

## **VAC Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday 19 September 2024**

### **Track & Field Secretary's Report 2023-24**

My first year as the VAC track & field secretary has not been easy because the availability of senior officials has been limited by the Olympics in Paris compressing the calendar which resulted in many more clashes of events. Even without this restriction, VAC is handicapped by not having a substantial number of officials whose first priority is to the Club. All the area clubs are suffering the same problems and the BMAF is trying to come up with ideas for increasing the numbers of qualified technical officials as well as ancillary staff for registration, results and announcing. Would offering incentives make the difference? It is also not easy to find stadiums that meet all our requirements.

In the indoor season, we have held our championships jointly with EMAC at Lee Valley, with more than 100 VAC men and women competing, and we fielded a team of 50 members in the Inter Area Challenge, also at Lee Valley. We came third overall out of nine area clubs, with our men's team third and the women's team fourth. In the 90 events, VAC recorded 16 first places (9 for the men and 7 for the women), 15 second places and 7 third places.

In the summer season we have had the standalone evenings of 5000m and 10000m as usual. This year they were both held at Battersea Park. The 5000m in June had 69 finishers in four races and the 10000m in September had 59 finishers in three races.

Our main championships were initially scheduled for May at Finsbury Park, but we were so short of officials and there were problems with the stadium that we decided to re-schedule for after the Olympics. We eventually fixed on the date of 31<sup>st</sup> August at Tooting Bec, and we attracted 170 athletes, many signing up for several events. With only one week to go, we weren't sure that we would have enough officials, in spite of severely limiting the number of entries in the field events. However, with the help of some late signups from a few more senior officials and many athletes volunteering to help when they weren't competing, the day went ahead very smoothly and we finished marginally ahead of schedule.

Finally, the climax of the season was the outdoor inter-area challenge at Corby in September. We had a team of 37 men & women, some of them competing in a large number of events. We were placed fourth overall out of nine area clubs, with our men's team fourth and the women's team sixth.

Individual members have competed indoors and outdoors in national and international events. We had 103 and 80 respectively in the national indoor and outdoor championships, with 65 competitors entered for the European indoor championships in Torun and 58 at the world outdoor championships in Gothenburg. VAC members medalled and set world and national age group records at both events.

Ben Noad continued to help with us with the management of our track and field events but much of the work has been undertaken by committee members, with particular thanks to Maggie Statham-Berry, Ros Tabor, Andrew Murray, Michael Mann and Anna Garnier

Peter Kennedy  
18 September 2024