

TAC Masters Update 1st April 2023

Apologies for not being able to keep up to date with some impressive achievements over the last month. I hope to cover most, although I know I will miss TAC records and personal achievements. TAC Masters have been busy. Get a cup of tea and start reading to be inspired!!

Torum Indoor World Masters

Massive congratulations to Ian Crawley M60 who achieved an impressive bronze medal and British M60 record in the M60 Pentathlon. I think this is only our second world masters medal after Ben Reynolds. There was a big field of 31, of which 27 finished. Read his version of events below.

https://wmaci2023.domtel-sport.pl/?seria=3&runda=3&konkurencja=WMIPENT_60&dzien=&impreza=6

I am writing this sitting on the plane on the way home from a great week in Torun (Poland) at World Masters Indoor Champs.

I so nearly didn't make the trip after a rather depressing 10 weeks since Xmas which, designed as a pre competition training block, turned into a cycle of injury niggles and cancelled competitions, followed by recovery; with a short bout of Covid the cherry on the cake. Anyway with flights, accommodation and entry fees paid I thought I'd give it a go. Had researched my competition and realised I faced probably 9 or 10 serious contenders capable of 3700 + points which is roughly where I thought I was if things went well. But well short of my 4000+ pre Xmas target for Gold.

Arrived Monday night late missing Alan and Sue and Ben Reynolds in the X country unfortunately; and had Tuesday to settle in, register and get acclimatised or acclimated as our American cousins incorrectly pronounce it. Very quickly made the first mistake, which was to eat some cooked chicken from the local supermarket. The result was I was up half the night with a bout of Delhi belly, or more accurately and politically correctly, Deli. belly. Then up at 5 (yes 5) to cook breakfast (a nice omelette) and get to the track early; so early in fact that had to find a back entrance to get in and started my warm up before the lights had been switched on. Probably too early!

Call room 0740 for M60 World Indoor Pentathlon Champs- more nervous than Diane Abbot on Countdown. Pretty quickly worked out that 2 of the 10 contenders were no shows. But this just increased my expectations and hence nerves. Suddenly one of the Americans stands up and conducts a group prayer. I didn't have the heart to tell him I am a heathen but thought great now he's got God on his side as well. Then out for 1st heat of 60H (first event) at 0800 with some of the leading contenders in the field. Ran a 10.45 PB but far from a well executed race and short of what I hoped for. Not a disaster but straight away 200 points behind and in 9th place. Long Jump next and managed to get myself together. Executed 3 reasonable jumps within 4 cm of each other for 4.75. Again not a disaster but a bit short and the competition was disappearing into the distance. But happily the war of attrition that is multi eventing was taking its toll - 4 more contenders fell by the wayside as injuries took them out. So found myself in 5th early on and started to feel very

positive. Shot Put next and absolutely nailed first attempt for 11.75 which is probably a 1 in 20 distance in training , so pressure off made a complete rickits of the next 2. Up to 3rd. Nerves returned for High Jump which post hip replacement seems to have gone from a banker event for me to a very inconsistent one. And so it proved as, after a couple of early heights I tried very hard to screw it up, but happily managed to get a grip of myself and dig out a half way decent 1.51 which I think is the best I have done since before my Op so maybe it is on the way back. More importantly I was really pleased with how I dealt with the huge pressure I put myself under.

There then followed about 2 hours of being messed about by officials as first of all they moved the 1000m forward and then back to its original slot then mixed the heats up so the medal contenders were in different heats. This made refuelling and resting and warming up again very difficult. However, I was buoyed up during this period as 2 pretty young lady volunteers asked me to autograph their T shirts. Thinking very clearly and correctly I did the backs. I don't know who they thought I was , but I wrote Roger Moore and they went away happy.

