



Julie Gillender

NAME Julie Gillender

DATE OF BIRTH 18th January 1968

Date joined IAC: 2016

Personal Bests:

100m 19.88 (2015 v45 ranking 123rd in UK)

Mile 8.01

5k 28.24

Parkrun 28.35

5 mile 48.35

10k 59.41

First Club race in which I participated was the Essex League ZXC at Colchester in 2016. I came last as I do in a lot of races but my philosophy now is that someone always comes first and some poor soul has to come last!

My most notable performance(s) was winning a Vets ac bronze medal for the 5k distance at Battersea Park. My second favourite performance was completing the Wix 5 mile race and being presented with an engraved crystal trophy for best club effort. I cried as I've never won anything before!

A typical weeks training for me is to try to run at least 3 times a week. A track session usually on a Tuesday and a road run of a Thursday around 5 miles. Parkrun of a Saturday (pre covid days) and finally a run in Hainault forest with a few running pals or a jaunt round Valentines or Clayhall park with Carol Muir.

My favourite races are Westminster Mile and the Vitality 10k which I've done twice. I love running around London and at my pace you take in the views and sites. London at it's best .



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The main reason why I got into running was because one morning in 2014 i woke up with a very blood shot eye. I saw my GP who diagnosed high blood pressure .I was prescribed tablets which didn't agree with me due to the side effects that made me feel worse. I was very overweight at this time, so asked my partner Steve who is a runner if he would help me try to lose some weight by helping me with some gentle running. I also started to attend Valentines parkrun every Saturday.

I have completed 143 parkruns to date and am grateful to have been able to have participated in this event on a regular basis as it has given me a lot of pleasure in life by meeting other park runners, trying to stay fit and giving me the opportunity to give something back by becoming a Parkrun Director at Barking Parkrun. I'm always glad to see fast and slow runners alike meeting up, having a chat then doing the parkrun and seeing everyone over the finish line with either a grin or a grimace on their faces but most of all to have completed that 5k and got in some exercise!

My favourite running event is Cross Country as I love to run in the forest and I'm not afraid of a bit of mud and the odd ditch but running just gives me a great sense of freedom and I find it good for my mental and physical well being.

The most famous athletes that I have been very fortunate to run with and on a regular basis is Ilfords lovely Pam Jones . The other person who I will mention is Paul Sinton-Hewitt (parkrun founder) who turned up at Raphaels parkrun when i was doing my 100th parkrun. It was a very memorable day for me and i was very grateful that a lot of my ilford team mates turned up to support me and made me cakes too!!

If i was to give any advice on improving the sport would be to encourage youngsters to take up some sort of running maybe through school. Put a stop to any illegal drug taking within our sport and lifetime bans on anyone caught doing so.



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My favourite athlete is David Rudisha.

I do like and follow other sports which are boxing and Formula one. When my father was young he used to race Morgan Sports cars and even competed in the Isle of Man ' TT ' races. Even now at 84 my father still owns a Morgan but finds it hard to drive these days. Many holidays when I was a child always involved car racing so i am a bit of a petrol head!!

My favourite foods are Cod and chips with a glass of cold lemonade and lime. Im also a fan of salmon with fresh broccoli and hollandaise sauce.

The last film I watched was I P Man on Netflix. I've watched so many films during these recent lockdowns I've lost count to be honest.

The book that I'm reading currently is Captain Tom Tomorrow will be a good day. It's his autobiography by Captain Sir Tom Moore. I like any books that are written about the first and second world wars both fact and fiction.

The last album that I purchased was Sophie Ellis-Bextor- Songs from the kitchen disco.

I have a very eclectic taste in music. I'm a big 80s fan as that was the era I grew up in and in my opinion was the greatest music decade. My favourite artists are Phil Collins. OMD. Simple Minds. Cold Play just to name a few.

The last concert I attended was Gary Numan - Savage tour at the cliffs pavilion in Southend-on-Sea.

Pets- Sparky my lovely tabby cat.

My main aim is to try and keep running, injuries aside to keep both my mental and physical health intact!

Finally.....my corny joke.



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What do you call a pig that does karate???

A pork chop!



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JULIE GILLENDER FOLLOW UP

What school did you go to and did you do any sport there ?

Back in the early 1980s I attended Chaffords Comprehensive School which is in Rainham Essex.

I have to admit I was pretty useless at sport at school and being one of the geeky kids I was always picked last for any of the school sports teams. However on the annual sports day I did get picked for the 400m and on my final year in school came second! We did do cross country at school which was run round some farmers fields at the back of the school and at that time I genuinely hated it!

Worst Injury ?



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My worst injury has to be my Haglund's deformity which is an abnormality of the foot bone (Achilles heel) My Achilles tendon has a large bony section on it. It started in around 2017. I've had various treatments on it both NHS and private and apart from an operation which is not conclusive to rid me of the problem I just manage to live with it. I also have a cartilage problem with my left knee and awaiting treatment but the Covid situation takes priority over outpatients clinics at the present time.

How did you meet Stephen ?

Steve and myself met in 2001 on a dating app.

20 years on and we are still happy in each others company!

First Single and Album purchased ?

The first album (vinyl) that I purchased was by Imagination- In the heat of the night. I cant remember the first single I purchased. I had a Saturday job whilst I was at college working in Boots in Romford on the record section. For a young 16 year old mad on music this was great. I got to play all the latest music in the charts.

