

Isle of Man Athletics Association

Annual General Meeting 2011

Athletics Development Officer Report

Introduction

Now two years in position the Athletics Development Officer Trevor Christian has delivered various projects with clubs and schools to help promote athletics, bring new faces to the sport and provide opportunities for coach and officials development. The project headings in last year's development plan were Coach Education, Coach and Officials Development, Running Groups and Growing Participation. In addition to the projects in the development plan other athletics related projects were also undertaken such as co-ordination of the Commonwealth Youth Games.

Coach Education

Coaching Assistant Course October 2010

The new coach education programme was a long time in coming and finally the Coaching Assistant course took place on 9th and 10th October 2010. 13 candidates took place with a split as follows.

Table 1

Club	Attendance
Northern AC	5
Manx Harriers	2
Western AC	1
Manx Fell Runners	1
Teachers	1
Other	3

The impact of this course has meant that Northern AC have been able to deliver a junior training session at the weekend all year round which prior to this was not available. Manx Harriers now have two assistants one of whom is Julie Mullarkey who is assisting Di Shimell's track sessions and Niall McGarrigle who along with Richard Sille of the Manx Fell Runners has helped facilitate the IOM Sportshall Athletics Squad sessions at Ballakermeen HS. Western AC member Jane Wooding has put her skills to use in MSR athletics schemes along with two other MSR coaches who attended the course Ari Brooks and Sam Caine. Ari and Sam now work in primary schools around the island and deliver PE lessons where athletics is the focus of the summer term. Of the 13 attendees only one is not actively using their qualification to coach

athletes yet which I feel is a real success for the course as often entry level coaching courses are attended by CV builders.

Sportshall Athletics Workshops

This is an example of where my other role as Eastern Community Sport Development Officer overlaps with Athletics Development. As part of the SDU Primary School Sports Programme, Sportshall Athletics is focussed on during the summer term alongside Cricket. Two hour Sportshall Athletics Workshops are delivered around the island for primary school teachers, sports leaders and parent helpers. Upon completion of the workshop participants are then asked to deliver an after school sports club in sportshall athletics and enter a team in the Isle of Man Primary Sportshall Athletics Competition. This year workshops were run at the National Sport Centre, Castle Rushen High School, QE2 and Ramsey Grammar School. Attendance figures are as follows.

Table 2

Venue	Student	Teacher	Parent
NSC	3	11	0
Queen Elizabeth II	13	0	0
Castle Rushen	12	0	0
Ramsey Grammar	6	1	0

In addition to these regional workshops I delivered similar workshops on location at Marown Primary School and Ballacottier where in excess of 10 teachers were present at each.

The impact of delivering these workshops has been eight more schools entering the Isle of Man Primary Sportshall Athletics Competition which doubles the number of schools that entered the previous year. Figures compare as follows:

Table 3

Region	After School Club Attendance		Festival Attendance		Schools Entered		Teams Entered	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
North	115	220	0	18	0	1	0	1
South	497	854	59	142	3	5	3	5
East	351	1112	73	182	3	8	4	9
West	279	854	43	142	2	2	2	2
Total	1242	2465	175	393	8	16	9	17

Areas of focus for 2011 will be the North and West to try and increase entries by schools in those regions whilst maintaining or increasing the south and east.

Coach Development

Coach Development has been identified by England Athletics as a target area to focus on rather than regional squads in order to support a wider audience of athletes by improving coaching knowledge and ability through their National Coach Mentor and Local Coach Development Programmes. The Local Coach Development Programme launched on the Isle of Man with our Club Coach Support Officer Claire Buckle delivering two workshops. The first of these workshops was aimed at coaches at entry level and level 2 to find out what their coaching needs are, what support is required to meet those needs and making their own personal development plans with smart goals and objectives. There were eight attendees on this workshop and the information gleaned from their PDP's has helped to mould coach development opportunities in the development plan. Topics that were popular included strength and Conditioning, youth development. The second workshop had five attendees and was aimed at higher level coaches who would be keen to assist and mentor other coaches. Local Coach Development opportunities arising after the workshops were as follows:

