

# **Management Team Report Isle of Man Athletics Team**

## **Natwest Inter-Island Games**

### **Isle of Wight 2011**

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## **1. The Team**

### **Manager**

Anthony Brand

### **Assistant Managers**

Di Shimell

Danaa Callow

Richard Sille

### **Sports Masseur/Assistant Manager**

Andy Watson

### **Men**

Kevin Loundes

Martin Malone

Ed Gumbley

Keith Gerrard

Andy Barron

Ryan Fairclough

Ben Brand

Michael Haslett

Tom Riley

Daniel Stewart Clague

Harry Pugh

Richard Bell

Lee Corlett

### **Women**

Gail Griffiths

Hannah Howard

Sarah Astin

Gemma Astin

Rachael Franklin

Hannah Riley

Harriet Pryke

Sarah Halligan

Andrea De Bruin

Sinead Kaneen

Reagan Dee

Louise Kneen

Charlotte Christian

## **2. Introduction.**

This report covers the 2011 Island Games held in the Isle of Wight. In no way can this document list and account for all events up to and during the Games but tries to give a flavour of what took place and then make recommendations as to how things may be improved for future Games.

The only reason for these recommendations is to help improve preparations for, and the performance of, the Isle of Man Athletics Team. One has to accept that this is a bit of a misnomer as athletes are in most cases individual sports men and women. However, an element of team spirit is needed when away from home for the duration of the competition.

## **3. Accommodation/Travel.**

We travelled with the IOM team by ferry and then coach to the IOW. Two stops were made on the way. Unfortunately our driver didn't know the way and took a wrong turning which needed me to sort out. This small diversion of about 20 mins meant that we were delayed and missed our IOW ferry and had to wait for the next one. Overall we arrived over an hour later than the first coach.

The Fort Holiday Park was selected by IGAM as suitable for the whole IOM team but after their initial visit it was soon apparent that it could not accommodate everyone. Mobile homes were allocated to sports with some sharing, us with swimming, whilst other sports with their own transport were housed 5 mins up the road at a second location. The mobile homes were too small to comfortably accommodate 6 people, the beds designed for mobile living were small and hard and this didn't make for ideal conditions however after a few days everyone got used to the cramped conditions and seemed fairly happy. In most mobiles someone ended up sleeping in the living areas including myself and in one athletes had to share a double bed. One of the advantages of mobile homes was that they have self catering facilities and this was extremely useful to the middle distance runners who had very specific dietary requirements. Also the fridges were useful for ice packs etc.

Meals at the Caulks Head were generally good with breakfast being excellent, lunch acceptable and dinner good. The staff were very friendly and accommodating and we soon had sorted out our eating arrangements phoning ahead any order for those that were delayed at the track. They also provided us with their wholesalers details and we were able to purchase ice at half the price of the local convenience store. Feedback from the staff was that our athletes were very polite and very easy to deal with.

The Fort Holiday Park was conveniently located about 1.5 miles from the track and so was easily walkable and the buses ran every 30 mins however we organised the use of one of the teams vans on a daily basis and with Di's car we transported all the competing athletes backwards and forwards as necessary. For future Games transport should be considered in advance of the Games as the number of journeys backward and forwards on a daily basis is quite considerable we would not want to be reliant on a bus service that may not be too reliable to get athletes to competition deadlines.

#### **4. The Games.**

The opening ceremony parade in Ryde was spectacular but we had to wait an hour and a half before joining the parade which was a little too long to be standing. However once we were underway we were overwhelmed by the crowds that had come out to see us. The parade lasted around an hour before we were ended up at the formal opening ceremony which was a bit underwhelming given the success of the parade.

The organisation of the athletics event was excellent given that we had little information in advance. The officials running the event were very efficient and well chosen by the organisers and the technical meetings ran smoothly and efficiently.

The track was at the Sandown High School and as such the facilities were none existent. Marques had been erected for changing facilities and meeting /call up rooms. It was lucky the weather was perfect as there was little shelter for athletes/spectators had it rained. The decision to take two gazebos was a good one as this allowed Andy Watson to use one for his treatment area and the other was used to store bags and keep athletes out of the sun. Water for the ice baths was a problem as the nearest water point was some 300m away and filling and moving the bins twice a day was an exhausting and wet task!

The standard of the competition is constantly improving. Medals are much harder to achieve in all events than perhaps they were in some in the past. Basically the standard in depth at the Games has improved tremendously and we must continually strive to provide our athletes with the best opportunity to flourish at the Games.

The closing ceremony was held at Cowes and was another parade through the streets and then a party held at the marina. Again the crowds were large and very approving of the athletes. Our athletes were in fine voice during the parade and everyone enjoyed the party!

