

Jack Fitzgerald Centenary Memorial Six Mile Walk, Tilgate Park, Crawley 4th Nov 23

This year marks the Centenary of celebrated VAC member Jack Fitzgerald's birth and was once again commemorated by Veterans AC in the very pleasant Tilgate Park. Perhaps pleasant was not quite the word this year as the place was almost deserted in heavy rain. However some 15 including officials and observers braved the conditions in the best athletic tradition. Due to the additional problem of a flooded section on the usual course round the lake, an out and back section was used and a 7 lap event was completed by 9 of the 10 walkers with an alternative shorter, 5.44 km. distance of 4 laps was undertaken by newer racewalker Nicolas Fleeman. Performances against normal pace were extremely varied, particularly with the expected negative effect of the weather matched by the unexpected positive times also recorded as some rose to the challenge and a few raced quite normally. Surrey Walking Club was represented by Chris Flint and Paul Gaston both of whom travelled considerable distances to compete and both with normal times and Chris not very far behind Paul and a slightly better performance. Altogether a fine effort by all and made slightly more pleasant as the rain ceased just after race ended. The event was also charitable with the result going to the Blind Veterans UK fund as a tribute to Jack who had served as a fighter pilot in the RAF in WW2.

Results: (10 starters overall)

9.52km Mixed:

1. M.Peddle (Loughton W55) 59 min 22 sec; 2. T.Jones (Steyn M65) 1 hr 1 min 1 sec; 3. B.Kirkdale (Hast R M65) 1 hr 3 min 57 sec; 4. F.Bishop (AFD W60) 1 hr 4 min 54 sec; 5. J.Borgars (Loughton M75) 1 hr 6 min 23 sec; 6. **P.Gaston** (Sy WC M75) 1 hr 10 min 31 sec; 7. J.Garder (B&H W65) 1 hr 15 min 59 sec; 8. **C.Flint** (Sy WC M75) 1 hr 16 min 24 sec; 9. S.Cartwright (Col H M65) 1 hr 16 min 24 sec.

5.44km Mixed:

1. N.Fleeman (SCVAC M65) 38 min 47 sec.