



SUSSEX COUNTY AA

President: Martin Etchells

Report to the Annual General Meeting on Friday 16th October 2015

British Athletics and the sport internationally have had a roller coaster year. The highs have included Sebastian Coe's election to head the IAAF, Jessica Ennis-Hill's triumphant return to the World Stage, the future of UK women's sprinting in the hands and feet of the teenager Dina Asher-Smith and Mo Farah's invincibility on the track.

However it has been a year when the ever-present spectre of drug taking has loomed large over our sport. Russian and Kenyan drugs cheats have fallen like flies. Justin Gatlin, the twice banned American looked to be unbeatable, until Usain Bolt returned to form just when the sport needed him most. The controversy around, the since cleared but inevitably tarnished, Alberto Salazar and the unauthorised leaking of blood data information of one of Britain's greatest athletes - Paula Radcliffe - have all impacted on the image of athletics.

There have though been many outstanding results for Sussex athletes and teams over the past twelve months. We have had at least one representative and often multiple at the World Championships, the European Indoor and World Cross-Country Championships and at the World and Commonwealth Youth Games and European Junior Championships. In addition several Under 20 and Under 17 athletes have had England and GBR call-ups for the first time this year.

Sussex records have toppled and three of our younger athletes have set European and/or National age group records. It is also very satisfying that the county's investment in pole vault development has reaped rewards with Sussex athletes featuring not just in the top 10 but often in the top three of nearly every ranking list from Under 13 to Under 20.

In total across Road Racing, Cross-Country, Indoor and Track and Field, more athletes competed in all the county championships and events than in previous years. However there has been a significant drop off in the senior age groups in some competitions and the boost to numbers has come predominantly from the younger age groups.

Via their roles on the Regional Council Stuart Condie and Keith May have continued to effectively represent the views of the county association to England Athletics. Following widespread consultation proposals to change young athletes age groups were dropped. The track and field county championships will also return to the second weekend of May in 2016.

The county has been saddened by the deaths of two long serving officials in the last month. Ken Best MBE died at the age of 91. Before moving to Horsham after retiring he was, for many years, a stalwart with the Surrey Walking Club and Civil Service association. After settling in Sussex Ken had consistently supported race walking in the County and had been an ever present at the County Track and Field championships and at Sportshall as a track judge until he reached his ninetieth birthday. He was also a regular judge at the Horsham Blue Star home meetings.

We are also mourning the death of Dawn Piechoczek at just 54, after her brave fight with cancer. Until struck by illness just under two years ago Dawn was of course the Administrator for the Sussex Athletics Network and County Association where she brought diligence, efficiency and sense of humour to her role in the organisation of all aspects of athletics, road running and cross-country

in the county. As Club Secretary for Mel's Milers not only was Dawn a popular and much loved club member but also a keen and talented runner who frequently picked up age group prizes. She and club members regularly took part in races all over Sussex, further afield and on trips abroad which Dawn often organised. Dawn will be sadly missed both by her friends and club members in Mel's Milers and the wider athletics community throughout Sussex.

Reports of activities within the various areas of the County during the year are presented below.

Cross-country

The 2014 – 2015 Cross Country season was in many respects a bumper one for Sussex athletics in recent years. The upward trend in numbers has continued with overall league participation on the rise, which has been reflected in championships fields both at club and school level. One effect has been in the strength of the Sussex teams in the inter-counties resulting in a top 10 overall placing nationally over all the age groups. One of the highlights of the season was the hosting of the South of England Championships at Stanmer Park for the second time in four years with two Sussex athletes involved in one of the closest finishes for years in the senior men's race which resulted in a gold and bronze for the Phoenix duo of Ben Tickner and Jon Pepper while Worthing's Emma Macready ran a superb tactical race to claim bronze in the senior women's race while Grace Baker went one better in the under 20 age group. Following a month later, the English National returned to its spiritual home at Parliament Hill with Sussex having one of its best turnouts for years and 5 top 10 finishes – 3 of the Southern stars were again on form with Ben 5th, Emma 10th and Grace 4th and were joined by Hastings duo of George Pool 5th in the under 13 boys and Joe Body 6th in the under 15 boys race.

