



Howard Williams - RIP

Andy Catton writes:

Sad news of the passing of Howard Williams, one of the great unsung heroes of the sport. He was not just a talented middle and long distance runner in his day but an absolute legend of an official and administrator and race organiser. He was a stalwart of Ilford AC as Road and Cross Country Officer, General Secretary of Essex AA, a CAU officer, organiser of the Metropolitan League XC and seemingly ever-present in some capacity at Essex, Southern, CAU and National XC over four decades between the 60's and 90's. Many will have received their finish disc from Howard at the end of major xc races. A total inspiration and a totally modest man.





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Please leave your tribute to Howard below and it will appear on this page shortly or if you refresh:-

Name (required)

Your Email (required)

Your Tribute

Tributes to Howard received so far

From	Tribute
John Batchelor	One of life's great Gentlemen in the truest sense of the word, and as everyone else has said, a great servant of our sport. While most of us picture him in wellies at the finishing funnel year after year, my abiding memory is of Howard storming down the Handcross slip road at the end of a long leg on the London to Brighton relay, pitted against the best runners in the country, but giving his absolute all for Ilford AC. Rest well Howard!



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Michael O'Donnell	i'am very sorry to hear the howard has passed way , i have not been in the running club for some time now but remember him well all ways with a smile on his face form the essex cl, met cl, as well as the other eventes and very helpfull i am sure the lads for woodfrod green will all miss him as will you ilford boys and girls . most of all his family
Dave Huffer	A club-mate of mine in Thames Valley Harriers recalls that in a race in Hainault Forest in 1965 he [my friend] gashed his head badly. Howard sacrificed his own race, came to his rescue, and guided him to the finish. As my friend says "That was the kind of man he was". And the Metropolitan Cross Country League - which Howard began - became a part of our competitive lives and has gone from strength to strength. It is now 50 years old.
Clive Ridley	What a great servant to our sport, especially in Essex. We were so lucky to to have Howard working tirelessly for us even when we sent our entries in late! RIP, Howard, you will be missed by so many Club Athletes.
Roger Mills	Howard was the template for the ultimate " official" in amateur athletics. A greeting, a smile,well prepared, all logistics covered , contingency plan in place - job done. No fuss, no drama whatever ,wherever the event and In truth never to be replaced. Rest easy.
Geoff Biscoe	Very sad news with the passing of a stalwart for Ilford ac and Essex. Sad that both he and Mke Barrat from Southall ac both passed in the last 2 years.They were both responsible for setting up the Metropolitan X country league. Athletics is the poorer for this loss. RIP Howard.
Dave Ainsworth	How sad to say farewell to Past President Howard - a true giant in Ilford AC's history and one of a family of talented athletes who gave great service to our Club. One also prominent throughout athletics formerly being a diligent Essex County Honorary Secretary and, of course, No.1 in the Metropolitan League cross country set-up. One blessed with a wonderful memory for names and faces, and a gentleman who'll be in our memories for all-time.
Ross Clarke	Very sad to hear of this news. I met Howard at multiple Essex championships and he always had a smile on his face and wise words for young athletes. I will always remember the talks I had with him and the influence he passed onto me.
Jamie Nunn	RIP Howard - thanks for all you did for us runners (me in particular); you were a real gentleman and will be missed.
Terry McCarthy	Howard was such a quiet, yet powerful personality. It was a privilege to be in his company and I'm grateful for the selfless, good-humoured work he did that gave so many of our athletes at Woodford Green, and thousands of other athletes in Essex and the Met League, the opportunity to compete in this sport that we love. Thinking of his lovely wife Ann too.
Paul Stockings	In all my 45 years of running, and 140 plus Met Leagues, it is hard to add anything to the previous tributes.Howard was one of the "Good guys of officialdom" and I am privileged to have known him
Gary Webb	Howard was one of the most dedicated members of the club, Essex AAA and Area/National associations. He seemed to be ever present in the finish areas of cross country races, giving out the finisher discs. He knew if you had had a good run and gave his congratulations and if it been one of those bad days he offered words of support. He was such a modest man but a true contributor to the sport of athletics. I am proud to have known you and wish your loved ones all our sympathies. R.I.P. Howard it has been a pleasure to have known you. Gary & Kim Webb
Peter Chown	A man of true character. His dedication to his beloved sport will be missed by all
Owen Phipps	He will be missed by so many. Only good memories of him at so many races. Howard was the main reason I joined Ilford AC. Rest in peace dear man.
John Barker	A very kind gently spoken gentleman who had time for everyone, even though he had a million other things to do at cross country, road and athletic meetings. Howard, it was a pleasure to have known you. RIP



