



## MIDLAND VETERAN'S TRACK and FIELD LEAGUE 2022

Worcester AC's track and field season got off to a flying start on 27 April when our Veteran Athletes (those aged 35 or over) competed in a South Midlands league match at Abbey Stadium, Redditch.

Huge congratulations to everyone who took part at the first of the four Vet's League matches. The first match of the season is never an easy one but our athletes performed above expectations to secure a win for Worcester. Many thanks too to those who helped officiate and without whom the event could not have taken place.

**In the men's match** the evening began with the 100m sprints. **Dave Shaw** set the ball rolling splendidly with second place and a time of 13.9 in the M60 category. Had there been another 10m to this race Dave would almost certainly have prevailed. Dave also helped get second in the M50 mixed relay as well as leaping 7.81 in the triple jump to get further Team points.



**Laurence Oldfield** then rose to the occasion to produce a great season opener of 16.3 in the M70 race. Laurence's margin of victory was considerable which was all the more remarkable given that a few months ago he broke a rib.

**Laurence heading the field in the M70 age group 100m**

**Richard Houchin** is another who has had an even longer road back from injury. In his first competitive race since 2020 he grabbed second place in an incredibly closely fought

M50 race with a time of 13.2. Welcome back Richard.

**Dave Price** made his debut for the Vet's team in the M35 race and ran 13.6 to secure 6 points. Later Dave went on to dip under 60 seconds in the M35 400m race only narrowly missing out on second place. Given that Dave is normally a middle distance runner these were both startling performances.

In the M40 400m race **Richard Drewett** bravely agreed to fill in and compete against a field mainly made up of runners 20 years his junior. His three points and very respectable time of 73.9 seconds are commendable. Richard also took his customary place in the M60 race walk, bringing home 7 Team points in just under 14mins.



**Rich Drewett crossing the finishing line in the Race Walk, under the watchful eye of Worcester's Race Walk Judge, Ann Perry**

The mile race saw a memorable run by **Tony Farnsworth** in a time of 4:48 in the M35 category. This was enough to smash the WAC age group record by 6 seconds and to secure first place. Tony and Dave Price also got together with Amy and Nicola to achieve a great win over the super strong B and R team in the 4x200m relay. Stirling work.

**Matt Fairlamb** left everything out there and got his season off to a great start in the M40 mile with a time of 5:09 which rewarded the team with a further 6 points.

In the M60 mile **Derek Jackson** gave away ten years to many of the other runners but still managed to secure victory. The second placed athlete was a huge 1 minute 15 seconds behind. On a cold evening Derek's time of 5:49 was exceptional.

In the field **Marc Flannery** generated a bonanza of 21 points for the club. First place in the M60 shot with 10.89, second place in the M50 hammer with 24m and third in the M35 high jump with 1:35. Marc's performances in the throws exceeded last season's bests which is most impressive at this early stage.

**John Reynold's** literally stepped up to the plate in the M35 hammer in which he wasn't expecting to compete. This was not enough to stop him from taking second place though with a throw of 17.7m. Not bad for someone who had never thrown a hammer before. John then threw a mighty 38m in the M40 javelin to win that competition outright.

**Dave Mehaffey** made a return to competition with a 1:40m in the high jump which gained us yet another 8 points. The conditions weren't great for jumping so well done Dave.

In the M70 javelin **Roger Garland** renewed his boyhood enthusiasm for the sport and hurled his spear 13.94 to get third place and a valuable 6 points.

So once again thank you to everyone for getting us off to this great start.

**In the ladies match** the track action began with a selection of 100m sprints. **Angela Bryant** (at W60) and **Iris Holder** (at W70+) each scored maximum points in their age groups. At W50 **Louise Kirby** made her debut for the club and finished in second place just 1 second behind the GB international competing for Midland Masters. **Nicola Guiver** (W40) and **Amy Pinkney** (W35) also delivered good performances and gathered valuable Team points.



Louise in a photo finish with a Stratford athlete



Amy racing for the line in the W35 age group 100m

**Nicola** and **Louise** were soon back on track as they took on the 400m where they were joined by **Ros Townsend-Hope** (W60). All three raced against younger athletes, but all three finished in third place in their respective races to deliver an excellent combined total of 18 Team points.

In the 2k Race Walk we could only field one athlete, **Cat Hutchinson** (W40) coming home in second place to secure 7 Team points. Sadly, we did not have an athlete to compete in the W60 age category.

The next longest races of the meeting were One Mile. In the W35 age category we were represented by **Cat**, whilst at W40 we had **Karen Holland**. **Ros** was racing again, dropping down to the W50 age group. All these ladies ran well and, between them, they collected 16 points for Team Worcester.

**At this point in the competition, despite scoring so well, our Ladies Team was in second place, a point or two behind Stratford and with Halesowen chasing us hard. We well and truly had a fight on our hands.**

**In the Field Events – Gill Repton** (W60) threw the Hammer 17.31mt for 7 valuable points. Worcester Ladies team captain **Mel Garland** faced another GB International (Paula Williams) in the W50 High Jump and the W50 Shot. Mel was not happy with her own performances, but still managed to gather an excellent 14 points for the Team

**Claire Gratrix** made her debut for Worcester in the W35 High Jump, coming second with 1.15mt. Also making her debut for the Team was **Sally-Anne Cook**. Sally competed in the W50 Javelin coming third with a throw of 14.12mt.



**Ruth Wells** took part in the (W40) Shot where she out-performed the opposition to obtain maximum points with a throw of 7.59mt.

**Iris Holder** was also a winner in the Shot, this time in the W70+ category, then Iris came down another age group to take third place in the W60 Long Jump.

**Mel in the W50 High Jump.**  
Note the confusing strips of tape in the jumpers' eye-line

Traditionally these matches finish with the relay races, which are always very exciting and invariably get the crowd on their feet. This time there were two relay races, each of

4 x 200mt. One race was for athletes of 35 or over and the other for athletes of 50 or over, but to add interest to the proceedings (as if any were needed!) the individual teams were made up of two men and two women. The sequence in which athletes run can be decided by the individual teams

In the "35" race **Nicola** and **Amy** were paired with **Tony** and **David**. They got the baton around in a fairly rapid time of 1'57.7 just managing to hold off the fast finishing B&R relay squad. WAC clinched first place and maximum points for the Team total.

In the "50s" relay race Worcester decided to run lady, lady, man, man. **Angela** took the first leg, handing to **Mel** in second place. Mel powered around the top bend and down the finishing straight before handing to **Hugh**, who had stepped in for **Richard** as he had twisted his ankle warming-up. Next it was **David** on the final leg for a second place finish and seven more points to our Team total in the final race of the evening.

We all returned home unsure of the Team positions, but we calculated that we had probably come second. When the results came through the following day we were thrilled to discover that WAC Ladies Team had over-hauled Stratford Ladies (who held a narrow lead at "half-time") and had clinched the match victory!

**Hugh Davies and Mel Garland**  
Vet's T&F Team Managers



**Worcester Athletic Club**