



## British Masters on the Beeb October 2019-TONY BOWMAN

**Evan Davies**, presenter of PM on radio 4 interviewed **Tony Bowman** live by telephone on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. During this week Tony also received other extensive media coverage including an appear on BBC' Have I Got News for You. BMAF treasurer David Oxland along with many others found the interview a fascination insight into the general life of a Masters sporting icon including his regimental approach to diet and recreation. David therefore has transcribed the whole interview more or less verbatim as follows:-

**Evan**-introduction: "Now in the quagmire of Brexit-related stories in the paper today, a man from Leeds has held onto his record as the fastest 84 year old sprinter in the world despite two heart attacks. Tony Bowman (recently) represented Team GB at the European Masters in Italy. He won three medals in the 80-84 category, Gold in the hurdles, Silver in the Relay and Bronze in the Decathlon. And he's on the phone to us right now."

**Evan** "Well done Tony"



**Tony**

"Thank you"

**Evan** "How fast can you run? I mean describe to us what an 80-84 race looks like."

**Tony** "100 metres: I am running-let me think- about 15.8 seconds."

**Evan** "15.8-that's pretty good isn't it? Pretty good."

**Tony** "Not bad. Yes-when I was 80, I won the World 100 metres in Perth. It was the World Championships in Perth, Australia. I ran 14.85 which was just outside the World Record."

**Evan** (laughs) "Incredible! That is fast. So -come on-. What's the secret? What have you done to make yourself so fit at your age?"

**Tony** "Welcome to my world! I mean the world that I live in is absolutely wonderful. I am such a fortunate guy". The secret? It's very difficult to put my finger on the secret. Obviously, I've grown up with the right genes."

**Evan** "Were you fast as a fifty year old? Or as a 20 year old?"

**Tony** “Yes I was. I was pretty fast. When I was sixteen, I came second in the All England Schools Athletics Championships over the hurdles.

**Evan** “So you are fast. Just tell us something about your lifestyle. I presume you don’t smoke?”

**Tony** “No I don’t smoke, and I have drastically cut down my alcohol intake to one glass of wine every other evening because there was an article by a scientist saying that drinking could be a cause of dementia. Of course, when you are in your 80s you are pretty close to catching dementia I have cut down on my alcohol and also on my sweet and sugar intake and chocolate. I only have that at weekends now, I have cut down about 50% on my meat intake and I eat more fish these days.”

**Evan** “You keep yourself fit. They do say the best way to keep yourself mentally active is to keep yourself physically fit because your brain is an organ in your body and is as affected by physical fitness as any other organs in the body.”

**Tony** “That is right-yeah. The other things I do to keep my brain active: I do three cross word puzzles a week and I do quite a lot of dancing as well.”

**Evan** “You dance?”

**Tony** “I do ballroom, salsa, cha cha cha, jive, Argentinian Tango. I do that in front of a 17-piece band in Saltair every Monday night and they are playing Duke Ellington and Count Basie type of music which I absolutely love, and I can dance to it. I am very fortunate in that respect as well.”

**Evan** “You are leading a very fit life obviously. We will never know whether that’s the cause or the effect of being fit. But that’s your-what are your future ambitions? How long do you keep those international athletic events going?”

**Tony** “ I am looking forward to being 85 which is next September and in the middle of that month will be the British Masters Decathlon championships where I am hoping to create an 85 year old record, that is my main aim but first I am going to Braga in Portugal in March for the European Indoors championships and then hopefully I am going to Toronto in August for the World outdoor championships unfortunately just before I am 85. So, I will still be in the 80 year old category. When I am 85 I am hoping to break-let’s see-twelve to fourteen British records from 60m to 400m on the track with Pentathlon, Heptathlon and Decathlon.

**Evan** “Well that’s a challenge to other octogenarians to get training and make it harder for you! Tony-very good luck. Thanks so much for joining us”.