

Minutes

Scottish Athletics Track and Field Commission Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2009 at 6.30 pm in Scottish Athletics Offices, Edinburgh

Present: Leslie Roy (Chair)
Kenny Marshall
Gary Condie
Margaret Daly (Secretary)
Stuart Fowlie
Ali Strange
Alan Potts, President, Scottish Athletics
Ross Cunningham, SAL Events & Competitions Manager

1. Welcome and opening remarks

Leslie welcomed everyone and introduced Stuart Fowlie and Ali Strange to their first meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from **Barry Craighead**, Arnold Black, Alan Pettigrew, Graham Sword and Elspeth Allan.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 16 February 2009 were agreed as a true record.

Matters arising

3.1 SAL Media Representative's Role at Championships

It was agreed this issue should be taken forward by Geoff Wightman to ensure that results teams on duty at the various Championships are not perceived as responsible for the distribution of results to press representatives at events. **Action: GW**

4. Financial Report

The Commission noted that for family reasons, Graham may not be able to attend all meetings for the foreseeable future and it was agreed that a card should be sent on the Commission's behalf. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that there was no requirement to issue expenses cheques on the day and these could be sent out post-event from the office.

Action LR

5. Delegate Reports

5.1 Management Committee

From the meeting of 5 May, Leslie reported for information that video conferencing was available in Caledonia House.

The rule book would be updated in 2010 and a motion had been put forward to change to IAAF age groups which change on 31 December each year. This would be trialled by Road & Cross Country during the winter of 09/10 with the hope that other governing bodies would follow.

Leslie circulated the advertisement to be carried in Athletics Weekly for the National Championships at Pitreavie on 20/21 June.

The BOS/Celtic Cup date is still under discussion with 26 August a possibility.

Ross to email Brian Penicuik to clarify position on proposed relocation of the Pole Vault at Grangemouth.

Leslie reported the date for the Coaching Conference would be 30/31 October & 1 November, with the Scottish Athletics Awards dinner taking place on Saturday 31 October.

5.2 Officials Commission

In Barry's absence, it was noted the next meeting of the Commission was due on 26 May and Leslie would attend. Minutes from the previous meeting were not available. **Action: LR**

Athletes' Report

Ali circulated a comprehensive report which is attached as Appendix 1. A number of points required action and these were noted as follows:-

- what is the role of NEMs in supporting athletes with advice on accessing medical support and funding;
- what is the role of NEMs with non-CWG squad athletes
- issues raised regarding athlete's kit
- clarification on code of conduct in relation to squad events, i.e. athletes' to attend team meetings

It was noted with concern that some athletes were considering moving to Loughborough because of a perceived lack of support from scottishathletics. These issues all to be raised with the Chief Executive. **Action: AP**

Leslie thanked Ali for his very comprehensive report which provided a lot of information that was important for the Commission.

5.3 Highland Games Report

No report.

5.4 Open Graded Improvement Meetings

No report.

5.5 Timetabling Group

No report.

5.6 Results Team Update

Gary commented that he had raised a number of issues over the past few years and that these were still arising. He referred to a paper detailing these issues and action promised. This is attached as Appendix 2. At the recent Inter-Regional event, Gary had received the entries at 10.30 p.m. on the Thursday with the event due to take place on the Saturday. He advised that he was still working on loading these into the results package at 1.30 a.m. on the day of competition. If volunteers were to be expected to do this work, then current arrangements for closing dates, guest entries and changes to teams could not be allowed as late as they are at present. Ross advised on the process within the office and the limited staff involved in this. The process had been further complicated for the IR event due to the 3 formats of age group; IR and super teams. Solutions required to address these issues were noted as:-

- Agreed effective cut-off dates for national championships
 - Sufficient staff allocated in scottishathletics office
 - Information passed to volunteers in a timescale that acknowledges they are in full-time work and have family commitments
 - Field event cards – last event cards must be brought to results team and final result marked up in pen, not pencil
- Action: GW**

6. Business

6.1 Scottish Athletics Six Year Plan

As the meeting ran out of time, all were asked to provide comments on this to Leslie as soon as possible. **Action: All**

7. Sub Committee Reports

7.1 East

Not discussed.

