

The Law



The newspaper of Essex Police

Issue 356

June 2004



Learning about our heritage - P3



Reformed addict speaks out - centre



Tragic death of colleague - P10

JURY STILL OUT ON NEW RULES

Nowhere to hide



● A rude awakening for one suspected drug dealer as Thurrock officers ram a door. Photo: Evening Echo.

THE streets of Thurrock are being swept clean of drugs in an on-going operation involving intelligence-led raids and covert policing.

During one warrant in Wharf Road, Grays, drugs with an estimated street value of £250,000 were seized.

The operation was described by ACC (Crime) Liam Briggishaw as

excellent teamwork.

Officers seized nearly 70kgs of cannabis and more than 10kgs of a substance thought to be cocaine.

A 37-year-old man and a 20-year-old woman were arrested and remanded in custody by Grays magistrates.

Mr Briggishaw said: "Warrants being executed in

this format provide reassurance to the public and a feelgood factor among the officers involved."

The Thurrock operation coincides with the launch of *Crack Under Pressure*, a joint campaign by Essex Police and Crimestoppers. For full details and the experiences of a reformed addict see centre pages.

AS the first Essex officer is called up for jury service under new legislation, staff associations have raised concerns about the implications.

Strong representation was made nationally by the Police Federation for police officers and staff to remain exempt from jury service, but the Home Office went ahead with the change in legislation. UNISON has also voiced its view about possible conflicts.

Eligible

The changes in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 came into force on April 5. Any staff involved in the administration of justice will be eligible to sit on a jury.

Assistant Chief Constable (Personnel) Andy Bliss said: "This legislation is now in place and we have to ensure that officers and police staff can fulfil their responsibilities and that we maintain the highest level of confidence in the justice system.

"We are finalising our policy and will consult on this

by Heather Watts

with staff associations so that guidance may be given on practical issues.

"It may be, for example, that representations will need to be made if staff are summoned for jury service at a local court to the area where they work. The policy will cover these aspects."

There are now moves to seek clarification on a number of issues and implications for both the force and officers.

Chairman of the Essex Police Federation Sue Kelly said: "This is just another layer of bureaucracy that we could well do without and is a misguided use of police time.

"Even if we are called away from our routine duties to serve on a jury and we are objected to, this will cause disruption and a considerable amount of paperwork.

Continued on page 3

Welcome sleuth boost

A RECORD number of officers have registered for training on the new National Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme (ICIDP).

Crime Training Manager Insp Tim Raymond said: "It is very encouraging that over 30 aspiring detectives are keen to take their place on a challenging course that sets very high standards. Officers completing the ICIDP can be confident that they will be fully equipped to deal with any incident they may find themselves investigating."

CID career opportunities will be published in personnel bulletins in preparation for the next induction day on August 24, 2004.

An Act of equality

The Disability at Work Act covering police officers comes into being with effect from October 1, 2004. Outlined is a précis of some of the questions and answers expected about the issue.

Who is protected by the Act?

Disabled people - defined in the DDA as having "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Each case must be considered individually.

'Mental impairments' are clinically well recognised mental illnesses. (Just because somebody has been long-term sick with anxiety or stress, it does not necessarily mean they will be protected by the DDA.)

Conditions not covered by the DDA are addiction/dependency on alcohol or any other substance, unless resulting from being medically prescribed.

'Day-to-day activities' include mobility, dexterity, co-ordination, continence, ability to move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to understand, concentrate or learn, perception of the risk of physical danger. Day-to-day activities do not mean an officer's work-related activities. So an officer may not be able to undertake officer safety training because of a bad back, but still may not come under the DDA definition because his/her ability to carry out the activities listed above is okay.

The service is committed to a 'best practice' approach - not mere compliance

Federation Newsline

by Terry Spelman



with the DDA - and the Police Federation of England & Wales expects this to mean that where an officer has an impairment, which does not fit the definition exactly, he or she will be treated as though they were entitled to the Act's protection.

What is unlawful?

Direct discrimination on grounds of disability, treating a disabled officer less favourably for a reason related to their disability, harassment or victimisation and failing to make reasonable adjustments.

Can a disability be confidential?

The DDA does not prevent an officer keeping a disability confidential, but this means that unless the force could be expected to know about it anyway, they will not be under any legal duty to make adjustments. If any disabled officer expects reasonable adjustment, they need to give sufficient information.

While sensitive personal data must not be passed on without 'informed consent' a refusal to give consent may impact upon the effectiveness of the adjustments which the force is able to make.

Reasonable adjustments

Chief officers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to premises,

policies, practices and procedures, when they put a disabled officer at a substantial disadvantage, compared with non-disabled colleagues. This idea is not new. You will already know of officers who have special arrangements at work because they have an illness or injury. Many disabled officers will need no adjustments whatsoever to enable them to work on equal terms with colleagues.

What is the purpose of a reasonable adjustment?

To remove the 'substantial disadvantage' to the disabled officer. Reasonable adjustments should be applied at all stages of employment from recruitment to retirement etc. They can include altering premises or providing special equipment; transfers and adjusting working hours; allowing absence for rehab, assessment or treatment. Providing reasonable adjustments is a decision for line management, not doctors or occupational health, although there will be numerous occasions when advice is essential, prior to a decision being made. If a manager seeks information about a disability, they should only ask questions which are relevant to the officer's ability to do the job.

What is reasonable?

When managers are deciding what is "reasonable" they should consider the size and resources of the force, the effectiveness and practicability of the adjustment and the disruption caused. They can also consider how much the officer is prepared to co-operate. The aim is for the officer to remain in post with adjustments to working arrangements, rather than be posted to other duties. Forces can apply to the Access to Work scheme, via the local Job Centre Plus, for advice and funding for reasonable adjustments. Fit the job to the worker - not the worker to the job.

Health, safety, welfare and the DDA

Disabled officers are entitled to the same protection from health and safety law but in some cases their needs may be different to their non-disabled colleagues. When considering a reasonable adjustment and/or after an adjustment has been made, a risk assessment may be required. If duties have been swapped with colleagues, their work may also need to be risk assessed.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) outline duties for reviewing and, if necessary, modifying risk assessments if circumstances change. Illness, injury or the onset of disability may make an officer more vulnerable to harm, so managers need to consider whether their risk

assessment of the tasks performed is suitable and sufficient or whether fresh precautions are necessary. There should be individualised assessments not assumptions.

MHSWR require forces to identify any groups of workers particularly at risk. The Approved Code of Practice (AcOP) refers to disabled staff as one such group.

If the officer's disability is work-related, steps must be taken to prevent or control risks to other officers that could lead to more cases. Are your risk assessors competent to undertake an assessment involving disability? Where appropriate, is there an evacuation plan for a disabled officer? Are colleagues informed/trained to deal with an emergency?

●Health and Safety at Work Act - Does your force need to revise its written policy on health and safety in the light of the DDA, or the arrangements for carrying out the policy and bringing it to the attention of staff?

