



Administrator's Annual Report to the AGM November 2025

I think we can all agree that 2025 was a challenging year. We were short of volunteers in a few key positions on the committee, which has meant that some of us have had to multi-task to cover the shortfalls. Tim Soutar stepped up to take on the role of Vice Chair, Nicola Thompson volunteered to continue covering the Northern Co-ordinator's role, I was once again having to cover the Midlands, as well as continuing with the Results Co-ordinators job, and Grace has worked tirelessly checking all the athlete registrations and helping to update the records. We welcomed Arwel Williams into the fold to take on the National Finals, and I'm delighted to say that he and his team in Liverpool worked really hard to deliver a great Finals weekend of athletics. Thankfully he has agreed to carry on for a further year.

It was never going to be straightforward with so many preparations needed to deliver the league with the new age groups in 2026, indeed we're still not certain what the UKA rules will be for individual events which are having to cater for the differing requirements for each age group.

As usual, fixture dates for 2026 has loomed large in recent weeks, and I think it's fair to say that whilst it's wonderful to welcome two international championships to Britain, it does present problems trying to run the domestic calendar around their deadlines. Janice attended our Fixture Planning meeting and found that leagues in particular were having to make huge compromises on dates. Suffice to say we're already picking up some flak from clubs, but there really is very little, if any, wiggle room.

Simon Fennell has once again produced some excellent data from the 2025 results software to help us to look at what's going on nationally – a summary of which is included in the mailing.

The system of recording officials for matches has worked well where clubs have co-operated and declared them on time using the drop down menus on the portal. It made scrutinising those matches much easier. We remain committed to persuading all clubs of the benefits of the system for all concerned. To give a flavour of the sheer size of the league, in all we had 2545 individual officials recorded, of whom 422 were unqualified. This doesn't include the myriad of other volunteers needed to run each match. This is an increase on the number in 2024, and we are most grateful of the hard work and dedication of you all – thank you. Despite these numbers, the provision of officials generally is still a concern, as some of our member clubs don't appear to be able to persuade their volunteers and parents to take a more active role in supporting the athletes. This causes quite a bit of frustration amongst the other clubs who are pulling their weight, as well as covering the shortfalls.

We remain the biggest league in the country by far, with 247 teams competing in one or both age groups, an increase from 2024. In terms of the number of teams, the Midlands region remains the largest with 80 affiliated teams, the Southern region are just behind with 76 teams, and the Northern region had 68 teams; Scotland remains the smallest with just 23 teams in the LAG only. In all we had 74 matches in the LAG, and 42 in the UAG, a drop on the number in 2025, largely because all regions held only 3 match in the UAG. However, athlete numbers are greater in the South with Midlands and then Northern regions following.

We've continued to run both single, and double header matches, those being predominantly in the Midlands. In terms of providing officials, the double headers fare better than some of the





single headers, as clubs are paired up to provide a full team of officials between the 2 partner clubs.

In terms of structures, the Midlands continued with 2 Premier divisions in both age groups, the remainder of divisions organised horizontally to try to equalise their strength and to reduce the environmental impact of travel. The Northern region similarly has 2 Premier divisions but remains a linear structure, in the LAG this resulted in a few divisions catering for some very small clubs, who are having to undertake long journeys, less so in the UAG. The Southern region has one Premier division in both age groups, the LAG having 5 divisions organised horizontally based on geography where possible, to reduce travel and the length of the day, the UAG retained a linear structure. The Scottish region had just 3 divisions: two 8-team divisions in double header matches operating on a half timetable, and one division with 7 teams. Unfortunately, long travelling distances are inevitable given the geography of Scotland.

Simon has provided a breakdown of the % turnout for individual events by age group.

- In the UAG field events, all throws show an increase in the numbers competing from 2024, Hammer being the lowest turnout. The jumps on the other hand show a slight decrease across the board with Triple Jump (39.3%) and Pole Vault (15.4%) being the lowest.
- On the track, Hurdles events show a lower average take up, especially long hurdles (21.1%) and all Steeplechase events (15.8%). However, the 3000m numbers (38.1%) are up in all age groups from 2024, balanced by a drop in 1500m numbers (40.5%).
- In the LAG Events which have returned a less than 60% turnout are High Jump, Sprint Hurdles, Hammer and Pole Vault.

We would appreciate any input from event leads as to how we can work together to promote those less well-supported events.

On a personal level, I'm very grateful to our management committee for their support and assistance during the year. Janice and Grace have helped with the scrutinising of all our Northern matches, Joyce Tomala, a past member of the management committee, also helped with the Midlands results; without their help I couldn't have covered it all. They've made a big difference to my workload for which I am indebted. I have still been in regular contact with Grace who has had to put up with my need to air my frustrations when the workload has been piling up, but thankfully she's been happy to listen, and encourage me to keep going.

It does concern me greatly that our largest region, the Midlands, has no representation on the management group, and there will come a time in the not too distant future when there is literally no-one to carry out the work as their Area Co-ordinator.

Last and by no means least, I would like to thank all those who work in our member clubs supporting their athletes and officials and helping our league to function.

Marian Williams
UK YDL Administrator



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