

## **WIMBORNE AC NEWS** *Autumn 2021*

### **FROM THE CHAIRMAN** Jason Hall

So far so good regarding getting back to something like a normal existence, however, there is still some way to go yet. The good news is that we have managed to get a track season in this year, albeit a reduced one. But looking on the bright side it was a good taster for next year and hopefully we have cleared away a few of the lockdown cobwebs. It's also great to see that we have cross country back on the agenda, though again a reduced version, however, it's still a great opportunity to get back into the mud...you know you love it really! On the Road Running front we have the Wimborne 10 to look forward to this month and the Dorset Road Race League is planning a full programme of races for next year.

Training is also getting back to normal and it's great to actually speak with so many familiar faces again along with meeting the many new club members. There have been a few changes though, as you are all aware, we have lost two cornerstones of the club to retirement, Ian (our Endurance and Cross-Country coach) and Steve (our sprints coach). I got back into running thanks to Ian about ten years ago and have some great memories of both mud and exhaustion running with the endurance group. I then moved into Steve's very capable hands and started sprinting again after more years than I care to remember. Running has always been a big part of my life and it's thanks to the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication of people like Ian and Steve that we all enjoy our sport so much. So, on behalf of Wimborne AC I would like to say a HUGE thank you to both Ian and Steve for all they have done for us all. With 'Endurance' and 'Sprinting' written through them like the words in a stick of rock I'm sure this won't be the last we see of them.

Don't forget that if you are a track and field athlete winter training is the foundation to your success next season. All the hard work you put in now will provide you with a solid springboard from which you can smash any PB's from last year.

**Finally don't forget the annual Awards Evening at Wimborne Football Club (BH21 2FU) on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of November.**

### **ROAD RUNNING** *Nick Solomon*

The long-awaited return of road racing has seen WAC runners competing in The New Forest Marathon, Clevedon Marathon, London Marathon, Manchester Marathon and many more half marathon and 10k races including the local Bournemouth Half Marathon and 10k.

Our own Wimborne 10-mile road race is being run on 21st November at Pamphill Green. The event attracts over 500 runners and is a regular fixture for local club runners with an added incentive of homemade cakes at the finish. If you have a hidden talent for cake baking or would like to volunteer as an additional marshal at the event then contact Steve Wyatt who is the race director.

Looking ahead to 2022 the Dorset Road Race League are planning to hold a full series of twelve races starting with the Broadstone Quarter Marathon on New Year's Day. These races vary in distance from 5 miles to the full marathon distance of 26.2 miles and form part of our road runners club championship.

The road runners train on a Thursday night at their new winter venue of Wimborne Town Football Club. The sessions are focussed on different aspects of road running from strength in hill work to speed in intervals.

### **ENDURANCE : CROSS-COUNTRY & INDOORS** *Ian Kennedy*

The track and field season has now drawn to a close, and although we did not entirely make it back to pre-lockdown normality, as the summer months passed, slowly but surely, things did improve. The season got off to a later than usual start, and unusually this meant track meetings extended to the last weekend in September. WAC's middle-distance runners competed in the club's, and Team Dorset's, league meetings but there was less activity from our squad chasing across the country to compete in championship, British Milers' Club and open meetings. However, having had really limited opportunities to race due to lockdown in the 2020 season it was fantastic to be back out there. Even when the availability of competition was limited, the endurance squad managed to maintain high levels of motivation in training. The squad's commitment was ultimately rewarded as once on the track PBs were forthcoming, and in many instances it was by quite extraordinary margins. Club records fell to Piers Copeland (senior) over 400m, 800m, 1500m and Emily Shaw (u20) in the 800m and 1500m. Emily had a particularly fruitful 4-week spell where despite being bottom of age-group she came second in the under-20 English Championships for 1500 (19/6/21), then at the British Championships over 3000m (25/6/21) she was fourth, she then went on to claim third in the English Schools Championships for 1500m (9/7/21). It was so good to welcome back the English Schools Championships after it had suffered cancellation in 2020 for the first time since World War II! Emily has ambitions to make the U20 team for the European Championships in 2022, however she will still be eligible the following year.