●Display Screen Equipment Regulations - Do the workstations fit the person?

●Manual Handling Operations Regulations - If manual handling cannot be avoided, these Regulations require the force to take into account the capabilities of the person lifting, pushing, pulling etc.

●Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations - Reg 4 requires that where PPE is provided, forces must ensure that it is suitable and takes into account the health of the person who uses it.

●The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations covers suitability, maintenance, information and training.

●The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations - Of particular importance are toilets, restrooms, cleanliness, temperature, ventilation, lighting, doors, signage, escape routes etc. Adjustments may be needed to these.

●Safety Reps and Safety Committees Regulations outline rights and functions of the safety representative, who has the right to investigate potential hazards, complaints by members and causes of accidents and diseases. Chief officers have legal obligations to allow safety representatives time for training and the Disability Rights Commission recommends health and safety representatives receive training from their trade organisations.

●Working Time Regulations recognise the need to limit or adjust patterns of work and rest to prevent risks to employee health and safety.

Further advice can be obtained from the Disability Rights Commission on www.drc-gb.org.

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Visionary approach to policing county roads

ROAD policing officers in Bocking are subjecting motorists to roadside eyesight tests as part of a one-month clampdown to improve the quality of driving on the county's roads.

Police are teaming up with road safety officers as they check the eyesight of drivers involved in road crashes, as well as those who are suspected of having poor vision.

Road Policing Inspector Mark Harman recalls one amazing instance which still baffles his colleagues.

"One of my officers was dealing with a crash one afternoon when he asked the driver whether she had a problem with her eyesight," said Insp Harman. "He was taken aback by the response: 'Sorry officer, I forgot to put my glasses on when I left the house, but I'll be late picking

up my son if I go back for them now.' Just think how she would have felt if she had killed another motorist or even left her sons without a parent."

Driving with defective eyesight is not only an offence in itself, but would also support any graver charge of careless or even dangerous driving - both of which attract heavy fines and penalty points.

Jury debate

... from page 1

"When the public want to see more officers out on patrol this can only reduce public confidence when officers are abstracted for long periods to perform in another capacity."

UNISON Secretary Lee Robson said: "We view with extreme concern the practicalities of the new legislation which requires police staff and officers to attend for jury service."

"We have no doubt our members would make excellent jurors but the inevitable conflict will arise in some cases, as police professionals we may know the defendant or details of the case."

"Our role is to police the community without fear or favour and our undertaking by its own nature involves the final judgement to be carried out by other members of the community."

"By disestablishing this fundamental principle we risk undermining a legal system that was previously a standard for all to follow."

Any applications for deferral or excuse from serving on a jury must show 'good reason', such as medical grounds. Deferral will always be considered in the first instance.

One point that has been clarified is that officers called for jury service will attend court in duty time, in plain clothes and with no police equipment except for their warrant card.

Additional guidance will be issued shortly.

Hi-tech web support

NEW web pages have been launched on the intranet to answer typical questions about the Hi-Tech Crime Unit and reduce the number of phone calls placed to the unit from divisions.

The site contains details on investigating internet crime, including eBay frauds and forensic data recovery. There are frequently asked questions, numerous pages on crime investigation and prevention, an exemplar EnCase report with explanations and an electronic HT9 submission form.

Before phoning the unit it is worth checking the site, which will continue to evolve, as your question may well be answered by doing so.

Heart scare

FORMER chairman of the Police Authority, Anthony Peel, is recuperating after major heart surgery.

Mr Peel was chairman of the police authority for six years before his election as vice-chairman of Essex County Council. The son of former Essex Chief Constable Sir Jonathan Peel, he is currently chairman of Essex County Council.



● Lauren White was more than happy to be restrained in handcuffs during the force museum open day.

History open to all

NEARLY 600 visitors soaked up policing history when the force museum flung open its doors for a two-day extravaganza and boosted museum funds by £250.

As well as the usual displays and museum activities, a competition was held to design the police transport of the future. This was part of the temporary Essex Police on the Move exhibition.

Guests got to see a marine unit RIB, a classic Wolseley police car, and two modern police vehicles, giving children the chance to make some noise with sirens. A display of designs for the Chief's garden, produced by Writtle College students, was on site and the garden was open to visitors.

Photographs of the event, which was staffed by volunteers, can be found on the museum website.

Museum applies for heritage funding

IT is hoped that extra funding can be secured to improve the condition and educational status of the force museum following an application for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The fund issues grants of up to £50,000 for projects that conserve and enhance heritage, encourage communities to celebrate their heritage and increase opportunities for the widest possible audience to learn about heritage.

The force museum was established in 1991

and has since gained the status of both a registered charity and a registered museum. Last month it was also featured on the BBC TV show *Flog It*, which travels the country in search of valuable artefacts, selling them at auction on behalf of the owners. During each show the film crew visits a place of historic interest and in Essex it chose the police museum.

However, despite a great deal of hard work by curators and volunteers, much of the museum remains in a similar state to when it first

opened its doors.

Curator Sarah Ward is very keen to exploit its full educational potential, improve on the displays and expand its public opening hours, generally raising its profile.

Sarah said: "The museum could be of enormous value in providing a friendly environment where people can come and find out about our officers and how their role has developed over the last 160 years."

News on whether the bid has been successful is expected in the autumn.

Essex first to train in new casualty system

Welcome advance in disaster management

ESSEX has paved the way for forces across the country by assisting in the development of software to computerise casualty bureau procedures.

CasWeb is the web-access version of the HOLMES2 Casualty Bureau and new front-end software will mean that Essex calltakers will input information direct, making it live on the HOLMES2 system.

In a situation where we are assisting another force, the information will be fed through a conduit operated by Cable and Wireless to populate the host forces HOLMES2 system giving access to other forces in a mutual aid situation.

Refresher training has been given to existing Casualty Bureau calltakers, and additional volunteers have been trained.

Essex is one of a handful of forces to

by Heather Watts

use the system to the full, and to have all their calltakers trained.

Authorised users once logged onto CasWeb via the intranet will input information directly, removing the need for laborious form filling.

MICAS manager David Blackiston said: "We are the first force to completely train all our divisional support staff in using the new system."

"CasWeb will streamline our response to the thousands of calls we receive from members of the public after a major incident and coupled with national mutual aid telephony it will be a tremendous asset in assisting forces to help each other."

"Further developments I am currently involved in will mean that information on survivors, evacuees and casualties can be input remotely

using mobile data.

"These exciting developments will enable us to deal very effectively with any major incident we are faced with in the future."

New cadet drive

THE latest cadet recruitment drive is under way aimed at building on the good work of the last two years since the scheme was reintroduced.

Since 2002 Essex Police has welcomed 48 recruits into the fold, most of which have become regular officers. A further 12 are now being sought for October, followed by another dozen in early 2005.

As well as learning policing skills, cadets take in wider community work. More information can be found at an open day on June 15 at the HQ sports pavilion or by contacting Pc Simon Knightley on 01245 547259. Alternatively application packs are available on the Essex Police website.

