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| **Kent County Athletic Association** | |
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**Secretary’s Annual Report 2017-2018**

**(including Sub-Committee Reports)**

As you will probably be aware, this is my final Annual Report as Secretary of KCAA. Yes, it’s time to go!

So what has occurred in the past eight years or so? I have to state that the Sub-Committees are so well managed, and almost autonomous, that the Executive Committee has a reasonably straightforward role in the organisation of athletics in the County, although of course all the members of the Executive (except the Secretary who probably has the easiest job of all) are heavily involved in either the aforementioned Sub-Committees or in events themselves. It is this involvement with the grass-roots of the sport which ensures that the County provides good competition for athletes of all ages in all disciplines throughout the year. It is the stability of the members of the Executive and the Sub-Committees that provides the consistency of competition, and great thanks should be recorded to everyone who volunteers for and at County events.

Perhaps the biggest change in recent years was the review of the Constitution which brought KCAA up-to-date - and, it has to be said, with virtually no screaming and shouting or comments of “we’ve always done it this way”. As a result, communication and liaison to, from and between clubs seems to be fairly efficient, although no doubt it can be improved still further with the more effective use of modern technology.

As in previous years, we record our appreciation of the contributions of the KCAA Officers (the Chairman and the Treasurer), the Executive and all members of the Sub-Committees towards athletics in Kent. On a personal note, thank you also to all the clubs, athletes, officials, supporters and volunteers who do so much to maintain the current high levels of competition throughout Kent and have been so supportive of KCAA throughout my time with the County.

I wish you all well. .

**Alan J G Bennett**

**Hon Secretary**

**Sportshall Report**

The 2017/2018 Sportshall season was another successful one culminating with our U15 girls qualifying for the UK final in Manchester where they won the bronze team medal - a great achievement out of 11 counties & regions from all over the UK. The team had two substitutes as two of the original team dropped out. The number of entrants overall for the season was up on previous years.

At our committee meeting it was decided to change the format of Sportshall to be more in line with other counties, making it a league for the U13s/U15s with scoring similar to the Cross-Country league with 3 to score for a team. In the U11s there is an increase of 2 more events which the team would have to do in the regional final so these were included in the current timetable. A decision was made to cut out the U17 age group, apart from the County Finals, but asking these athletes to consider coming along and help officiate with the possibility they may become officials in the future. The other change was the venues, choosing those where track and field could be run together to try and cut down the length of the competition. We also thought that cutting out the most expensive venues in the past would reduce overall costs. Hence Ashford and Tunbridge Wells have been chosen as the venues. We hope to be able to store equipment at the Stour Centre, Ashford, which will cut down the transportation and loading/unloading issues for Gary Capon, who has valiantly done this for the last few years, even when not well. At Tunbridge Wells, Chris Hogwood is arranging to get the equipment from the Tunbridge Wells sports hub. A request is to be put on the entry forms for all teams to provide at least two officials and helpers at the meeting.

Our recent first meeting in October at Tunbridge Wells using the new format went well and numbers of the U13s and U15s were up on last year. We had lots of helpers come forward which enabled us to keep to time for the meeting.

**Janet Duffin**

**Track & Field Report**

I am going to start this report with the Obituary for Wendy Daniel which I wrote for the KCAA website.

“Wendy Daniel has had a long dedication to athletics and for many years was the Administrator of the National Junior League but as a member of Blackheath & Bromley we in KCAA were fortunate that, when she stood down from the national appointment, she joined our T&F committee as Secretary & also as KYAL Administrator. With a small working group, she set about modernising the league with her focus being on athletes and the importance of as many as possible had a chance to compete. During this time we saw considerable growth and it is clear that the growth seen there has been reflected in U13 & U15 championship competition which stems from their first experience in the KYAL, and our Cambridge Harriers club member Noel Carmody (a National Walks Judge) is sure that the KYAL has been a reason for so many young Kent Walkers appearing at national level. I think Kevin Winch (a KYAL Team Manager) sums up the feedback we have received “So sorry to hear this sad news, thoughts with family and friends, and thank you for all the support Wendy gave the young athletes in the KYAL””

The KCAA website and Facebook continue to be our key communication channels. We also gain feedback with links to our externally provided on-line entry facility, which is clearly the first choice of athletes. However, late entries create much work for the Entry Secretaries as the majority of entries come in during the last week.

The committee has a role of “Competition Provider” for 13 days of competition across the season which continues to be a logistical challenge in avoiding fixture clashes and an even bigger one in finding sufficient Officials. Our aim is to provide inclusive quality competition for all athletes with links to Kent, resources permitting. We work in conjunction with other counties for the Indoor Championships at Lee Valley and at the Dartford Open meetings for the 3k/10k & U13 Pentathlon Championships, for which we are most thankful for the support we receive.

After a very wet Day One at this year’s Combined Events, Masters & U13 Championships, Day Two had to be abandoned because of flooding across the site making it unsafe for athletes, something not taken lightly but has identified a need to look at communication in such circumstances.