The County Scene:

The Brooks Sussex League

As usual the opening fixture returned to Goodwood on a windy but clear day and saw no less than 500 athletes register for the main scoring races, plus an additional 41 in the under 11's. Plumpton followed in November with totals of 482 and 84 respectively breaking Goodwood's overall record with 566 runners over the eight races. The Lancing Manor course saw just under 500 athletes compete in December and the league returned to Lancing for a hastily re-arranged fixture in February, as the Bexhill course had still not recovered after the heavy rain before county championships in January. Thanks must go to a fine joint effort from many of the clubs to put on the 4th fixture at short notice. Not counting a few extra non-scorers, just over 2000 runners competed in the four fixtures, not far short of double the number who ran just over a decade ago. Regarding team medals, Brighton & Hove won the senior men's first division title from Lewes and Crawley, while there was a new name on the women's title with a well deserved first ever win for Lewes in front of Chichester and Worthing.

Championships

Hastings hosted the main championships in early January over a course saturated by a heavy band of rain, which had crossed south-east England in the days and hours before the event. The racing was no less exciting with the junior girls winners Rose Ellis, Almi Nerurkar and Harmony Cooper while the boys winners were Stephen Ferroni, Joe Body and George Pool, with three of the winners from the home club Hastings to go with the majority of the team wins. The junior team shield went to Chichester as a result of their consistency across the six age groups. In the senior races, former winner Emma Macready had to settle for second place although she won the senior title, as under 20 Grace Baker just got the better of things on the day. The men's race included the under

20's in the early stages with Billy White coming out on top while there was a titanic battle for the senior crown with Jon Pepper getting the better of Phoenix clubmate Ben Tickner by a mere 3 seconds with the rest of the field spread-eagled a further two minutes back.

Worthing Striders again hosted the Masters a couple of weeks later over the tough Lancing Manor course and there were wins for Jeff Pyrah (Hastings), Keith Newton (Brighton & Hove) and Paul Whelpton (Brighton Phoenix) in the men's races while Chichester's Fay Cripps retained her over 35 women's title while Liz Lumber (Hailsham) won the over 45 race and Linda Tombes won what is believed to be the first ever cross country title for Fittleworth Flyers in the over 55 race.

The three Championship team shields went to 3 different clubs – in addition to Chichester's junior team win, Brighton Phoenix won the combined senior and veteran shield while rivals Brighton & Hove came out on top in the combined junior and senior races, a total of 14 separate age groups from under 13's right through to veteran over 45/55 for the women and over 60 for the men. Credit must go to Peter Witcomb and his fellow B&H team managers and coaches for such a fine all-round performance.

Inter-counties

Much credit must be given to the three team managers, Dave Leach, Chris Marsden and Vicki Clark for the success of the Sussex team in the two inter-county events during the season, especially in the main national event at Cofton Park, Birmingham where Sussex were ranked overall in 10th place out of the 44 counties and areas from across Great Britain. In the junior age groups the under 13 boys were a fine 4th with the girls 10th while the under 17 men were 8th and the under 20 men 9th. What was most satisfying was in the showing of the two senior teams where the women finished 12th while the men had their best result

for many years led home by a top 10 placing from Ben Tickner and their final scoring 6th runner home in 106th giving a team position of 8th.

Schools

The Sussex schools championships were held as in the previous year at Waterhall, near Brighton midweek in January and were once again a resounding success with a total of 673 recorded finishers over the six races with both junior races having fields of nearly 200. The switch to a midweek date seems to be popular with the schools and looks likely to continue. The girls' winners were Rose Ellis, Nancy Jones and Almi Nerurkar while the boy's winners were Stephen Ferroni, Archie Davis and Ben Collins. Brighton College emerged with the most team titles, especially in the upper age groups. There was similar enthusiasm for the years 7 and 8 championships held at Christ's Hospital in March.

(Phil Baker)

Sussex Sportshall Athletics

The two Sportshall leagues at Horsham and Worthing continued successfully in 2014/15. The Horsham league fixtures were again held at Tanbridge School. The season started with six clubs taking part (the maximum possible for the size of the hall), but East Grinstead withdrew after the first fixture. The Worthing league fixtures were held at the Lancing Leisure Centre and now involve five clubs with the inclusion of Burgess Hill.

From the results of the league fixtures, teams were selected to represent Sussex in the Regional inter county events for Under 11s and combined Under 13s / Under 15s which were held at Burgess Hill. This year the County Sportshall teams had one of their best overall results for several years at the Regionals. Both the U15 Girls and the U13 boys placed third, the latter missing silver by just one point, whilst the U15 boys and U13 girls came fourth.