Harwich throws open its doors

TENDRING Division is again putting out the welcome mat to the public, with an open day at Harwich Police Station on Saturday, July 24.

It is part of a year of local events to mark the 400th anniversary of Harwich's charter as a borough by King James 1.

A similar event, combined with a fun day, at Clacton Police Station last summer pulled in more than 10,000 visitors.

The Harwich open day will run from 10am until 4pm. Visitors will be offered a tour of the police station and a fingerprinting session. Officers will be on hand to answer questions.

The rear yard will house an exhibition featuring specialist police services, including marine, dog and road policing units, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and staff from the Essex Air Ambulance.

Entry is free and refreshments provided by Age Concern will be on sale.

Organiser Sgt Peter Wood said: "It will be very much a community affair, rather than a fund-raising event, and we are hoping for a big turnout."

Law letters

Steer a safer route!

I WRITE with reference to Lesley Rosenwold's article in the April issue of *The Law* 'Are we driving officers to crash?'

As Lesley knows, I was also a driving instructor at HQ for some 12 years, both teaching driver training and traffic law, and like the other instructors, was very proud to be part what was said to be one of the best, if not the best, police driving school in the country.

Before becoming an instructor I attended a five-week standard course, two-week refresher course, four-week advanced course and then a six-week instructors' course. I could not even drive a police vehicle until I had completed my five-week standard course.

I entirely agree with Leslie that "shorter courses equal poorer quality". A student does not begin to get to grips with the system of driving until after at least two weeks course work, after that it is practice, practice and more practice with an instructor.

Police drivers are at the forefront of policing and I have heard many comments and seen for myself some of the bad driving by police officers.

I heard only the other day that an officer travelled some distance, about 12 to 15 miles, from one

town to another, albeit at night, in just six minutes and thought this was some achievement. With only a limited amount of training, I wonder what details were missing from his driving, or if he had any driving plans at all.

Colin Day, whom I know well, in his 'right to reply' states that "Essex Police does follow the nationally approved Centrex model of police driver training courses" but this does not make it

right.

I feel sorry for the instructors who give their best, knowing that if they had a little more time with students they could produce better and safer drivers.

It may all come down to cost but is not cost effective when we should be ambassadors for safe driving, and the bad press the police receive on the increase of accidents involving police vehicles is not conducive to public

confidence in our ability to police our roads.

In this day and age, when we keep hearing police officers must be more highly trained as drivers, why is it that police forces restrict their driver training to the mere minimum?

To all the instructors at Essex Police Driving School, I say keep up the good work, we support your aims.

Neil Seymour, Canvey Island

A poignant letter to home

ON the 50th anniversary of D-Day, I sent a story into *The Law* which illustrated some experiences.

As we recognise D-Day once again, I have come across a letter that I wrote to my parents the day after D-Day which I would like to share with you. I was in the Royal Navy, serving aboard Landing Craft Tank 1069.

Dearest Mum, Dad, and Joan
Just arrived back from France, and we are very pleased and proud with what we have done, I am really fine, all of us were lucky. Now to give you as much detail as I am allowed, most of it you will have heard on the wireless.

As you will have already heard the do was postponed for 24 hours

owing to the weather. When we did set out on Monday morning the weather was not too good, the sea was really still choppy, we did not mind but some of the soldiers were a bit green.

About 8 o'clock Tuesday we saw France and the place where we were to land, the RAF and big naval guns had done their job, well the place was flat, and quite a number of fires.

The place we landed at was between Le Havre and Cherbourg, Jerry was as usual up to his tricks and whistled some shells over, and a formation of his fighters tried to dive bomb, but our lads made short work of them. I saw one come down.

Walking along the beach and working, digging etc, were some men in a pea green uniform, yes they were Jerry prisoners.

If you can will you save me the newspapers as I would like to read just how good we really are.

Will see if I can get Joan some souvenirs.

Last night at 9 o'clock half way between England and France, I was on the bridge, and we had the wireless on. We heard the King speak and also the news. It said the fellows we landed were already 10 miles inland and doing really marvellous Mum, so cool, as if for all the world it was a manoeuvre somewhere in England.

Well must close, not cut too much out, so goodbye for now I'll write again as soon as I can.

My fondest love to you all at home.

Jack.

Jack Faulkner, Southend

Do you have a view on a policing issue or maybe a memorable experience to share with colleagues old and new?

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		Total	£38,222.30	£18,001.88	£22,208.48	£17,811.18	£19,814.13	£18,868.97
8.9% APR	£10,000	Monthly	£186.14	£148.44	£148.11	£198.88	£328.87	£307.40
		Total	£19,727.80	£12,882.28	£14,708.37	£11,794.41	£12,883.07	£11,066.34
8.9% APR	£5,000	Monthly	£98.57	£74.72	£78.58	£98.29	£178.94	£183.70
		Total	£8,243.77	£4,278.12	£7,263.08	£5,897.21	£6,477.50	£5,535.11
8.9% APR	£3,000	Monthly	£65.38	£48.00	£78.52	£82.88	£115.48	£96.08
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Praise for promotion promise

MORE officers than ever are seeking promotion and for the first time the pass rate for the Part 2 sergeants' exam in Essex is on a par with the national average.

This success is being partially attributed to the encouragement and support being offered to promotion candidates at the Essex Police Training Centre.

For the those taking the first promotion step, a series of seminars have been held to dispel some of the myths surrounding the process, including include discussions on deployment and specialist postings.

Part 2 candidates have been provided with an eight-week training course, taking students through role-play, their mental approach and a mock exam. Of those who took the latest Part 2 exam 80 per cent passed.

For inspectors taking Part 1 this September, crammer courses have been organised. A list of dates can be found on the intranet.

Responding to the recent Part 1 sergeants' exam, ACC Andy Bliss said: "The exam requires concentrated study and is not easy. My sincere congratulations go out to all those who have successfully passed this exam – it is a significant achievement and I wish each success with the next stage."

Preparing to go live

TRAINING in the new Airwave communication system is now well under way with over 1,000 officers and staff trained and issued with handheld terminals.

Stansted Airport and Chelmsford divisions will be the first divisions to use the equipment operationally live from June 22. Meanwhile FIR operators are receiving tuition in the management of Airwave features from the control room.

Project Manager Insp Keith Beechner said: "Thanks to a rigorous testing regime, detailed preparation and a focused training programme, the introduction of Airwave in Essex Police should be well received by the end users. Already we have witnessed a vast improvement in radio coverage to handheld terminals and a level of clarity never before experienced in police communications. With the added security inherent in Airwave we have the ability to carry out more effective operations."

Anyone with a course date is reminded of the need to visit the Airwave intranet site and complete the computer based training programme.

Recruitment hits a record high

PROVING that a career in the police service remains a real attraction for many people today, the force has reached its highest-ever number of officers.