7.2 West

Meeting scheduled for Monday 15 June 2009.

7.3 North

Report circulated. Any comments to be forwarded to Leslie as soon as possible. **Action: All**

8. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 3rd August at Adelaide's Hotel, Bath St, Glasgow.

Action: LR/MD

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Report by Ali Strange

Inter Regional Championships

Good idea, although is there enough athletes to make it a viable competition? The only event that filled all 12 places was men's 1500m. Glorified league match?

Big problem is athletes split across A/B race. Top two could be in separate races

Maybe move the competition to later in the year.

Not enough depth to fill 12 places. Maybe 4 regions with two per event. More chance of full fields and the best athletes all compete together.

Districts 1st at start of may (can act as selection) then inter regional mid summer? Sponsored with better prize structure?

Super teams

Some athletes felt it was patronising

Not exciting enough

Young athletes aspire to be like the seniors so need to do same events

Athletes who didn't like or were good at the selected events felt like they were left out

Has been mentioned would be ideal for u11 not u13

Internationals

Loughborough Selections

Selection policy needs to be made absolutely clear and not have different criteria for different athletes. NEMs need to liaise with prospective athletes to discuss form etc as most people won't have competed before selection date. A few athletes felt that they were overlooked in selection for no apparent reason.

Discrepancy in selection date. Meeting and international handbook different.

with competition opportunities before selection date almost non-existent (except for students) why not identify top 2/3 and confirm availability of all 3, then select after inter regional/district/county champs the week before the match.

Empty events – Many events were left unfilled, especially in the jumps. Many athletes felt that this was ludicrous. Minimum standards? Never published and why are they there?

other countries fielded athletes at a poorer standard than ones Scotland left at home. How can there be team spirit when complete disregard is shown to the team element of the competition? It is becoming a 'competition opportunity' instead of a full senior international. Why still take relay squad members who don't even run in the team but won't take individual field eventers?

Kit

Again kit is always an issue. Rain jackets, Hoodies etc. Something to actually identify everyone in the same team. The staff seem to have plenty of kit.

Payment

Understandable that money is tight. However athletes were puzzled as to why they have to pay to represent their country at the only senior international of the year is ridiculous.

Staff

As above, athletes have also expressed concerns with the fact that there were 9 members of staff present at Loughborough. Is this really necessary if money is tight? Were staff paying £30 a head?

The majority of the athletes have enough international experience that they don't help. Also personal coach is usually there.

Travel

The bus travel needs to be addressed.

Too long

Flights?

Extra night?

Team unity

Any athlete I spoke to reported that they are no longer proud to represent Scotland at Loughborough for all the reasons listed above. Many athletes don't strive to be selected anymore

Belgium

Selections? Commonwealth only?

What will be provided for the £50

Event Specific Internationals

Some of these have gone on in the past for specific event groups

Athletes from other groups feel hard done by as nothing for their group was provided.

Re-addressing last meetings points

Championship timetabling

Provisional timetable needs to be available

Will allow athletes to decide if they can enter more than one event

Field Events

Entries on the day? Extra money for SAL

Possible, as wont make difference to timetable

Call Up procedure

Big improvement reported at the inter regional compared to indoor

Still needs to be better drilled and officials need to be intuitive and help athletes. Example was men's 400m. Let them run then sort it out after

Atmosphere/Crowd at championships

Understandable with lack of marketing manager indoor

Schools promotion for championships. Invite schools to attend championships and meet athletes before or after. Identity breeds interest!

Entrants

Hopefully work is underway to improve entrants at major senior champs.

NEMs must use their position to attract athletes. They must also speak to athletes as they have huge knowledge about coaches and athletes in the UK.

NEMs in general don't communicate with the athletes enough. Many athletes have never spoken to their NEM despite being high up Scottish rankings.

