

# North Down Athletic Club

## Secretary's Report 2005

I think that all our members would agree that to have two members of our club selected for the NI Commonwealth Games team is an achievement to be very proud of. We wish Eva and Brendan every success in Australia and we will be watching their progress closely. Alison Moffitt also been selected for her third Commonwealth Games as part of Headquarters Staff.

Our first promotion of 2005 was the **New Year Cross Country relays** held on Saturday 13 January. This was a good friendly fun event.

Congratulations to **Jessica Craig, Lauren Scott and Nicola Simpson** who represented NI at the Age Group Championships Inter-counties at Nottingham and competed at the London Mini-Marathon.

On Easter Saturday we were privileged to be asked by the Council to meet the **Queen's Commonwealth Games Relay Baton** and run with it through the streets of Bangor. The Council kindly provided officials, runners and parents with a superb lunch.

Our annual Club **Handicap to contest the Smith Shield** was held on 9 April around the 5k course in Crawfordsburn Park. **Cross Country prizes** were awarded to: Leigh McWha, Jessica Craig, Nicola Simpson, Kerry Iveston, Lynne Wilson, Darren Kelly, Thomas Simpson, Jordan Neil, James Stewart, James Budde, Tony Wall, George Bell and Ken Hawtin for performances throughout the Cross Country season. The Smith Shield was won by Clare Scott.

The following club officials have received awards during 2005: **Claire Scarth**, UKA NI performance coach, **Eddie Wilson** UKA NI off-track official, **Gillian Weir**, UKA NI club Volunteer and North Down Sports Advisory Council Award of Merit, **Barry Scarth** Lucozade Senior Coach and **Danielle Oliver**, Lucozade Award for coaching children with special needs. The club was awarded **UKA NI Track and Field team** and runner-up club for **Innovation**.

I would like to pay tribute to one of our coaches, **Claire Scarth**, and explain a little of the journey which has taken her from the interested parent asked by Hilary O'Neill to hold the tape at the High Jump in the late 1970s, back to her native Australia as Grade 4, Senior Coach to Brendan McConville, competing at the Commonwealth Games, Melbourne 2006.

Claire has coached many successful champions past and present at various levels from schools, NI Age Group and Multi Event champions, GB representatives, to the highest accolade that a member of our club has gained: Brendan McConville (Decathlon), David Robb (HJ), Tom Reynolds (Multi Events), Michael McConkey (Jav), Amy Foster (100m & 200m), Kathryn Colwell (100m & 200m), Jeremy Harper (Throws), David Keys (Throws), Darragh Murphy (HJ), Katie Hewitt (Multi Events), Hannah Lewis (Multi Events).

Claire can give coaching advice on all disciplines of athletics, sometimes surprising those around her with her wealth of knowledge. She is a highly respected coach and when she

travels with Brendan, other coaches often seek her out to ask for advice. She was awarded **UTV Performance Coach in 2000** and **UKA Performance Coach of the Year 2005** and an Award of Merit from North Down Sports Advisory Council in 2004.

As well as coaching at North Down Athletic Club four or five times each week summer and winter Claire is also involved in the **Rover Combined Events Squad**. This squad sponsored by Rover cars gives opportunity for athletes to develop multi events i.e. decathlon and hepthalon by bringing coaches from Great Britain and sports therapists to give advice to the young people to advance their knowledge and skills.

The successful **Primary School Sessions** were Claire's baby, allowing training opportunities for young athletes and using the Year 7 pupils to feed into the main club. Also encouraging our 16-year-old athletes to gain their coaching qualifications to allow them a source of income.

Claire also works closely with our Sports Development Officer participating in initiatives such as Skills 4 Sport and organising the Co. Down heats of Sports Hall Athletics.

This year there were over 60 kids enrolled for the **Primary School sessions** that took place on Monday evenings from 16 May until 21 June.

We provided 16 Kit carriers for the **North Down International Games** on 24 June.

We held two very positive **coaches meetings** in March and November. It is good for the coaches to get together and pool ideas to assist the club with future plans and development.

During 2005 David Keys and Amy Foster gained their level 1 coaching award. Jeremy Harper and Gemma McAnirn are working through their level 2 award and Paul Kirkpatrick, Richard and Kris Lockhart are completing their level 3 award. We also welcomed Mel Koffi as sprint and hurdle coach, from the Ivory Coast, who has come to live in Bangor.

