



Sharon Honey

**Name:** Sharon Honey

**Born:** 1957

**Joined Club:** I joined Ilford AC on 17 April 1980 so I'm doing this around my 40th anniversary of joining the club! I initially ran for Essex Beagles from 1975.

## **RECORDS**

### **TRACK**

<b>800m</b>	2.28.4	25/08/1981	Ilford	Club Champs	SL
<b>1500m</b>	4.57.3	20/09/1980	Ilford	Gibson Trophy	SL
<b>3000m</b>	10.43.8	10/05/1981	Hornchurch	GRE Cup	SL
<b>5000m</b>	20.06.0	??/??/1996	???? ?????		V35
<b>10,000m</b>	39.16.5	??/??/1994	Ilford	Club Champs	V35

### **ROAD**

<b>5k</b>	19.02	29/08/1994	Barking Park	Barking Park 5k	V35
(6th fastest IAC lady ever)					
<b>5m</b>	32.02 (31.06*)	20/10/1985	Ingatestone	Ingatestone 5m	SL
(14th fastest) *Actually 5.2 miles					
<b>10k</b>	38.22	10/11/1985	Southend	Southend 10k	SL
(8th fastest)					
<b>10m</b>	63.42	??/??/1985	Tonbridge	Tonbridge 10	SL
(6th fastest)					
<b>H Marathon</b>	1.22.22	??/??/1985	Swanley	Swanley Half	SL
(4th fastest)					
<b>20 m</b>	2.10.42	29/03/1986	Chelmsford	Essex 20	SL
(2nd fastest)					
<b>Marathon</b>	3.05.21	20/04/1986	London	London Marathon	SL
(4th fastest)					

*Thanks to Gary Floate for the statistics*

**First Club Race:** This was probably a Southern League Track and Field League race. Probably nothing notable as I wasn't much of a track runner and the other girls were so fast! We were in a tough league and I usually ran the 3000 'B' string.



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**Favourite Race:** Any road race really. This was, and still is, my favourite surface and the longer the race, the better I ran. Unfortunately, many of the old races have gone. They used to be organised by the clubs and only cost a couple of pounds to enter. We used to do a Club 4.5-mile road race at Chigwell Row, running down Millers Lane, then Gravel Lane, turn left along the Abridge Road then left up Pudding Lane. It was tortuous but everyone joined in. It would be too dangerous now as we'd all get run over!

**Notable Performances:** My one individual Essex gold medal was for winning the Essex  $\frac{1}{2}$  Marathon in 1994. I also won the Essex Vets' 20m Championship in the same year and Essex Senior Road Championships in 1993 and was third in the Essex Vets XC in 1995. In all I have 40 Essex medals; 15 gold, 15 silver and 10 bronze and two Southern Counties bronze medals. In the early days these came from being the back up for our very strong team in the county cross country champs and road relays. In my early veteran years, I did more road running and gained several medals through this, both individually and as part of a team. Apart from this I think my best ever race was the Essex 20 in 1986. I was 2nd female but unfortunately, ladies didn't count in those days and we weren't awarded any medals. Fortunately, this was rectified by the lovely late Howard Williams who did a great deal for Essex road running.

**Honours:** Representing Essex at 10k and 20 miles.

**Biggest Disappointment:** Not breaking 3 hours for the marathon in 1986. I had run my best 20-miler only three weeks before and there wasn't enough left in the tank. Lesson learnt!

**Typical Weeks' Training:** I am presently recovering from foot surgery but up until recently it was something like this:

Monday: 5-6 miles

Tuesday: Track 8x400m

Wednesday: 4-mile tempo run

Thursday: 8x3mins with 2 minutes recovery

Friday: Rest



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Saturday: Race, Parkrun, hard run or hills

Sunday: 8-10 miles

During the 80s and 90s the structure was similar to the above but with more reps and longer runs (and obviously much faster!) averaging 40-50 miles per week with the highest mileage during marathon training being 70mpw.

My maddest sessions were: 25x400 in 90 seconds with 30 seconds recovery in torrential rain with Stuart Bennett who has now returned to walking. (We still reminisce about that session!); 8x1200m hill climbs (jog down to recover); 3x2 miles with 1-minute recovery and 2x3 miles with 2 minutes recovery. Also, acceleration runs up to 15 miles and 13 miles flat out!

**Favourite Sessions:** I loved winter training. Winter track sessions were long in the 80s under coach Fred Plumm and progressed as the winter went on: 4x200, 4x1000; 4x400 and 10 criss crosses (there were always criss crosses!) across the football pitch. Long runs over Hainault were also a favourite.

**Memories:** We concentrated mostly on the Southern Track and Field League, the Southern Cross Country League and the Essex Cross Country and Road Relay Championships as our targets. The Essex Cross Country was a hugely nerve-racking event just before Christmas as the stakes were high but Ilford ladies won this many times back then

The original owner of the winter headquarters at Chigwell Row was Edgar Moon who had a tea room where we would all pile in after training on Saturdays. He sold weak tea and ginger cake and had a table tennis table at the back where we would all play table tennis around the table. The changing rooms were stone buildings behind the present changing rooms and were so cold that they had frost patterns on the windows in winter!

