

2012 AGM report from Junior Ilkley Harriers

We have had an incredibly busy and successful ninth year with membership reaching 274. More juniors are committed to training and racing with the club, more parents and junior leaders are involved with coaching at sessions and the junior section is an exciting place to be. Training takes place over 5 days a week and sessions are well attended. This is only possible because of the fantastic support and commitment of over 60 coaches, parents and junior leaders each week.

In competitions we are going from strength to strength as we continue to encourage children to participate in a wide range of athletic activities. In 2012 one of our key aims was to 'raise the bar in competition by providing more specific coaching sessions for the older juniors'. We have already been rewarded with some exceptional athletic performances across a number of disciplines and I believe that it will continue to get better.

In **Cross-Country** we had more juniors competing in the highly competitive West Yorkshire 'Complete Runner' League and our U11 boys and U13 girls teams gained podium places with 1st and 2nd team places respectively and our U11 girls gained 4th team place overall. 32 juniors (we had 20 in 2011) raced in three or more events and gained an individual placing – top 10 placings were achieved by: U11's - Francis Westhead (1st), Euan Brennan (5th); U13 - Sarah Pickering (2nd); U15 - Lucy Williamson (9th); U17 - Georgia Malir (1st). In the Yorkshire Championships we had 21 athletes and our U13 girls team were 4th and U15 boys team 9th. Georgia Malir and Sarah Pickering were selected to represent Yorkshire in the inter-counties and then went on to run in the London mini-marathon. How good is that? 15 juniors competed in the Northern Championships where the U13 girls team were 7th overall with Sarah Pickering (U13-8th) and Georgia Malir (U17-6th). Three Juniors made the long journey to London to run in the National Championships but for 2013 we've already got the 49 seater coach booked for Sunderland. The massively popular Wharfedale Primary Schools League which we support is now in its sixth year and has provided the ideal starting point for most of these athletes. Over 450 children from 12 local schools compete in the 5 league races organised by All Saints, Ashlands, Ben Rhydding, Ghyll Royd and Westville House Schools. And as a much needed stepping stone between school and higher level competition the Peco XC league organises Challenge races for 8 to 16 years which are gaining in popularity year on year. We had 19 juniors compete and top 5 places were achieved by: U11's - Emily Elmes (3rd), Euan Brennan (1st), Dominic Coy (2nd), Robbie Matthews (4th); U15's - Lucy Williamson (1st), Harriet Jackson (3rd), Joanne Williamson (4th) and Ed Bickerdike (3rd).

On the **fells** we are seeing a lot more juniors competing in both BOFRA and FRA races. The races at Haworth saw between 13-26 Junior Harriers racing and we have also had a good presence at the English Fell Championships this season. In particular from the U10 girls - Emily Elmes, Poppy Anderson and Molly Pearson. Georgia Malir is our highest ranked junior - 4th in the U16's championship tables and Lucy Williamson is the Yorkshire U16 Champion. A slightly different group of juniors have been competing in the BOFRA series with Ruaridh Mon-Williams our highest ranked junior - 5th in the U17 championship tables. However a number of other juniors including Charlie, Angel and Summer Smith compete most weekends. Hopefully this upward trend on the fells will continue over the coming years.

Throughout 2012 we have been further developing our **track and field Athletics** programme and we are able to cater for all aspects of the discipline to different degrees. Our adopted format of using the York summer league alongside local open events seems to work for us and gives us a competitive season stretching from mid February to mid September. There have been a number of good performances but the individuals who stand out are: Roisin Ramage (U13) who gained a silver medal at the Yorkshire T&F Championships for shot in May and is currently ranked number 1 in Yorkshire and 10th in the UK. She won the York summer series and became Yorkshire Champion at combined events today (23rd Sept). Daniel Judkowski (U17) gained a bronze medal at the York summer series and a silver medal at the combined events championships. Harry Maslen who has just become the U17 Yorkshire combined events champion and is ranked in Yorkshire for his hurdles and high jump. Georgia Malir was selected to run the 3000m for Yorkshire in the northern inter-counties where she came 3rd. Chloe Tindale became the Yorkshire U17 triple jump champion in May and Lucy Williamson is ranked 5th in Yorkshire in 800m in the 'Power of 10' tables. We have such a talented group of athletes and hopefully over the next few years we will see a lot more gain the confidence to compete

at these higher levels.

In 2012 over one hundred and forty juniors took part in weekly **Sportshall Athletics** sessions. 9 juniors were selected for the West Yorkshire regional teams; six at U11 level, two at U13 level and one at U15 level. This is slightly lower than the last couple of years but not by much. And at our own annual Sportshall Athletics awards presentation evenings we gave an impressive number of gold awards as well as the presentation of cloth 'colours' for Sportshall Athletics, Track & Field Athletics, Cross-Country, Fell Running and Road Running (including Terrain) to juniors for achievement and commitment to training and competing for the club.

Relays are always a lot of fun and something that we like to encourage at Ilkley. It's good to be a part of a team and everyone gets to do a lot of cheering. There are a lot of friendly junior relays suitable for all ages and abilities. At the Washburn Valley Relays we fielded 5 teams and regained the trophy. And the increased number of junior and family teams at the Will Ramsbotham Badger Stone Relays gave a very special element to this summer evening event.

We have held 5 events this year – Wharfedale Primary School's XC relay event, junior fell races, junior trail races, sprint fell relays and our junior leaders organised a sportshall athletics 'come and try it' event in Bradford as a part of their award.

Coach Education has really taken off this year. Seven adult coaches have just started their Coach Award course and will qualify in Feb/March 2013. Our 13 Sports Leaders qualified in December 2011 and received their certificates at the annual Awards Evening in January. Seven of them have just embarked on their Community Sports Leaders Award and are due to qualify around Easter time and we have 16 juniors currently helping at sessions who will start their Sports Leaders Award in January 2013 and qualify in December. Additionally 4 other qualified Sports Leaders will be starting their Community Award in July 2013 and qualify the following Easter 2014.

Sue Williamson took over the **Coach Development** side of things and she has organised two SportsCoach courses at Ilkley Rugby Club. In November 2011 - 'long term athlete development' and in March 2012 - 'Safeguarding & Protecting children'. Through the Bradford Athletics Network initiative we have had two coach development mornings in October and March at John Charles Centre, Leeds with our athletes taking part.

The most important ingredient to our success since we started has been the enthusiasm, support, commitment and motivation that all the coaches, helpers, parents and juniors have given to the activities that we organise. We introduced the '**Volunteer of the Month**' Award two years ago which is presented to individuals for their commitment to the junior section. For many of our volunteers it is a small amount of recognition and reward for many years of commitment, enthusiasm and support to the junior section. The recipients since September 2011 have been: Anna Sinclair, Dominic Ellis, Angela Bretherick, Henry Websdale, Nick Spencer, Sue Williamson, Rob King and Daniel Judkowski. Without the volunteers who give their time freely to 'make things happen' we could not have achieved half as much, so many thanks to everyone who has supported the junior section this year.

... and what for the future? We will continue to do our best to support our juniors at all levels throughout all athletic disciplines. So I guess it's just more of the same. Onwards and upwards.

Shirley Wood
Junior coaching co-ordinator ;