Now the serious business, I was in 4th and needed about 10s buffer in the 1000m on the 3rd place guy and was pretty confident I could get that so looked forward to quite an easy race for bronze. But then redid the maths and thought that maybe Silver was possible if I had a good one and the Italian guy in silver had a bad one so unfortunately realised I was going to have to go full gas. I could tell he was nervous too as I had knocked him out of a medal 4 years ago at this stage. Due to the lack of training I had very little idea of what I was going to be able to manage so thought I'd try for 1:57 to 600 and then see what I had left. It went more or less to plan and I front ran to go out in 1:59ish and brought it home for 3:20 pretty evenly paced all the way. Collapsed, but out of the corner of my eye saw gold and silver come through in 3:40 ish so realised I hadn't done enough. But bronze was quickly confirmed and I had my first inkling that it was a British Record. Now chasing records is a fools errand really but I confess I had had my eye on it; just didn't think I was in that kind of shape. All in all pretty pleased and felt that I had finally banished the imposter syndrome that has haunted me since Torun 4 years ago. But physically felt like I had spent a week in a Turkish prison (other nationalities are available) and I'm not talking massages.

Another sleepless night followed and up at 6am for a repeat of the previous day in preparation for Pole Vault individual competition at 0920. This was the first of my 3 bonus events and I was expecting very little, as the last time I picked up a pole was at the TAC Open in August. But continuing with the Midnight Express theme actually managed to vault as high as a 3.10m fence which matched my indoor PB and the height I managed 4 years ago and was good enough for 7th overall. I really need to train less!

In the afternoon I had a 200 heat which I had entered with the completely idiotic notion that I might make the relay team. Right up to the start and even in the blocks I toyed with the idea of scratching from the race as my legs felt like it was the last rep of a lactic session. And I duly ran it like that - pretty embarrassing .

Friday - first lie in and a leisurely breakfast before going back to the track to watch Nicki Buckwell in her Pentathlon in which she finished 6th which, annoyingly, is one better than my first time. Then on to prep for 60H individual heats. My sole aim was a decent time with

no thoughts or hope of making the final; but just before coming out I realised that my heat was down to 4 with 2 to qualify. Then one of the 2 decent guys injured himself on his practice start so down to 3 and the other guy looked like he had just wandered in off the street trying to find a bed for the night. So I thought I'm through to the final here if I don't mess it up. Obviously I then tried to do just that, as I hit hurdle 2 very hard. Luckily, or as I realised later unluckily, all my falls in training came to the rescue and I stayed on my feet to get to the end with an awful time. So had to stay late and run the final, which was stacked with 7 people who should have been there and one who shouldn't. I really really wanted a decent time as Colin Jackson would say, but by this stage my legs had only a distant relationship with the rest of my body and I could barely climb over the hurdles- finished dead last.

But what a great week rubbing shoulders with truly inspirational people always happy to talk athletics, advise on training or share their entire medical history if you stay too long. Not the medal I had in mind before Xmas but certainly more than I expected as I boarded the plane and a confirmed British Record I believe. Lots of credit and thanks to coaches Lewis Church and David Hull as well as advice from Harry and Alex and the rest of the group who tolerate an old ... (word replaced) person in the group.

If you've made it to the end God Bless you.



Ian Crawley high jumping | Photo: Adrian Essex

Sue James in the W70 has struggled to regain her fitness after illness but was well rewarded for her travels as she collected medals in the W70 mixed relay on the track and the W70 women's team in the XC. Alan Newman had been in good form in the build up but was hit by a nasty cold 2 weeks before Torum, but still determinedly got to the start line of the M65 XC (21st) 3000m (15th) and 10k (10th)



Nigel Field M65 ran a seasons best in the 200m and 10.15 in the 60m

Ben Reynolds was also taking part, he is in the last year of his M55-59 age group, still impressively up at the sharp end. Please see his report as follows.

“The thing about going with no expectations is that they say you can't be disappointed. In reality, it never works out quite that way.

I decided to go to the World Masters even though I had lost February to a cold which rather pathetically I couldn't shake off. I wasn't even back to my decidedly average end-of-Jan form so I knew I wouldn't be in the mix but I hoped to enjoy the trip.

I made a bit of a hash of my travel electing to fly, the day before my race, Stansted-Gdansk and then hoped to figure out the trains. It meant leaving home at 04.45 which was sub-optimal and, although Polish trains are excellent, buying the right train ticket from the machines in Gdansk was a challenge I failed. Oh well. When a 2 hour train ride only costs £8, it's hard to get cross and I even got a refund. By the time I got to the hotel I'd been travelling 14 hours and walked 13,000 steps. Definitely sub-optimal.

