

# The Civil Service Athletic Association

1864 – 2024

## A Brief Overview

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### Celebrating 160 Years of Athletics within the Civil Service

The very first Civil Service Sports Day was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> April 1864 at Beaufort House, London.

The Athletics historian, Peter Lovesey, penned the following:

“The CSAA was extremely prestigious in the Victorian era and the sports were certainly one of the most important occasions in the calendar. Charles Herbert (1846-1924), a winner at the sports in 1869, 1870 and 1875, became the Hon Sec of the Amateur Athletics Association and a member of the International Olympic Council from its foundation until 1906, when he fell from the top of an omnibus. He was regarded by Pierre de Coubertin, the creator of the modern Olympics, as one of the key figures who made the first Olympics possible.”

It is hoped to celebrate this anniversary during the year starting with the 10k & 5k events at Battersea Park almost 160 years to the day of that first event.

### Milestones along the Way

- 1864 First Sports Day but was Men only
- 1920 First Track Event for Women introduced (80 yds but 100 yds in 1924)
- 1921 Cross Country Championship
- 1922 Race Walk Championship
- 1928 First Representative Race Walk Fixture v Metropolitan Police
- 1929 First Representative Cross Country Fixture v RAF v Middlesex
- 1953 Road Relays
- 1965 Marathon up to 2007, 2008 Half Marathon
- 1980s Masters Track & Field
- 1986 10k

This is an impressive list of events and many an International has taken part in these competitions.

### Famous Athletes who Worked in the Civil Service

Linford Christie Olympic, World and Commonwealth 100m Gold Medallist worked in the Inland Revenue.

Stan Cross set a British Triple Jump Record at the 1951 CSAA Track & Field Championships at Chiswick in 1951 with 48ft 6in

Bob Dobson set a British 50k Record in 1976 and represented Great Britain and England in major Championships

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Peter Driver was the Gold Medallist in the Six-Mile Race at the 1954 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. His winning time of 29.09.4 was a Games Record and the first time anyone had run the distance in under 30 minutes. He also won the National Junior Cross Country Title in 1953

Len Eyre won the 3 Miles Gold Medal and the 1 Mile Silver Medal at the 1950 British Empire Games in Auckland. He also competed in the 1500m at the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki and won the n Inter Counties Cross Country Champions and featured on the front cover of Athletic Review in February 1953.

Elaine Forster was an early pioneer in Women's Running in the 1930s winning the Senior Women's National Cross Country Title in 1936 & 1938.

Eileen May Hiscock was an English track and field athlete who competed for Great Britain in the 1932 and 1936 Summer Olympics. At the 1930 Women's World Games in Prague she was a member of the British 4x100m Relay Team which won the Silver Medal, then in the 1934 World Women's Games, she won the Bronze Medals in the 100m and 200m events. Eileen won the CSAA 100 Yards Race 7<sup>th</sup> times in succession from 1930 - 1936

Joy Jordan represented Great Britain in the 1960 Olympics at 800m and also in the 1962 Empire Games. She was an 880 Yds World Record Holder

Ray Middleton competed in the Olympic, European & Empire (Commonwealth) Games as well as the Civil Service Race Walking Championship.

Sue Reeve was Commonwealth Games Gold Medallist in 1978

Many other Civil Servants have represented their Country since 1864 and the CSAA has always been in the forefront of athletics, especially with events for Women from the early 1920s as social change began to impact the country following World War 1.

### **Further Details**

The above can only very briefly highlight what a long history you are part of today and hopefully a few of you will go onto to represent your Country at major Championships in the coming years.

More detailed information, including Newspaper Accounts of the Sports Days from the 1860s onwards, and on each of the Championship Events and Representative Matches along with the majority of the Winners since 1864 can be found on the Civil Service Athletic Association Website at

[www.CSAA.org.uk](http://www.CSAA.org.uk)

If anyone can provide any of the missing winners, please contact Nick Hume at [Nick.Hume@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:Nick.Hume@tiscali.co.uk)