



Worcester AC's Athletes at the World Championships Torun, Central Poland – March 2019

Torun is a dedicated World Heritage Site, but for this visit we were more interested in the superb indoor athletics track on the edge of town. As we had already visited Torun back in 2015 for the European (Masters) Championships it didn't feel too strange so we were able to advise and support other athletes, helping reduce the anxiety levels sometimes associated with such international adventures!



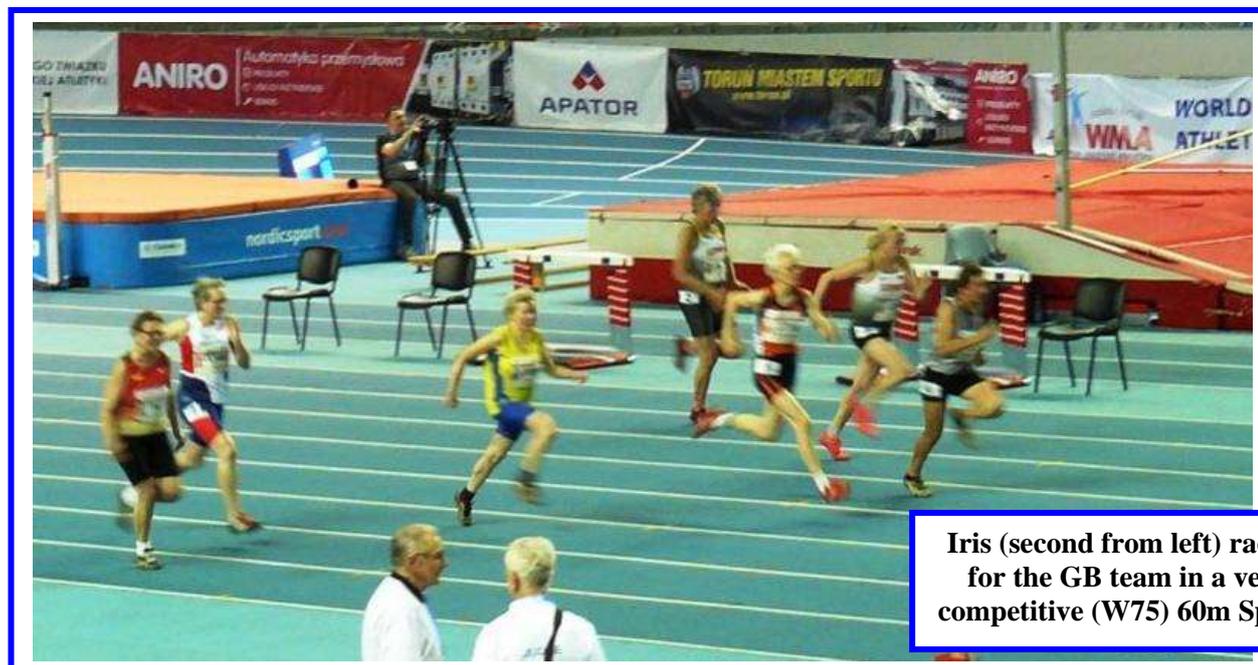
The magnificent indoor facility at Torun – possibly the best indoor athletics venue in Europe

And so it was that towards the end of March 2019 our little group of Worcester AC female athletes that normally compete in the “Midland Vet's League” arrived in Poland to compete on what is obviously the largest masters track & field stage on the globe, the **World Indoor Championships**, this time as part of the **Great Britain** squad. Sadly there were no WAC men in the GB team this time.

The event was spread over a week and included Cross Country, a Half Marathon, a range of Race Walks and Outdoor Throws, as well as the full range of Indoor Track and Field competitions. With over 4,000 entries from 88 countries it was a truly massive, global affair. Athletes were all aged 35 or over, with no upper age limit. The oldest I saw was a lady from India aged **103!** She competed at 60m, 200m and Javelin. Sometimes needing a helping hand from the officials - see photo right >>>



Iris Holder (W75) – took part in the **60m Sprints**, coming 6th in the final with a time of 11.52s. In the **Long Jump**, due to the number of entries, Iris discovered she would be jumping into a sandpit located next to the indoor warm-up area, rather than in the main arena. Iris managed 2.67m for 5th place. In **Triple Jump** Iris was once again asked to compete outside the main arena, but this time she achieved 2nd place for a Silver Medal with an excellent SB of 6.25m.



