

Goodbye Tom

386 Woking 3s and though Tom never received a Frequent Flyer medal he certainly matched most of ours by being at the finish every month, rain or shine, handing out the finish tokens right up until May this year when he fell ill.

Always smiling, always encouraging, Tom was there ready to take car keys, rucksacks, sweaters for us all.

Tom Rowley was everywhere. Anywhere there was athletics: road, cross country, track. And latterly, parkrun. And everywhere inbetween: coaching in Woking Park, Windsor Park, Stoke Park. Extra sessions of exercises tailor made for anyone and everyone, he never let anyone down. He always made them fun. He attended every London Marathon until 2018 and being a London boy, knew all the streets, rail stations and would zip around the course, encouraging and supporting 100s of marathon runners. Because he knew them all. And they all knew Tommy.

Tom has always been athletic. He served several years in the Merchant Navy before joining the Army as a PT instructor. Right up until a few months ago, he would do his old army exercise regime in his garage, every single day. More recently, it was every other day. What a soldier.

Tom was Woking AC. He joined the club in the 70s when he moved from Wembley to Woking where he is still the record holder: in the V55s right up to the V80s, from 200m right up to the marathon. What a champion.

But most of all, we will all remember his smiley face, his humour, his enthusiasm, dedication, encouragement and empathy. His love for the sport. His love of people, young and old. But more than all this, his love for life. What a hero.

Goodbye Tom, forever in our hearts.