With the absence of a sponsor the inter county events can only take place with the financial support of the competing counties to cover the cost of facility hire, medals and if teams wish, the supply of t-shirts.

Background: The Sportshall League at Tanbridge School in Horsham, organised by John Linfield, began 34 years ago when the Blue Stars promoted two demonstration meetings. In the early days there were only four or five clubs in the County interested in this form of competition but in recent years there has been more widespread interest since UK Athletics adopted Sportshall as a grassroots scheme as a first step into athletics for young people.

Trivia:

- England U21 Football Manager Gareth Southgate took part in the Horsham Sportshall League.

Sussex Indoor Championships

The Sussex indoor Championships took place over the weekend of 14th –15th February this year. There was a large dip in the number of senior athletes supporting the championships, but in total only seven fewer entrants than last year, as support from the younger athletes – the U13's particularly - continues to

grow. Consequently most senior events and many of the U20 events had no more than three or four contestants. There was also a drop in the number of athletes doing more than one event, but most of those doing three events or more left with multiple medals. There were some excellent sprint performances with the U17W 60m final being particularly memorable.

As usual, this event was run in conjunction with the Surrey Championships and thanks are extended to the Surrey County AA who undertook most of the organisation. Thanks also to those officials from Sussex who made the journey and contributed to a successful weekend of athletics competition.

Track & Field

Entries for the County Championships in May were up on last year's figures, although it is in the senior age groups where the numbers continue to be low. The event went well with fine weather for both days. There were five Championship records broken; Calum Neil (Horsham) U17M pole vault 4.31m, Orla Brothers (Crawley) U17W 300m 39.6, Bill Saunders U15 pole vault 3.70m Livvy Connor (Lewes) 3.60m to take the U20W pole vault title and Grace Baker's 4:37.9 1500m (U20W). Two records were equalled Jason Hussain (Crawley) 21.2 over 200m and Anna Short (Brighton) 12.1 in the U20W 100m. Thanks must go to all the officials and helpers over the weekend.

The Masters Championships were held with the Surrey Championships at Ewell Court with entries similar to previous years.

Sussex sent teams to all of the inter-county fixtures this year. Thank you to all the team managers: Terry and Michelle Notman - U13 and U15; Paul Cunningham, U20, Steve Jones and Janice Farrar - U17. Craig Cox and Amy Barclay - Seniors. Also thanks to Craig again and Chris Minn who managed the Senior

Inter County event hosted by Sussex at K2, where the Men's team won the event for the first time. The Women's team finished 3rd with the county taking second place overall. At the CAU Championships at Bedford the Women's team finished in an excellent 4th place, with the Men's team 11th. The Under 13 Southern Inter Counties, held at Kingston, saw the Girls team finish 4th and the Boys team 7th. In the SEAA U15 & U20 Inter Counties at Hendon, the Under 15 Boys & Girls team finished 5th with the Under 20 Men & Women team 9th of the 17 Counties competing, whilst the Under 17 eight County match saw the Men's team 7th and the Women's team 7th.

Schools have had a bumper year on the track with many outstanding results. In May Amber Anning (Brighton & Hove) broke the U15G pentathlon Championship Best performance (CBP) at the Sussex Schools Combined Events Championships.

In June at one of the best supported Sussex Schools Track and Field Championships for a decade, records fell. Joe Fuggle (Tonbridge) broke the 23-year-old Intermediate Boys 400m hurdles CBP and Vicki Pellett (Crawley) won the Inter girls hammer with a 50m plus throw. Later in the month in the South East Schools Inter-County match at Erith Junior Girl Alyssa White (Chichester) won the sprint double, Intermediate Orla Brothers was victorious over 300m and Calum Neil (Horsham) and Scott Staples (Lewes) won the pole vault and javelin, respectively.

At the South East Schools Combined Events Championships at Reading senior Girls Katie Garland (Brighton & Hove) and Beth Crocker (Crawley) won gold and silver in the heptathlon and junior girl Amber Anning broke the Sussex U15 pentathlon record with a score of 3252 points to claim silver. All three and intermediate Matt Smith (Brighton & Hove) qualified for the English Schools' CE final in September.

