



Pauline Tester

**Name:**

Pauline Tester

**Born:**

17 March 1964

**Date Joined:**

1977 Brian Meadows, a teacher at Dane High School invited interested students to the track at Cricklefields, I went with Katy Pestell, we trained that summer. I returned in 1981 and officially joined 15 October 1981.

**Personal Bests:**

**Road:**

**5k:** 18m02s Barking Park 1993

**5 miles:** 29m36s Victoria Park 1993

**10k:** 38m38s Women's Own, Harlow 1989

**10 miles:** 66m59s Eye 1993

**Half Marathon:** 1h37m42s Hastings 2001

**20 miles:** 2h47m48s Chelmsford Essex Champs 1997

**Track:**

**400m:** 64.4s Inter Banks at Norbury 1987

**800m:** 2m24.9s Club Champs at Ilford 1991



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**1,500m:** 4m48.9s Essex Champs at Woodford 1991

**3,000m:** 10m34.4s Essex Champs at Ilford 1993

**5,000m:** 18m06s Business Houses Champs at Battersea 1993

**10,000m:** 38m48s Club Champs at Ilford 1993

### **First Club Race:**

Essex XC 10 October 1981 at Hainault Forest

### **Favourite Race:**

Essex Road Relays (any relays because there is competition to get into the team, great encouragement from team mates on the day and wanting to push hard for your team mates).

### **Notable Performances:**

Manufacturers Hanover/Chemical Corporate Championships Finals held in New York annually from 1986-1993, I ran for the NatWest team. We had to qualify in heats held in London (one year there were two heats and NatWest qualified in both, so took 17 runners (included team manager) to the final in New York). I was surprised to be in a team with some great runners.

Essex medals in track, road and relays.

Essex vest at Inter-Counties track 3,000m at Horsham August 1993.



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**Biggest Disappointment:**

not being able to run better at the longer distances on the road.

**Typical Weeks Training:**

coached by Fred Plumm/Dave Jones/Alan Lovett

**Track:** Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday (summer) 4-6 miles

**Chigwell Row:** Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning (winter) 5-10 miles

**Lunch-time:** Monday, Wednesday (sometimes Tuesday or Thursday too) 5-7 miles London Embankment or Regents Canal

We would race regularly, sometimes in the summer I would do 2 races a week!

Maximum mileage when I ran twice a day was around 50 miles per week.

**Favourite Sessions:**

**Track:** warm-up 1 mile jog on grass, 4x 100m strides, 2 x 200m, 12 x 400m aim 80s for 8 then 78 for last 4 & 1 mile jog warm-down

Fred would often make me lead the track reps as he knew I would be able to set the correct pace he gave us. I knew I made the grade when Fred gave me a scrap of paper with my training rep times. He would also write training plans for me on these scraps of paper.

**Road:** Bournebridge 7 mile training run



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### **Who is the most Famous Athlete you Trained with:**

Pam Jones & Andy Catton – IAC legends

Gillian Dainty – part of NatWest team (we raced over cross-country, track, road relays and the corporate challenge mentioned above) and 1,500m silver medalist at Brisbane Commonwealth Games in 1982.

Lesley Watson – after a group training run around Regents Park on 17 March 1988 we all headed back to her flat and she'd laid on food and drink to celebrate my birthday.

### **How would you improve the sport:**

Life-time ban for athletes tested positive for banned drugs.

**Favourite Athlete or Sportswoman:** Lucy Charles-Barclay – Ironman triathlete

**What other sports do you follow:** Triathlon (done a few myself), used to play squash competitively, watch rugby (boss has debenture at Twickenham), cycling and anything except football.

I now do more swimming training with London Borough of Redbridge SC (before COVID-19) and open water swimming training at Royal Victoria Dock. I compete in pool and open water masters competitions where I've won Essex medals at 200m & 400m, as well as London open water 1.5k and



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3k champion. Racing up 14k open water.

