

## **56th London to Brighton Walk 5th Sep 1981**

This years Brighton was won by Carl Lawton and his Club Belgrave Harriers were again successful in the team race. We started with six and finished five, and took second place in the team event being led home by Steve Till in his first Brighton. However the race was overshadowed by the tragic accident at Pyecombe that resulted in the death of Dave King of Belgrave Harriers and this ruined the occasion for all of us.

The early stages were dominated by the Dawlish duo Shillabeer and Haddocks. They began at 8 minute mile pace and one wondered whether Shillabeer was pacing Maddocks for a crack at the record or were they both using the race as preparation for the National 100 kms. Despite the assistance of a smog mask Ed Shillabeer still bit the dust and retired before halfway. Chris Maddocks a newcomer to the race did not appear to relish the solitude and although he went through 50 kms still in the lead he soon after became the latest casualty in a long line of would be Brighton record breakers. After suffering a bout of sickness climbing towards Pease Pottage he retired.

Behind the Devonians Carl Lawton headed other experienced Brighton regulars, Eddershaw, Worth and Halstead plus Tony Collins of Holloway Poly (who was making a welcome return) and Brighton novices Warhurst and Armstrong. We were all particularly delighted by the appearance of John 'Jake' Warhurst one of the greatest of this country's long distance performers over the last decade and a smashing bloke into the bargain.

As for our own lads Graham Peddle made his customary cautious start. John O'Sullivan too was a trifle wary but understandably so as this was his first Brighton attempt. The others Steves, Till and Wynn, Shaun Lightman and Nolan Simmons all bunched together. Steve Wynn was the first to break formation and although he opened up a three minute gap by the Swan and Sugar Loaf it was his undoing for he was overhauled by Redhill and then struggled badly to Horley before calling it a day. Steve Till at this stage was playing it very cool and conserving energy for the second leg of the road no doubt under orders from his attendant a certain P. Selby who claims to know something about the Brighton. With Maddocks out Lawton stamped his authority on the race, he had never let the leaders have more than five minutes and now his judgement proved first class, he stepped up the pressure and the fifteen minutes by which he led Collins at 50 kms was stretched to nineteen by Dale Hill. At this point he took a breather and almost duously strolled home with eleven minutes to spare. This was indeed a well deserved victory for Carl that not even we Surrey men begrudged him, a fitting reward for a man who has given and still gives a great deal to this sport. The stocky Collins who reminded old uns of the legendary Alf Pope held second and John Warhurst came with a late burst to take third ahead of John Eddershaw (2nd for the last two years) Brian Armstrong and Keith Halstead.

Then the first Surrey man arrived Steve Till and what a marvellous final 20 miles he had putting his overall strength to maximum effect and easily dipping 9 hours. We were all pleased for Nolan just 6 minutes behind Steve, he was able to wipe out the memory of his last years nightmare race. I'll wager now that in 82 he will be nearer to 8% than 9 hours, Nolan is really coming back to form.

Poor Shaun found the last ten miles an agonising drag and from being well on schedule at Bolney to break nine hours he failed to make the first class standard (9hrs 15 mins) by a matter of seconds. Nevertheless he remained an integral part of our scoring team and certainly deserves praise for the way he has supported the club in his first season with us.

The team race had been an absorbing battle all day between Belgrave ourselves and a Sheffield quartet and of the first six men home on a team scoring basis each club had two men home with Sheffield leading with 5 points to Bels 7 points and our 9 points. Shaun was next in to tip the scales our way but then sadly came the news of the accident and everything else paled by comparison. For the record Bels Ron Day clinched victory for his team pipping Graham Peddie by a little over two minutes. If the placings had been reversed the result would have favoured us not that one is blaming Graham Peddie, he walked as he always walks, reliably keeping to a steady consistent pace and chatting away cheerily too all and sundry.

And we should not forget our other finisher John O'Sullivan. There were a few sceptics

among us who possibly wondered whether John had the miles in his legs having never before raced beyond 20 kms. Our fears proved totally groundless John paced himself very sensibly resisting any temptation to race it from the start. He looked straight ahead not daring to glance even at the numerous pubs on route (ED: I was tempted to comment here but some people love Watneys beer). John's joy at the line was apparent for all to see as he threw his hat high into the air, a fine show indeed with every prospect of improvement for the future.

