

NORTH DOWN ATHLETIC CLUB

SECRETARY'S REPORT 2012

There was great expectation and excitement in athletic circles as 2012 dawned and with it the long awaited London 2012 Olympic Games. North Down was fortunate and proud to have representation at the Games as two of our officials (NTOs) Ian Atkinson and Philip West had been selected along with three other officials from NI Pam Brown, Joy Alexander and Robin Mack. Philip also officiated at the Paralympic Games. Both Ian and Philip were track judges for the duration. Adjudicating at each and every race ensured that the judging remained fair and within the IAAF rules. They were both responsible for disqualification of athletes for infringements. They describe it as an amazing event where they worked alongside the world's greatest athletes and most highly esteemed officials, an event they were privileged to be part of. Philip and Ian are now members of the UKA's International Officials Group.

I had assisted Terence Bowman with a few queries regarding the Bangor in the 70s book. I received a phone call from him in January 2012 asking if I would assist with an article about North Down Athletic Club for the **Bangor in the 80s Book** to which I agreed. I hadn't anticipated what exactly I had let myself into. I thought I would just have to supply a few photos where in fact I had to write the two pieces. I must say I really enjoyed doing the article and it brought back memories of my youth. It was also a good way to chronicle ten years of club history and I am very pleased with the published article. Thanks to Michael Moffitt and Paddy McGrattan for loaning me their scrap books of photographs and press cuttings, thus making my task easier.

The Men's Team was 3rd in the **2011/12 Cross Country League** with the Women's team finishing in first place.

The Ladies team also won the **Belfast City Marathon relay**, which their captain Ange Perrott has described as the finest moment of her captaincy.

Our series of **Track and Field Meetings** held on 17 April, 13 August, 28 August proved very successful especially the ones where we included hurdles and younger age groups. James Budde and John McGarvey have now been trained and can assist with electric timing at these events. Another series of meetings is planned for 2013.

North Down Sports Advisory Sports Awards were held on Friday 30 March at the Marine Court Hotel. The guest speaker was Bill O'Hara. Past Olympians of North Down were also present. We nominated The Senior Ladies team for Team of the Year, Matthew Martin as Young Sports Person of the Year and Ben Reynolds as Sports Person of the Year. Congratulations to Geoffrey on winning the **Bruce Mulligan Award** for Services to Sport. Stephen Yetman of North Down Special Olympics Club was awarded Sports Person of the Year, for his 3 medals at the Summer World Games in Athens, in Equestrian Sport.

We are grateful to Nicky Wakefield for volunteering to initiate the **Fundamental Athletics Group** for ages 8 to 11. They started at the Track on Thursday evenings from Easter and have moved into Ballyholme Primary School Gym from September until March. Charlie McNutt has joined the group as Level 1 coach and with assistance from Paddy and myself, this has allowed the group to increase to 24 young people. We hope that the group will be a feeder group into the main club at age 11. If more interested coaches volunteer we can continue with another succession group.

The Cross Country Awards and Annual Club Handicap was held in Crawfordsburn Park on Monday 23 April, 38 competed. **The Smith Handicap Shield** was won by Charlie McNutt. Perpetual trophies for performances throughout the season were

presented to: Lauren Hamilton, Claire Francis, Abbey Taylor, Jessica Craig, Lauren Scott, Stephanie Hambling, Craig McMeechan, Jamie McMeechan, Roger Dawson, Charles McNutt, Glen Willis, Chris Bryan, Francis Marsh, Gerry Coy and Terry Eakin.

The final **Northern Ireland Young Athletes League, sponsored by McCain**, as we know it was won this year by City of Lisburn on 799 points. Unfortunately there were only 2 rounds in the 2012 league and due to our athletes having other Saturday sport and school commitments we sadly failed to make the final. Athlete of the match awards were awarded to the following athletes: Round One – Sophie Cree, Alex Catherwood, Charles McNutt, Oliver Wakefield and Andrew Kennedy. Round 2 - Darcy Yeatman, Sophie Cree, Alex Catherwood, Matthew Torrens, Aaron Sexton, Oliver Wakefield and Ciaran Farren. The 2013 League will be changing and we have signed up for the younger age groups U13/U15.