Iris (second from left) racing for the GB team in a very competitive (W75) 60m Sprint

Unusually for Iris, she did not enter the **4x200 Relay** as she had an early flight home that morning.

Melanie Garland (W55) – was delighted to arrive at the World Championships fit and healthy. Mel made the semi-finals at both **60m Sprints** (9.08s) and **200m** (31.11) but did not progress to the finals.

In the **High Jump** Mel managed a very respectable 1.36m to equal her SB and secure 6th place.

However, in the **Triple Jump**, Mel set a massive lifetime best of 9.72m which bettered the previous British all-time Record at W55. However, her friend and GB colleague Jo Willoughby, herself a former Welsh International, has recently moved into the age group and she jumped even further!

Long Jump is possibly Mel's best event.

Professional author and photographer Alex Rotas was watching and kindly supplied words and a photo....

[Alex Rotas Photography](#)

This is GB's Mel Garland showing just how much she gives every time she competes. It was enough for her to earn a Silver Medal in the women's Long Jump competition, 55-59 year old age group, here at the World Masters Athletics Indoor World Championships at Torun, Poland today.

It also brought her a new British Record of 4.73m.

It was a phenomenal achievement from a superb athlete. I've watched Mel and photographed her many, many times and I've never seen her ever give anything short of her best. I asked her if she'd mind me posting a shot of her clearly giving her characteristic roar as she lands. I was quite pleased with the drama of the image. I love how powerful she looks and how totally she occupies that moment.

She said *“Not at all. It shows how much I go for it and what else is there? That's the whole point of it. Why compete unless you give it absolutely everything you've got?”*

I think we can see you do that, Mel. We salute you for it and for your Medal and for the British Record!



Selected for the **GB (W55) 4x200 relay team** on the final day of competition, Mel was surprised when the fastest of our GB athletes, Kirsten King, was not in the squad. No worries, GB still had a full team plus a reserve. The GB team ran well, getting the baton around safely in a time of 2'03.51 for third place in the World and secured a Bronze Medal.



Worcester's Angela Bryant (W55) –had also arranged to take part in the World Championships. Sadly Angela suffered an injury and illness in the lead-up to the competition so she and hubby Mike decided not to travel. We wish you a speedy recovery Angela.

If fully fit, Angela would almost certainly have featured in this GB relay team.

**GB (W55) 4x200m Relay Squad
L to R – Susan Frisby, Angela Kelly
Mel Garland and Virginia Mitchell**



Jan Timberlake (W50) – was another of the Worcester AC athletes who went to the World Championships, where she entered a large number of events.

At **High Jump** Jan came 10th with an SB of 1.30m whilst at **Triple Jump** she achieved a creditable 9.05m for 7th place.

Jan also entered the **60m Hurdles**, but in the results is recorded as DNS.

In the **Long Jump** Jan managed 4.27m for 11th place and another SB and in the **60m Sprints** Jan came 6th in her heat with a time of 9.68s

Jan was a member of a very strong **GB (W50) 4x200 Relay Team**. Unfortunately they finished in 4th place, so just outside the medals, in a time of 2'03.43

Jan's Championships was not finished though. There is a strong rumour (that she has not denied) that Jan likes to party, so it was no surprise that she helped organise a visit to a local night club for the GB athletes and those from other teams if they wished to come along. By all accounts it was well supported and a great success.

Well done to the handful of Worcester AC athletes who made the trip to central Poland and competed in the Masters World Championships. You produced a range of good (some very good!) performances, helping Team GB to 4th place in the medals table – yes, our local club athletes were mixing it with the very best at the World Championships!

The 2019 World (Masters) Indoor Athletics Championships attracted over 4,000 entries from across the globe, making it by far the biggest indoor T&F competition of the year. Even from the UK there were over 400 athletes, no wonder competition was fierce and standards so high.

Many people said they felt privileged simply to be involved, just to be part of this massive organisation, to meet fellow enthusiasts from foreign parts, greeting friends old and new, soaking up the atmosphere and the camaraderie.

For those who wish to consider experiencing something similar later this year, the European (Masters) Outdoor T&F Championships take place in Italy in September. Details are already available on the BMAF website, or contact me directly if you have any specific queries.

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Worcester Athletic Club