**Best Country Visited:** Australia, including Tasmania

**Favourite Food & Drink:** Salad with everything! Rum cocktails!

**Favourite TV Shows:** Sport

**Last Film Seen:** Frozen II

**Last Book Read:** Try not to breathe by Holly Seddon

**Favourite Band Singer:** Zac Brown Band

**Last Album Bought:** The Owl – Zac Brown Band

**Last Concert Attended:** Rod Stewart



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**Any Pets:** None, unless you include all the birds I feed in the garden: robin looks for me through the window or follows me in the garden singing for me to hand feed it some treats

**What are your aims for next season?:** Keep up the training and do more races

**Tell us a Joke:** Why do bees have sticky hair? Because they use honeycombs!



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Essex Road Relays at Basildon 1983



Essex 3,000m Champs at Ilford 1989



Essex 1,500m Champs at Woodford 1991



Chemical Corporate Challenge Final New York 1992 1st mixed team



Warm weather training at Club La Santa, Lanzarote in preparation for International Running Challenge  
(4 races over 4 days: 8.6k off-road hills; 10k road; 5k beach; 23k cross-island)

4th female 1993



IAC Annual Dinner, Dance and Presentation evening with coach Fred Plumm

### PAULINE ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

#### **What is your current job and how do you fit training around work ?**

Until a few months ago I worked as a legal PA assisting a variety of lawyers, including a Deputy High Court Judge, mainly undertaking advocacy in a variety of specialisms. This involved long working days and tight deadlines whilst juggling a number of different court cases. I had limited time to train due to masters swim training 6-7.30am Mon/Wed/Fri (sometimes one other day in the



week too) and working long hours. In winter I would try to run 2-3 miles once a week, track training on a Tuesday and 3-5 miles on a Sunday. In summer the same as winter, except Sunday's run would be an open water swim or race.

### **What has been your training during Lockdown ?**

I started with two 3.7 mile road runs, one 10 x 250m efforts with a mile warm-up and cool-down and one 5 mile road run weekly. Then when open water venues opened, I added two 50 minute swims per week and dropped the 5 mile run. I've also fitted in a few bike rides for variety and long walks (Fairlop Waters is a good 6 mile round trip and if I had company might try to run this route one day).

### **I see you did the last race before Lockdown which was the Essex Road Relays at Colchester on 15th March - What did you think of that race ? Comparing it to the relays at Harwich ?**

I enjoyed the Essex Road Relays in March at Colchester. Great course: in 1991 I was privileged to be part of the winning mixed relay team at this venue with Andy Catton, Derek Coates and Tony Nixon (Colchester hosted this weekday evening event where teams had to include one veteran and one female). I've never run at Harwich so can't compare them. This year it was very windy, which was tough. I used to enjoy the Chelmsford course - looking through the fence to see your team mate racing along the last stretch. I preferred when the Essex Road Relays took place in October, which meant I still had some track speed in my legs.

### **Worst Injury in Running ?**

Not an injury as such, although having asthma has caused me problems in the past. Bad reactions to insect bites has caused me more trouble over the years (especially at the track or Hainault Forest) - I get blisters and shooting pains when bitten on my legs.



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### **What make of trainers do you normally buy and why ?**

I currently wear Asics Gel Nimbus and have worn this trainer for some time now as they suit my neutral running style. In the past I've been a fan of Brooks and New Balance.

### **Favourite Cross-Country Race and venue ?**

Essex XC league races with my favourite course being One Tree Hill – a tough one with an up hill finish, so it definitely helps to be fit for that one.

### **I see the last film you saw was Frozen 2 - What Did you think of that compared to Frozen 1 ? You can let this question go if you like.....**

I think Frozen 1 was better than Frozen 2, although I'd happily sit through either again surrounded by children!

### **Worst or most horrendous conditions you have raced in ?**

The Linford 10 mile race one January is the worst I can remember. It had snowed heavily and I was expecting Linford Joggers to cancel the race. I've never seen so many runners wearing woolly hats, gloves and so many layers to run a race – it was bitterly cold and icy underfoot. I've forgotten all the muddy XC courses, although do remember one particularly slippery day running around Hainault with a large group and everyone fell over at some point during the run.

### **Greatest Running Rival(s) at Ilford AC and in the wider Running community ?**



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I was always trying to catch Kim Trunley/Webb, Tracey Trunley/Bull, Sharon Honey and Dianne Crisp at Ilford AC and amongst the corporate/banking runners I would be chasing Gillian Dainty, Alison Fletcher and Julie Moore.