Despite losing several medal prospects to the European Juniors and World Youth Championships 2015 saw one of the best ESAA performances for 50 years. The Sussex team returned from the English Schools in Gateshead with four gold medals and many other podium positions. Thirteen athletes won medals and more than half the team of 60, 32 athletes achieved a 'top eight' placing. The gold medallists were Livvy Connor in senior girls pole vault, Orla Brothers in the intermediate girls 300m, Joe Fuggle in the intermediate boys 400m hurdles and Amber Anning in the junior girls 200 meters. There were silver medals for Anna Short (Brighton & Hove) in the Senior 100m, for Natasha Purchas (Crawley), Calum Neal and Bill Saunders (Lewes) in the junior girls, intermediate and junior boys pole vault and for Tom Eames in the junior boys 1500m. Archie Davis (Brighton Phoenix) won bronze in the intermediate boys' 800m, Katie Garland bronze in the senior girls long jump while Billy White (Brighton Phoenix) was third in the 2000m steeplechase and Ben Hawkes (Worthing) won bronze in the Junior boys hammer.

Two hundred and eighty seven young athletes in total entered the U13 and Quadkids U11 Championships, which took place at Withdean stadium on a gloriously, sunny day on Saturday 27th June. This was a week earlier than normal and the change of date impacted on the availability of some officials. There were Championship Best Performances from Ella Hannyngton (Horsham), in the Hurdles and from Worthing's Luke Ellard in the 800m. The U15B and U17M 3000m Championships races were amalgamated into one race and were better supported than in previous years with nine athletes in total competing – seven of them U15's. An 800m-wheelchair race was incorporated into the event for the first time. Two athletes entered and received great support from the crowds. A dedicated wheelchair race will now be part of the annual competition, with the option of different racing distances.

In the English Schools Combined Events Championships at Bedford Senior Girls Katie Garland and Beth Crocker ended their ESAA account on a high with a silver and bronze medal.

The Sussex Veterans League consisted of four matches for 2015 with fixtures at Eastbourne in May, Worthing in June and two at Lewes in July. The overall winners of the Men's League were Eastbourne / Hailsham who won three out of four matches and the overall winners of the Women's League was Brighton and Hove AC who won all four of their fixtures. Many thanks to all the officials and athletes who took part in the League in 2015, without their involvement the League would not happen. League organiser Paul Emerson hopes that more clubs will take part in 2016 as there are only four teams involved and two of them are joint Clubs.

The Under 13 League Final, held at K2, was won by Crawley, with Crawley and Brighton winning the West and East Divisions respectively. The Under 20 and Senior 3000m Championships held in conjunction with the Under 13 Final had no entries, which was disappointing. The Under 15 league final, held at Withdean, saw Crawley take the title for the fourth year in a row.

The Combined Events Championships were again held this year at Sutton and there was an increase in entries on the previous year, although as in the May Championships it was in the younger age groups, with a poor entry in the under 20 and Senior events. Our thanks must go to Surrey AA who organised the event. The steeplechase championships held in conjunction had no entries, but the 3K Walk, held for the first time at these Championships, had four entries.

Notable performances and International Representation

Led by the still Under 23 Brighton Phoenix athlete Charlie Grice, this has been

one of the most successful periods for Sussex Athletics and the highlights, which include national titles and UK and European age group records, are summarised below:

December 2014

Will Gray (Brighton & Hove AC) was selected for the Under 23 British team for the European Cross-country Championships in Bulgaria. Unfortunately Gray failed to finish after twisting his ankle on the frosted, uneven course.

U20 Nicole Taylor (Tonbridge) and U15 Joe Body (Hastings) are bronze medallists at the Southern Inter-Counties Cross-country at Horspath. The U17 Women's team wins silver and the U13 Boys team bronze. V65 Pete Witcomb (Brighton & Hove AC) is second in his age group.

Indoor – Brighton's Katy Garland and Amber Anning both collect early Christmas presents when they win the South of England U20 and U15 Indoor Combined Events titles at Lee Valley.

January 2015

Brighton Phoenix athlete Jon Pepper wins the Brooks Cross-country Championships title for the fourth time in a row. Later in the month his club mate Ben Tickner triumphs at the South of England Championships at Stanmer winning the Senior Men's race. Grace Baker wins silver in the U20 race and Emma Macready runs tactically to secure the bronze medal in the Senior women's race.

Will Gray and Grace Baker are selected to represent Great Britain in the Great Edinburgh Cross-country International at Holyrood.

Indoor - Brighton & Hove's Tom Eames (800m) and Amber Anning (200m and 300m) and Crawley's Natasha Purchas (Pole Vault) win South of England titles at Lee Valley. Anning's 300m time of 40.32 seconds is a Championship Best Performance and a UK U15 indoor record.

