2020 AGM report from Junior Ilkley Harriers

Cross-Country report from Gaenor Coy

In the PECO cross country league there were 24 registered juniors who ran in at least one of the four PECO races. Lots of primary school aged runners taking part and its good see the next generation of xc runners already keen to race for their club. Lots of really strong runs with top five series positions for Robert Carter, Iris Smith, Amelia Nichols, (years 2-4) and Archie Budding (year 7-8). Well done to all who ran.

This year we had a slightly lower entry and turn out for the West Yorkshire Cross Country league than in recent previous years, and although we had at least one runner in all junior categories, Ilkley only managing to produce team results for 3 age group teams: The Ilkley U13 boys beating Keighley to gold in the last race, U15's girls a clear silver and a good effort for the U11 girls for 7th team. Some really strong individual runs throughout the series and top 6 series performances from Archie Budding and Alexander Wolfenden in the U13 boys.

Championship races.

14 juniors raced at the Yorkshire Cross country championship at Lightwater Valley in January. Outstanding team performance from U13 boys to gain silver medal (5th Alexander Wolfenden gaining him his first Yorkshire vest), 14th Archie Budding, 15th Dylan Shinn). 5th team overall for the U15 girls and a superb run for Emily Gibbons taking individual bronze who gained her Yorkshire vest along with younger sister Elizabeth Gibbons finishing 8th in the U13's girls.

Another Yorkshire venue in Bedale for Northern Cross Country Championships in which 14 juniors ran. Good running by all and bronze medal U13's team performance for the U13's boys team (Alexander Wolfenden, Sam Bentham, Archie Budding, Dylan Shinn)

The English National Championships were held at Wollaton Hall, Nottingham, despite flooding causing some travel and parking havoc for the venue, 11 juniors braved the extremely muddy course with what must have been a record for the deepest water crossing in a championship race. Another outstanding U15 girl individual performance by Emily Gibbons finishing 14th and U13 boy team result in 11th place.

Thank you to Gaenor and Steve Coy and Nicola and Rob Budding for team managing and supporting the juniors throughout the Cross-Country season.

In addition the Wharfedale Primary Schools League which we coordinate is now in its fourteenth year and has provided the ideal starting point for most of these athletes. Over 400 children from 12 local schools competed in the league races organised by Burley Woodhead, Ashlands, Ghyll Royd, Ben Rhydding and All Saints Schools. Thank you to the organising team of Felicity Tomblin, Rachel Websdale and Debbie Nicholson for another successful season. The KS2 relays had to be cancelled but well done for getting the awards, certificates and Easter eggs out into the schools just before lockdown for the children to receive their rewards and recognition.

Sportshall Athletics – with reduced numbers we still had 130 children attending sessions and over the next few weeks we hope to get all awards out to everyone after the abrupt end in March. At the Regional trials attended by a record 14 juniors 6 athletes were selected to represent the West Yorkshire teams. They were Samesh Chotai, Sam Dixon, Sam Bentham, Archie Budding and Farrah Kennedy Harting (all U13) and Annabel Petyt (U15). Many thanks to Katrina Kennedy for taking on more responsibility.

Fell Running - with exception of a handful of races in the months leading up to lockdown all fell running activities were cancelled for 2020 including the JIH and BAN fell leagues so nothing to report.

Thank you to Liz and Nicola for all their hard work and commitment with organising training sessions and to David and Rachel Holder for taking over the organising and compilation of the JIH league tables.

Track and Field Athletics – no season

Junior Presentation of Awards evening - cancelled and everything is boxed up ready to be presented.

Our **Coach Education programme** is sound enough but it is no longer being driven. We have a steady flow of new parent helpers and Sally Malir is hoping to do her CIRF qualification. Junior Leader numbers remain high and their support is invaluable.

Many thanks to Jane McCarthy for organising the only **event** of the year - Sprint Fell relays last September.

We have had 70 **volunteers** (38 adults (19 qualified and 19 parent helpers)) and 32 Junior Leaders give up their time to coach athletics and without their commitment and dedication we could not run our programme, so many thanks to everyone who has supported the junior section this year. Thank you to all lead coaches for their commitment, planning, preparation and organisation of sessions over the year - Ros Blackburn, Nicola Budding, Kate Lofthouse, Sally Judkowski, Katrina Kennedy, Sally Malir, Elizabeth Raven and Sally Westlake. It is an absolute pleasure to work alongside such dedicated individuals.

Finances: a copy of the junior finances will accompany this report and as I will not be attending the AGM people may have questions. Please contact me direct by email (Shirley@ilkleyharriers.org.uk) if you have any specific questions about the junior finances or anything else for that matter. In the annual comparisons there are some obvious differences from previous years so here are a few explanations. On the income side we now charge less per session, generally do less sessions and JIH membership has fallen from 394 to 250 - all this is due to no longer needing to generate income for facility build. In addition races have been cancelled and numbers doing XC were generally down on previous years. The only weird one is the £195 misc - my error I paid £195 twice to ILT&SC for venue hire for the fell group and that was it being refunded. On the expenditure side I would say it's for two reasons - generally the reduction in what we are now doing (less sessions/smaller membership) but the majority is Covid related and usual things not happening. Finally I would like to thank Gavin Lamb for looking over our accounts again this year.

Due to the uncertainty of the coming year and the fact that we have money from years of fundraising we are giving everyone on the JIH membership list a year free of session fees or membership fees. It will also reduce our admin.

2020/2021

I have tried to avoid using the word Covid too much – but it is the reason why we have brought forward a number of decisions regarding the future of the junior section. Lockdown has given many individuals the time to re-evaluate their lives and commitments and as we now start to take very tentative steps back to coaching we have had to make some hard decisions regarding our programme. We will no longer provide any Track & Field Athletics and athletes are being advised to join other local clubs to continue their training. We are going to provide an absolute minimal amount to tide them over while they do this. And our Sportshall Athletics programme will now end after Year 6. These changes have had to be made and it's a shame to see things going backwards after almost 20 years of development and progress.

It is also sad when a number of coaches decide to 'hang up their whistles' and I would like to thank the following two Level 2 coaches who have decided to stop. **THANK YOU** to Ian Marshall and Malcolm Pickering who (although I can't find exact start dates) I know have both been volunteering for at least 12 years and probably nearer 15. What a massive commitment particularly when their children have long gone through the programme. There are others who I know are making this next year their final one so in 2021 we will have a proper gathering as a thank you when (I hope) the world will be in a better place. Definitely a changing of the guard and the end of an era.

I have reduced what I am doing and will coach one evening a week and continue to take on the administrative side of JIH for hopefully some years to come. But it would be nice to think there is someone (yet unknown) who will step forward and start developing the section again. This could be as a volunteer or a part time paid post.

Shirley Wood
Junior Co-ordinator

September 2020