Warming up indoors is always a bit tricky. No point in running outside given the main aim is to adjust to the dry indoor air. I trotted round the warm up hall with people on the cusp of hip replacements and other nasties while I thankfully felt OK. Tension grew. The Call Room process ratcheted up the tension another notch. In the tunnel, I pointed out to a fellow Brit that his vest was back-to-front. He says he owes me a beer. With 16 in the race, we had a broken start line which suited me well. I'm a rubbish starter and tend to get boxed. From the gun, the Portuguese favourite disappeared up the track never to be seen again. The next 9 of us took up single file with me the 4th in line. The first km clipped by in 3:10 and I felt OK. The second km (3:18) was a bit messed up with numerous clipped heels. Finally at the 2km point, my fellow Brit Dave Cowlshaw, kicked on into 2nd (he ran 2:57 for the last km) and I followed. It felt good to finally open the throttle but alas that feeling quickly drained away and the gap to Dave opened. I was still in 3rd with a lap to go but then 3 people swept past me and I had no response. I finished in 6th in 9:41 a good 19 secs above expectation. Wobbly legged I cooled down with Dave in good spirits.



Despite my 'no expectations' policy, I then harboured hopes of a good run in the next day's cross country. In 2019 I ran badly in the 3k only to have a redemption run and win the xc. I was looking to repeat that upsurge but this time the reality was very different. Jelly legged

from the start, I was never in the mix. The Portuguese disappeared up the course to an 80 second win but I was labouring at the back of a 10-strong pack. The course was tough with multiple climbs/descents and sand 'traps' to suck the life out of the legs. Another Brit, who has never been close to me before, cruised past with words of encouragement. I lost ground on the ups and gained on the downs but couldn't hang on to him on the last lap and I finished a weary 6th. For someone whose forte is meant to be xc, it was a poor performance.



So in the end the trip was good. I exceeded expectations in the 3k and subceeded them in the xc but with the M60 category beckoning in Jan 2024 it gave me good motivation to try to do some damage next year.

Scroll down to continue with other news

England Masters Representatives

Dan Bradley and Nichola Evans (AG 35) had both gained selection for the England Masters Team to take part in the Chester 10k. Dan ran 32.04 and Nichola 38.18 on what was apparently a challenging course

<https://ale.niftyentries.com/Results/2023-MBNA-Chester-10K>

Opportunities to be selected for **England** next year have been posted here, although we hope there may be more races added.



<https://www.englandathletics.org/athletics-and-running/england-competitions/england-teams-and-selection/england-age-group-masters/>

Lydd 20 Mile

Tom Rule M40 continues to steadily improve as he aims towards the London marathon, running 2.09.36 on this blustery exposed course. Dave Suddes M45 2.26.23 and Graeme Charters M65 also continues his massive improvement in 3.58.46

<https://www.nice-work.org.uk/races/Lydd-20/2023>

Paddock Wood Half Marathon

This traditional preparation for spring marathons gives an indication of how training has been going.

Jacek Traczynski 79.03 ran a big PB and James Beeston M50 84.11 ran his fastest HM for 10 years. Peter Sutton M40 88.40 was just outside his PB 88.02 from Tunbridge Wells.

Tony Fullbrook M55 proved PB's are always possible as he ran a PB 88.43 to be 15 seconds faster than last year.

Laura Andrade has taken massive chunks off her PB and repeated this in 92.58 as she heads to Brighton Marathon. Helen Gaunt was 3rd female in 80.15. Steve Ellison was another to run to or above his expectation in 1.42.07.



Eastleigh 10k 19th March

Phil Coleman M55 was pleased to return to sub 40 over 10k as he ran 39.05 for 4th M55.

Cambridge Half Marathon

Dan Longhurst M40 ran a PB 76.18

<https://results.resultsbase.net/results.aspx?CId=8&RId=20184>

Masters Road relays

Just in case anyone didn't know, unfortunately the BMAF relays due for the 20th May have been postponed till the Autumn. Thank you to all those that had committed, we had strong teams and I hope you will be able to target them again once we have a date.