Archie Davis (Brighton Phoenix) sets a new UK U17 Indoor 1500 metre record at Sheffield in the BMC Indoor Grand Prix running a time of 3:56.82 seconds.

Later in the month Brighton Phoenix 800m runner Spencer Thomas (U20) wins gold at the U20/Senior Southern Indoor Championships.

February

Lee Emanuel (Hastings) 3000m and Charlie Grice 1500m are selected for the British team for the European Indoor championships in Prague after winning their events at the UK Indoor championships at Sheffield.

James Baker (Chichester) wins the Senior Men's Sussex League title again.

Grace Baker wins a gold team medal at the National Cross-Country Championships U20 W race with Aldershot after placing fourth individually. Ben Tickner is fifth in the Senior Men's race.

Indoor - Hurdler Bethany Close (Brighton & Hove) strikes bronze at the BUCS indoor championships in the 60mH.

March

Grace Baker is selected for the GB & NI U20 team for the World Cross-Country Championships in China, after finishing fourth in the junior race at the CAU inter-counties.

At the English Schools' Cross-Country Championships there is an excellent third place and a fine seventh spot for the junior boy's and senior girl's teams.

At the BMAF 10 mile championships Brighton's Cathy Ulliott wins silver in the BMAF FV50 and Arena's Jenny Hughes the bronze whilst Brighton and Hove's Judith Carder is second in the FV55 BMAF age group. Her team also win silver in the BMAF V45-54 category. For the men Brighton and Hove's Graham Godden is first placed BMAF MV45 and his club team are second in the V45-54 competition.

At the BMAF Cross-country championships in Ruthin, Caroline Wood (Arena 80) has a strong run to secure first place V50 and V50 British Masters XC championships, which is her best ever placing in five years of BMAF Cross-country.

Joe Smith (Crawley) wins the South East Inter-County Schools Cross-country Year 8 race. Olivia Wiseman (Chichester) wins the bronze medal in the girls' Year 8 race.

Indoor - At the England U15/U17 Indoor Championships in Sheffield Toby Harries (Brighton Phoenix) follows his 60m bronze with a UK Under 17 indoor record over 200m in a time of 21.45 seconds. Harries clubmate Spencer Thomas wins the U17 800m race. Robbie Fitzgibbon (Brighton Phoenix) strikes silver in the U20 1500m, as does Archie Davis (U17) over 800m and U15's Amber Anning and Bill Saunders (Lewes) in the 200m and Pole Vault respectively. Freya Fitchett (Lewes) and Horsham's Calum Neil place third in the U15 Girls and U17 Mens Pole Vault.

Lee Emanuel wins silver at the 3000m European Indoor Championships in Prague. Charlie Grice is fifth over 1500m.

Leanne Buxton and Helen Reynolds (Crawley) win gold at the European Master's Indoor Track and Field championships at Torun in Poland. Buxton adds the European W35 Pentathlon title to the World title she won last autumn. Reynolds clocks 59.89s to take the W35 400m crown and she then adds an 800m bronze medal running 2:21.55s.

April

There are two silver and two bronze medals for Sussex athletes at the BUCS championships at Bedford. James Lasis (Crawley) heaves the discus out to a personal best to take second place. Bethany Close (Brighton & Hove) matches this placing in the 100mH. Hastings hammer thrower Louisa James wins a bronze medal in the hammer throw while Samuel Heaward (Worthing) is also third in the shot putt.

May

At the Combined Events Nationals in Bedford Elise Lovell (Hastings) wins gold in the Senior Women's Heptathlon, Peter Moreno (Brighton & Hove) is the silver medallist in the Senior Men's Decathlon, as is his club mate Katie Garland in the U20W Heptathlon.

At the BMC Grand Prix in Manchester Brighton Phoenix athletes Spencer Thomas, Robbie Fitzgibbon and Archie Davies all gain qualifying times for either the European U20 Championships or the World Youth Games. Grace Baker gains automatic selection to the European Juniors as the first U20 finisher in the 5000m.

June

In the South of England Championships at Lee Valley, Worthing's Emma Macready wins the 3000m steeplechase taking five seconds off the CBP. Brighton Phoenix's Billy White wins the U20 steeplechase by 71 seconds. Anna Short takes the U20 women's 100 metres title and Holly Turner (Crawley) the 400m senior women's race. Beth Close (Brighton) wins the U20 women's 100mH and her club mate Gwilym Cooper the 400m Hurdles. Crawley's U17 Lillie Franks wins gold in the U20 High Jump competition and Tom French (Brighton) takes the honours in the senior men's Long Jump.