Favourite holiday destination and Why ?

My favourite holiday destinations I admit are in the UK. However in my 20s I did travel a bit around Europe (France, Germany and Austria).

Back to the UK, Norfolk and Kent are my favourite places. As a kid I had many holidays in Norfolk with my parents and brother. We had a caravan that my father pulled along with his beloved Morgan sports car. We use to get many strange looks! I have also had some great holidays with Steve and his children in Norfolk mainly at Haven holiday parks. Where Kent comes in is my father (not again I hear you say) owned a holiday flat in Leysdown up until 2018 and every summer from about 2003 until 2017 Steve myself and the children had many holidays there. It was ideal as it was not to far for me to drive. Had a great chippy nearby



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lovely beach about 300meters from the flat and lots of other amusements for the kids.

Money no object where would you go on holiday, and would you seek out a race whilst you were there?

Money no object the holiday destinations that I would love to visit are Australia and New Zealand. Some good parkruns there i hear?

Do you work and if so how do you fit running around it?

My working life has always been in catering. My current job is a cook in a private boys school.

I start at 7.30am most days and finish around 2.30 so this allows me to fit in my running around my working hours.

I do struggle at times as cooking stuff I like is always difficult as it's always tempting to eat some. I do have a little restraint and not keep picking.

I hear you 'Temporarily' Retired from Running after the Ingatestone 5 Miles Road Race in 2019 ? Why was that and what changed your mind to carry on ?

Temporary retirement from running:- During the Ingatestone 5 in 2019 I had got to about mile 4 and then started to struggle. I was suffering from a 'hot sweat' , this is due to the flipping menopause us women go through in our 50's. By coincidence Steve and Terry Knightley were doing a warm down and genuinely encouraging me along the way when I announced that I was giving up running!! A lovely lady from Dagenham 88 heard me and gave me a pep talk and I managed to finish the race. Once recovered from the race I duly retracted my retirement

Greatest Running Rival ?



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I do not have any running rivals really my motto is to try to get close or match my previous times from before and to finish a race whatever even if I am last.

Best and Worst Park Run and Why ?

Best Parkrun: Victoria Dock as in December of 2019 I got a pb for that year and it's a flat and even course.

Worst Parkrun: Eden project . The first part is all up hill and winedy. However it's in a beautiful part of the world and after the parkrun got to visit the project which was a great day out.

How did you become Race Director for Barking Park Run ?

When I turned 50 I had a little bucket list of things I wanted to do. One was to become a Race Director for parkrun as I felt I had got a lot out of it but wanted to try and give something back and help other people. I knew that Barking parkrun needed some new RDs. I approached them and had some initial training for a few weeks they kindly let me take the reins. I volunteer when the rota goes online and I know I can commit myself to those Saturday mornings along with all the other very dedicated people at Barking parkrun team.

I love to see runners joggers and walkers alike get round that 5k course and give them some encouragement along the way. The only frustrating thing sometimes I have found that after the run and we have to process the results and a couple of times the server has gone down and you have to start from scratch again but that's life I guess.

On my 100th parkrun which I did at Raphaels the founder Paul Sinton -Hewitt turned up on the day. It was a great surprise. I have to admit I cant remember what I really spoke to him about but it made it a memorable day for me and a lot of my IAC team mates turned out to support me that day and bought cakes too.

I dont just do Barking parkrun. I do mainly local ones (valentines and Raphael and Roding Valley) as I dont have to travel too far. However i have done others further afield.



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Do you have a favourite Cross Country course?

My favourite XC course is Hadleigh. Very hilly and very muddy with a few proper ditches along the way. This is in the South Essex League and I'm glad to say a lot of women in my age category compete and are at my level. There is a lot of friendly rivalry and it's nice not to always come last!

The Westminster mile is one of my favourite races as I said in part 1. I like to run the shorter distances as I'm slightly faster at this distance. One day I would like to achieve a sub 8 minute mile.....watch this space!

Fantasy Dinner party - 6 guests. Who would they be, and would it be you or Stephen cooking?

Both my wonderful Nans, Dusty Springfield, Captain Sir Tom Moore, Phil Collins, David Rudisha. Steve would of course be in the kitchen cooking so that I could mingle with my guests.

Favourite Olympic memory?

My favourite Olympic memory was from London 2012 watching David Rudisha in the 800metres gaining the world record in 1.40.91 and winning the gold medal which was quite amazing considering he ran it from pillar to post.

In all your years at the club have you ever at any stage thought that as a woman you were treated unfairly or unequally?

Whilst being a member of IAC I have always been treated fairly as a female member and never discriminated against in anyway.

Hi Julie, great inspiring Who's who, well done. I was interested to see that you watched IP MAN on Netflix, I would like to know if you watched all 4 films and what did you think of his life story. I found his life to be tragic but fascinating particularly the references to his former student Bruce Lee



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With regard to the film IP MAN I only watched the film that was on Netflix which was the story of Bruce Lee's mentor Wing Chun in his younger life and his life when China was invaded by the Japanese. It is very insightful and I gather there are a further 3 films which I intend to watch either on Netflix or buy them from ebay.

It was an excellent film. During the lock down (s) I've watched all the Bruce Lee films.

Brandon Lee's film The Crow blew me away. It's so sad that both father and son passed away so young in life.