

Minutes Track & Field Committee, Wednesday 7th February 2024, Teams Conference Call.



WELSH ATHLETICS
ATHLETAU CYMRU

Attending:

Lynette Harries (LyH), Joyce Tomala (JT), Chris Moss (CM), Alan Currie (AC),
Dai Williams (DW), Alex Donald (AD), Lisa Campion (LC), Crispin Backshall (CB),
Steve Hames (SH), Lee Hayward (LH)

1. **Apologies:** Lynne Brier, Sue Hooper, Chris Type, Darran Williams

2. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

3. WA Updates:

1. WA Development and Facilities update (CM)

CM explained the background to Track Mark (UKA quality assurance programme) as well as the current process. The focus for competition is Unit 1 Track, Unit 2 Field. The units are renewable every three years by facility operators, WA are making some good progress with facilities, 12 of 20 outdoor facilities (some tracks are non-standard) are currently accredited with Track Mark Unit 1. There are currently 11 with Unit 2 Field accreditation.

JT asked for clarification regarding the facility at Aberdare. The facility manager confirmed that the repairs had been completed and they were waiting for Ed Hunt to sign it off. Jacky Brett has apparently stated that the stadium cannot be used for hammer and discus which is very confusing. There are several fixtures due to be held at Aberdare soon; this situation needs to be clarified as a matter of urgency.

CB requested an update on the Deeside facility as North Wales are proposing to hold their Regional TF Championships in May at Deeside. CM reiterated that it is always worth checking Track Mark status with the facility operator including any restrictions in place.

LH enquired if TrackMark is linked to Licencing portal as he had recently completed licence applications for Aberdare, Brecon and Leckwith but none of the tracks were listed on the drop-down menu.

From April 2023, the guidance from UKA was for home countries who have the responsibility to issue licences for competition tracks that had achieved Unit 1 and Unit 2 of Track Mark criteria.

A new licencing portal was being developed currently. This is about to come online for road and multi terrain. The intention is for these to be linked to an online Track Mark directory which will be updated from a master sheet of all tracks across the UK, so that licence imports display the live track mark status and whether an event has a full competition certificate. This is not the case now because as it is currently organised by UKA licencing. The two sets of data are not coordinated, which is very frustrating. The plan is to establish a feedback loop for competition organisers to report on the facility after an event.

ACTION: CM will check the position of both facilities (Aberdare and Deeside) with Ed Hunt next week and feedback to TF Committee.

DaW asked if information regarding competitions at Leckwith is available as competition providers have been informed that the facility would not be available between 5th May and 17th June. He sought clarification regarding which parts of the facility would not be available.

JT believes that the Cardiff Athletics club have been told the same in that they can't have anything there during that period.

AD informed members that there is a short period when the track is not in use. The major problem is obviously the infield. WA have events booked in during that period and some events have had to be rescheduled. The Run with the Wind meeting has been moved to 1st May. The Sprint Open event on the 5th June on the track is being allowed and WA can have events in the outdoor cage on that day but not the cage on the infield. The final date for the completion of the work was the 17th; it seems that events can take place as long as they don't use the infield.

CB felt that they'd experienced the same problem in Colwyn Bay. The club had it for training purposes, but we weren't allowed to use the track at all for about two months.

LyH thanked CM for his update.

2. Competition Update (AD)

Outdoor updates 2024

A. Senior Championships 15th, 16th June at Cardiff with permission to use the infield.

B. Junior Championships 10th and 11th August at Swansea

C. Regional Championships – confirmation of dates and venues

South and East Regional Championships, two-day event at Aberdare- 11th & 12th May

West Regional Championships 12th May at Swansea (tbc)

North Regional Championships at Deeside 11th May, (Wrexham not available due to football)

CB stressed the importance of Deeside being available, if this is not available they will look at another date and ensure that pole-vaulters are consulted on their preference for that event.

D. Internationals

WA are not hosting a U20 international in Wales in 2024. England are hosting and probably in Manchester. The proposed date is 17th August, which was later than some people wanted. Scotland have raised an objection to the date as this is the date of their Senior Championships. They have however suggested they would be happy to support the event but with a reduced strength team as many their top under 20s would choose to do their senior championships.

SIAB international 20th July, Carmarthen.

Inter-Regional T & F Championships 2024 – 8th June @ Wrexham, North Wales host region.

E. Event Specific Meetings

Run with the Wind Wednesday 1st May, Cardiff.

Sprint specific open meeting Wednesday 29th May, Menai.

