

**Meeting of Track & Field Committee,
Wednesday 5th April 2023, Teams Conference Call.**

6:00pm Start



WELSH ATHLETICS
ATHLETAU CYMRU

Present

Rhiannon Hawker, Darran Williams, Joyce Tomala, Lynne Brier, Chris Type, Zoe Brown, Steve Mitchell, Alex Donaldson, Crispin Backshall, Alan Currie, Lynette Harries, Lynne Brier, Lee Hayward.

1. **Apologies:**

John Elward, Rhys Williams, Sue Hooper, Dai Williams, Ryan Spencer Jones

2. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest:**

No declarations of conflict of interest expressed.

3. **Welsh Athletics Updates:**

a. **Competition Update** (RH)

RH confirmed that Newport had achieved full Track Mark accreditation and they were still working with Cardiff to reach their targets to achieve full accreditation.

i. **Outdoor Dates 2023**

Senior & U15 Championships – date/venue

U13, U17 & U20 Championships – date/venue

ii. **Inter-Regional T & F Championships 2023**

JT confirmed that the meeting was to be held in Aberdare on 16th July. South Region are hosting, with Darran Williams working on the declaration and results programme.

iii. **Event Specific Meetings**

DW shared the following information:

10th May – Run with the Wind sprints evening in Cardiff

31st May - 3K and 5K championships at Newport, incorporating South 400m and 1500m championship

10th June – sprints, hurdles and four field events open meeting in Cardiff

19th July - sprints and three field events open meeting in Aberdare

26th July - endurance and three field event open meeting in Aberdare

iv. **Welsh Junior Competitions**

RH has worked out some bespoke timetables for North Wales, working around the league matches that they are already involved in. Some clubs have already offered to host these matches and Welsh Athletics were working alongside the clubs to support them with dates and facilities.

Action: JT requested that the track and field committee are copied into any future correspondence between clubs and Welsh Athletics.

RLP confirmed that the Urdd and Welsh Schools have partnered to organise some multi-discipline competitions on a national and district level. This is not intended to replace the school district programmes and is aimed to be inclusive for those athletes who do manage to make it to the top end of the schools programme.

LH expressed her opinion that this was a good initiative that would hopefully enhance schools athletics in Wales.

v. Dates of future indoor Championships

RH confirmed that either she or another representative from Welsh Athletics will be involved in a UKA meeting on 3rd May to begin planning the dates for 2024.

4. DISCUSSION

a. Indoor 2022/2023 Review report (RH)

Following feedback on recent indoor championships, the following points were discussed:

i. Should Welsh Athletics Championships be open to U13 athletes?

RH shared statistics on the number of junior athletes who have entered in championships since 2018, clearly showing that numbers have dwindled. Clubs reporting that young athletes have lost the confidence to compete.

AC felt that there was not enough local and league competition for the younger athletes and more was needed to encourage younger athletes to participate in competition. LH agreed with this point. CT expressed his opinion that not having an Under 13 championship would be harmful to athletics because other sports were already picking youngsters up at a younger age than athletics. CT also said that to expand upon the current delivery model for competitions, clubs need to be more supportive, as it is not sustainable for the current competition team within Welsh Athletics to organise this themselves, given their current structure and volume of competitions that they are already organising.

SM agreed that there needs to be more competition for younger athletes and also felt that the competition days need to be shorter in order to compete with other sports that are less demanding in terms of time.

DW agreed that clubs needed to be more pro-active in organising competition for their younger athletes, rather than relying on the Welsh athletics competition team. DW praised Neath, Llanelli and Swansea for their triangular matches, which provide competition for younger athletes.

ZB expressed her opinion that if clubs provided competition on a local level, athletes may be more confident to compete at championships, hence increasing the number of entrants.

CB said that although he would like to retain championships for Under 13 athletes, he was concerned about the overall cost for families from

North Wales, citing this as a possible reason for low entries from the junior age groups.

The majority of committee members agreed that championships should continue for Under 13 athletes.

JT suggested that less confident clubs could possibly benefit from some support, training or guidance on how to host competitions.

LH (South Wales) said that current guidance on how to host competitions was not clear enough.

Action: RH / DW to meet with LH (South Wales) to discuss and work through current guidance.

ii. **Should junior athletes be allowed to move up age groups in Welsh Championship events?**

Following lengthy discussions and based on the fact that a only a small number of more able and talented athletes choose to step up to compete in an older age group, the committee agreed that athletes would continue to be permitted to move up age groups in Welsh Championships.

iii. **Consistency in number of athletes allowed in endurance races.**

Concerns have been brought to the committee's attention about inconsistencies surrounding the number of athletes allowed in endurance races. Following a discussion on this, the committee agreed that clear and consistent guidelines needed to be produced. AC agreed to communicate this at the next official's committee meeting, with a view to discussing consistency and fairness to athletes.

iv. **Should U15 athletes run 3000m indoor, particularly at Championship events?**

SM expressed his opinion that Under 15 athletes do not need to be running 3000m indoors and other shorter endurance events, including cross country would be much more beneficial for them, both physically and mentally.