This report does not cover individual race reports which have been well covered in the press and David Griffiths blog/book.

## **5. Performances.**

With 28 competitors competing in a total of 35 events there were bound to be a number of performances that exceeded expectations, some on a par with what was expected and some that fell short of the expected level.

Medals were won in 16 events making it one of the most successful Games for Athletics ever :-

- Gold -           Gail Griffiths/Hannah Howard - Half Marathon Team  
                  Hannah Riley – 100m Hurdles  
                  Keith Gerrard – 1500m  
                  Keith Gerrard – 5000m  
                  Harriet Pryke – 400m  
                  Harriet Pryke – 200m  
                  Reagan Dee – High Jump
- Silver -           Kevin Loundes – Half Marathon  
                  Kevin Loundes/Martin Malone/Ed Gumbley – Half Marathon Team  
                  Kevin Loundes – 10,000m  
                  Tom Riley – 110m Hurdles  
                  4x100m Relay Women  
                  4x400m Relay Women  
                  4x400m Relay Men
- Bronze -           4x100m Relay Men  
                  Rachael Franklin – 5000m

Numerous athletes made finals and finished in 4<sup>th</sup>, to 8<sup>th</sup> places (Final placings) often recording excellent performances. See results sheets in appendix.

The following Personal bests and Seasons bests were recorded. For actual times etc. see results sheets in appendix.

Totals -           PBs - 16                   SBs – 21

Manx Record Performances (subject to ratification)

Hannah Riley 110m final -           14.68 seconds  
Womens 4x400m final -                3.54.79 seconds

Island Games Record Performances (Ratified)

Keith Gerrard 1500m final -           3.48.45 seconds

This document will not list athletes who may be deemed to have underperformed.

## **6. The aftermath.**

The closing ceremony and final party went well. Everyone had great fun and all were accounted for afterwards.

All athletes reported on time for the early departure by bus back through the UK. The return journey was long and tiring and once we reached Liverpool those staying on for the Northern League match stayed in Liverpool to travel onwards to their respective hotels. The remainder of the team headed back to the IOM.

Overall the athletics party were tired but happy.

## **7. Recommendations.**

It was a privilege to work with this group of athletes and the hard working management team. However, there are areas for improvement in the future based upon what happened in the build up to and during the IOW Games.

1. A fund raising committee needs forming that does not include the management team. This is a separate task that should not fall on the same people. All athletes need to be involved to ensure that the task does not fall on the same athletes each time and that the distribution of funds is fair.
2. Athletes need to realise that they have to record performances in 2012 to ensure selection for 2013. The summer of 2013 is too late.
3. Only athletes committed to going to the Games will be selected. Places will not be kept open for athletes looking to compete at other events. Places will be kept open for athletes trying to fit another event into the same period but are committed to going to the Games.
4. Where possible attempts should be made in future to ensure the management team reflects all competition areas of the team. Currently we are short on field events skills. The management team should be as follows: Overall Manager and then event based coaches – Sprints, Distance & Field.
5. The IOMAA should consider funding the expenses of the Manager and funding/part funding the assistant managers. The amount of work put in by the management team prior to and during the Games is considerable, added to that is the time commitment (ie holiday from work/away from family etc), the loss of income and the expense of the next Games. It should be noted that most of the other managers are funded by their sport as were the athletics managers I spoke to during the Games.
6. The system of meetings and publicity we had prior to the Games should be continued. Email/Facebook contact has helped greatly here.
7. The hiring of a vehicle for the Games period might prove sensible in future games where accommodation is some way from the competition venue. The busses tend to be unreliable.
8. Team management should have more information regarding athletes training and preparation prior to the Games. It is imperative athletes are well prepared as the standard of competition is so high now.

9. The use of coaches from off island for the technical events should continue as over the last 2 years to enable our athletes to compete with those of other islands and not be at a great disadvantage.
10. The IOMAA and team management should try to ensure that IGAM make bookings as early as possible for the next games so costs are clear to all.
11. IGAM need to ensure that team kit is delivered on time and that it fits the athletes or that there are plenty of spares for swapping etc. IOMAA need to ensure that the team have enough team wear to ensure constant use during the Games.
12. The IOMAA needs to find major sponsors – solely for the Island Games.

## **8. Conclusion**

The Isle of Wight Games were a major success.

Our targets were:

Short - 8 medals

Long - 12 medals

– our Aim was for 2 Gold medals

We exceeded all our targets.

**Anthony Brand**

**IOM AA – Athletics Team Manager.**

**2011**