Run with the Wind, again with a selection of jumps and field events 5th June, Cardiff.

Endurance Meeting including WA 3000 metre and 5000 metre Championships and potentially some BMC 800 metre races on 22nd June at Newport.

Endurance open meeting, including BMC races 16th July Deeside. (tbc)

F. Welsh Junior Competitions (AD/LH)

AD believes the regions are much more willing to host the events this year.

The North have agreed several dates, staff member Amy, is helping the clubs to establish a three-fixture series this year.

The South and East have comprehensive plan. LH confirmed the following: - 14th April, Cardiff. 4th May, Aberdare, 2nd June, Brecon with an awards day on 13th July, hopefully at Aberdare. It is intended to hold an endurance event, some fun events and may feature a daily mile.

LC West 13th/14th April at Swansea. 4th/ 5th May venue tbc, 14th July at Carmarthen. All dates and venues tbc following West Regional Meeting on 16th February.

PMN: 14th April Neath or Swansea, 4th May Neath or Swansea, 14th July Carmarthen.

LH will update members on throws competition at the next meeting.

G. Date Indoor Competitions Review

ACTION: AD to liaise with JT and SH re date for review meeting.

3. WA Performance update (CT) no update available.

LyH requested that the performance team did not add additional events to the calendar due to the strain on organisers and officials.

AD replied that CT is so against adding events and has impressed upon his team and that this was not an option and is adamant that this would not happen unless there are extenuating circumstances.

ACTION: JT to email CT for a written report.

PMN: CT has stated that he does not report to this committee. Up to date information is included on the WA website including the performance programme and selection policy.

<https://www.welshathletics.org/en/page/performance-pathway>

4. **Welsh Athletics Event Licences update (DW)**

AD gave an update on the new licencing platform as DW is on leave. A letter has been sent to event organisers in Wales informing them of the new licencing platform which will be operable for Road events only from 1st April. WA will seek to develop a licencing platform for Track and Field events for the next indoor season. Eventually the platform will cover all disciplines. Cross Country is expected go live soon; applications are being taken 2024/2025 season.

JT asked if DW is still taking L1 licence applications for T & F events. AD replied this is the case if anyone applies for L2 licence this is forwarded to Jacky Brett.

AD reported that JW advised that we would take level 2 licence applications on board in Wales when our platform goes live; this is still to be confirmed. Now until such time as our new platform goes live information should be sent to Jackie, Brett at UKA.

5. **Opentrack results program update (AD)**

WA have not been able to start the tendering process it is however likely that our platform will be in place throughout the summer. We currently have a rolling contract where our rates are held so will be using Opentrack for the near future. WA are looking to start a tendering in the next few weeks to ascertain if there are other suitable suppliers. AD felt any changes or a move to a new platform would be somewhere down the line and believed that WA would stick with Opentrack in the short term. The feedback relating to the main rival is not particularly good, but WA are investigating another provider.

At the moment Opentrack appears to be the best option.

6. DISCUSSION

a. Update IR Championships (JT)

i. Appointment of chief officials for IR Champs

1. CB confirmed that North Wales have secured a Chief Timekeeper, Track Referee and some field officials. JT to check with SH which officials have made themselves available for this event.

ii. List of officials affiliated to each region. (Regional Official's secretaries should have lists)

1. JT confirmed she has received list of officials affiliated to East Wales; BB receives the monthly updates for East Wales. CB confirmed Tracey also receives monthly updates for North Wales, The South don't have an official's secretary at the moment. LH asked if the report was sent as an automated report or a physical document. CB believes it was sent as an attachment to an email. SH and LC think that Gareth Harries will be asked to take on the role for West Wales. JT will speak to SH regarding the South region tomorrow.
2. **PMN:** West Wales appointed Gareth Harries at their regional meeting on Friday 16th February.
3. **PMN SH.**
 - A virtual Officials' conference will be held on 17th March.
 - Summer availability is now live on website. SH has emailed officials with this information.
 - Information regarding South Officials is sent to Jeff Mapps.
 - Zoe Holloway contacts newly qualified officials regarding availability for competitions.
 - SH offered suggestions for starters in North Wales. JT has sent information to CB.

iii. Rotation of field duties

The discussion concluded that allocation of field duties will be used for this year's IR.

ACTION: JT to produce regional field duties list.

b. Training in the use of Opentrack Results programme.