At the National U20/23 Championships at Bedford there are gold medals for Charlie Grice over 800m and Crowborough's Ryan Driscoll in the 3000m steeplechase. In the U23 high jump Isobel Brown (Chichester) shares silver. Under 17 Toby Harries is second in the U20 200 metres. There are bronze medals for Livvy Connor in the U20 pole vault, for U20 Spencer Thomas in a tactical 800m and for James Lasis (Crawley) in the U23 discus.

Brighton Phoenix athletes Archie Davies (1500m) and Toby Harries (200m) are selected to compete in the Commonwealth Youth Games in Samoa in September alongside Grace Baker. Harries is also selected to take part in the World Youth Games in Colombia in July.

July

In the Sainsbury's British Championships in Birmingham Charlie Grice retains his 1500m title, Rob Mullett (Lewes) wins the men's 3,000m steeplechase and Emma Macready takes the silver medal in the women's race.

Competing in the European Cup Super League Combined Events in Aubagne in France, Elsie Lovell sets a PB of 5255 points and moves to second on the Sussex all-time list.

Spencer Thomas (800m) and Robbie Fitzgibbon (1500m) are selected for the British team for the European Junior championships in Sweden where later in the month Fitzgibbon comes sixth in the final and Thomas, in a fast race, is knocked out in the heat. Grace Baker is 16th in the 5000m final.

Sussex has its best result for half a century at the English Schools in Gateshead and the team returns with four gold medals, five silver medals and four bronze. The gold medallists are Senior Girl Livvy Connor in the pole vault with a CBP of 3.85m, Orla Brothers in the Intermediate Girls 300m (39.59s), Joe Fuggle in the Intermediate Boys 400m hurdles (54.58s) and Amber Anning in the Junior Girls 200 metres 25.03s into a headwind after a heat of 24.75s. Fuggle and Brothers are selected for the England team for the Schools International the following weekend where Fuggle wins gold and Brothers silver.

In Colombia Toby Harries comes sixth in the final of the World Youth Games 200m and becomes the first ever Sussex runner to run under 21 seconds finishing in 20.92 seconds.

Senior Woman Leanne Buxton (Heptathlon) and U15 Amber Anning (Pentathlon) win titles at the South of England Combined Events championships at Bedford.

Lille Franks wins the High Jump at the South of England U17 Inter-Counties match at High Wycombe.

Ella Hannyngton (Horsham) has a double victory in the hurdles and high jump and Adam Lindo (Crawley) takes the long jump title at the South East U13 Inter-Counties match at Kingston.

Charlie Grice is selected for the Team GB at the World Championships.

Anna Short (100m), Lillie Franks (High Jump) and Katryna Bajorinate (Horsham Blue Star) (400mH) are included in the South of England Under 20 team to contest the “Welsh U20 International” at Cardiff. Short and Franks win their events and Bajorinate gets a bronze medal.

August

Elise Lovell (Long Jump) and Emma Macready (3000m SC) win gold at CAU Inter-County Championships, which incorporates the England Athletics Senior Championships. Lovell also claims a silver medal in the 100m Hurdles. Horsham based Jade Lally wins the discus. Hastings Louisa James wins a bronze medal in the hammer, as does Tom French (Brighton & Hove) in the Long Jump.

Peter Moreno (Brighton) is the Nigerian National Decathlon Champion.

Ian Richards (Steyping) becomes the World Masters Champions V65 over 5K.

In the South of England U15/U17 Championships Amber Anning wins gold medals in the 200m and Triple Jump, in the latter beating her own CBP with an UK Age 14 record jump of 11.65m. Lillie Franks wins U17 High Jump, Scott Staples takes the javelin title, Joe Fuggle the 400m Hurdles crown and U15 Ben Hawkes (Lewes) the Shot Put gold.

With a heavily depleted team, the two victories for Livvy Connor in the pole vault and 100m Hurdles and a win for George Turner (Brighton) in the pole vault are the Sussex highlights at the Under 20 Inter Counties at Hendon.

Charlie Grice is the only European athlete to make the final of the 1500m at the World Championships in Beijing, where he comes ninth.