The statistics, which are welcoming news for residents across Essex, show the force's recruiting figures at a record high, with its strength currently standing at almost 3,200 officers.

To acknowledge the success of the recruitment campaign, 512 Essex Police balloons were released by newly-recruited probationers to represent the number of officers the force has attracted and placed on the county's streets during the last two years.

In addition, 71 officers have joined Essex from other forces during the past 12 months, with some replacing those who have either retired or transferred to other forces, but the figure represents a real increase of nearly 200 police officers during the two-year period.

Assistant Chief Constable Andy Bliss praises the "determined efforts" by the recruiting department to get the force strength to the highest it has ever been.

by Nishan Wijeratne

"With the highest number of officers on our streets for a long time, people in Essex can be assured that the quality of policing they receive will get even better," said Mr Bliss. "Furthermore, there will also be increased high-visibility patrols on our streets as we ensure this county continues to remain one of the safest in England and Wales."

The force has also experienced an increase in police staff, who are also helping to make Essex safer. For example, the increase in police station

front-counter staff ensures the force provides an even better service to members of the public, while 90 police community support officers will add a further police presence on the county's streets. Essex Police now has over 2,000 police staff supporting front-line officers.

Several of the new 512 recruits are following in their parents' footsteps, with Chief Insp Tim Stokes's two children, Carly and Tom, making their way through the training programme.

Chief Insp Stokes said: "I'm really proud of my two kids and I know that they've got what it takes to become a good, solid, honest, hard-working police officer."

Cash helps Jack to walk and talk

A YOUNG cerebral palsy sufferer will soon have a little more independence thanks to a quiz night which raised a massive £1,823.

The event was held by MICAS in aid of Jack Walker, son of index researcher Dave Walker.

The new walker will support the weight of Jack's body without him having to hang onto a frame with his hands. This will enable him to walk and talk at the same time as he relies on

sign language. Jack has had the final fitting and should have the walker this month.

His dad Dave said: "I'd like to pass on my sincere thanks to the whole of MIT from my wife and myself, and Jack of course for your extremely generous contribution towards this, it was very kind of you. To be honest by the end of the evening I was completely overwhelmed by everyone's support."

Firearms introduction was right on target

THE majority of officers who attended a road policing armed response vehicle open day have already applied for firearms appraisal assessment.

Chief Inspector Kevin Bailey gave a very clear view of the role of an authorised firearms officer (AFO) and there was a tactical demonstration on the day.

Evaluation has shown that it was a well-structured day that gave a very clear insight into what the force offered in the way of investigation, welfare and support for AFOs following any incident where a weapon is discharged.

As the day was oversubscribed there will be a further open day at the beginning of September at Wethersfield.

There will also be two days in September for female officers only and numbers will be restricted.

The HQ firearms range was used for this most recent open day, a venue which has undergone extensive refurbishment since it closed in 1998.

Refurbishments

Additional facilities catering for both men and men are now in place and improvements include new flooring, walls, lighting, targetry, bullet trap and an air ventilation system.

It is now light and airy with computerised overhead lighting which can simulate different conditions. Realistic flashing blue lights can be added and there are plans to install sodium lighting to provide street lamp conditions.

The bullet trap is constructed of rubber granules, which are periodically taken out so that the lead can be removed, making it quieter and much cleaner as any bullets decelerate quickly and rapidly drop down. There is also a secure purpose-built armoury, secure purpose-built workshop, instructors' office and classroom.

Female officers now have their own changing room, fully equipped with seating and showers.

Issuing weapons has also been made more functional with a secure hatch and inner hatch negating officers having to enter the 'clean areas' inside the building.

Armourer John Taylor said: "We have to thank Richard Booth and his team from Property Services who have been instrumental in turning the accommodation into an operationally viable area, as well as a more comfortable and secure environment."



● Pc Paul Hunter tests his shooting skills in the newly refurbished range.

'Cocaine cost me my children'

Report by Ben Pennington

Reformed addict backs police and Crimestoppers in crack campaign



a dozen times in ten years, and her personal relationships crumbled.

"My family relationships broke down," she says. "Crack is so powerful and makes you so desperate. I lost my children. My dad was dying and I couldn't care less. "When you're in a relationship with someone you think the world of them, but you can't stop hurting those around you."

By 2000, at the age of 30, Laura had five children taken into care and had become a totally different person.

"The mental effects do your head in," she said. "If you look at it logically you tell yourself to get over it but it's not that easy."

"I'm not a violent person but I found that along with the great feeling, I became paranoid and violent towards people."

Facing prison again in 2001, Laura was offered the lifeline of a drug treatment and testing order. An order requires a user to see probation and counselling workers most days of the week, and to be tested for drugs on a regular basis.

Within five months Laura had kicked heroin. However, it took another three months to shake off crack.

"There were so many low points," she said. "Every time you think you've hit rock bottom, you find another rock bottom."

"The last two years of using were the worst. I woke up many days and didn't want to carry on. You're not living, you just exist. I'd rather not have been here; I was so desperate and depressed, sick with myself. The guilt of what you've done is massive."

Very supportive

Laura is now clean, has a two-year-old child and is working. Her partner has been clean for over a year.

She said: "I've still got lots of bridges to build with family. I've got sisters, and things are better than they were. They were very supportive and I've got a good network of friends. Things are great now."

But Laura will never forget how low her life had sunk. She hopes now to become involved in counselling work for others trying to kick drugs, and remains fiercely committed to spreading the word of how crack wrecks lives.

"Crack's not a smart idea. To anyone thinking of using it, I'd say they were making a huge mistake that will change their lives completely," says Laura.

"No matter who you are, how much money or privileges you have, this drug can affect anyone."

are a prime target for dealers to expand.

"The Crack Under Pressure campaign highlights the problems that we will all suffer if crack use in Essex is not tackled head-on."

Cocaine was widely used in the UK during the 1800s, and could be bought at Harrods until 1916. It was a common ingredient in tonics, toothache cures and medicines, as well as Coca-Cola in its first incarnation.

However, in the latter half of the 20th century, thrill seekers were looking for a bigger rush than snorting cocaine could give them, and developed a smokeable form – crack cocaine.

Feeling confident

Crack was formed by heating a solution of baking soda and cocaine, and has the appearance of raisin-sized lumps of rock salt. Each rock costs between £10 and £20, and leaves the user feeling confident and exhilarated.

It was this feeling which Laura got hooked on at the age of 23. At that time, Laura had only ever tried softer drugs as a teenager and was, in her own words, a "very normal mum" to two kids.

"At that point I split up with my partner of eight years," said Laura. "He was drinking and using speed, and we separated over it."

"I bumped into an old friend of the family who was using heroin and crack. The word 'heroin' just horrified me, but he persuaded me that it was OK to use drugs just at the weekend."

But the drugs quickly took hold, and once inside the circle of users and dealers, Laura found it impossible to stop the downward slide.

"Crack gave such an intense feeling, and you naturally want more. Using drugs every weekend became using every other day, then every day. After a couple of months I woke up one morning and realised I was addicted."

