



BILL GARRETT R.I.P.



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Ilford AC members are mourning the passing of popular former race walker Bill Garrett, who turned out for the Cricklefields-based Club between the mid-70s & mid-90s. Never a leading light, Mr. Garrett was a good solid back-up walker who could be relied on. Twice he closed home winning Ilford teams in Southern Area 50 Kilometres' Championships, on both occasions around a bleak deserted Basildon industrial estate. On a more popular course around Battersea Park's Queen's Carriageway he was the Club's 3rd scoring finisher (of 4) when winning a Southern Area 10 Miles' Championship so claiming the coveted "Garret Cup". He was proud when awarded race walking's 10 kilometres-in-an hour badge, achieved



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in an Essex County AA 10,000 metres championship on Hornchurch Stadium's track. Garrett twice race walked London Marathons, raising money for "The Marriage Guidance Council" and "Relate" – they being the same charity, having changed names between his first and second completions. He also appeared in triathlons.

He suffered a couple of notable setbacks. In a Southern Area Garnet 10 Miles, Ilford with 3 men home waited for 4th scorer Bill to clinch certain team victory, when the man himself was "pulled" for a bent knee 15 yards from the finishing line on a bracing Clacton-on-Sea esplanade. Not downhearted Bill was Ilford's Club 3rd scorer a year later at Battersea Park in a winning "Garnet" quartet. In an Essex County AA 3,000 metres championship at Hornchurch Stadium, organisers combined all categories into a composite event. Each category had race numbers issued from 1 upwards. We saw Murphy's Law on the first bend of lap 1 when a youth was disqualified wearing No.8, resulting in a loud call of this number. A startled judge panicked as 2 disgruntled No's 8 trudged towards him unpinning numbers – a transgressing youth and Bill. Bill lost much ground before it dawned on the judge what had gone wrong – so Bill rejoined the race – and finished it!

A keen supporter of Ilford's social functions he suffered back complaints in his later time with the Club, which he didn't attribute to athletics but a daily commute to inner London on decades' old Central Line rolling stock which always gave a bumpy ride. Mr, Garrett worked in telecommunications and was presented with an engraved tankard in appreciation when retiring to Forfar in the mid-90s, where he died aged 86.