



UK Youth Development League AGM 2023.

Chair's Report.

In what is the eleventh year of the UK YDL competition, we did manage to get through the 2023 track season, albeit with less volunteers doing more work, and with our member clubs managing to put a little more than basic teams out than they did in 2022. It has also become apparent that it is not only clubs trying to build up athlete numbers following the turbulent few years we have experienced, but the lack of officials is also now becoming even more of a problem. Not all officials resumed normal service, and many are now not renewing their officiating licenses, leading of course to major problems, not only for YDL, but other competition providers.

The other problem we have encountered is the fixture planning, with YDL working with other league competition providers to find solutions to an ever-increasing competition calendar. 2024 is looking to be the most problematic year ever with the process now being overseen by the Home Country Federations, and no longer UKA, who at least tried to use a priority system in previous years. We will carry on talking to the competition working group, but I do not anticipate much change to the dates we are now being given for next season.

The National Finals weekend, once more in Manchester, was a success and we would like to express our thanks to all the officials, volunteers and Manchester Regional Arena for their support.

The outright winners in both the Upper Age Group and the Lower Age Group competitions, were Blackheath & Bromley Harriers & AC. Congratulations, not only to Blackheath & Bromley Harriers & AC, but to all UK YDL teams for their successes this year, both at the finals and in the normal fixtures they competed in.

It is also good to see that the athletes themselves are finally benefitting from a full return to training, and an increase in numbers for some clubs. At least I have seen an increase in additions to squads on the team manager portals, but not all member clubs yet. Yes, I am the one who deals with the eligibility of athletes, and thousands have been checked this year. The downside to that has been the increase in athletes on club squads who following the update to EA membership in July, are no longer members of EA, or they look to be unregistered. Perhaps clubs could do a spot of housekeeping on their portals during the off season, deleting athletes no longer competing and sending those who you know have paid their HCAF membership fee, to check.

This season also saw an increase in league records, 11 new individual records and a number of relay records, but for all the athletes who took part, a new PB or two is what we hope you have achieved. Our main objective however is that the athletes enjoyed the season and being part of a team who competes in the YDL and enjoyed the experience. League records are on the YDL web site.

Finally, none of this would happen without the clubs, their officials, and volunteers, who have made it possible for our matches to take place. Plus, to the management committee members who have worked so hard, not just during the season, but all year round, thank you. I look forward to seeing you all again in 2024.

Grace Hall.

Chair.

29.10.23