Within four months, Laura was shoplifting and committing fraud to feed her £300-a-day habit. Her life of crime would show her the inside of a prison cell half

"I HAD lost my children. My dad was dying and I couldn't care less."

After ten years of using crack cocaine, Laura had sunk as low as it was possible to go. Stealing and fencing to feed her £300-a-day habit, Laura was oblivious to both the death of her father and the fact that social services had taken her children from her.

Laura's name is made up. Laura's story is not.

On May 26, Essex Police and Crimestoppers joined forces to launch *Crack Under Pressure*.

The campaign, known inside the force as Operation Orlando, is a summer-long initiative aimed at raising awareness of crack cocaine and targeting those who deal in the drug. It is stories like Laura's that have prompted the offensive.

DEALING and use of crack cocaine has multiplied rapidly across Britain in the last ten years. From 316 seizures totalling 0.6kg in 1990, seizures were up to 3,000 by the turn of the millennium, with more than 25 kg of the drug recovered.

It is estimated that London uses 55 per cent of the total supply, with the West Midlands close behind.

However, with these markets reaching saturation point, dealers are attempting to make inroads into counties such as Essex.

Launching *Crack Under Pressure* in Chelmsford, ACC (Crime) Liam Briginshaw said: "With our close proximity to London and easy access routes we

Sarah doesn't smoke crack. Her boyfriend did.

We're putting the pressure on crack cocaine in Essex

CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

tell us what you know not who you are

● 'Laura' tells of her experiences as a crack addict and how she turned her life around.

Have-a-go heroes scoop top awards

THE brave actions of an RAF pilot and bar worker have been recognised with silver medals at a prestigious police awards ceremony.

The Provincial Police Awards are designed to acknowledge outstanding acts of bravery or meritorious devotion to civic duty carried out in support of the police.

Pilot Officer Richard Kinniburgh won his medal after going to the aid of a woman being subjected to a serious sex attack in Southend. The woman had tried several times during her half hour ordeal to summon help, but was continually overpowered.

When PO Kinniburgh heard her screams, he confronted the attacker and tried to detail him. Although the suspect initially managed to flee, the woman was undoubtedly saved from a far more life-threatening assault and PO

Kinniburgh's quick and effective support helped to preserve the scene and lead to an arrest within an hour. The suspect pleaded guilty and received two ten-year prison sentences.

Tackling and disarming an armed robber won Lauren Smajlaj his silver medal. A man had broken in to Mr Smajlaj's workplace by forcing the door with a crowbar. Wearing a balaclava and carrying a sawn-off shotgun and flick knife, he threatened two women who were cashing up, forcing them to fill a bag with nearly £25,000.

As he tried to escape, Mr Smajlaj challenged the thief. During a struggle Mr Smajlaj received blows to his head and body but succeeded in disarming the robber and restraining him until assistance arrived.

On your bike for Joshua

A STANSTED officer is organising a bike ride to raise funds for his young son who suffers from a genetic disorder causing benign tumours to form in various organs of his body.

Sgt Andy Bartlett's son Joshua has suffered from Tuberous Sclerosis since he was a few months old, and is prone to having nearly 20 seizures a day.

Now two and a half, he has suffered permanent eyesight damage because

of drugs prescribed to control seizures.

Andy has organised a coast to coast cycle ride, sponsored by Willhire, starting at Tynemouth on the North Sea and finishing at Whitehaven on the Irish Sea coast. He hopes to raise about £1500 from the event, which will take place between July 12 and 14. If anyone wishes to make independent donations contact Pc Darren Bruce on ext 22320.

Rhyming crime away



● Health Secretary Dr John Reid accepts a copy of Rhyme Against Crime from Harwich Community Policing Team.

HARWICH officers were rubbing shoulders with the nation's leaders recently following the publication of the ninth annual Rhyme Against Crime scheme.

The crime reduction initiative, which is run in all seven Harwich primary schools, encourages crime awareness in children through a poetry writing competition on a theme which is then published in a book.

This year's theme was shop theft, with contributions printed into a book for free by Autoprint of Parkeston.

Forewords for previous editions have been supplied by the Prime Minister and Home Secretary. This year's was written by Poet Laureate Andrew Motion.

Officers from Harwich community policing team were invited by local MP Ivan Henderson to Parliament, where they presented a copy to Health Secretary Dr John Reid. The awards for winners in May were attended by Chief Constable David Stevens and outgoing High Sheriff, Mark Thomasin-Foster.

Honours for skill and grit

SKILL, investigative ability, sensitivity and commitment were recognised last month by the Chief Constable when he presented officers with certificates of commendation.

Dc Danny Walker, Grays, and Pc Jonathon Drewry, Tilbury were commended for the sensitive way they performed the role of family liaison officers after the murder of a 23-year-old man in January 2002.

South Ockendon officers, Ds Dave Hudson and Dc Clive Day attended the murder scene, preserving evidence as well as being involved with arrests, interviews and compiling a very high-quality evidence file.

Dan Mead, TSU was commended for the part he played in Operation Mayfly, the investigation of offences of rape, indecent assault and theft committed against six teenage girls on March 22, 2002.

Twelve suspects were identified and arrested, six of whom were charged. The enquiry and subsequent case preparations were complex in nature, with extensive work being done on CCTV evidence and many witnesses being traced and interviewed, 74 being summonsed for trial.

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Tribute to officers in blaze bravery

A PAIR of Southend constables have been praised for their selfless courage after helping to save residents from a blazing block of flats.

Pc Jemma White and Pc Darryl Flint were on routine patrol in the early hours of the morning when they were flagged down by a member of the public who alerted them to the blaze.

Seeing thick smoke coming out of the windows of a third floor flat, the two officers got into the building and spoke to an elderly woman who was in premises next door to the fire, who told them she thought a young man was possibly in the flat.

Pc White advised her to return to her house and shut the door while Pc Flint attempted to break down the door. The door finally gave in, but thick black smoke emanated from the flat causing both officers breathing difficulties.

They retreated to the first-floor landing

and whilst Pc White evacuated the floor Pc Flint took a fleece and went back upstairs to lead the elderly woman and her husband out to safety. The fire brigade arrived and fire crews wearing breathing apparatus found a man in the flat. Sadly he had died as a result of the smoke fumes.

Pc White, 32, an officer for five years said: "I knew we had to go in, but I had experienced a fire when I was 16 and was conscious of how dangerous it could be.

"The thick, choking smoke and the fact that we did not know the layout of the flat made it too risky for us to go in. You react because you don't have a chance to think about it at the time."

Pc Flint, 37, was taken to hospital for a check-up for smoke inhalation but later released.

Chief Insp Tony Payne said: "The two officers acted in the best traditions of Essex Police and undoubtedly their actions contributed to the saving of at least two lives."

Put your back into workplace health

MUSCULOSKELETAL Disorders (MSD) – do you want to become a statistic?