Interarea XC 4th March

This event is aimed to pit the various regional Veterans clubs against each other using Age graded scores. As expected it does depend where it is held and on this occasion it was held at Lloyd Park Croydon over 5 miles as part of the East Surrey league in which Veterans AC take part. As a result they completely dominated the interarea event. Mark PK, Alan Newman and Scott Shurmer enjoyed the unusually dry conditions to complete half of the scoring team for Southern Counties AC.

<https://bmaf.opentrack.run/en-gb/x/2023/GBR/emaaxc/event/T01/1/1/?fbclid=IwAR09oAcNCWIFJHDdS92zBlpn3kCCwzEKXGfijOTcsE5sKfsSyTX>

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Maidstone 10k.

Jacek Traczynski enjoyed winning this event in a massive PB of 37.24

<https://results.chronotrack.com/event/results/event/event-72669>

Tokyo Marathon

Elise Rendall kept her participation a complete secret as she returned to the full marathon distance. She explained that the whole process was quite complicated just to get to the start due to continued covid restrictions.

Elise then followed this up with 1.39.17 in the **London Landmarks Half marathon** on Sunday 2nd April.

New York Half Marathon

Ben Cole M35 ran a TAC M35 record of 68.20.

Hastings Half Marathon.

Julian Rendall is building to his participation running for England Masters at the Chester Half marathon on the 21st May. Julian was 14th in 1.17.18 at Hastings.

Brighton Marathon 2nd April

Laura Andrade (W40) followed up on her Paddock Wood half PB with a 3.24.02 for a 7 minute pb over her previous best set when she was 27 yoa. Tim Hill ran 3.04.34 which I also believe is a PB.

Southern Road Relays, Olympic Park 2nd April

Ben Cole ran his long leg in 21.42 and Dan Bradley short leg in 14.53 as part of the Mens A team that were 3rd. Jay Smith long leg 24.22 was part of the B team that were 11th, also qualifying for National Road relays.

The Womens team were 10th with Nicola Evans long leg in 27.33 and Maria Heslop short leg 17.58.



Above - Almost all of the men's and women's A teams at the South of England Championships

Race Walking

Grazia Manzotti W50 reports :

Sat 18 March a day of racewalking races Enfield Race Walking League – Les Barrett Walks, Donkey Lane, Enfield (Sat. 18th Mar.) I did a 5km race at the Enfield racewalking League and was second with a time of 28:28. Was taking relatively easy as I was racing again in the afternoon

Tri-Counties (Herts/Kent/Middx) Indoor Championships, Lee alley Athletics Centre (Sat. 18th Mar.) I was second for Kent after Hannah Hopper, who competes regularly for GB and is an under 23 athlete with a time of 10:49:67 for 2km. I will not recommend two races on the same day will not be doing it again.

Beckenham relays

This fun Wednesday evening event that is open to all and will take place on the 17th May at 19.30 in Beckenham Place park.

If you would like to take part please let me know now, so we get an idea of how many teams to enter once it opens (it fills fast)

Spond App

The Senior distance group is now using Spond App to coordinate and communicate re training. If you are part of the group you should have been asked to join Spond, if not please contact Charlotte Warren or Tony Fullbrook.

Southern Counties Veterans T&F League Dates

It is yet to be clarified how many non scoring opportunities there will be at each meeting. However assistance with set up, volunteer officiating, supporting etc will all be required so keep the dates free. More details at <http://www.scvac.org.uk/track.htm#tt>

Please complete this google form if you would like to let Grazia Manzotti and Mark McAllister know that you are available to compete.

<https://forms.gle/LVFQSUiWtKUzyKjP9>

- SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Dartford, 28 July
 - SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Tonbridge, 7 July
 - SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Norman Park, 23 June
 - SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Tonbridge, 2 June
 - SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Dartford, 26 May
 - SCVAC League - Kent Divisions - Sutcliffe Park, 5 May
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Open Meetings

For those not familiar with Open meetings, these are track meetings where you enter as an individual giving your predicted time / distance or height depending on the event you are entering. The organisers then place you in a race with similar athletes with the aim that you get assistance to run your best time.

TAC run one on the first Tuesday of every month. Look on the website to find the link to entry system.