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Kevin Wright	<p>I first met Howard when we (Springfield Striders) put on the County 10 mile road championship for the first time. He was very helpful and was one of the few at the time who didn't look down their noses at us "new clubs". He was the most polite and gentle man and we had a lot of dealings over the years with his involvement in the Inter Counties Fell Running which saw Essex shock more than a few Northern teams over the years.</p> <p>I still have scores of his typed up results from all the various road and XC races he officiated at. A true gent and a great loss to athletics in the county. RIP Howard</p>
Susan Hampshire	<p>Rest in peace Howard. I remembered him from various races I entered throughout Essex. A great ambassador to sport.</p>
Ivan Howlett	<p>Rest in peace Howard. A truly old school gentleman who gave so much of his time to sport he loved.</p>
Gerry O'Doherty	<p>Sad news -- what a lovely person Howard was, a true gentleman, there was absolutely nothing he would not do for an athlete, no such thing as a 'late entry'! When he retired it took a team of people to do the administration that he used to do!</p> <p>Thirty years ago he was hugely encouraging to the people of Billericay in the founding of Billericay Striders.</p> <p>His contribution to our sport in his lifetime can not be measured. Essex athletics owes Howard a massive debt, may he rest in peace.</p> <p>Our thoughts are with his family and friends and at everyone at Ilford AC</p> <p>With sympathy Billericay Striders</p>
Alastair Aitkin	<p>HOWARD WILLIAMS REMEMBERED (letter to AW)</p> <p>It was sad news to hear Howard Williams died last weekend.(25/26-3/17)</p> <p>There are those in athletics who work tirelessly as officials for no remuneration, to keep the sport afloat.</p> <p>Certainly Howard, with his tremendous encouragement and love of the sport, will go down as one of those.</p> <p>He certainly was one of the Essex 'Greats' not for his modest athletics achievements of running 2:50.2 for the tough Isle of Wight Marathon or for doing 52 minutes for 10miles but, by being AAA's Honorary Secretary for Essex in the 1980's; President of Ilford Athletic Club in 1966 and Essex County President in 1996. He was first Ilford Athletic Club cross-country and road secretary in 1958!</p> <p>Perhaps, the thing he will be most remembered for, by the cross-country fraternity, was being the Founder of the Metropolitan League in 1966. From 1966 to 2010 he spent his Saturday evenings and, all of Sunday collating and writing out all the results, single handily, which his wife Anne understood he had to do. Considering since then computers were used as a back up, it was quite remarkable.</p> <p>The enthusiasm of Howard Williams has meant that the Metropolitan League has grown in numbers, year by year and, it is due to Howard Williams's initial hard work. [1]</p> <p>Regards Alastair</p>
John Downes	<p>My deepest sympathy to all at Ilford athletic club on the loss of a great servant to athletics. Howard Williams was small in stature but as one got to know him over time you could see he was giant sized in personality and capacity to help so many. He always had a positive word to say on athletics. He endeared himself to many as can be seen by how many have responded. To his family my sympathy. He has gone now to Tir na Óg which means the land of the forever young in Irish. May he rest in peace</p>