National Statistics revealed that 1.1 million people suffer from MSD which they believe were aggravated or caused by work. 43 per cent related to back problems and 40 per cent to upper limb or neck problems and occupations involving typing and repetitive tasks carry a high

Health check

incidence. So how can you prevent work-related MSD developing or being made worse?

Some important factors are understanding the hazards and risks associated with using Display Screen

Equipment both in work and home and how to avoid or minimise the risk.

●What is the best posture for you at a computer?

●Do you have the right equipment for best posture e.g. chair?

●What about regular screen/mobility breaks?

See the Occupational Health website for more details.



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Names in the news

HARLOW inspector **Andy Loveridge** has retired to pastures new after topping the 30-year mark.

Andy, 49, who served the majority of his time with Chelmsford and Harlow, spent eight years as a schools liaison officer.

"I've always been committed to the community side of policing," said Andy. "I'll miss that a lot."

Andy left the force at the end of May and is now self-employed, carrying out alcohol awareness training with people convicted of drink-driving.

Ds **Derek Nickol** has joined the 30+ scheme having retired on May 20 after 30 years and a day. He will continue to serve at Chelmsford Police Station.

Ds **Mick France** will also join the 30+ scheme and remain in Braintree's Divisional Intelligence Unit as acting detective inspector, following his retirement on May 24.

Obituaries

RONALD Pope, a former constable, has died aged 75.

Mr Pope, from Wisbech in Cambridgeshire, joined Essex Police in 1949 serving at Harwich, Braintree, Saffron Walden and Clacton. He retired in 1974 and died on May 7.

Julian Dawson, a former sergeant from Maldon, has died aged 58.

Mr Dawson served with Essex Police from 1965 to 1995 at Maldon, Clacton, Chelmsford, Witham, Kelvedon and Feering. He died on May 25.

Chris Sigournay has died aged 56.

Mr Sigournay joined in 1984 and served as a communications officer and in the PNC bureau before retiring on medical grounds in March this year.

Former constable Pc **Chris Hovells** wants to announce through the pages of *The Law* the sudden death of his wife Jean on May 9. He has asked that this be done for the information of old colleagues and friends.

Brenda Crawshaw killed in car crash as she leaves for holiday

A very difficult act to follow

TRIBUTES have been pouring in for Brenda Crawshaw, from Colchester's Criminal Justice Unit, who was tragically killed in a car crash as she and her husband prepared to jet off on holiday.

Brenda and Ralph Crawshaw (former chief superintendent) were heading for Stansted Airport on May 22 to fly to Sicily, when their taxi was involved in a four-car crash on the

A120 at Stebbing.

Ralph was discharged from hospital after receiving treatment for chest injuries, but Brenda died later the same day.

Brenda had worked for Essex Police for nearly 21 years. She married Ralph on 1995 and had two grown-up children, Tim and Louise, and three grandchildren.

Ralph said: "No words can express our grief and loss. She loved her work and she enjoyed the company of her work friends and colleagues."

Brenda also had a love for

the outdoors and nature. Her many hobbies included hiking, going to classical and jazz concerts, gardening and interior design.

Head of the Criminal Justice Unit for Essex Police Supt Andy Adams said: "Brenda was a committed and able member of the team at Colchester who will be remembered with affection by colleagues, former colleagues and friends within the Criminal Justice Department and throughout the service. Her skills and ability in her chosen field mean that she will be a very difficult act to follow."



● Brenda Crawshaw.

Rumblings among the retired

THERE was considerable disquiet among the few members who attended the Chelmsford branch of NARPO's AGM, concerning the lack of support for the branch.

Events have had to be cancelled because we can't afford to book a coach without a full complement of passengers. We have heavily subsidised previous trips but cannot continue to throw good money after bad. Having said that we are grateful to those members and their friends who elected to take part in various outings.

Colchester and Southend

branches do well – why can't we?

It is probably, at least in part, due to the geographical spread of the branch. Apart from Chelmsford and Braintree, we take a great swathe of the county from Harlow to Grays and we appreciate that members from those areas do not always find it easy to get to HQ for a function. Pick-up points for outings are limited, but we can surely sort something out if people show an interest.

We need more members, some already retired, who haven't yet joined us. We need more officers who are approaching retirement

to at least think about NARPO, and we need to keep up the interest of our existing members. We need new ideas – perhaps functions at venues other than HQ – and we welcome any suggestions from existing or potential members.

The NARPO magazine in itself is worth the small membership fee. There are regular updates on insurance, pension and welfare matters, the small-ads are crammed with details of holiday villas all over the world, and in the last issue there was the best offer I've ever seen on annual travel insurance. There's even a

prize crossword (which I have spent the last 15 years doing – I'm still waiting for a cheque).

The Hon Sec Tony Cooper will be at the pensioners' garden party on July 9 looking out for potential members.

If becoming a NARPO member interests you, ring Tony on 01376 329563 for an application form. If you have any ideas for functions or outings, pass them on to Tony, or to me on 01376 323609 and we will put them to the rest of the committee.

Let's try to get this branch back on its feet!

Tom Morrison, Braintree

Market Place

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● Advertisers should be aware that *The Law* is now published on the internet and any telephone numbers given will be in the public domain.

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LA MANGA. 2 bedroom fully furnished apartment. Beaches, swimming pool, restaurants, all close by. Sleeps 4. Prices from £160 to £340pw. Contact Lucy on 07900 505606 or lucykeightley@hotmail.com

LUXURY Florida vacation villa for rent. Fully equipped, 4 bed, 3 bath, 2 master suites. Own south facing pool and jacuzzi. Within 10 mins of Disney. www.the-haven-at-westbury.co.uk or Tony Adams on 07776 162868. Discounts to police personnel.

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Romford reunion

A REUNION luncheon for the former Romford Division is again being held at the end of the year.

The event will take place in the sports club bar at HQ on Saturday, November 27 at 1pm. There will be a fork buffet with wine and/or orange juice included in the price of £12. Partners are also invited. The bar will open at 11.30am.

Cheques made payable to S.P. Mather (Lunch account) should be sent to Stu Mather, Copper Leaves, 25 Queens Avenue, Pooles Lane, Hullbridge SS5 6PS. Tel: 01702 231383.

Met too mighty

THE men's football team faced the Metropolitan Police in May in the South Midlands cup final, losing 4-3 in a tense thriller staged at Colchester United's ground.

The venue was a late choice, arranged at very short notice by Chief Supt Dave Murthwaite after the team's usual ground was flooded.

With six regulars missing through injury or holiday the match would always be an uphill struggle, compounded when MPS took the lead.

A game of parry and attack followed, with Essex briefly holding a 3-2 lead - with goals from Nicky Simpson and Craig Bolton - before a freak deflection beat keeper Paul Nicholls, who had an otherwise excellent game.

In the dying minutes a dubious refereeing decision saw a Paul Keaney tackle punished with a penalty, and MPS took their chance to run out 4-3 winners.