We did not win this year it is true but we can draw strength from the result, for in Steve Till we have a potential champion and he is still only a growing lad whilst Nolan has rediscovered his touch and can hardly wait for next year.

### Results:

| Position | Initial | Surname      | Club               | Hour | Min | Sec |
|----------|---------|--------------|--------------------|------|-----|-----|
| 1        | C.      | Lawton       | Belgrave H.        | 8    | 20  | 51  |
| 2        | A.      | Collins      | Holloway Poly      | 8    | 31  | 13  |
| 3        | J.      | Warhurst     | Sheffield U.H.     | 8    | 37  | 10  |
| 4        | J.      | Eddershaw    | Sheffield U.H.     | 8    | 46  | 42  |
| 5        | B.      | Armstrong    | Ilford A.C         | 8    | 50  | 38  |
| 6        | K,      | Halstead     | Coventry Godiva    | 8    | 52  | 56  |
| 7        | S.      | Till         | Surrey W.C         | 8    | 56  | 54  |
| 8        | N.      | Simmons      | Surrey W.C         | 9    | 02  | 58  |
| 9        | C.      | Bent         | Leicester.W.C.     | 9    | 10  | 02  |
| 10       | J.      | Hall         | Belgrave H.        | 9    | 14  | 02  |
| 11       | S.      | Lightman     | Surrey W.C.        | 9    | 15  | 21  |
| 12       | P.      | Worth        | Enfield H          | 9    | 17  | 51  |
| 13       | J.      | Dunsford     | Belgrave H.        | 9    | 23  | 41  |
| 14       | J.      | Dowling      | Sheffield U.H.     | 9    | 45  | 04  |
| 15       | R.      | Day          | Belgrave H.        | 9    | 56  | 57  |
| 16       | J.      | Scammell     | Belgrave H.        | 9    | 58  | 27  |
| 17       | G.      | Peddie       | Surrey W.C.        | 9    | 59  | 43  |
| 18       | S.      | Clarke       | Dawlish & S. Devon | 10   | 02  | 58  |
| 19       | A.      | Bainsborough | Dawlish & S. Devon | 10   | 02  | 58  |
| 20       | C.      | Weston       | Highgate           | 10   | 03  | 54  |
| 21       | P.      | Hastings     | Cambridge          | 10   | 10  | 58  |
| 22       | P.      | Emerey       | Enfield H          | 10   | 15  | 48  |
| 23       | E.      | Winyard      | Watford L.D.W.A.   | 10   | 20  | 25  |
| 24       | D.      | Staniforth   | Sheffield U.H.     | 10   | 22  | 39  |
| 25       | A.      | O'Rawe       | Southend A.C.      | 10   | 24  | 26  |
| 26       | J.      | O' Sullivan  | Surrey W.C.        | 10   | 28  | 43  |
| 27       | J.      | Keown        | Belgrave H.        | 10   | 29  | 21  |
| 28       | M.      | Barnbrook    | Cambridge          | 10   | 29  | 22  |
| 29       | G.      | Eastwood     | Woodford Green     | 10   | 35  | 06  |
| 30       | M.      | Turner       | Brighton           | 10   | 46  | 18  |
| 31       | E.      | Dobson       | Border H           | 10   | 48  | 26  |
| 32       | D.      | Parkins      | Medway A.C.        | 10   | 49  | 53  |
| 33       | C.      | Megnin       | Highgate           | 11   | 00  | 26  |
| 34       | G.      | Beecham      | Belgrave H         | 11   | 08  | 50  |
| 35       | G.      | Richardson   | San Diego          | 11   | 35  | 47  |

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| <b>Team</b> | <b>Position</b> | <b>Club</b>       | <b>Points</b> |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1           |                 | Belgrave Harriers | 25 pts        |
| 2           |                 | Surrey W.C.       | 28 pts        |
| 3           |                 | Sheffield U.H.    | 30 pts        |

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Victory Cup                  | C. Lawton - Belgrave     |
| Dithy Cup                    | S. Till                  |
| Harry Preston Trophy         | J. Eddershaw - Sheffield |
| Astill Bowl                  | J. Warhurst - Sheffield  |
| Edward Knott Memorial Shield | Belgrave Harriers        |
| Cousins Bowl                 | S. Till                  |