- i. JT suggested that training for people to become familiar with using the Opentrack system would possibly attract more non-technical officials.
- ii. LH agreed that training was desirable either in the form of an online tutorial or a day set aside for training. All agreed it would not be practical to schedule training prior to an athletics event; particularly on championship days.
- iii. CB stated that DW had offered to go to North Wales to provide a training day in conjunction with Amy.
- iv. SH suggested that Nathan Jones may also be able to help with training.
- v. JT felt that basic training beforehand would be ideal. The programme requirements are not too onerous. There were however issues relating to the programme at the Senior champs, which were eventually resolved.
- vi. AD agreed that such training would be useful.

ACTION: AD to contact DW and NJ with the aim of organising training in the use of Opentrack.

c. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING – not already covered:**

- i. **Action** records for 1200m –
 1. All members present agreed that Welsh Records for 1200m would not be recognised as it is not a standard event in Welsh Championships.
 2. AD apologised that he had not sent the document out relating to the proposed age group changes. UKA have now agreed that the new age groups (even years) will be operational from April 2026.

ACTION: AD to share a document on the proposed UKA Age Group Rule changes with the committee.

7. REPORTS:

- a. Welsh Schools (DaW)
 - i. The indoor combined events were at the beginning of November at NIAC, this was followed by Welsh Schools hosting the combined events International for the first time. Cardiff Met was thanked for organising the competition. They put on a presentation for students from the other home countries who may be prospective students, which was well received. The Welsh team performed better than they have done in the away events.
 - ii. Welsh Schools Championships is 6th July.
 - iii. SIAB is In Carmarthen this year. Accommodation will be provided for the home countries at the universities of Trinity St David and Lampeter. Some of the delegates will be accommodated at the Ivy Bush. LH asked if the Welsh team would also be accommodated. AD confirmed that they would also be accommodated.
 - iv. The Schools Cup and Plate competition has been brought forward a week from the 17th to the 10th of July which is the Wednesday after the Welsh School championships. Steve Jones will take on the organisation of the event as Welsh Athletics staff have other competitions to organise in that period.
 - v. DaW asked if Welsh Schools would have an input into the U20 International this year now that it has moved to Manchester. AD replied it is fair to say that performance team wondered if there was value in continuing to send a second team to this event regardless of whether or not it moved out of Wales. DaW felt as far as Welsh Schools senior athletes were concerned it is their only opportunity for international selection.

ACTION: AD to seek clarification from Chris Type.

- b. Regional Issues
 - i. JT reported that South and East continue to work closely together on events across both regions. Successful Indoors Championships were held at NIAC for the U13 to U17 age groups.
 - ii. LC informed members that the West had held successful indoor championships in January; Day 1 focused on track events with 181 attendees whilst Day 2 focused on jumps with 132 attending. Most officials and volunteers were from the West supported by Swansea officials, there was also great support from Darran.
 - iii. SH gave an update on the West Junior Development League; The first event this year is scheduled for Neath in April; this is however dependent on whether the track repairs are completed.

ACTION: JT to contact NJ for dates and Venues of West JDL.

- iv. CB stated that North Wales had a successful open indoor meeting before Christmas, followed by the NW Championships, NW will repeat this pattern of indoor competition next year.
 - v. NW have secured a grant for EDM and continue to be successful in updating equipment. The next challenge will be to upgrade competition venues. CB is working with the council to improve the Colwyn Bay facility. A grant has already been secured but this may not cover the work required. The 4G pitch in the middle of the arena means that throwing events are not allowed. Rugby players are allowed at the venue during athletics club training sessions which makes coaching a nightmare.
- c. Officials Committee (AC)
AC reported that he had not attended the last officials' meeting.

8. Any Other Business.

- a. AD reported that a query has been raised about an athlete Olivia Grimshaw who would have set an under 15 girls, triple jump indoor record in February 2023. (proof of the performance received) At the time of the competition WA were not recognising records for that age group. However, the outdoor triple jump record was recognised. Another athlete set a record in the U15 indoor championships this year, but this did not supersede Olivia's previous mark. This is why the issue was raised. AC suggested that the record would be recognised retrospectively, all agreed.
ACTION: AC to amend records, AD to update WA website.
- b. AC said that he is giving up his involvement in the sport. He does not intend renewing his official's licence. LyH replied that the important thing is that Alan looks after himself and stated that his contribution to athletics in Wales over the years has been immense. All members thanked AC for his hard work and commitment and wished him all the best for the future.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday April 3rd, 2024.

Dates of Future Meetings: (all meetings commence @ 6pm)

05/06/2024

07/08/2024

02/10/2024

04/12/2024