Lottery wins

WINNER of the April lottery was Pc Graham Anslow, EPTC scooping £1,500. Second prize of £750 went to Pc Sean Murphy, Basildon with £375 going to Mary Thomson, Harlow and £200 to Pc Paul Watson, Shoeburyness.

Consolation prizes of £50 were awarded to: Insp Dennis Bessent, FIR; Pc Harry Sexton, MSD; Dc Michael Puttick, Braintree; Pc Graham Banks, Crime; J.R. Flory, retired; Pc Emma Philips, Braintree; R. Rowlingson, retired; Dc Gary Washbrook, Crime; Judith Bailey, Southend and Stephen Mundy, FIR.

Winner of May £1,500 first prize was Pc Steven Lee, Harlow. £750 went to Pc David Graham, Leigh, £375 to Pc Ian Banks, Harlow and £200 Pc Ian James, Tendring.

Consolation prizes of £50 were awarded to Dc Samantha Hutchinson, Crime; W.H. Cobbold, retired; DCI Grahame Bird, Braintree; Pc Cally Beale, Basildon; Pc Damon Bainbridge, Basildon; Lydia Odell, Chelmsford; Pc Michele MSD Dogs; Pc Colin Shead, Halstead; Pc Louise Edwards, Harlow and R.W. Booth, retired.

Shape up

CLUB Woodham in South Woodham Ferrers is offering concessional rates for police officers and police staff.

This consists of a half-price joining fee of £50 and discounted monthly membership rates of £38.25 (Exec Gold), £29.75 (Daytime Gold), and £25 (Off-peak Gold).

Membership also allows limited use of sister club, Club Kingswood in Basildon.

For more details contact Ross at Club Woodham on 01245 329882.

Bowlers lead in valley victory

THE beautiful Carmarthen countryside was the venue for the Essex Police cricket team's first round PSUK tie against the much fancied Dyfed Powys.

Following defeats in the semi and quarter-finals over the past two seasons, Essex were keen to progress in the final stages once again.

Skipper Ady Garnham won the toss and elected to bat on what appeared to be a flat hard wicket. With small boundaries a score of around 250 appeared to a competitive target.

Essex began where they left off last season with openers Laurie Austin and Jon Butcher getting the side off to

a spectacular start. Butcher made a magnificent 103 and Austin 65 as they put on 156 for the first wicket in only 25 overs. Both players were then dismissed as Essex suffered a middle and lower order collapse. Only Kevin Cooper with 19 offered any real resistance as Essex were dismissed for 240.

The Dyfed Powys innings began in explosive fashion with their opening batsman putting on 61 for the first wicket in only 12 overs. Essex were clearly struggling in the hot conditions on a wicket that offered little for the quicker bowlers. The introduction of veteran off spinner Phil Mellon into the attack proved to be an important decision. He, along with the other slow bowlers, slowed the scoring rate down as Essex began to claw themselves back into the game. However, with

just over 100 needed off the final 20 overs and with wickets in hand, the hosts were still strong favourites to progress.

The decisive point in the inning came with the reintroduction of the pace bowlers.

Garnham dismissed the free scoring G. Williams for 65 and Cole for 38 as he claimed 2-47 and then Vince Bird finally delivered with the ball with a match-winning spell of 4-38 from 8 overs - three of his wickets coming in the 43rd over as the hosts fell 12 runs short.

This victory was achieved through a superb fielding performance and a never say die attitude from the Essex players who have been rewarded with another tough fixture at home to Leicestershire in the 2nd round.

Hockey first for county

HOCKEY history was made when Essex county claimed the England Hockey Association championships for the first time, and an Essex detective was among the squad that secured the win (also a first).

It is the third season that Dc Paul Maleary from Stanway MIT has been assistant coach and one of the goalkeepers for the county side.

The team took on Sussex, Beds, Channel Isles and Kent to make it through to the final matches to be held on home turf.

The semi-final was against Lancashire, a team fielding England internationals. Despite that Essex beat them 7-0.

The final was against a strong Warwickshire side. Essex took control but poor finishing coupled with strong Warwickshire goalkeeping meant Essex had to work hard for victory. Essex were awarded two penalty flicks, one which was missed and one saved, but in a short corner routine 18 minutes from time Amrit Singh, of Old Loughtonians, flicked the ball high into the net.

Essex held on, fighting to the very end and Dc Maleary is now the proud owner of an England medal with county colours.

He now takes on the role of head coach while he decides whether to retire from patrolling between the posts in pads and kickers.

Walk keeps ambulance airborne



SORE feet and blisters there may be, but Essex Air Ambulance couldn't be happier, as a special walk has reaped them in the region of £2,000.

They were the nominated beneficiaries of this year's Special Constabulary trek of the Essex Way.

The event also included the Admiral McHardy circular walk in Chelmsford where other staff and friends joined the main group.

Deputy Commandant George Cook is pleased with the amount of sponsorship raised and passed his

thanks to everyone who helped make the event a success.

Pictured left to right are: Pat Snape, Howard Rayner, Tony Krinks, Jim Noakes, Tom Rodgers, Jeremy Spake, Deputy Commandant George Cook, Geoff Markham and Alan Hill.

All set for summer songs

REHEARSALS are well under way for the musical society's summer show which is to take place in the Assembly Hall, HQ at 7.30pm from July 29 to 31 inclusive.

Some of the proceeds will go to local charities and the society is always grateful for the generous support shown at its summer shows

Last year saw £500 donated to the Chelmsford Stroke Exercise Group, £150 to the Essex Police Romania Appeal, £500 donated to the Chelmsford branch of BLISS (a charity which deals with the care of babies born prematurely) and £200 to the East London Cabbies Outing for Handicapped Children. This annual outing is escorted by the Blue Knights Police Motor Cycle Club.

The title for this year's show is *Our Favourite Things*. All members were asked to submit their favourite solo and chorus numbers and from this initial selection of songs, the final programme was selected. As so many people's ideas have gone towards the planning of this programme, the society is particularly pleased with the range and variety of material to be included. As ever, there is something for everyone with musical numbers from a wide variety of show-stoppers

to popular tunes including a Rat Pack medley together with numbers from Paul Simon and Simon and Garfunkel. A huge cross-section of shows will be covered with numbers included from *Anything Goes*, *Evita*, *Chess*, *Sound of Music*, *My Fair Lady*, *Oklahoma* and *Les Miserables* together with songs from *Sister Act* and the *Blues Brothers*.

Those who have been kind enough to support the society in the past will know that the summer show is a unique event. It's a very relaxed evening with the audience seated around tables and invited to bring drinks along. Nibbles are provided and the audience are encouraged to join in. As well as the musical numbers there will be some comedy routines, and to guide you through the evening's entertainment, our MC Peter Simpson will be there to delight and entertain you.

Tickets are £6 each and are available from Justina Bécousse on ext 51037 or Jenny Hillyard on ext 50335. The society was delighted with the support last year which beat the number of tickets sold for the previous few years and is really hoping you will again offer your generous support and help them beat last year's ticket sales.

