

## Mike Dooling

Having been a loyal member of the Club for over 45 years, representing the Club on the track, road and country, Mike's biggest impact on the sport lies in his involvement with the English Schools, and in 2009 he became their Chairman.

Born on the 14th May 1949, and brought up off Rice Lane, Walton, he attended Blessed Sacrement RC Juniors. While starting running as far back as he could remember, it was when he furthered his education at St Edwards College in West Derby that he started serious athletics. He started competing on the track and over the country for the school, and joined the Club in October 1963. Though not very naturally talented as a runner, he worked hard to improve. As the saying goes: "what you put in, you get out". Like many youngsters in the Club, he was influenced by Tom O'Mahoney and was in many of his training groups.

His early experiences gave him an insight into organising in the sport, which came in handy later in his life when he was a teacher at a Huyton school where there was lack of athletic expertise.

After starting at cross-country, he developed on to his favourite event, road racing, with best times of 24mins 15secs for 5 mile, 51mins 10secs for 10 mile, 68mins 10secs for the ½ marathon, and 2hrs 26mins 15secs in the Manchester Piccadilly marathon. On the track he achieved personal bests of 4mins 10secs for 1,500m, 15mins 19secs for 5,000m, and 32mins 16secs for 10,000m. The photo shows him tucked behind Peter Carey in a Northern League 5000m at Kirkby, probably in the 1970s.

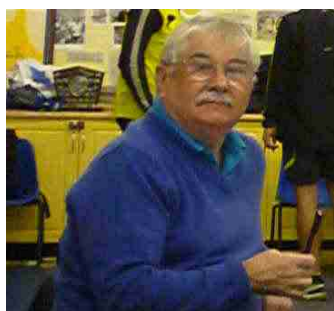


He was away at Training College for 3 years, where again he got himself involved in the track and cross-country. On his return he took up a teaching appointment in Kirkby. It was then that he joined the Club's elite training squad with John Woods, Frank Davies, and Geoff Smith, to name a few, and reached a good level. He was training 60-70 miles a week, and was in the top 10% in most cross-country races as well as winning a few local road races. Mike was to experience a number of Club team triumphs, and among his other highlights was clocking 2hrs 35mins in the first London Marathon in 1981.

Alongside his teaching and his running, Mike found time to attain a BA (Hons) degree in Education at Liverpool University, after a three year part-time study. Having already acquired coaching and administration skills, at school and training college, it was while training with the Club at Kirkby Stadium back in 1971 that he got involved with the Catholic Schools athletics organisation. He progressed to form the Knowsley Schools Athletic Association, naturally moving into Merseyside Schools. The busy athletic official has been involved in many roles within the sport, locally, County and nationally, but has not neglected his roots. He ran the Club's North of England teams, and been part of the Club administration for over 25 years.

Mike's English Schools commitments started back in 1981, when he was assistant secretary of the English Schools at Kirkby, and in the same year was elected to the English Schools Executive Committee, and the following year became Assistant Meeting Manager for the ESAA Annual Athletic Championships. Having been the ESAA Team Manager for over 25 years, he was elected Vice-Chairman of the ESAA in 2008. The top honour arrived in 2009, when he was appointed Chairman - a move which meant retiring from teaching after 38 years.

Over the years he has travelled the country with his duties at the English Schools Championships, and has attended five World Schools Cross-Country Championships in Beijing, Latvia, France, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Among his highlights of his long career in the sport has to be English Team Manager at the Commonwealth Youth Games in Edinburgh in 2002, and officiating at the Manchester Commonwealth Games in the same year. Also high on the list would be his involvement in the World and European Indoors in Birmingham.



Mike is married to Eryl. They have two sons, Gareth and Matthew, and live in Rainhill. Mike is a regular at the clubhouse, where he is now putting his efforts into the development of the junior end of the membership which, as he rightly says, is the future of Liverpool Harriers. He claims that he likes to spend his spare time on walking, music, and collecting stamps - but it is hard to see how this busy guy has any spare time at all!

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