Dear Dave

I thought I would put finger to keyboard and write this short letter to you as a representative of all the British officials that you have ever worked with.

All of us here today are aware of what you had achieved at the highest level in officiating, receiving the England Athletics ‘Official of the year’ award in 2014, so there is no need for me to repeat those achievements.

However, Dave I don’t think you really knew who had nominated you, so I will let you into a little secret, it was me!

Anyway Dave, I would like to talk more about you the man, whom I got to know over the last 25 years. I have tried to think of suitable expressions that would best describe you, so came up with incorrigible, enthusiastic, loving the banter, passionate about athletics and supportive.

**Supportive**

Always supportive to all. If you were able to help out anyone, you would be there in a flash, be it at the track or at the home. Nothing was too much trouble for you. If you could you would.

**Incorrigible**

You and I were selected to officiate at the 3 A’s in Sport city several years ago.

 I drove and this turned out to be a 5 hour journey. Of those 5 hours you probably talked for about 4 and a half of those hours on the one topic that you knew so well!

I did at one point ask you to refrain from speaking, which I could see from your body language, was difficult!

So on arrival at the hotel near the GMEX, we booked in and at that point I instructed you to unpack your case and meet me back in reception in 10 minutes.

“What for” you asked

“We are going shopping” I replied

“I don’t do shopping”

“Well you do today Dave”

“I have just driven 5 hours with you in the car, now for your penance, you are coming shopping with me”.

So we set off for the Lowry centre on the tram, It didn’t take long for you to get into the whole experience and I know that deep down you quite liked browsing the shops. And I certainly didn’t believe you that you didn’t do shopping, as you were too engrossed in finding a bargain.

Anyway this was in the days when we wore whites and we spotted a shoe shop so at your suggestion we went in scouring the shop for white shoes. I found mine quickly and went up to the till.

Whilst paying the lady behind the counter said that my husband over the other side of the shop was trying to get my attention. To which I replied “oh that’s not my husband”.

You then saunter over to the counter to purchase your shoes (remember-you don’t do shopping!) I told you what the assistant had said to me, to which you said

“oh no we are not married; we are just away for a dirty weekend”.

At which point I beat a hasty retreat.

**Loved the banter**

A number of us from Bexley AC attended a club members medieval themed wedding, with actor/stunt men in tow. There you were dressed like the Rowan Atkinson character out of the Elizabethan Black Adder, with your false moustache and cod piece.

During the meal the stunt men would have mock fights and at one point when a situation appeared to get heated, timed to perfection, up you step to resolve the situation and out of your medieval man bag you produced “**ye olde rule book**”, which Carol had lovingly covered to look old!

Only you Dave could take a rule book to a wedding and produce it at an appropriate time. Mind you that rule book was your bedtime reading as well as your holiday reading. The rest of us didn’t bother to read the rules as we knew if we asked you something you would know exactly where to find it.

**Enthusiastic and passionate about athletics**

You always set out to learn as much about your disciplines, that you could and you took great pleasure in passing that knowledge down to the up and coming officials. I for one, shall be forever grateful to you, for taking the time out, to take this shy (yes shy) up and coming official to the grade 4 course at Blackheaths headquarters, because I really don’t think I would have gone on my own!!! So as you were taking me there, you sat the track course as well. Putting that skill to good use on occasions.

However, you were frustrated by those who failed to reach their full potential, there were many who could have attained a high level but not all had that commitment.

Your technical prowess was exceptional and the equipment room at Bexley was given over as an example of best practice.

**Subtle**

However, one word that definitely could not describe you is subtle. Subtlety was one attribute that was definitely lost on you. For example there was the time that you were officiating on the Pole Vault and you were on Card 1. Keith Davies was on runway control. The first athlete came down the run way, and cleared the bar. Keith sauntered down the runway and asked if that was a good clearance. You looked and thought Keith had lost the plot. The next athlete made his way down the runway and cleared the bar. Keith again walked down the runway and asked if that was a good vault. By this time you had thought Keith was going blind. You then looked at the floor and that light bulb moment occurred when you saw the flags lying on the floor. Next athlete came down the runway cleared the bar up went the white flag, to which Keith gave you the thumbs up and a wry grin.

Dave, you have been described as a ‘one off’. That is very true, those of us associated with Bexley AC got to know you better than others and we definitely had lots of good times both on and off the track. One of my abiding memories, was when we were in Birmingham for the European indoors. We had just gone and got our uniforms and went back to the hotel to make sure they fitted. I was all done and dusted and knocked on your room door to go and get food. I was greeted with you at the door in nothing more than your shirt and underpants. It was truly a sight to behold.

Anyway Dave, need to sign off now, so on behalf of all officials I wish you a fond farewell and thanks for the memories, it has been a privilege