Report by Gary Condie

Entries

- Entries were the worst I had seen for many reasons.
- SAL do not seem to put enough importance into a national championship
- Only one person was preparing the entries. This should be team event not Ross emailing at 10.30 the completed entries late on a Thursday night and then again on the Friday night
- Methods should be in place to check and recheck the entries
- All entries should come in the same Excel format- Not in three different forms.
- The Inter Regional should be in the format agreed with the Results and photo finish team
- Entries need to be sent to me ONLY in plenty of time to be checked. Monday before the event is the latest. No point in sending them to photo finish or field referee until they have been checked.
- Changes the night before because of late closing date is not on. This is a National Championship event not a league match
- There is a chance that people can compete in a National Championships who are not members of Scottish Athletics. This has already been proved by a medalist in the National Cross Country Championships whose membership lapsed in November. Were there checks that everyone who ran was a member?

- From my Results Report in 2007 what has happened to these suggestions

- The list of ideas we had which would be put into operation this winter after a suggestion by Alastair Currie
 - All entries will be online
 - If they arrive in the office, the staff would enter them on line so they were all in the same programme
 - Computer would allocate numbers and events for the championship
 - There would be no need to enter all the athletes in a rush at the end
 - All athletes could be entered as they arrive
 - All entries use SAL registration number so no errors in clubs or age groups would happen
 - It would not be left to one person
 - Gordon would check with DEKO if more than one person could be on the system at one time meaning everyone could help with entries
 - Should be no duplication of numbers as it would not be done on paper
 - Time would be set aside to check, names numbers, etc before it left the office

- Format for Inter Regional, Age groups and super teams were all different. Not the ones agreed before
- SAL not giving Ross the support or time to check and recheck the numbers. Using the Pivot table as suggested in 2007 would identify all the errors
- Still athletes are entering in two different age groups and will probably have different number
- Events must be numbered from 01 not 1. T01 rather than T1 and F01 rather than F1
- If we have event which have two age groups or mixed sex then they need different event names. This usually happens in the field events i.e. Pole Vault F01a, F01b etc
- The names of the events on the timetable must be the same as the names in the programme i.e. T01 60m Hurdles cannot be written on the timetable as T01 60mH
- Don't used spaces before the title of the event as the PC will not recognize <space space> 800m as 800m

- Timetabling group need to check very carefully the entries and whether they need semis and finals. On too many occasions this winter we were adding in events 12a etc
- On the timetable we need the number of heats. This can be adjusted on the day but at least it gives me a starting point

Results team

- Alan and Dave's results programme worked well in all championships
- Couldn't link into the new Photo Finish system. Needs to be tested. Not good to use it for the first time at a national event
- Photo finish team did provide a result in order which helped results.
- Not enough people willing to do results thanks to Ron Hunter for stepping in and doing the Sunday

Declarations

- We only need to know if someone is changing number. We don't need to know if they have changed events
- However we do need to know if someone has been entered on the day

Field Events

- In large fields the referees to make sure that every athlete's results is recorded at the bottom of the sheet and not just top 8. I understand that the referee is busy but it should not be the referee's job to sort 21 names, this should have been done by the field officials.
- Could all results be done in ink not pencil? They can't be photocopied
- Can all field results follow the same path? As usual the last field card disappeared and I had to go looking for it. All officials except Liz and Isobel had left
- Field cards can be made easily on to templates to include records. However this is time consuming and shouldn't be left to Ross or a volunteer. This is an admin duty which should be done in the office
- SAL needs to put some importance to the Championships we run. Leaving it to one or two people is not going to work. It needs to be a team effort. It will get to the point when the volunteers will be sickened by the amount of work we need to do to make the weekend go well If we all turned up with the info supplied it would be a disaster.
- If this is repeated during the summer there will be problems. As I will not be available to check numbers. If we turn up on the day and each athlete has three numbers or two athletes have the same number the results will fail.
- I'm getting to the point when my weekend time is precious so may give this up. However who is going to do all the checking and preparing of results before the meeting starts
- I sat up to midnight on Thursday sorting the errors and then to 1.30 on Saturday morning after returning from a night out to get the entries ready for the Inter Regional.