

WIMBORNE A.C. NEWS

Autumn/Winter 2020



SECRETARY'S REVIEW *Glyn Davies*

Despite our best efforts to keep the various sections of the club operational during the summer, we once again are unfortunately faced with a period of inactivity due to the Covid situation. Notwithstanding the ability to meet up and run with one other person it would appear that other training activities must cease. This message has already been conveyed via the Sunday newsletter to the roadrunning section but I guess by now most members are already aware of the situation.

The previous lockdown did see some subsequent relaxing of guidelines and we will attempt keep abreast of any government or England Athletics statements that suggest we can recommence and under what conditions. We are also governed by what QELC can or can't do as they are our facilities provider. We did not manage to return to training at Blandford Camp whose restrictions are more exacting than the other venues.

Our message to the WAC members is that thanks to the efforts of our coaches and administrative staff, the procedures, risk assessments and training frameworks are all in place ready for the resumption of training. Try and keep yourselves active and we will circulate any relevant updates in due course.

THE UNDER-11s SESSIONS *Paula Hine*

The under-11s sessions returned to training after the first lockdown with great enthusiasm and commitment from both the coaches and the athletes. The sessions proved to be so popular that a waiting list process was in operation. Places on each session were limited due to Covid restrictions, equipment and space available. The flexibility to just turn up, pay and train was no longer available. We also missed the opportunity to use the indoor facilities, and occasionally had to cancel sessions when the weather conditions dictated.

On the coaching front we have had a new coach join our coaching team, we welcome Georgie Butt to our Saturday morning sessions. Just before lockdown, two of our parent helpers Claire and Richard, qualified as assistant coaches and have certainly been putting their qualifications into good practice. All of these coaches are a great asset to our club. We are all missing Gill, but we are thinking of her and we look forward to welcoming her back at some stage. We also had two student sports leaders working with us, Fraser Adams and Oliver Rawles, and we are grateful of their commitment to the athletes.

With the Sportshall athletics season on hold at the moment we have no competitions on the horizon to prepare for. But this did not dampen our spirits. Our sessions were full of fun running, relays, throwing varied equipment in various ways, and learning how to jump long, high and combine different jumps. The children have been amazing to work with and I know the coaches have their spirits lifted after each session with our young WACers.

ENDURANCE SQUAD ROUND-UP *Ian Kennedy*

It's been a year like no other, bringing all sorts of challenges. I'd like to give a big shout out to the coaches and support team that enabled our club to become one of the first to return to training after the initial lockdown. The roll of honour for the Endurance Squad includes coaches Jon Braund, Daryl Davies, Lesley Davies, Richard Davies, Abbie Hine, Kay Moss and Claire Ruscoe with superb support from Elana Albery, Nadia Bunting, Seamus Doran, Brendan Dunn, Tara Green, Jess Kennedy, Phil O'Connor and Rob Rawles. We're fortunate to have such a great support team. We owe these guys a debt of thanks, they've delivered week-in week-out as we've watched the ebb and flow, and we've had to adapt as rules were amended by the UK government, England Athletics and our venues. With the support of our team we'll continue to strive to deliver as much as we can under the prevailing guidelines.

The early season track season was wiped out, later there were limited opportunities to compete in open meetings and a few road races. Some from the squad took advantage of what was on offer. We saw the rise of the 'virtual' event where competitors ran in isolation and recorded their performances electronically. Notable amongst these was the Roger Bannister Mile in May.

WAC's Piers Copeland won this event having recording 4:02 for a mile along Ham Lane. Some athletes headed for Newbury recently and Grace Copeland broke the WAC's women's 5k club record (16:53). It's been impressive how focussed so many of our athletes have remained, despite limited opportunity to compete.

Elite and international track meetings were less affected. Piers Copeland travelled to France, Poland (twice), Sweden, Switzerland and Doha. Due to Covid restrictions all he saw was the inside of airports, hotels and stadiums! During that time he became South-West England's All Time No. 1 for 800 and 1500m, and ran the fastest 2000m by any Brit for 14 years, taking the UK U23 record. Tracking Piers' progress has been a thrill. It was fantastic to watch the Diamond League meeting from Doha live on the BBC as he recorded a time just 3/10ths of a second from Olympic qualifying. After Piers' breakthrough season he has decided to become a full time athlete ... we wish Piers the very best in his career.

By now we have usually started to compete in cross-country races. There was hope that the Hampshire League would operate, unfortunately landowners' permission was withdrawn for the early fixtures prior to a second lockdown being announced. Organisers are working hard to deliver as much as possible, it isn't clear yet how things will develop with county, regional and national cross-country championships into the new year. This statement from the English Cross Country Association sums up where we are, *'We will look at the situation ... no later than the end of December ... It [is] noted that the "National" has only ever been cancelled during the two world wars and we certainly do not want to fall into that category ... Please be assured that we will do everything we can to get cross country running and our Championships ... back with you as soon as it is possible.'*

I'm encouraged that, both at a local and national level, there are people working very hard on our behalf to bring us some competition.

