019 - 2020

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Mansel Pope</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Helen Simpson</b>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<b>Richard Pavey</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Carole Harrison</b>
<b>Welfare Officer</b>	<b>Mel McGuinness</b>
<b>Social Secretaries</b>	<b>Gordon Nicoll</b> <b>Richard Johnson</b>
<b>Coaching coordinator</b>	<b>John Snape</b>
<b>Road Running</b>	<b>Mike Berks</b>
<b>Cross Country</b>	<b>Graham Harrison</b> <b>Fiona Cosgrove</b>
<b>Fell Running</b>	<b>Tim Raffle</b>
<b>Track &amp; Field</b>	<b>Justin Thompson</b>

## England Athletics Virtual 5K Road Running Championships 11th - 13th July

Following on from the Virtual National Road Relay Championships which took place during April and the British Masters' Virtual Road Relay Championships which were in June there is now the chance to compete in the England Athletics Virtual 5K Road Running Championships which are scheduled to take place on the weekend of the 11th – 13th July.

The club had 33 representatives in the National Relays and 35 in the Masters' Relays.

Entries for the 5K championships are now open and full details can be found here:

[https://data.opentrack.run/en-gb/x/2020/GBR/ea\\_5k/](https://data.opentrack.run/en-gb/x/2020/GBR/ea_5k/)

## August Pawprints

Please send material for next month's Pawprints to Colin Davies: [colinxdavies@gmail.com](mailto:colinxdavies@gmail.com) by Sat 25th July. Articles, reports, results, news, and photos gratefully accepted.



## BMAF Virtual Road Relay Championships 14th - 20th June

The annual veteran's road relays, usually held in May at Sutton Park near Birmingham, were cancelled this year in view of the ongoing restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic.

In their place the BMAF organised a virtual relay, similar to the senior road relay held in April. Altrincham were represented in six of the ten categories with 35 club members taking part. The M35-44 category consisted of 6 stages, the M45-54 & W35-44 had 4 stages and all the other categories had 3 stages.

The outstanding performance was by Jeff Norman who, at the age of 75, recorded the fastest time for our M65-74 team and was the fastest M75 in the whole competition.

The W55-64 team of Vicki Perry, Alison Vesey and Carole Harrison took sixth place in a category in which there were with 47 complete teams. Vicki's time of 20:17 was the second fastest of all W60s.

Although these were described as the British Masters' Virtual Road Relay Championships, Dave Entwistle completed his leg in Hauterives, near his home in South East France!

<b>Vicki Perry</b>	<b>20:17</b>
<b>Alison Vesey</b>	<b>22:58</b>
<b>Carole Harrison</b>	<b>23:03</b>
<b>ADAC W55-64</b>	<b>1:06:18</b>

<b>Alice Welch</b>	<b>21:27</b>
<b>Nikki Leese</b>	<b>22:46</b>
<b>ADAC W35-44</b>	<b>incomplete</b>

*Alison Vesey, Graham Harrison, Colin Davies, Mansel Pope & Dave Telford  
pictured at Millington by Carole Harrison*



*More results on next page*

## BMAF Virtual Road Relay Championships

Dave Norman	16:31
Mike Berks	17:05
Tom Moseley	17:16
Kristian Matuszczak	17:42
James Pattison	17:48
Craig Bradbury	18:55
Andy Spencer	18:59
Richard Jellyman	19:16
Matt Page	19:22
Andrew Paton-Crockett	20:02
Chris Marritt	20:41
ADAC M35-44	1:45:17

Jeff Norman	22:50
Dave Telford	24:12
Colin Davies	24:28
Hugh McKenna	24:31
Mansel Pope	25:15
ADAC M65-74	1:11:30

Andy Pickford	17:19
Ed Buckley	17:57
Richard Lane	18:46
Andy Holloway	19:03
John Noblett	19:29
Nick Burke	19:39
Steve Renny	19:56
ADAC M45-54	1:13:05

Richard Evans	17:57
Graham Harrison	20:37
Dave Ainsworth	20:51
Dave Entwistle	22:01
Duncan Dickinson	22:27
David Hughes	22:36
Mike Duncombe	23:52
ADAC M55-64	59:25

*Dave Entwistle in Hauterives*



## Running with Champions

*from Dave Entwistle*

This article was inspired from recently seeing the photograph of Alan Hardman in Olympic torch-bearing attire, flanked by Alan Blinston and Jeff Norman.

I had also been tipped-off that Colin Davies was short of copy for the next edition of Pawprints and was requiring some ballast.

I have always considered myself fortunate to have learned at a very early age that my athletics career would never amount to very much. The name Blinston is synonymous with ADAC but my first contact with the club would not be Alan but his wife, Shirley.

As an enthusiastic 9-year-old, I had happily signed-up to represent Navigation CP School in the local Schools Cross Country competition. On my first outing all went perfectly, as would be the case for the whole of my schools' cross-country career. You see, I had the absolute good fortune of being in the same class as a young lad called Neil Greenfield and not only could you depend on him winning every Saturday morning in John Leigh Park but, backed by a Sale Harriers training programme, he would go on to being English Schools' Cross Country Champion, amongst many other titles.

So, in the 100% certainty that victory for the school was assured, on that first venture into the world of mud, hills and burning lungs, I crossed the line in what would quickly become my customary mid-field placing and handed my raffle ticket to Shirley Blinston.