Something for everyone

WHATEVER you like to do in your spare time the Essex Police Social Club is sure to have a trip which is right up your street.

On July 10 a coach will leave HQ at 8am for a visit to the Hampton Court Flower Show. Adult tickets are £28. Children under 16 go for £12.

The Houses of Parliament and the London Eye are the destinations for September 4. Tickets, which include coach trip and a blue badge guide of the House of Parliament, cost £15. A trip on the London Eye is an optional extra in the afternoon.

A day trip to Calais and Cite Europe is scheduled for November 6. Cost is £18 for members and £20 for non-members.

For other trips see the EPSA website or contact Shirley Turner by email or fax (01245 452157).

That's fighting talk

AN illustrated talk on the battle of Rorke's Drift organised by Harlow MIT investigating officer Roy Tyzack has raised £900 for Essex Air Ambulance.

The talk, delivered by Roy Gaskie, former captain in the South African Army, was followed by a raffle and auction of Rorke's Drift wine.

Captain Gaskie was presented with a limited edition print of a portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother by Penelope Tyzack, to take back to the battle scene where he now works.

Sport
and LeisureEuro
collapse

BEATING 31 other forces in a national police tournament led to an invitation for the Essex Police five-a-side team to play in Poland.

During the three-day International Police Association Tournament in Katowice, which is held every two years in a 'Champions League' format, Essex beat Poland and Germany in the first round but lost to Romania, Russia and Italy following a series of injuries.

The team did walk away with one award after Maldon's Mark Gridley won the golden boot.

The force will now play in the national trade competition in November to be broadcast by Sky Sports.

Caught out
by Norfolk

IN the regional PSUK angling competition the Essex 'A' team finished runners-up to Norfolk.

In the individual stakes Bob Sandford, Southend, took 1st place, with Clive Skingley coming in 2nd and Phil Baxter 3rd. Phil also came first in the retired officer category). Retired Dave Clark was among the 'A' team members.

In the Croker Cup beach angling competition Southend took the most points. Rayleigh were 2nd, Chelmsford 3rd, Braintree 4th, Thurrock 5th.

Ladies net
national win

THERE was no match for the Essex ladies in the PSUK football tournament hosted by Greater Manchester.

Six teams entered and the first and most dreaded match was against the Mets. But they proved no competition losing 4-1, and Essex had a confidence boost which saw them secure three more victories and a draw.

Their sheer determination to win paid off and an added bonus was when referees awarded the player of the tournament trophy to Essex player Sarah Bamfield, from Clacton.

You win one, you lose one

AFTER the disappointment of having the first ladies cricket league fixture rained off, the season finally got off to a start when the Police played Harwich at the Royal Grammer School, Colchester.

Police lost the toss but were put into bat first in warm sunshine and made a total of 111 for the loss of 6 wickets in their allotted 20 overs.

The main contributors with the bat were Sarah Rose (27 rtd) and Jackie Crombie (28 rtd). Kate Mead added 14 runs.

Without doubt, the best of the Harwich bowlers was Kat Kenn who finished with figures of 4 overs, 0 maidens, 24 runs, 4 wickets. Captain Sophie Southgate (4-0-13-1) and Sarah Montague (3-0-14-1) were the

other wicket takers.

Chasing a total of 112 to win in fading light, Harwich opening pair Sophie Southgate and Amy Cook put on 52 before they had to retire. However, they were the only Harwich batters to reach double figures. When all the other wickets had fallen, both had the opportunity to add to their earlier score.

Southgate, who had retired on 27, was unable to do so, being run out by Police wicket keeper Mead trying for a suicidal single.

Cook, however, came back in on Southgate's demise and was able to add another 5 runs to her earlier 25, to finish on 30 not out. Min Patel was the most economical of the Police bowlers with figures of 4 overs, 2 maidens, 5 runs but no wickets. Nikki

Gander (4-1-7-2) took 2 Harwich wickets (Roland and Montague). Jackie Crombie (3-0-17-1) and Sue Bakewell (4-0-30-1) were the other wicket takers.

A total of three Harwich players perished through run out trying, in vain as it turned, out to surpass the Police total.

Final score Police 111 for 6 wickets beat Harwich 96 for 7 wickets.

With only nine players against Maldon Ladies CC, the Police were put into bat first. Sarah Rose, who opened the batting with Jackie Crombie, saw wickets falling relatively cheaply around her but stuck it out herself until the 12th over before being run out on 23.

Natalie MacKintosh, batting at

number 6, hit 4s in her quick fire 23 before being bowled by Megan Creasey (4-0-12-1). As the overs ran out, Carole Smith (3 not out) and Alex Jordanova (7 not out) added a valuable 10 runs to see Police to a total of 87 for 7. Holly Scrivener had the best bowling figures for Maldon with 4 overs, 3 wickets for 16 runs.

In reply, Maldon opener Audrey Mitchell was dismissed for 1 run but her opening partner Ruth Smith hit three 4s in her 27 retired. Holly Scrivener (15 not out) and Shirley Smith (11 not out) saw Maldon home to a seven wicket victory in the 18th over. Michelle Mauger was the most economical Police bowler (4 overs, 2 wickets for 17 runs).

Final score Police (87 for 7) lost to Maldon (88 for 3) by 7 wickets.



● On the home straight, Sgt Graham Perks prepares to take first place.

IT may have been Spring but anyone attending this year's off-road triathlon in Basildon would have been forgiven for thinking they were really at the traditional New Year mud race in Maldon.

Weeks of wet weather had made the hilly Gloucester Park more like a bog, but spirits were not dampened and almost a hundred triathletes gave up a Sunday morning lie-in to provide a bit of colour to a very grey day.

The event, sponsored by Cycles UK, doubles as the Croker Cup competition. First home for the police was Graham

Perks from Harlow in 54 minutes and 20 seconds. This was despite his bike gears surrendering to the mud on the first lap leaving Graham to run the remaining two laps with his not so trusty steed by his side. Braintree's Tony Benjamin came in just 21 seconds later.

The veterans' competition also went to Harlow Division with Mark Jones romping home just over the hour, but first home for the women was Chelmsford's Diane Frew in 01:24:16

As is tradition chief officers also turned out for the event, this year taking on their staff officers. Youth won

A trying
triumph

● After the toughest bike course to date Deputy Chief Constable Charles Clark (right) and Pc Dave Jones still manage a smile.

the day over rank with Sgt Paddy O'Toole, Pc Dave Jones and Pc Mark Schofield finishing just over three minutes ahead of Chief Constable David Stevens, Deputy Chief Constable Charles Clark and Assistant Chief Constable Andy Bliss. Mr Stevens then presented the awards.

The race will return bigger and better, but hopefully drier, in 2005.

If you are interested in taking part in triathlon contact Sgt Peter Bryan at Laindon Road Policing Unit, or Insp Mark Harman at Bocking Road Policing Unit.