The social life! There was always something going on.

**Who is the Most Famous Athlete You Trained with?** Kim Webb who led our squad was a 'B' international at the time and of course the lovely Pam Jones who was a brilliant athlete in her day.

**How would you improve the sport?** There seems to be a gap in the 20-30 age group now and this is the time athletes are at their peak so ideally, to promote club athletics to this age



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group and fund more grass roots coaching.

**What other sports do you follow?** Triathlon, as I started doing this in 1997 when I was injured and needed a break from running, also swimming and cycling as individual sports.

**Best Country Visited:** Canada. I've been there twice. I love the space and the scenery.

**Favourite Food and Drink:** Vegan – any cuisine – and a bottle of Jammy Red Roo (maybe not quite the whole bottle!)

**Favourite TV Shows:** I like a bit of suspense; Line of Duty and Spooks for example also comedies Outnumbered and Not Going Out make me laugh and satire such as Have I got News for You?

**Last Film Seen:** 1917

**Last Book Read:** Ken Follett: The Third Twin

**Favourite Band/Singer/Genre:** Coldplay, Rag 'n' Bone Man, Simply Red, R&B and 70s Rock

**Last Album Bought:** Coldplay: Everyday life

**Last Concerts Attended:** Beach Boys at Hampton Court and Aswad at the Havering Show with my teammates!

**Any Pets:** Poppy Dog and Guinea Pigs Chips and Daisy and some goldfish.

**What are your aims for next season?** To recover fully from my foot op! (It is getting better as we speak) and to get back to training and maybe increase my mileage if possible (and run faster!)

**Tell us a Joke:** Time flies like the wind but fruit flies like bananas.



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**□ What were the actual races you did to represent Essex and wear the coveted Essex 'red' county vest.**

I ran 20 miles for Essex in the Inter-Counties in Corby Northants and 10km in the Inter-Counties in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.



*Very dodgy shorts and haircuts!*

## **2) How did you get to meet Roger at the club?**

I actually met Roger at school when I was 16. He ran for Essex Beagles at the time and was a 110m hurdler. He got me into running when I was 18.

## **3) What was your most disliked race that you ever did and why?**

The 1996 London Marathon. I had trained really hard and was in pretty good shape but picked up a virus a week before. I didn't feel well on race day but ran anyway as people had been kind enough to sponsor me. I felt absolutely awful and staggered through the second half of the race in a blur. It took months to recover.

## **4) Why did you decide to do Sports Therapy and sports massage etc....**

I just found it all really interesting. I liked science and maths and, being a runner, it seemed to pull all my interests together.

## **5) What was your normal day job?**

I ran my sports injury clinic for 30 years, but saw people from all walks of life really. People





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get aches and pains and injuries from all sorts of activities (including sitting too much!). I also lectured at University of East London for a few years. Before all this though, I started out in the Civil Service but realised that type of work wasn't for me!

**6) Have you got your Essex Medals and trophies on display in the Honey household?**

I used to have some trophies on display in my clinic but they are now up in the loft!

**7) You were born at the same place as some other great runners at the club 'Forest Gate Hospital' - Did this mean you grew up as a West Ham fan, or did you not bother much with football?**

I'm not a massive football fan but I do have an affinity for West Ham and I always check to see if they've won (or not!).

We lived about a mile from the ground at Boleyn when I was young and could hear the roar of the crowd on Saturday afternoons.

The players were local lads then. It's all changed so much now!

**8) Of all the ladies you have run with at the club, which 3 would join you in a 4 x 400m relay if you were all in your prime?**

That's a great compliment but I was never a 400m runner.

There were so many fast ladies out there when I was running on the track. I would choose from Wendy Griffiths, Debbie Church, Dianne Crisp, Barbara Locke, KimTrunley and Tracey Trunley and shout at them from the sidelines!

**9) If you could see one group, or singer live in concert, front row (past or present) who would it be?**

That's a really tough one! There are so many great bands out there. Definitely a 70s rock band but if I had to pick just one it would be Queen with Freddie Mercury as he is such a great showman, I know all the songs and it would be out of your seats from the word 'Go!'

**10) Given that you are a vegan, would you say this has been a help in keeping you so fit and trim or do you still put it down to a lot of hard work.**

Well, I was vegetarian for all my adult life and turned vegan about four years ago. I would say the benefits of a vegan diet is that I tend to eat healthily and generally have to say no to cakes and biscuits. That said I am doing a lot of experimenting with vegan baking... I think it's a necessity though to take B12 and iron supplements to keep up energy levels. One good thing is that it's said to help reduce joint pain and that's obviously got to help the body to move more easily and keep going. For any runner to improve though it's definitely down to





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hard work.

**11) Who is your favourite male and female athletes ever.**

My favourite male runner is probably Peter Elliott who was an international runner in the 80s. He seemed to train so hard while working full time and achieved some amazing times and results but was overshadowed by Steve Ovett and Sebastian Coe who were breaking world records at the time. Favourite female has got to be Paula Radcliffe who has achieved so much for women's running and has proved that hard work can overcome the odds.