The only real point of interest in this event was the fact that I came back 2 weeks later and we went through the whole routine again ..... and would do so for the coming years, with the only changes being Neil and I changing teams, going from Navigation CPS to Wellington Boys' SS. Sports Day and Schools' Cross Country would be my only athletic outings, usually preceded by me going for a mile run the day before as training. Whilst the results did not vary much, Neil was given some stiffer competition at Wellington; names many of you will remember took turns in trying to make him suffer. Ian Sixsmith, Jamie and Scott Cree, Mark Hartley to name a few ex-ADAC youngsters but Neil remained dominant. There was another lad like me, only much better, who'd turn out just for the events called Nigel Houghton (who we will come back to) but basically the way it would go at the School Sports Day 1500m would be Neil nearly lapping me twice on the 200m track, Ian and Nigel lapping me once and Jamie finishing just a little less than a lap ahead.

I never had too much issue with Mark Hartley as he concentrated on 100/200m events until one year I let him convince me I might do better dropping to 400/800m races. As he was an ADAC semi-professional, I considered he must know what he was talking about, so I volunteered to run the 400m. The effect on me during the race was so traumatic, it would be 10 years before I would run another one! The second one would be equally memorable but for other reasons we can leave for another day.

I left school and, without the weekly routine of sports in the school curriculum, I started running on my own. We are now in the exciting period of late 70s and early 80s.

On the back of US imports like books by Jim Fixx and Bob Glover, and the start of the running boom, names like Reebok, New Balance and Nike were bringing specific running shoe options to rival Dunlop, Adidas and Puma standard offerings (not to mention Tiger Cubs and all the other suppliers of equivalent "black pumps"). I remember buying my first pair of Nike Roadrunner and, compared to anything else I had ever worn, it was like running on air.

Anyway, at the age of 17 or 18, I am now toeing the start line of some youth club organised closed event in my new Nikes and legs actually used running regularly against my old nemesis, Nigel Houghton, and we went step for step over an undulating Bowdon Vale 3 mile course and, whilst the final result was the same, we both came home minutes before the rest of the field.

And so, I learned my first important lesson in athletics; its best to do some regular training! November 1982 and I reach the age of 20 and, be it some form of early mid-life crisis, I slam in an entry for the Piccadilly Marathon.

*continued on next page*



## Running with Champions

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Family links now mean I can pump Alan & Shirley Blinston for information on how to prepare for running 26.2 miles which would quickly translate into me running most Sunday mornings with the ex-Olympian and European 5000m bronze medallist. Compared to my own pathetic efforts, Alan still had demi-God status but as I would quickly understand, he was running way below his previous ability even taking account he was now approaching 40. Despite his lack of form, running with Alan was rarely anything less than purgatory. Alan & Shirley were living in a cul-de-sac in Bowdon Vale at the time and I promise you, the warm up was the 75 yards onto Priory Road, before what was usually the run out to Tatton, a full lap of the park and then back. 12 miles; usually for me flat-out to the park, general disintegration in the park, basic thoughts of how I will get home once leaving the park.

A month before the marathon, Alan did his level best to convince me to turn out for what would be the inaugural "All in an April Evening" 5 miler but with my first 3 hour training run planned for the following morning, I regrettably gave it a miss but still went down to watch. Alan too was happy I was fit. To get me to the start line, I had offered a mutual friend I would get sponsorship for their chosen charity. Having suffered shin splints for a few weeks my participation had been touch and go and I had talked Alan into taking my place at the Piccadilly to protect the sponsor money. I am not sure who was more relieved in the end that I was able to run.

(Here I am in the 1983 Piccadilly Marathon)



I would subsequently get around the marathon course and then, looking for a new objective, I zoomed in on the Altrincham 10.

Despite my lack of any obvious ability, I announced to Alan I thought I could break the hour for 10 miles and asked him to find me a pacesetter. So, on what would turn out to be a customary hot July afternoon, I stood halfway-up Shaftesbury Avenue in the middle of the road, trying to identify Denis Wood.

30 minutes earlier, I had been sat in BTH School changing rooms surrounded by ADAC and other athletes, most of whom were wearing what was becoming the vogue of Ron Hill vests, the bottom half being mesh. A face I recognised from local newspapers then entered the changing rooms, took one look at the nearest Ron Hill vest and announced, "That's not an official club vest!" and then quickly added with that wry smile we all know so well, "I think I might wear mine."

This was my first ever encounter with Jeff Norman.

Anyway, having found and introduced myself to Denis Wood, if Denis was surprised at the fact he had been chosen to pace me round in an hour, then he hid it extremely well. Like so many people I have been lucky enough to meet both in and through ADAC, I am very grateful to Denis, a man of kindness and patience, who got me out of what could have been a nightmare official start to my athletic life. Jeff went on to finish second behind Malcolm MacBride of Salford and I still wonder if he might have won had he worn an official Club vest?

Four days later, back in the same BTH changing rooms, I joined ADAC and, despite some geographic difficulties, it remains the only club I ever joined and have never wanted to leave.

*Dave Entwistle*

*(If we are still lacking any real news then I will continue the tale next month but, we should be clear, we all have an ADAC story to tell.....)*