

VAC Annual General Meeting

Monday 11 September 2023

Track & Field Secretary's Report

2022 - 2023

VAC has worked without a designated Track and Field Secretary for 2023, so it is commendable that we have managed to hold indoor and outdoor championships and stand-alone evenings of 5,000m and 10,000m races. We have also sent teams to both indoor and outdoor Inter Area Challenges. Individual members have competed indoors and outdoors in regional, national and international events.

The indoor Inter Area Challenge was held in February at Lee Valley. There were great performances from individuals and relay teams. VAC finished 5th overall. We sent a very small team to the outdoor Inter Area Challenge at Nuneaton. The team came 8th.

In March we combined with Eastern Masters for our indoor T&F championships. This proved a success with more athletes and officials than we would have been able to provide alone. We plan to repeat this joint fixture in 2024. Several VAC athletes used either or both of these fixtures to prepare for the World Masters Indoor Championships in Torun, Poland in March/April. Here VAC members medalled and set world and national age group records.

This year we adopted a different approach for VAC's outdoor Track and Field championships held at the Finsbury Park track on 9 September. The event was marketed as a London-wide Masters' event. Individual clubs were encouraged to provide officials as well as athletes. This entailed a lot of organisation beforehand. The event attracted a high entry so we are hoping that it will be repeated in future years. All track and field fixtures nationally are finding it difficult to recruit enough qualified officials, and this event has reflected this. We are grateful to our officials and also volunteers who support us. We need to train more members as officials and in order to help this we pay for the required training. Probably many VAC members used the championships as preparation for the European Masters Championships in Pescara, Italy, later in September. We wish them well.

We have continued to hold stand alone 5,000m and 10,000m championships. These have proved popular with members. The Opentrack entry system has been very efficient, reducing paperwork and enabling results to be presented very soon after the races have finished. The 5,000m event was held at the refurbished Tooting Bec track, and the 10,000m is on 13 September at Battersea. The 10,000m walking championship which is combined with four County championships, will be at Coulsdon track on 30 September.

We used Ben Noad to help with the management of our track and field events but much work has also been undertaken by committee members Peter Kennedy and Maggie Statham-Berry.

We are still desperately in need of a Track and Field Secretary. Until we recruit one we will remain restricted in our offer to our track and field members. The role involves helping to organise VAC's championships (indoor and outdoor) and 10,000m and 5,000m championships. It would also include selecting and organising VAC's teams for the Inter Area indoor and outdoor competitions. We would also like to provide additional competitive opportunities such as participating in existing local events and leagues as well as offering coaching to VAC members, using the expertise of the members who have taken up VAC's offer to pay for specialist coaching courses. We realise that this is a huge task, and we would hope to have different people for different parts of the role.

Ros Tabor

7 September 2023