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Andy Horlock	In my role as Chairman at Barking RRC in the early 90s, Howard and I occasionally crossed swords, normally due to my disregard for the more antiquated rules which I tended to ignore. Despite our telephone conversations not only did I have a great deal of respect for him as a man, I liked him a lot. He always had time to stop and chat, even when he was usually involved in something far more important. I am not sure if any of us really knew how much work he put in on behalf of us the runners, jumpers and throwers of Essex, but I do know both Essex Athletics and British Athletics in general owe Howard a tremendous debt for everything he gave us over the years. Rest in Peace Howard and thank you.
Matthew Williams	My Uncle Howard was one of the most gentle mannered and pleasant people I knew. Always great to see him. He shall be missed very much. X
MICHAEL HINTON	VERY SAD TO HEAR OF THE PASSING OF HOWARD WILLIAMS.I WELL REMEMBER HOWARD AS MR X-COUNTRY WHEN TAKING MY SON RICHARD TO EVENTS IN THE 1990'S. ALSO WITH HIS ORGANISING OF THE INGATESTONE 5 ROAD RACE. HE WILL BE SORELY MISSED AS ILFORD AC RAN THROUGH HIS VEINS. REST IN PEACE. MIKE AND RICHARD HINTON.
David Bull	Sad news about Howard my memories are that he was a very polite encouraging and pleasant man. When I saw Howard it was usually in his capacity as a Marshall or official and he always had time to talk. R.I.P Howard
Gordon Crouch	Howard Williams an amazing club stalwart. A classic example to us all of loyalty, diligence and service for the greater good. Well done Howard, the race is run.....rest in peace Gordon.
Terry Knightley	I will always treasure the happy times I spent in Howard's company at races. The bright yellow high viz jacket he always wore. The smile on his face. The organisation and results of many of the Road and cross country races. His enthusiastic and encouraging nature whatever level of runner. His Essex medal presentations. There will never be another like him - he was one of the last of the old school type runner and organiser. A True Diamond and a Gentlemen. R I P Howard
Gavin Collett	Condolences to all at Ilford AC and Howard's family from your friends at Hillingdon AC. It was a privilege to have known him and to have been entrusted with his baby, as I succeeded him as the organiser of the Met League. He always had a cheerful demeanour even on the coldest & wettest of days as he waited at the end of the funnel to give out his disks & no computer can match the presentation of results from his wonky typewriter! A true legend. Thanks for everything, Howard.
Kim	RIP Howard A lovely man who always had a kind word and little smile. So pleased to have known him, miss him and that yellow fluorescent jacket at the Races



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John Mackenzie	<p>Although small in stature, Howard was a giant in our road racing and cross country world. Club road handicap maestro, finishing funnel aficionado and race organisational wizard, he was ever present throughout my long racing career. His vigorous cheering at the 20 mile point of the 1983 London Marathon gave me goosebumps and spurred me on to my best ever time. Howard was always giving - whether it be time, support, advice, encouragement or constructive criticism. I am proud to have had him as a friend and wish him peace in that finishing funnel in the sky.</p>
Bob Smith	<p>I'm so sad to hear this news. Howard was an absolute legend. He was a wonderful man who cared about people, especially athletes and he was also a first class race organiser. He put together a lifetime of selfless volunteering in the sport and I shall miss him very much. My condolences to Howard's family, to his close friends and to Ilford AC at this time from all at your neighbours at Newham and Essex Beagles.</p>
Gary Floate	<p>Howard was a lovely guy, always interested in how you got on (even after I left Ilford). Getting a phone call from Howard to be told you had made the Essex team for the Inter Counties was always special. He will be sadly missed</p>
Karl Hick	<p>Howard was a lovely guy and would help anyone and was someone that made everyone welcome and never had a bad word about anyone and will be sadly missed Karl</p>
Gerry Pells	<p>Howard, a dear friend to many, he was always, whatever the occasion, race or social event be the one you sought out first, knowing that he was always ready for a chat and invariably an amusing quip.</p> <p>A gentle man and an unflappable organiser indelibly linked to the Ingateston 5, a true servant and President both of Essex County AA and Ilford AC and founder of the renowned Metropolitan Cross Country League, it can be said that he never missed a single running of this event, only finally in recent years having to ration his attendances.</p> <p>A few years ago Woodford Green and Ilford, backed by Seb Coe and Dave Bedford, put Howard forward for OBE/MBE honours recognition but such are the vagaries of the system our efforts were unsuccessful, an inexcusable error given Howard's reputation.</p> <p>My condolences to Anne, Keith, Graham, Martin and families he will be sorely missed in the coming years by all those who knew and loved him as a friend.</p> <p>Gerry</p>