Under 15 Amber Anning sets a UK U15 300m record and European Age 14 best of 38.73 seconds to win the U17 National title at the Age Group Championships in Bedford. Joe Fuggle improves his own Sussex record over 400m Hurdles to take the U17 title in 52.88s. Natasha Purchas wins silver in the Pole Vault U15G as does Calum Neil in the boys U17 event. Lillie Franks takes bronze in the U17 High Jump.

September

Ella Hannyngton breaks the Sussex U13 High Jump record with a leap of 1.58m at the Sussex League final.

At the World Youth Games in Samoa Toby Harries has the 200m run of his life to win the silver medal, sharing the same time as the winner - a windy 20.56s. Archie Davis just misses bronze coming a fine fourth in the 1500m.

Joe Fuggle (400m Hurdles) and Orla Brothers (300m) compete at the Sainsbury's games coming first and second in their respective races.

In the English Schools Combined Events Championships at Bedford Senior Girls Katie Garland and Beth Crocker end their ESAA account on a high with a silver and bronze medal. Matt Smith comes 14th in the inter Boys competition.

Natasha Purchas ends her season by breaking the Sussex U15 pole vault record at Carshalton. Purchas added 22 centimeters to her best to clear 3.42m and move to the top of the 2015 UK rankings.

Kevin Rojas (Brighton & Hove) runs 2.18.44 in the Berlin Marathon, which takes him into the UK top 10 for 2015 and is the fourth fastest marathon of all time by a Sussex athlete.

Road Running

This year has seen another boost to the numbers taking part in Sussex Road Running and for me it is very exciting to see so many people participating whether in Saturday Park Runs, big charity events, marathons, fun runs etc.

Not only are people taking part in honest, healthy exercise but we are also seeing charities benefiting, clubs gaining much-needed funds and athletes being challenged at the front end. The numerous leagues are gaining not only with increased numbers but also new clubs wishing to join in. Even though some say the Olympics did not leave a legacy I see greater numbers running across all standards and ages. However, with the road running panel now down to one person, it is puzzling why we cannot get clubs to engage at a county level. I presume this is because we are spoilt with all the road running opportunities in our county and Sussex AA cannot offer any more than being the overseer of good practice, standards and rules.

I would like to thank, once again, Worthing 10k for hosting our championships over a new flat course. The first rate organisation was appreciated by runners. Hastings once again hosted an excellent half marathon and years of high standards were maintained. I must say that Sussex AA puts on the most exciting race with the relays which are much loved by runners, not only for the running but team spirit and a good way to bond with fellow team mates and runners from all clubs. It was great work from those Sussex officials who made this happen once again.

Harvey Curtis have continued their support of road running at the top end and we

thank them for all their help in moving Sussex standards upwards and also thank those races who have hosted events. Overall runners are very well served within the county by the numerous leagues, fun runs, charity races and park runs so I see only further advancement during 2016 in these areas and hope a few more people come forward to engage on the Sussex Road Running panel.

Next year Brighton Phoenix will host the Sussex 10k Champs and Barns Green have been offered to hold the Half Marathon Championships, two excellently run events with quality fields each year. Hopefully Harvey Curtis will also continue their support of county road running, as it has been great to see quality fields once again.

(Bob Page)

Race Walking

Despite our two top male walkers suffering with hamstring injuries for most of this year we have had a reasonably successful 2015, with our newer walkers giving good accounts of themselves. Under 17 Ollie Hopkins from Lewes has improved with each race. Earlier this month in his first 10K, Hopkins clocked 60m 51s. He also won the Sussex U17 3K title, the first time we have had anyone of that age enter for a few years.

67-year-old Ian Richards has had the most individual success, winning most of the BMAF M65 Championships that he has entered, along with all four of the M65 races in the EVAA Indoor and Non-Stadia Championships, and winning the M65 5K track title in the WMA Championships.

One of the highlights of the summer was at the UKA/RWA/CAU 10K Road Championships, where Sussex walkers took 2nd team spot in the Inter Counties

race and Steyning AC won the Team titles in both the UKA and RWA race with Ian and Trevor Jones taking 1st and 3rd place in the UKA race.

We have had good turnouts in most of our home domestic races with some strong performances. There were though disappointing entries for the Sussex 10K Championships and we will push those a bit more next year.

Anne Jones is, at the moment, our only regular female competitor. She has had some good races but without any real rewards. Under 17, Emily Ghose, who recorded some very decent times and achieved a silver medal for Sussex at this year's English Schools, has now moved to Kent and I believe that she will now transfer to them.