Our entry numbers, number of events and quality of our competitions puts us in the top league of county providers and this is based on a firm foundation set over many years by those who hold office on the Track & Field and Officials’ Committees for which we are most thankful. Our Committee Members take an attitude of ‘critical review’ as we seek to improve what we offer year-on-year, for which I, and hopefully the County, are grateful.

**David Ralph**

**Cross Country Report**

The season was once again a huge success, in terms of record numbers of entries.

We continue to provide good competition via the league and two County championship events.

As the entry levels have continued to grow, we will be introducing electronic timing for the league in future. Also, Dave Kitcher will be leaving us to move to another part of the country and this will leave a lot of work to be done and, as such, make electronic timing essential. The Cross-Country Committee would like to thank Dave for all his sterling work over the past nine seasons.

At some point in the future, I would like to see the Senior Men and Women compete together in a single race over the same distance and feel this is something we should encourage and work towards achieving.

**Tony Durey**

**Selectors’ & Team Managers’ Report**

Unfortunately, due to ill-health, James Roberts had to give up the position as Secretary of the Sub-Committee during the past year. James was responsible for developing a very effective and open selection policy and implemented an excellent process of team management, both of which will no doubt be developed further by Phil Pape who has taken over as the Secretary of the Team Selection and Management Sub-Committee. We wish him well.

It is also good to see that James is now out-and-about again at events around the County. Take care, James.

**AJGB**

**Race Walking Report**

It has been another excellent year for the counties race walkers.

The highlight of the year was Tom Bosworth (Tonbridge AC) winning silver at the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast (AUS) in a British Record time of 1:19:38 to become the first Briton to break 80 minutes for the 20km walk. Tom also represented GB & NI at the European Championships in Berlin, finishing seventh, the highest position achieved by a Briton since 1974.

Cameron Corbishley (Medway & Maidstone) and Guy Thomas (Tonbridge AC) both represented England in an International match in Podebrady (CZE), with Cameron also representing England in Lugano (SUI).

A number of the County’s younger race walkers represented England in the annual match against Ireland, including Matthew Crane (Bexley AC), Lucy Lewis Ward (Cambridge Harriers), Isabelle Bridge (Blackheath & Bromley), Abigail Smith (Blackheath & Bromley), Jack Childs (Medway & Maidstone) Hannah & Christian Hopper (Cambridge Harriers), Alex Macheath (Cambridge Harriers), Katie Stringer (Medway & Maidstone) & Grace Whittingam (Ashford AC),

On the Officials’ side, Noel Carmody (Cambridge Harriers) was appointed to judge at the IAAF World Team Championships in China.

**Noel Carmody**

**Fell Running**

I haven’t much to report apart from the excellent Kent team result at the Inter-County Champs. Kent came 6th out of 18 counties. Max Nicholls was an excellent 2nd overall and 1st U23, Luke Fisher 24th and Greg Cole 47th. All three from Tonbridge AC who came 2nd in the open team result.

**Ian Marshall**

**Officials’ Report**

The year started with another successful collaboration with Hertfordshire and Middlesex at the Tri-Counties indoor Championships. All three counties provide officials making for good and fair competition to all athletes. We would certainly not be able to go this alone.

During the Winter/Spring of 2017/18 we held two Level 1 Officials’ courses. Many of those who attended have already achieved their Level 1 and are well on their way to achieving Level 2. It is also pleasing to see a small number obtaining Level 3 and now working towards becoming a national official.

The county had experienced a couple of lean years trying to recruit new officials, but it would now appear that there is more interest being shown in becoming an official. It is however, still a huge problem in trying to get some of our trainees and qualified officials to take part in County Champs. The Championships are always to a good place to learn best practice and where to get reports done to progress further.

We have another two courses scheduled in the 2018/2019 winter, with hopefully another batch of officials taking up the call.

**Gill Freeman**

**Medals & Trophies Report**

Report awaited but thanks are recorded to the Capon family for all that they do to ensure that trophies are updated and available for presentation at the appropriate time.

**AJGB**

**Endurance Events**

Report awaited but the Kent Grand Prix series has once again been a huge success thanks to the efforts of Dave Behagg and his colleagues, plus of course the co-operation of the clubs which have hosted the individual events.

**AJGB**

**Coaching and Development Report**

I spent a large proportion of my time working with England Athletics (EA) to organise coach development workshops in Kent.

EA arranged the workshops at Ashford on 19th August 2019, including the events I recommended as these were requested by coaches in Kent. I was not consulted on this date and not sent publicity material to circulate.

Unfortunately they were cancelled by EA due to lack of numbers. This was not surprising, given that it was the middle of summer holidays, the day after an SAL match and in between the SEAA and EA u15/u17 champs!

I am disappointed with the lack of communication from EA. I am looking into how best to undertake future development activities in this context.

I share relevant information on KCAA social media and continue to work with Kent Sport on a range of matters.

**Stella Bandu**

**Website & Communications**

Thanks to Mike Peel who maintains the KCAA website so effectively. Also to Dawn Hookway who has created such effective communications that she has recommended that her role be discontinued with the Sub-Committee as such being disbanded. Well done and thank you, Dawn

**AJGB**