**North Down Sports Advisory Youth Games** event was held on 16 June. The Primary Schools session children were all given invites and we were more than surprised when 150 children arrived to participate in relay events. The event was very successful and a good fun night, introducing the kids to competing in athletics. Over 12 other sports provided opportunities for young people throughout the games.

**Bank of Ireland Young Athletes Meeting** was held on Tuesday 2 August. This year we made the difficult decision to use Mary Peters track due to the state of repair of our own track. The meeting was well supported and it was a fine summers evening.

The mens' Track and Field team has retained both the **Team Trophy and Golden Four League** for the fifth successive year. They entered the Premier division in the **League of Ireland** and were a very creditable 2<sup>nd</sup> with 113 points to Crusaders with 18. They surprised the opposing teams who were heard to exclaim, "were did North Down come from?" . The womens' team also won their **Team Trophy**.

The **Young Athletes League NI** saw the boys' team outright winners for the fourth year in succession. The girls' team were bitterly disappointed at being second, especially after it was necessary for recalculation of the points, and the difference was 1 point. We travelled to

Birmingham to the UK Final with a much smaller team, covering fewer events than in previous years. We won five medals; David Keys Discus and Hammer, Silver, Matthew Heaney Hurdles, Bronze, Steven Colwell, Hurdles, Bronze and Jack Campton, Hurdles, Bronze.

The **Club Championships** were held on 30 August with over 50 members competing. This was a fun night for all participants.

**BBQ and Track and Field Prize Night** was held on Friday 10 September with over 50 attending. Everyone enjoyed the evening, which ended with a quiz. Awards were made to the following: Kerrie Craig, Jessica Craig, Hannah Lewis, Amy Foster, Kathryn Colwell, Nicola Simpson, Louis Atkinson, Matthew Heaney, Nathan Barnett, Thomas Simmons, Tony Wall, Michael McConkey, Richard Lockhart, Thomas Simpson, Jason Blanc, and John Carlisle.

This year with sponsorship from North Down Borough Council we brought back the **Bangor Classic 10k**, with a new course, held on 19 September. Although we had some teething problems it was a good race and most of the competitors were complimentary about the event. We hope that the event will continue next year and grow from strength to strength.

The **Crawfordsburn 5k Trail** race was held on 2 October with 130 competitors enjoying the course through the Country Park. The club financed this but we hope to have a new sponsor next year.

Our **Web site** continues to grow from strength to strength with over 100 hits per day. The success of this is mainly due to **Barry Scarth** who keeps the site updated with results and photographs appearing sometimes the same day of the event. Hence I have not included my normal list of results in this report as members can access them from the web site. New members are constantly contacting us via the web site. I hope that members will step forward to continue this very critical work whilst Barry is in Australia for 2 months during March and April.

I would like to give a special mention to **Michael Moffitt**, who writes our reports in the Spectator each week, helping keep the club's name to the forefront within the Community.

We are grateful to our sponsors who help to keep the club in a strong financial position and we acknowledge the support given. This year we received sponsorship from **North Down Borough Council** for the Bangor Classic and the **Bank of Ireland, Corporate Services** for the Young Athletes meeting. Each year we receive a grant from **South Eastern Education and Library Board, Youth Services**, for help towards running costs. **Ards Borough Council** gave us a grant towards the Young Athletes trip to Birmingham. **UKA** provided with a grant towards the cost of the storage container.

Two of our parents deserve a special mention **Linda Patterson** and **Rosemary Colwell** who helped out on club nights throughout the summer, keeping the athletes register, distributing membership forms, championships forms and helping with administration, allowing me to concentrate on coaching. Both of them did a fantastic job encouraging members to compete at the Young Athletes League meetings by phoning around and filling in missing gaps in the teams.

The **North Down Special Olympics Club** has been in existence for 16 months now and is growing steadily with approx 20+ children training each week. The athletes really do get so much from these training sessions and the progress regarding their fitness and co ordination in some cases is remarkable. Two of the boys have also been training with the main club and one member, Chris Russell competed at the Young Athletes final in Birmingham. We would welcome any more volunteers, as the ratio of volunteer/athlete for these children is much greater. Any of our members who assist find it rewarding and worthwhile.

On 6th November we arranged a surprise **65<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Billy Brannigan** at the request of his wife Linda. Billy joined North Down in 1975, with many club runs leaving from Billy's front room. It was a great social occasion attended by his family and old club friends. Billy was presented with a club tracksuit and will be ratified as a Club Life member at this meeting. Billy presented the club with 2 new cups, the **Billy Brannigan Cups**, for the outstanding male and female at Cross Country and Road Running.