CB said that the event was very popular with athletes from North Wales.

JT asked committee members to ask their clubs and regions for their opinions on this matter.

v. **Should standards be introduced at all championships?**

Following feedback that in some events at indoor championships, entries had been too high, it had been suggested that the introduction of standards would be helpful.

Concerns were expressed during the course of the discussion that the introduction of standards would result in entries dropping in some events that already attracted low numbers. There were also concerns

that the introduction of standards would make the championships less inclusive.

The committee all agreed on the importance of providing the best experience possible for all athletes, whilst also being realistic about standards and the number of participants that championships tend to attract in different events. The committee disagreed with setting standards for the younger athletes at the moment.

Action: It was agreed that a working party would be put together to discuss a set of possible standards at future championships for senior and Under 20 athletes. CT will consider which staff member will be most suitable to participate in this working party.

vi. Length of competition day – should pools be continued or qualification one day then competition following day?

JT used senior long jump as an example in the indoor championships where athletes were unhappy about the pools. This led the committee back to the previous discussion about the introduction of standards.

JT asked for any further thoughts to be sent to her so that she could report back to general council.

b. Ratification of records

AC shared the following records with the committee. The following were accepted:

MEN / BOYS

UNDER 17

60 metres	6.93	Aaron Tugwell (Cardiff Archers)	Sheffield	11.02.23
3000 metres	8:42.34	Iwan Thomas (Carmarthen H)	NIAC	18.12.22

UNDER 15

200 metres	22.43	Max Evans (Maldwyn Harriers)	Sheffield	12.02.23
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WOMEN / GIRLS

U15

800 metres	2:13.42	Lois Codling (Newport Harriers)	NIAC	29.01.23
1500 metres	4:33.20	Libby Hale (Swansea Harriers)	NIAC	28.01.23
3000 metres	10:23.64	Bryony Boyce (Cardiff Athletics)	NIAC	29.01.23
Long Jump	5.74	Olivia Schrimshaw (Deeside AC)	Connahs Quay	15.01.23

INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP BEST PERFORMANCES 2022/23 (All performances at NIAC, Cardiff, unless otherwise indicated)

MEN / BOYS

UNDER 20

Shot	16.56	Dafydd Pawlett (Yate & Dist)	05.02.23
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UNDER 17

60m	6.94	Aaron Tugwell (Cardiff Archers)	05.02.23
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200m	22.29	Joseph Berry (Newport Harriers)	04.02.23
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UNDER 15

200m	23.10	Max Evans (Maldwyn Harriers)	29.01.23
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WOMEN / GIRLS

UNDER 15

800m	2:13.42	Lois Codling (Newport H)	29.01.23
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1500m	4:33.20	Libby Hale (Swansea H)	28.01.23
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3000m	10:23.64	Bryony Boyce (Cardiff)	29.01.23
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Long Jump	5.53	Olivia Schrimshaw (Deeside)	29.01.23
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Shot	11.03	Evie Cooper (Neath H)	29.01.23
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Pentathlon (Sheffield)	3034	Matilda Quick (Swansea H)	13.03.22
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It was agreed to hold back on the triple performances for now as they are currently a development event.

c. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING – not already covered:

i. Co-opted member (athlete)

We have not succeeded to attract an athlete as a co-opted member. It was decided to bring in different coaches instead, depending on the topics being discussed i.e. coaches who would be able to contribute to the discussions.

5. REPORTS:

a. Regional Issues

East Wales – nothing to report

North Wales – Nothing to report

South Wales – nothing to report

West Wales – nothing to report

b. Officials Committee

SH shared the following information via email to LB:

Official's availability forms have gone out for Summer fixtures and are gradually being returned.

SH and Zoe Holloway are currently revising the Officials Travel and Accommodation policy, which was last updated in 2015.

Sue Maughan and Dave Jessett have been selected to officiate at the World Paras in Paris this Summer.

6. Any Other Business

CB asked about expenses for officials and concerns about expense being slow following indoor champs. JT said that this was a point more for the officials committee, who should be feeding this information back to this committee.

LH expressed disappointment with the exclusion of some events at the Commonwealth Youth Games. LH asked if Welsh Athletics should follow England Athletics in submitting a complaint about this.

CT said that although he shared the frustration and disappointment, athletics bodies had no influence over which events were to be included in these games.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday August 9th 2023

Dates of Future Meetings:

Wednesday October 11th 2023

Wednesday December 6th 2023

JT thanked RH on behalf of the whole committee for her contributions over the years and wished her all the best in her new career role.

The meeting ended at 7:50pm