In the previous edition of WAC News we were looking forward to a summer Olympics, particularly as WAC's Piers Copeland had targeted the 1500m in Tokyo. At that time he was still chasing down an Olympic qualifying time, the time Piers had to beat was 3:35, he achieved that on 9 June in Marseille. There was more to be done as incredibly four other British athletes had met the Olympic standard and so it was to come down to the British Championships later in June. No matter how well you prepare, and how hard you work, luck can play a part. Piers safely negotiated the qualifying heat at the British Championships. He then had the misfortune to be the only one of the five with an Olympic time to be pulled in by doing control. It took hours and impacted on his carefully laid post-race plan. He missed his massage and wasn't able to eat until very late. There are fine margins at elite level and come the following day's final, despite being well-placed for the early/mid part of the race, his trademark fast finish deserted him. The three Tokyo-bound GB 1500m runners all made the Olympic final with Josh Kerr taking the bronze medal. Piers is already looking to the future, he moved to Cardiff in 2018 for uni and has properly set

down his roots, having lived there ever since. In the past 12 months he has chosen to represent Wales and so on his list of future targets are the Commonwealth Games next summer (in Birmingham) ... and of course the next Olympics is only three years away (Paris 2024) when he will still only be 25 years old.

The cream of the South West's U13, U15 and U17 middle distance athletes took part in London Mini Marathon trials at Taunton. This included six from the Wimborne Endurance Squad: Harry Butcher, Iris Courtney, Evie Fuller, Birdie Payne, Jack Williams and Tom Williams. Harry was then selected to represent South West England, and then took part in, the London Mini Marathon on 3 October.

The late finish for Track & Field has had a knock-on effect delaying the start of the cross-country season. In the gap between the track and cross-country seasons it's become a thing for WACers to get their 'eye in' for XC by racing at Black Hill (near Bere Regis) in a trail race. The Black Hill races took place on 26 September and the results we saw there gave us a boost. The 3k was won by WAC under-11 Ewan Eadie, while in the 5k it was a WAC full house on the podium. The race was won by Josh Fazakerley, and brothers Jack and Tom Williams took second and third. Jay Dunn competed in the 10k (his first time over the distance) and he finished 7th of 173 ... he's was the youngest competitor in the field.

With the later start to the season the pieces of the jigsaw for the fixture list are slowly falling into place. The race calendar is being updated on the club website as the information becomes available (see <https://www.wimborneac.co.uk/cross-country/cross-country-fixtures/>). Our first league races this season was on the 17 October at Canford Heath (Wessex League), still to go are 7 November at Ferndown (Wessex), 13 November at Bournemouth (Hampshire League) and 4 December in Aldershot (Hants). All the indications are that we are in for a busy spell post-Christmas with more Hampshire League races, plus all the usual championship events. For general advice and more information on cross-country with WAC visit <https://www.wimborneac.co.uk/cross-country/xc-helpful-advice/>.

### **Under 11's** *Paula Hine*

Our under 11's group have had a fantastic season. They have been an awesome group to work with. We have had regular attendance at training sessions, even in the rain, and positive enthusiasm to compete. Three club records have been broken and numerous PB's have been set. To top it all we discovered that we finished in second place overall in the Wessex Quad Kids League, beating over 20 other clubs and being beaten only by Winchester AC. We truly are very proud coaches.

It has now come to that time of year where the year 6 athletes in the group start to spread their wings and venture out into other club event groups for training. This can be a daunting process for some of them, but I feel sure that they will be welcomed by our excellent team of coaches and there will be plenty of opportunities for competing again next season. Now is also a great time to try all the different events and find out which one you like the most.

Our team of under 11's coaches wish all those moving up in the club all the very best.

W.A.C.! They are super 🌟🌟.

### **Officials needed**

Despite a reduced track and field fixture programme in 2021, it was still a struggle to turn out with an acceptable compliment of qualified officials for all our league matches. As a club participating in these leagues we are required to provide officials and helpers to allow each match to take place. If we cannot provide the required number of officials we lose points for that match and the match may even have to be cancelled.

The task of officiating tends to fall on the same few people throughout the season and with several of our officials having to cut down their attendance at league matches we are having to consider whether we can continue with all the leagues we participate in.

So a plea to anyone out there who can help officiate through the season, please get in touch or speak with one of our coaches. Becoming an official is not difficult with many resources now online and as a club we will always ensure that you get all the help, guidance and support you need. Any level of help that you can offer will be greatly appreciated and allow us to ensure we maintain the opportunities for all our athletes to compete throughout the year.

### **Club Kit**

When representing the club in races athletes must wear a club vest. These are available from Richard Nunn but if you don't know Richard or haven't seen him while you are training just speak to one of the coaches, they should be able to arrange to get you a club vest.

In addition the club has a range of training kit which is available via the club website [www.wimborneac.co.uk/club-shop/](http://www.wimborneac.co.uk/club-shop/) . The range includes technical t-shirts, hoodies and beani hats.