P.S. Hazel (Honey) and I always pushed harder when we saw a “wobbly bottom” in front and were determined to beat them as we didn’t think they should be in front of us!

### **Favourite Park Run ? And Time?**

Valentines is my favourite park run (I was born at a house in Christchurch Road and spent a lot of my childhood in the park). It is ideal now as I can run there as a warm-up and then home again afterwards as recovery making a total of 7 miles as I now live in Seven Kings.

Royal Victoria is my fastest at 23m34s – probably because I was keen to get into the dock for a swim afterwards. Beckton is on my “to-run” list as a friend’s husband organises this one.

### **Your Half Marathon and 20 mile times would indicate that you could have had a good marathon in you. Did you ever consider it?**

I considered running Boston (USA) in 1997 (Colin had a qualifying time and got a place on the first bus and front row of the start line) that year, so I was going to enter albeit I would have to start with the masses at the back (this was possible in 1997). I tried to fit in the training, but struggled due to workload. I ran the Essex 20 miles that year on low mileage and realised I didn’t have 26.2 miles in me, so toured the course by bus and waited at the finish for Colin.



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**I see your first club race was the 10 mile XC at Hainault Forest. Very much a baptism of fire. Did you enjoy or endure it?**

Oops, my first race wasn't the 10 mile XC at Hainault Forest, it was an Essex XC league race on 10 October 1981. If I'd attempted the 10 mile XC I don't think I would have finished and possibly given up running.

**At your prime what would you say you enjoyed the most - Track, road or Cross-Country running?**

I enjoyed the track races most. There was a great atmosphere at the league events and lots of opportunities to race for IAC, NatWest Bank and open competitions with team mates and work colleagues. In the summer I would often run 3-4 races a week.

**Have you got your Essex medals and vest on display at home?**

No, Essex (and all) medals are in boxes and vest with all my other running kit in the wardrobe.

**You have kept yourself very fit. Is this purely down to training, or are you very careful with your diet too? Do you do any weight or core training?**



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I've always been active and enjoy pushing myself to achieve new goals. Luckily, I enjoy eating healthy food – salad every day with new potatoes, rice or pasta and mainly fish or an omelette. In winter porridge with fruit and mixed seeds is a staple breakfast. Although I do blame swimming for adding 2 stone in weight since my early running days (it's all muscle) ♀

I do Pilates, yoga, stretching, strength exercises (using 2 x 1.5 litre water bottles (full)), band work and try to keep myself active.

**Warm ups and cool downs are very much encouraged now. Has this always been the case and would you say you always adhere to it?**

Warm-up at the track was always the same: 4 laps jog on grass; 4 x 100m strides (jog back) and 4 x 200m (jog across grass) with 4 laps jog on grass to finish. I still make sure I do a warm-up before track training and efforts. Nowadays it helps that I can run to the track and home again. I have noticed some don't do a warm-up before track training – I would encourage everyone to do so, even if it means missing the start of the training – you will run better for it. My current 250m efforts are undertaken about a mile away from home, so I get a warm-up jog and cool down back home again.

**Fantasy dinner party. You can invite 6 guests, alive or dead (the ones would obviously be alive for the dinner) who would they be and what would be your signature dish that you would serve?**

Fred Plumm (how many times would he say “crickey!!”, Zac Brown (for some background music); Sarah Thomas (4-way English Channel marathon swimmer), Dalton Grant (no introduction required), Linwood Barclay (author) and Tom



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Leech QC (Deputy High Court Judge and all-round nice guy).

Kiln smoked trout fillets with Jersey Royal potatoes and salad.

**Do you miss your hugs from Ernie?**

Yes, definitely missing all hugs, especially Ernie's

**I understand you swim longer distances than a lot of us run. How long does it take to swim 10k & 14k? . And where do you swim them?**

10k best 2h34m River Dart (Totnes to Dittisham) 2015

14k best 4h10m River Thames (Henley to Marlow) 2019 (includes getting out and walking around 3 weirs and jumping into the water again to continue swimming) and giving way to boats!

**Did you change your training in any way to help you to so many good times in the early 90's?**

I always followed the training and guidance of the coaches. Track training was an integral part of my training along with working up the hills at Hainaut Forest and racing frequently, which together paid dividends for me.



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