



Administrator's Annual Report to the AGM November 2023

Once again, we have come to the end of what proved to be a challenging year for the league, with the weather playing a large part in some of the frustrations felt by both ourselves and our member clubs. I don't recall so many matches having to be cut short, or so many events having to be cancelled due to local circumstances during any of the previous seasons.

We still have problems sorting out our fixture dates, it's impossible to organise fixtures that don't impinge on school holidays. The UAG matches are timed to avoid a direct clash with external exams for the vast majority, but this does mean that we have to utilise the bank holiday weekend and the start of the summer holidays. It doesn't sit right to finish our season in June for most teams but that may be our only option. The Midlands is currently the only region to offer regional finals and promotion matches, but even those met with some issues where teams decided not to bother competing even though they had qualified. Maybe that now needs to change, and we revert back to a straight 4 matches for all, certainly promotion matches are a massive headache to organise, and unless we find a volunteer to fill the role of Area Co-ordinator, we may not be able to hold these in 2024.

As ever, we've had to deal with complaints about a variety of things – dates of fixtures are a perennial problem, although to a large extent the decision as to the actual dates we are given is out of our hands; there are also complaints about the length of the competition day, and the distance travelled, mostly in the Southern region which has a large geographical spread and the small matter of London and the M25 to navigate. As I said in my report of last year, maybe we should be looking at moving away from a linear structure, especially in the LAG, and making the divisions more geographically based where possible.

We are looking at measures to reduce the length of the competition day in the UAG, but it's always a balance to make sure we're not compromising on competition opportunities for all athletes. It's clear from our results that some of the technical events in particular are still struggling to get back to pre-pandemic levels, so this year we have put forward some proposals for the UAG to help alleviate this and make the experience more enjoyable for the athletes.

We are fortunate that we have some clubs who will always step up and host matches, but equally we have a few who try to avoid this at all costs. Every team in the league should be prepared to host, or co-host if needed, at least once every two years; with the cost of stadium hire increasing, it's only fair and proper that everyone takes their share of shouldering the responsibility.

Looking at the scheduling of fixtures for next year and anticipating that a number of clashes are likely to occur it's more important than ever that anyone hosting a match sorts out their chief officials and other necessary posts as soon as possible, it was somewhat alarming this year to find quite a number of hosts had waited until the very last minute to sort out their chiefs and then struggled to find volunteers. We're very aware that officials are not a plentiful resource, but I believe it has been alleviated somewhat this season by the changes brought in at last year's AGM, however it remains a priority that all clubs need to make every effort to provide a full team of officials for every match, otherwise it's putting the onus onto other clubs to bail them out, which is patently unfair. We've been





working with EA to look at how to support clubs who are struggling, as providing officials is part of a team's commitment to the league as well as a way for them to score points and support their athletes' efforts. Equally it's imperative that everyone is familiar with the league rules to avoid some disappointment when athletes' performances have to be removed for breaking those rules.

We are by some margin the biggest league in the country with 139 clubs competing in the UAG, and 189 in the LAG; in all there were 120 regional fixtures, 47 in the UAG and 73 in the LAG, of which 25 were double header matches, plus the 2 National finals. This all takes place due to the commitment and hard work done by an ever-diminishing band of volunteers. On a personal level, I'm very grateful to our management committee for their support and assistance during the year, especially as too we are short of numbers. In particular, I must thank Grace and Janice for their hard work scrutinising and chasing anomalies for all the Northern region's results, and to Joyce Tomala who has helped with some of the Midlands' results. They've made a massive difference to my workload.

Last and by no means least, I would like to express thanks to all the volunteers in our clubs who continue to work hard supporting their athletes; without your enthusiasm and commitment there would be no matches, so, thank you all.

Marian Williams
UK YDL Administrator

Breakdown of divisions, teams, and clubs by region:

UAG

	Divisions	fixtures	teams	clubs
Midlands	6 divisions	12 divisional* + 3 finals	33 teams inc. 6 composites	50 clubs
Northern	4 divisions	12 divisional	29 teams inc. 4 composites	42 clubs
Southern	5 divisions	20 divisional	33 teams inc. 10 composites	47 clubs

LAG

	Divisions	fixtures	teams	clubs
Midlands	9 divisions	18 divisional* + 3 finals	50 teams inc. 5 composites	60 clubs
Northern	7 divisions	25 divisional*	41 teams inc. 2 composites	46 clubs
Southern	6 divisions	20 divisional*	37 teams inc. 4 composites	45 clubs
Scotland	3 divisions	6 fixtures* + 1 final	23 teams inc. 7 composites	38 clubs

* indicates where double header matches were used

31 Oct 2023