- Working closely with the Head of Performance the IOM Squad S&C sessions were opened up to athletics coaches to attend and learn from Sport Institute coaches. Approximately 3-5 coaches attended sessions with Lesley Christian and Mike Callow continuing to attend on a regular basis.
- Again in partnership with the Head of Performance it was agreed that the IOMAA Squad sessions would be open to any coach who wishes to attend. They have been led by Di Shimell, Mike Callow who attended the lead coach workshop and have been supported by an average of ten coaches per session all getting new ideas from the leads coaches and sharing their own experiences too
- Projects for the Athletics Network Year 2 plan have been influenced by the findings of the needs analysis performed as part of the coach PDP's.
- The Isle of Man Sportshall Athletics Squad sessions gave another mentoring opportunity for level one and two coaches to share ideas and help develop two of the newly qualified coaching assistants from the October course.
- Clubs are sharing coaching knowledge and helping each other by filling gaps in coaching expertise for certain event areas. Di Shimell, Danaa Callow and Trevor Christian have supported The Southern Athletics Group with sprints and throws. Graham Davies and Trevor Christian have supported Northern AC with throws and coaching juniors.

The impact the local coach development programme has been:

- Coaches are gaining a better understanding of S&C and having input into what their athletes do under supervision at the Institute.

- Our Athletes are becoming stronger and more stable and will hopefully be less prone to injury.
- The Island Games team has brought home its largest medal haul since 2001 and several Island records have been taken by athletes involved with these sessions.
- The education of coaches can be targeted at specific needs as highlighted by PDP's, more
- There are more and more opportunities for coaches to come together and share knowledge and ideas on coaching.
- Clubs are sharing knowledge, expertise and personnel.

Growing Participation

In the area of Growing participation the following activities have been used.

- Sportshall Athletics
- Star Track
- HSBC Manx Youth Games
- Open Meetings

Sportshall Athletics

Sportshall Athletics opportunities for children have been used in the following settings:

- Sportshall IOM Squad U11

This initiative saw primary schools nominate talented boys and girls in year 5/6 to attend trials for the IOM U11s Sportshall Athletics Squad. Over 120 children were put through a sportshall pentathlon with the top 50 being invited to attend weekly IOM squad sessions at Ballakermeen Sports hall. 30 athletes were picked from the 50 to represent the Island at the Northwest AVIVA Fun in Athletics festival at Sport City Indoor Athletics Arena in Manchester. This highlighted many talented athletes who were not part of the club system but unfortunately there was little uptake into the clubs resulting from this. It was decided for the following year to hold regional trials at local clubs in order to attract more athletes into the club environment. A success of this venture was that it introduced Medis as a new sponsor to athletics donating £4K to Sportshall and £1K to x-country.

- MSR Holiday Schemes

Sportshall athletics has taken place on MSR Holiday Programmes for October Half Term, Christmas and February half term for school years R-9. Schemes take place at the NSC halls and the regional High School halls of Castle Rushen, QE2 and Ramsey Grammar. Figures as follows

Table 4

Period	No of Schemes	Total Attendances
Christmas 2010	5	144
February 2011	4	136
October 2011	3	123

At the schemes participants receive a sportshall athletics certificate which on the rear lists contact details for the islands clubs with junior sections to offer an exit route into the club environment.

- MSR Term Time Activities

During the school term athletics sessions are available at the NSC sport shall after school between 5-6pm on Thursdays. This runs all year round and is open to pupils in reception to year six.

- Club Pentathlons

Last year they took place at Northern AC with an attendance of 75 and Manx Harriers where 26 athletes took part. These were fun introductions to sportshall with the NAC pentathlon forming part of the IOM Sportshall Squad selection process.

- SDU Primary School Sports Programme
 - After School Clubs (see table 3)
 - Interschool Competition (see table 3)
- Secondary School Taster Sessions
 - BHS – Pentathlons for year 7 PE Lessons
 - CRHS – Indoor Obstacle relays and howler throw, year 7

Star Track

Star Track schemes take place on the MSR holiday schemes in the dryer months with attendances as follows.

Table 5

Period	No of Schemes	Total Attendances
TT Week 2011	4	119
Summer 2011	9	312

As with Sportshall Schemes participants receive certificates with club details listed on the reverse side.

