HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF ATHLETIC & RUNNING CLUBS

Report of the General Committee for 2015-16

**December** -..The SEAA Inter-County Cross-Country was held at Biggleswade. Teams were entered in all available categories with the best result coming in the U15 boys with 3rd individual and 3rd team.

**January** – the County Cross-Country Championships were organised by Stevenage. There was an entry of 530 with 400 actually running on the day. Because Marriotts School was not available, the courses had to be altered at the last moment. Stevenage & NH were able to provide hot drinks for officials and spectators and results were compiled in the scout hut.

The Regional Sportshall final was held at Hatfield with 3 teams (U15B, U15G, U13B) qualifying for the National final

**March** – The county veterans’ cross-country was held jointly with Middlesex at Cassiobury Park. Dacorum & Tring did an excellent job organising the course and marshals. Chip timing was used for the first time and proved a success apart from one or two slight hitches. 185 Herts athletes entered.

The officials’ social was organised by Herts Phoenix with an enjoyable quiz organised by Stuart Broadhead, and food provided by the Feathers Inn in Wadesmill. The number of officials joining in was lower than usual unfortunately.

The Tri-County Indoor Championship (Herts/Kent/Middlesex) was held at Lee Valley. This championship is very popular and means two rather long days for officials, but the meeting was completed within the time frame required.

The county sent teams in all age-groups to the UK CAU Cross-Country Championships in Birmingham. There were top 20 finishes from Elizabeth Janes (SW 14th), Jamie Philpott (U17M 15th), Grace Ingles (U13G 19th) and Tom Patrick (U15B 20th).

**April** – In the Sportshall final in Manchester the three teams performed very well with the U13B and U15G finishing 3rd and the U15B finishing 4th in their respective age-groups.

**May** – this was a busy month with two county T&F events taking place. Early in the month the first day of the championships was held at Stevenage. This included U13s, veterans, 1500m races, disability and relays as well as open events. The main championship for all the other age-groups took place at Watford with entries slightly down. The county association is very grateful for the use of the portacabin, photofinish system and Watford clubhouse.

A team from Tring Running Club travelled to Wales to compete in the Fell Running Championships. Despite finishing in last place they were all reported to have enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to competing again.

**June** – the popular U13 Challenge was hosted by Herts Phoenix at Gosling track with Herts Phoenix finishing in first place.

The county pentathlons and 3000m were held at the end of the month, ably organised by Diane Ratcliffe and Dacorum & Tring. Entries were slightly down, possibly due to the ESAA Regional Combined events being held on the same weekend.

**July** – the county 10000m track race was again held in conjunction with an open 10k at Sandy by courtesy of David Brown of Biggleswade.

There was a whole succession of weekends with Inter-County matches. The boys and girls U13 teams were both 7th in the Inter-County match at Kingston. In the U17 match at Bromley the U17M were 7th and the U17W were 5th. The senior men were 5th and the senior women were in their match at Basingstoke and in the UK CAU Inter-Counties at Bedford the men and women were both 7th.

The County road relays, hosted by Fairlands Valley Spartans at Stevenage, were again very popular. The CAU walking trophy was unexpectedly won by the county walkers at Coventry.

**August** –The SEAA Inter-County U15/U20 match was held at Oxford with the U15s finishing 5th and the U20s 7th.

**September** – The Young Athletes Road Relays were held with Middlesex at Feltham. Only two Herts clubs took part.

The final Inter-County competition (the Hibbard Trophy) was held at Peterborough in atrocious conditions. The men finished 3rd, women 5th and U17 men 2nd.

During the year there have also been Road Championships at the various distances from 5km to marathon for seniors and veterans. These have been organised by the promoting clubs – Watford Harriers, St Albans Striders, Chiltern Harries, Garden city Runners, Fairlands Valley Spartans, N Herts RR as well as two clubs outside and not affiliated to the county.

On an administrative note, athletes are now obliged to pay £13 to register with England Athletics and we are obliged to ask for their EA registration when they enter a county competition, (as all leagues and other competition providers must as well).

There have been Hertfordshire athletes at some major T&F championships – Jodie Williams travelled to the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games where she reached the semi-final of the 200m. She also reached the semi-final of the 200m in the European Championships in Amsterdam. Her sister Hannah competed in the World Juniors at Bydgoszcz in Poland where she reached the semi-finals of the 400m. She also competed for the GB Juniors at the Loughborough International. Philippa Lowe was also at Loughborough in the England team at 400m hurdles. Antonio Infantino (representing Italy also reached the semi-finals of the 200m at the European Championships in Amsterdam. Two disability athletes – Mitchell Dutton and Amy Wareing - gained valuable experience in the IPC European championships. Rachel Felton ran for England in the IAAF Half marathon championships in Cardiff

Brian Fowler, our President was awarded an SEAA Merit Award for his long service to Barnet & District and to the North West London Young Athletes Cross-Country League.

Our collaboration with Middlesex at several of the championships has increased and this helps both counties with officials and organisation.

Sally Stevens who has been doing sterling work looking after the female cross-country runners as well as the track & field has decided to concentrate on the warmer summer activities. We have a new volunteer in Deborah Steer from St Albans. Marie Heald who has organised the Sportshall Athletics for many years, has also decided to step down and we are looking for someone to take on her role. The county would like to thank both these ladies.

On behalf of the Herts committee I would like to thank all the clubs, especially those who hosted events, team managers, officials and other helpers who have supported the county this year and look forward to seeing you all in 2017.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a happy and successful 2017. Sally Gandee - Hon Secretary 18th November 2016