Peter Selby continues to hold coaching sessions at Lewes Track, and has some youngsters that he is bringing along. He is hoping to put on some more Development Races in the near future.

(Ron Penfold)

Development

During 2014/15 the Sussex Athletics Network continued with a range of initiatives aimed to develop Sussex athletics and athletes. The establishment of the Network was a means to take advantage of the funds available from England Athletics. Since these funds no longer exist the future of the Sussex Athletics Network is under review. During 2014/15 the main projects undertaken were: -

School/Clubs Links. Having established links between a number of clubs and schools these continued with varying degrees of success. The establishment of future school club links and satellite clubs is now part of the responsibilities of Elspeth Turner England Athletics Club and Coach Support Officer.

Website Development– An overarching review of the web sites of the County Association and that of the Sussex Athletics Network has led to the decision to update and merge the two sites. As part of this review an examination took place into of how best to use IT and social media to improve communications and promote athletics in Sussex. Work on this is progressing and it is expected the new site will be launched before the end of 2015.

The Wheelchair Racing Project - In partnership with Worthing District Harriers the project continues to go from strength to strength. With financial support from the Network and England Athletics further equipment was purchased. Wheelchair events are progressively being introduced to county-based T&F events.

Run England Marion Hemsworth who has led this project achieved her targets and set by England Athletics. Further funds have been obtained from England Athletics and for administrative and financial reasons Marion will continue to progress the Run England project through and with the County Sports partnership

Sussex Squads Both the Track & Field and Endurance squad sessions were again successful over the 2014/15 season. A successful Athletics Leadership course was held as part of the squad sessions. A review of the T&F squad arrangements has led to the decision to hold four multi-event sessions for the under 13 athletes and a number of master class sessions for the under 15 and under 17 athletes.

The endurance squad sessions for 2015/16 will follow their previous formula.

Supporting Officials The EDM (Electronic Measuring Device) continues to be used by County officials at major events throughout the track and field season.

Clubs continue to suffer from a lack of officials with officials' courses struggling to get enough participants to make them viable. A similar situation exists with courses for coaches.

(Peter Masters)

Officials

John Gill has continued in the role of Sussex Officials Development Officer. John has announced he is stepping down from this position with immediate effect. We wholeheartedly thank him for the work and effort he has put into arranging courses over the past eight years in order to provide more qualified officials for the County. The position of Officials Secretary remains vacant. John sends this report on the past year:

A Level Two course for all aspects of Track and Field officiating was arranged in the spring. Sadly the response was poor and England Athletics wanted to cancel. It was only by the County sponsoring it with a considerable cash input that EA relented and those who had enrolled were able to take the course.

This was a disappointing start to the season, as we in Sussex are in need of an influx of qualified officials to run our events. It has to be said that only a couple of clubs in the whole of Sussex have, at least on paper, a full set of qualified officials. This really has to improve and it is hoped that the next course, which has been arranged for Sunday 1st November at K2 Crawley, will be better supported. It is sincerely hoped that all club secretaries will do their utmost to encourage members, parents and friends to consider this and take up the baton of officiating.

A separate course for people who are involved in organising distance events - road and cross-country - is being held at the Steyning AC clubhouse over the two nights of 10th and 11th November. This course is thoroughly recommended for

all people involved in this side of our sport. These courses should be booked through England Athletics, on line or by post, and most (probably all) clubs will pay the fee. All details are on the EA website, but if you have any queries John Gill may be able to supply the answers (puffins70@talktalk.net).

Finally, after some eight years in post, John Gill has to move into at least semi-retirement, which means that a new and fresh body is needed to take on, at least, the general secretarial, archiving and correspondence involved in the job. Anyone interested, please contact John through the e-mail address above. This is not an overly onerous job, but we MUST find someone to take it on.

Team/ Meeting and League Managers

As always Sussex AA would like to formally thank the organisers, team and meeting managers, officials and helpers without whom none of our athletics leagues, championships and events could take place.

A big thank you to Terry and Michelle Notman who took over the Under 15 Inter-Counties team alongside their U13 management roles. Chris Marsden stepped down from team management of the girls' Cross-country teams, and that role is still vacant. Our thanks to Chris for his support over the last few years. Keith May has announced he will step down as meeting manager after the 2016 county championships. We thank Keith and Sue May for their hard work and ongoing commitment to Sussex Athletics.

Melanie Anning,
Administrator.

October 2015