The HSBC Manx Youth Games gives children in each region the opportunity to try athletics in weekly training sessions facilitated by our local athletics clubs. This gives clubs the opportunity to showcase their athletics experience to new faces and hopefully take on new members as a result. It is the largest grass roots sports scheme on the Island and is promoted in every school. The training sessions start in February in preparation for the event in May.

2011 witnessed the introduction of Quadkids, which is a quadrathlon where each participant gets to sprint, jog, jump and throw. Feedback from coaches, participants and spectators was fantastic regarding the format of the competition which gives all athletes a flavour of each athletic event area.

Total Training Attendances over 15 weeks of sessions were as follows.

Table 5

Region	2009	2010	2011
North	157	170	468
South	254	197	254
Douglas North	485	411	354
Douglas South	460	367	331
West	336	0	239
Total	1692	1145	1646

On the day itself approx 150 children took part in the competition, most of whom are not club members. I feel this initiative needs to be supported by the association and its clubs and should be exploited to find new members for our clubs. A co-ordinated approach to link the participants with other athletics events outside of the Manx Youth Games needs to be put into action. There is huge potential to increase membership subscriptions using the Manx Youth Games with such large amounts of young people [passing through the training sessions.

Open Meetings

The Open Meetings were not particularly well attended in general sometimes due to clashes with other events and they could have been marketed better. The continuation of the Open events should be reviewed to see if they can be improved for next summer.

Running Clubs – Run England/IOM

Run England is an England Athletics initiative to get more people running regardless of fitness level. It is aimed at beginners and uses the Leadership in Running Fitness Qualification to help enthusiastic people who want to lead running groups get started. The LiRF course was held in March 2011 with 15 candidates with one from NAC, two from WAC, three from MH, two from IOMVAC, one from MFR and one from MTC. The remaining 5 candidates

were unattached from various backgrounds including recreational runners to personal trainers.

As a result of this there are currently two leaders (Tom Melvin NAC & Mark Preston MFR) who have registered their running groups on the Run England Website. This gives them access to training and administration resources to help organise their running group and deliver engaging running sessions to its group members. It also gives its members access to a biweekly e-magazine with information and stories about running and offers for discounts on running related products.

The challenge now is to market these groups appropriately on the island to increase the amount of runners out there and in turn direct keen runners to the athletics club environment which can often be seen to beginners as an elitist.

The Run England initiative also encourages clubs and local authorities to develop measured recreational running routes called 3,2,1 courses to give beginners places to run that allow structure and goal setting so they can measure their improvement in fitness. Two areas earmarked and awaiting permission form DOI for signage to be erected, are the Douglas Promenade and the Peel to Douglas Heritage Railway Line. This project has not been completed due to many changes in the Run England organisation which have now been settled. It will carry over into the year two development plan.

Summary

In all it has been a busy year with many initiatives being run and of course hosting the Commonwealth Youth Games. The development committee have worked hard to provide opportunities to improve the sport in the areas outlined in this report and continues to do so into the next athletics year. Project areas for the next year are:

- Coach Education
 - Athletics Coach Course (8 candidates enrolled)
 - Coaching Assistant – (if sufficient demand from clubs)
- Officials Education
 - UKA Tutor Course – to deliver Level One Officials workshop
 - UKA Tutor Course – to deliver Level 2 Starter course
 - UKA Officiating workshops at level two in
 - Timekeeping
 - Track Judging
- Coach Development
 - Heavy throws Workshops
 - S&C Workshops
 - Youth Coaching Workshops
 - Sports Coach UK – Introduction to LTAD
 - SCUUK – Introduction to Fundamentals
 - Athletics 365

- Club Structures and Organisation
 - England athletics Accredited Club Status
 - Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
- Run Isle of Man
 - Set up Island Wide 3,2,1 courses
 - Promote running groups under Run IOM Banner
- Local Lead Coach Programme
 - Promote cross club partnerships sharing coaching expertise
 - Mentor-Buddy system to nurture new and aspiring coaches

There will of course be other areas of involvement such as the Manx Youth Games, work with local schools and with continued sponsorship the Isle of Man Sportshall Squad.

Closing Comments

I have found the position of Athletics Development Officer the most challenging post I have been employed in and as equally rewarding. I hope to be of service to the Islands Athletics Clubs into the future and look forward to the year ahead with anticipation at the exciting projects planned which will help strengthen the athletics community.