TREASURER'S REPORT *Richard Nunn*

The club's financial year end is 30th September and, given this topsy-turvy year, we thought you might like to know just what the effect has been on our financial standing and why.

You don't need to be reminded that the normality of the year ended in March with the major health changes in the country and indeed the world which also heralded the enforced stop to our training sessions and all league competition. From that time onwards we have been strictly following the national regulations and England Athletics guidelines. Training did restart in a numbers limited way using Canford School and then QELC (but without indoor sessions). Regrettably there will be no Sportshall League this year but there are hopes the Hampshire Cross Country League could survive in some reduced form.

In the light of this the obvious impact financially is that session fees have reduced dramatically but that needs to be seen in the light that our location hire charges have also reduced. These figures are the largest part of our income and expenditure.

- Net income for the year was £2,854 (last year £7,399)

Membership renewals:

- Net renewals amounted to £4,657 (last year £4,669)

League costs:

- Net costs for league participation £777 (last year £2,694)

We really didn't know what the impact on our finances would be this year but it is good to note that there was net contribution to our accumulated funds of £3,186 reflecting the continued membership levels and the reduction in costs.

We fully appreciate that our members have not been able to enjoy what could normally be expected from Wimborne AC and we are keen to reflect this in the membership fee renewals called for in 2021. A proposal circulated to the committee was that *"the WAC membership element of the annual subscription should be waived in 2021 for any person who has paid their 2020 subscriptions before 1st October 2020"*. As most of you are aware, there is a second portion of the subs (EA competition affiliation circa £15) which will still be payable once we receive confirmation from EA of the exact details. The proposal was accepted and the renewal notice in December will reflect this.

HORIZONTAL JUMPS *Lorraine Winton*

Post-initial lockdown the jumps group trained on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. Attendance was good throughout and especially well attended on Saturdays with up to 12 athletes training. With this amount of athletes any help once we return to activity would be appreciated as it seems the jumps group, ie long, triple and high jump, rarely have any volunteers.

SHOT PUT AND DISCUS *Glyn Davies*

Whilst training continued during the permitted period the take-up has been low. Recent sessions operate from QELC on a Saturday was split between shot and discus. The message is therefore '*When normal service resumes I would welcome more of you to have a go*'. We are awaiting the installation of our new discus circle to make use of the cage and netting erected last year.

If you attended our presentation evening last year you will be aware of the rapid progress made by Kane Aubrey during 2019 in both shot put and discus. Well it's great to see the progress has continued and his training efforts resulted in him smashing the clubs 6k shot record with a throw of 16.34m at a local meeting in September. Well done!

JAVELIN *Ashley Long*

We have been delivering javelin sessions throughout the summer and will continue to do so post-lockdown. We provided double sessions on Saturday mornings with the earlier session for athletes new to the event, starting the athlete on safety and the fundamentals of javelin. The later session was for athletes that have the desire to develop their skills in the event and to prepare them for competition.

We observed the Covid-19 safety protocols, safe distancing and hygiene care of equipment. I provided coaching for groups of five athletes per session and athletes booked a slot on the session via email. Bookings opened on a 'first come first serve' basis. I am always happy to welcome new athletes and look forward to seeing you all at training.

ROADRUNNING *Nick Solomon*

In the *W.A.C. News Spring 2020* newsletter we mentioned that all events in the coming weeks were cancelled. Little did we anticipate that it would be months before there would be a resumption of competitive races. In the few events that have been held in recent weeks the experience has been surreal with no mass starts and spectator-free environments. Race organisers have found novel ways to encourage participation in alternative events.

WAC roadrunners competed in a number of these Covid secure events such as the New Forest Marathon Festival, Clarendon Marathon, Hellstone Marathon and the virtual London Marathon to name a few.

During August and September we organised two virtual races on the Wimborne 10 and Wimborne 20 courses. Competitors ran the 'race' within a two week window, submitting evidence of their times such as their GPS file. The initiative was well received by the local running community with over 100 runners taking part.

In July, as restrictions eased, we returned to training around the tracks around Pamphill and the Kingston Lacy Estate. As the evenings drew in we reverted to our winter training programme based in Colehill. Our club evenings comprise of structured sessions such as hill work or interval training alongside some general runs. The latest lockdown sees these activities suspended for the time being.

Also at this time of year we are normally gearing up to host our Wimborne 10 Road Race. This year because of the uncertainty and logistical difficulties we have made the decision to cancel both the Wimborne 10 race which was scheduled for November and the Wimborne 20 race which was scheduled for March.

Our run leaders organised another 'Couch to 5k' training programme based at Bytheway Field. The 9-week programme started in September and concluded with a celebratory 5k run along the Castleman Trailway.