

Pete Waddington

Like many youngsters Pete played most sports, including football and cricket, with his local mates, spurred on by his father's interest. When he went to grammar school, his interest in athletics started. Eventually he became a school teacher in Liverpool, joined the Club, and went on to be captain of the Club's elite road and cross-country teams of the seventies. He competing successfully for the Club at County, Northern and National level, and represented Lancashire and Northern Counties.

Pete was born in Burnley on the 24th of January 1947, and was brought up in Barnoldswick, Lancashire. He was educated at Ermysted's Grammar School in Skipton, where he started cross-country and track running. Around the end of his time at school, he joined Blackburn Harriers. He continued running when he went to Liverpool University, where he met Frank Davies and they became friends and training partners.

After university, he moved away from Liverpool. But he returned after a few years, to take up a teaching appointment, started running with Frank again, and naturally joined Liverpool Harriers. Modestly describing himself as "quite good at school, but average when joining the Club", he was determined to improve, and committed himself to a tough training plan centred on a very high training mileage. He had a break-through to finish third in the West Lincs Cross-Country at Clarke Gardens, and never looked back. Like his running partner, he was self-coached, learning by trial and error, and from books on coaching and training.

Pete's range of distances was impressive. He represented the Club in the British League at Steeplechase and 5,000m, won several road races, ran for Lancashire at 20 miles and Cross-Country, and showed his strength in fell races. One of his big satisfactions was winning his local Barnoldswick Fell Race, where he outclassed a good standard field and led the Club to team victory, and he emphasised his versatility by being a member of the Club's winning team in the AAA 4x1500m relay (see photo - Nick Marler, Peter, Frank, Alan Gerrard).



On an individual note, he finished runner-up in the Lancashire County CCC, 6th in the Northern, and a very creditable 17th in the English National. He represented Lancashire several times over the country, and finished second in the Northern 10,000m track championships. He was never satisfied - always striving for better. After possibly his best result, a brilliant third in the 1971 Inter-Counties 20 miles road race, he commented "there was too much wrong with my run". The big man's greatest pleasure was beating Mike Turner in the Steeplechase when achieving a personal best in the British League at Brighton. His biggest disappointment was in his last year at school when, having been unbeaten over the country, he was forced to miss the Yorkshire County championships through injury.

But Pete will be most remembered as the proud captain and a key member of the Club's 1970s elite road relay squad, which won many titles at all levels up to AAA Championships (in the photo he runs a lonely stage in the winning Luto-to-Bedford team of 1973). He not only contributed his running strengths, but also his enthusiasm, influence and organisational skills: hosting the Club's Tuesday night "eye-balls-out" sessions which were a major factor in the string of successes. Pete modestly does not think he was a star, but many of his contemporaries would say that he was certainly a vital part of many titles and honours the Club won in his time. He looks back on many of his team mates as friends, and feels privileged to have run with people like Frank, Mike Turner and John Woods. He also feels that Tom O'Mahoney played a very influential part in the successes of that era. The message is clear: "the more you put in the more you get out".



Pete also pays tribute to Bill McEvoy. When Pete's son Andrew suffered a brain injury, Bill frequently visited Pete and his wife Teresa and Andrew at Alder Hey hospital and, ten years later, is still in regular touch. Not surprisingly, Andrew considers Bill as his friend!

The Waddingtons now live in Cumbria, but it is a tribute to the ethos of the Club over the years that Pete has such positive memories of his stay in our city.