The club paid tribute to **Ken and Lynn Hawtin** for the 40 years promotion of "Ken's Boxing Day Run" by naming a trophy after them. The trophy was presented at the Christmas Handicap race on 17 December.

The growth of the **Monday night group** in the past year has been quite astounding and continues to grow. The sight of 30+ runners making there way from the Sportsplex is a sight to behold.

The Committee are currently working their way through a **Club Health Check**, which will provide all the criteria for us to obtain the Gold Star Mark Award from the Sports Council.

Our club continues to have more elected NIAF officials than any other club. Barry has been re-elected as YAL Chairman, with Rodney Brown as Treasurer. Tony Wall has been re-elected as Hon Assistant Secretary, NIAF. Geoffrey has been re-elected as Chairman of NDSAC and Assistant Treasurer of NIAF and David Seaton continues as Cross-Country Chairman & NDSAC Executive Council member.

Our **club tracksuits** have been a great success and several athletes from other clubs have remarked on them.

Our senior team of Simon Seaton, Francis Marsh, James Budde and Charlie Sanson had an impressive win at our own promotion, the **New Year Cross Country Relays**, held on 14 January.

The ladies team of Nicola Simpson, Katie Hewitt, Lauren Scott, Jessica Craig, and Kerry Iveston were victorious in becoming Junior Cross Country winners on Saturday last in Castle Park.

Geoffrey will leave on 2 April 2006 on an expedition to Mount Everest. I am sure all club members will follow his progress on the web at [www.everest2006.com](http://www.everest2006.com).

Without coaches, there would not be the depth and strength in our athletes and we have very dedicated coaches who stand out in all weathers to assist the athletes in reaching their full potential.

Finally, I would like to thank our outgoing committee who carry out their duties with enthusiasm and commitment. I would like to thank our Chairman, Pat for his support throughout the past year and to thank Geoffrey for his continued work with the NDBC on behalf of the club.

### **Athletes of Note 2005**

#### **Brendan McConville - Decathlon**

- ❑ Commonwealth Games Selection
- ❑ 5<sup>th</sup> successive year for GB selection at the Europa Cup

#### **Eva Massey – Shot**

- ❑ Commonwealth Games Selection
- ❑ AA1 Champion
- ❑ Scottish AAAs indoor champion

#### **Tom Reynolds - Decathlon**

- ❑ Represented GB (U23)

#### **Michael McConkey- Jav**

- ❑ Represented GB at Bedford (U23)
- ❑ AA1 senior champion
- ❑ U23 AAA championships winner

#### **Hannah Lewis – LJ & Sprints**

- ❑ Celtic Games Selection
- ❑ Bronze medal at AAAs (LJ)
- ❑ 3<sup>rd</sup> place Irish Schools Multi event championships
- ❑ 2<sup>nd</sup> Irish Schools LJ, 3<sup>rd</sup> 200m
- ❑ Schools Interprovincial winner 200m & LJ
- ❑ Age group champion 100m, 200m & LJ

#### **David Keys – Throws**

- ❑ AAI Championships winner Hammer & Discus
- ❑ Age Group Champion Discus & Hammer
- ❑ Irish Schools Discus champion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hammer
- ❑ Silver medal winner Young Athletes League UK Final Discus & Hammer
- ❑ Schools Interprovincial Champion, Hammer

### **Amy Foster -Events 100m & 200m**

- ❑ Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> Senior NI 100m 11.84
- ❑ Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> Senior NI 200m 24.30
- ❑ Ranked 6<sup>th</sup> Irish Senior 100m 11.98
- ❑ Ranked 7<sup>th</sup> Irish Senior 200m 24.25
- ❑ NI Age group Champion 100m & 200m
- ❑ Irish Schools Champion 100m & 200m (new record 200m 24.69)
- ❑ Represented Ireland at the European Junior Championships
- ❑ Silver medallist at Youth Olympics meeting
- ❑ Represented Ireland at the Schools International
- ❑ Competed at the Celtic Games
- ❑ Silver medallist 100m at the AAAs Indoor Championships
- ❑ AAAs Championships Bronze 200m and Silver 100m

### **Kiki Malomo-Paris**

- ❑ Irish Schools 3<sup>rd</sup> 100m
- ❑ Celtic Games Selection
- ❑ AAI Champion 100m & 200m

### **Harry Heyburn**

- ❑ Winner of Golden Cow Primary School Cross Country Event

Gillian Weir

25 January 2006