



### Looking for a good Vet? We know quite a few!!

Worcester Athletic Club rounded off a very successful season when their Veteran athletes (those aged 35 and over) clinched the South Midlands Veteran's League titles with both their men's and women's teams.

The league victories saw Worcester Veterans progress to the Midland's Regional Cup Final at Nuneaton where they competed against the other top clubs from across the area. With a total of 15 teams competing on the day, it was always going to be a difficult task, but the Worcester athletes were up to the challenge.

The Worcester Men's team suffered with a couple of late withdrawals through injury and illness, but the remaining team members pulled together to ensure that all the events were covered. This often meant athletes competing in events with which they were less familiar or out of age group. In the track events the Worcester team acquired a total of 109 points. This put them in second place behind the Rugby & Northampton Club (128) and just ahead of Cannock & Staffs (107).



Richard White in the 4x400 relay

**Richard White** – kicked things off with an M60 league record in the 200m Hurdles, filled in for a few points in the 100m at M40, scored a maximum at 400m in his own age group and ran in both relays, 4x100 and 4x400. What a busy day!

**Henry Hopkins** – managed a 2000m Race Walk (M35) and a 100m sprint (M50) before reluctantly having to throw in the towel with a calf injury.

**Nick Hitchings** – as well as being one of the Team Managers also completed a Race Walk (M50) then an 800m race (M50) a 1500m race (M50) and competed in the 4x100 and 4x400 relay races. Quite an exhausting schedule.



Darren Kirby in the 400m

**Darren Kirby** – started by scoring maximum points in the 800m (M40) then covered 3000m (M35) and 400m (M40) before completing his day with a leg in the 4x400.



Dave Price in the 1500m

**David Shaw** – ran well in the 100m (M60) and 200m (M50) then completed a leg of the sprint relay.

**Dave Price** – was kept busy with 1500m (M35) the 200m (M35) plus legs in the 4x100 and 4x400 relays.

**Laurence Oldfield** – had transport issues but arrived in time to tackle the 200m (M70).

**Derek Jackson** – stepped in at short notice to cover the 100m (M70) then was back on track for the 3000m (M60) – one extreme to the other!

## MEN’S FIELD EVENTS

In the field events the Worcester Men excelled by outscoring all other clubs. This extended their lead over Cannock & Staffs but was not enough to close the gap on Rugby & Northampton. As a result, Worcester’s Veteran Men finished second in the Midlands Cup Final. Coupled with victory in the South Midlands Veteran’s (men’s) League, this was an excellent way to end the 2023 season.



**Marc Flannery in the Pole Vault**

**Damon Cripps** – had a busy time in the M50 throws, achieving a second and two first places in Hammer, Discus and Shot, so 23 points out of a maximum of 24!

**Roger Garland** – who normally handles the paperwork, handled the Shot at M70.

**Marc Flannery** – took part in the Pole Vault and the Shot at M35, then moved right up to M60 for the Javelin and the Triple Jump – coming first in the Triple Jump!

**Andi Cresswell** – was another busy athlete, covering High Jump, Javelin and Long Jump, all at M35.

**Derek Jackson** – came straight across from having completed the 3000m in time to have just one attempt at M70 Long Jump, where he managed 2.26m for 4 points.

**David Shaw** – was another who mixed track and field events, top scoring in the M60 Long Jump then dropping down an age group to cover the M50 Triple Jump.



**David Shaw in the Triple Jump**

The Worcester Women’s team also went into the regional final aiming for a top three finish. A couple of their athletes were carrying injuries which they did not wish to aggravate prior to setting off for the European Championships in Italy, but remaining team members rose to the occasion and managed to cover nearly all the events.



**Gema in the 200m Hurdles**

**Gema Torres-Sollis** – travelled across to Nuneaton solely for the W35 200m Hurdles, coming second to a GB International – then dashed back to work in Worcester!

**Cat Hutchison** – came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2000m Race Walk (W35) then ran a strong 1500m race at W40.

**Louise Kirby** – also started her day with 2000m Race Walk (W50) before winning the 400m (W50) then a leg of the 4x400 relay.

**Vickie Watkins** – still recovering from a recent illness, ran 800m at the W35 age group.

**Ros Townsend-Hope** – ran the W60 800m W60 coming 2<sup>nd</sup> but unfortunately could not stay for the 1500m so that race was not filled.

**Amy Pinkney** – scored 7 points in the W35 100m and also covered a leg in the sprint relay.

**Angela Bryant** – covered the 100m and 200m races at W60, coming first in both!

**Carole Clark** – kindly covered for the injured **Iris Holder** at 100m and 200m (W70).



**Angela Bryant in the 100m**

**Mel Garland** – in a tactical move, dropped herself to W50 in the 100m (coming second) then helped the sprint relay squad to a WAC vet ladies club record!

**Jade Merry** – travelled across just to be part of the relay squad – great Team spirit Jade!

**Sara Saunders** – took on the 200m at W40 then covered a leg in both the relays, picking up 7 points in each of these three events.



**Sara Saunders in the 200m**



**Emma Oldham in the 400m**

**Sally Russell** (W40) and **Becky Selvey** (W50) each ran at 3000m bringing back 8 points to add to the Team total.

**Emma Oldham** – came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 400m at W40 then ran a leg of the 4x400 relay.

**Nicola Guiver** - also completed a leg of the 4x400 where our team scored 7 points.

**Worcester Ladies 4x400 relay team, left to right .... Sara, Nicola, Louise and Emma**



On the track Worcester's women achieved 12 "top 2" finishes from 20 races including both relays, securing 120 team points. This put the team second behind Rugby & Northampton (129) but well clear of the remaining clubs.



## WOMEN'S FIELD EVENTS

In the field events a range of excellent performances saw Worcester comfortably outscore all other clubs.

**Nicola Guiver** – helped out with a couple of W35 field events, Shot and Javelin, securing valuable Team points.



Wendy Thomson hurling a Javelin

**Iris Holder** – was unable to run, but came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the W70 Shot. As Iris couldn't risk the W70 Long Jump due to her injury, we didn't have an athlete in that event.

**Clare Gratrix** – tied for first place in the W35 High Jump obtaining 7.5 points.

**Wendy Thomson** – was kept busy throwing things - Hammer and Shot at W50, plus Javelin and Discus at W60 for an excellent total of 26 points.

**Amy Pinkney** – as well as sprinting, came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the W35 long Jump, just pipped by an athlete from Birchfield Harriers.

**Nicky Crawford** – in her first ever Triple Jump managed 2<sup>nd</sup> place for 7 Team points in what is quite a technical event.

Nicky Crawford in the Triple Jump

**Mel Garland** – warmed up for the European Masters Championships by winning the Long Jump and the Triple Jump, both at W60.



When the track event and field event scores were combined, Worcester women had clinched an overall victory in the Midlands Final by 201½ points to 200. Yes, the difference was just 1½ points - it really did go down to the wire! This is only the second time in 40 years that Worcester AC has won the women's title at the regional final. Having already secured the South Midlands Veteran's (women's) League title the team celebrated a well-earned double victory to end an incredible 2023 season.



**Well done to all the veteran athletes at Worcester AC, their supporters, team managers, coaches and the club officials.**

*Roger Garland  
Worcester AC*