The Senior Men's Team retained their 1st position in the **Team Trophy** with the Women's team finishing 3rd.

Our popular **Crawfordsburn 5K** Trail Race was held on Wednesday 22 August with a good field of 108 finishers. Our top athlete was Glen Willis finishing in 7th place, closely followed by Andrew McCabe in 12th place and Chris Speers in 13th position.

Our **Track and Field Awards evening**, BBQ and Quiz was held on Friday 7 September at the Sportsplex. We had a great evening, enjoyed by all. Awards were presented to; Brook Stranaghan, Holly Brannigan, Elleana Hull, Alexandra Catherwood, Beth Wilson, Kathy Hetherington, Adam Matchett, Aaron Sexton, Oliver Wakefield, Andrew Mellon, Callum Hunter, Peter Glass, Chris Ball, Ciaran Farren, Natasha Mellon, Saskia Greer, Charles McNutt and Rachel Gibson.

The **Aurora Bangor 10k**, sponsored by **North Down Borough Council** was held on 29 September. Our sub-committee, Brian, Geoffrey and Davie have a very good working relationship with the council officials and the PSNI, without whose support the race

could not take place. It was a bright autumn day and we were very pleased to have over 900 entrants with the online Thursday and Friday night entries proving a great success. Tony Wall took on the role as Clerk of the Course assisted by Rodger Perrott and did an excellent job. North Down's top finisher was Jessica Craig 2nd lady with Michael Dyer 6th Open Male. The ladies won the team event and the Men's team was 2nd. We are preparing for 2013's event.

The second year of **Victoria Park Relays** and NI relay championships organized by Orangegrove AC proved a successful day out for North Down. Senior Men were 2nd, Senior Ladies 4th, Masters Men 3rd and the Masters Ladies 3rd. Michael Dyer was the first man home.

Jessica Craig was first in the **5k Runher event** and **Rachel Gibson** 2nd while **Julie Balmer** was 2nd home in the **10k Runher event** at Stormont on 7 October.

At the **McConnell Shield** on 3 November we had some great successes with Niall Robinson winning the Open Mens' race and Jessica Craig winning the Ladies Open Race. Francis Marsh was the 1st 045 Vet, Ange Perrot 1st 035, Stephanie Hambling 1st 040, Terry Eakin 1st 060 and Fred Murdoch 1st 070.

The following members represented Northern Ireland at the recent **British and Irish Masters Cross Country International** at Queens University, Belfast - Stephanie Hambling, Ange Perrott, Debbie Matchett, Chris Bryan, Norman Lellyett, Michael Roberts, Terry Eakin, Fred Murdock, Brian Smith & David Seaton.

We were very proud to learn that Oliver Wakefield is this year's winner of the **Star of County Down Award** for his outstanding performances at AAI Ulster competitions. Oliver had a clean sweep in Ulster 9 county competitions, winning the long jump and 60m hurdles at the Indoor Championships at the Odyssey and long jump and 80m hurdles at the outdoor championships all by substantial margins. Oliver follows in the footsteps of some of our best athletes who were past winners of the award; Alison Moffitt, Eva Massey, Darragh Murphy, Roger Sexton, Jeremy Harper to name a few!

The Ladies Team (Jessica Craig, Stephanie Hambling and Rachel Gibson) won the race at the Malcolm Cup, with the Men in 6th place just outside the prizes.

After 5 rounds of 2012/2013 Cross Country league the Ladies are in 1st position and Men's teams are in 3rd position.

Our Annual **Christmas Dinner**, organised by David Seaton was held in Helens Bay Golf Club on Monday 10 December with over 50 members, from all sections of the club attending. We were particularly pleased to welcome a former club stalwart, Billy Brannigan and his wife Linda who had travelled from Scotland to be present. Thanks to Michael Jenkins, (Pure Running) and other members for providing prizes for the charity ballot. This year almost £300 was raised to be donated to support the World Transplant Games team.

The **Hawtin Handicap Shield** was held on 22 December at Crawfordsburn Country Park. The conditions were very wet and windy; however 30 + runners endured the course. The winner was Charlie McNutt.

Virgin London Marathon club places have been awarded to Stephen Wylie, Scott Wilson and Nick Irvine.

We are working towards achieving **Club Mark accreditation**. There is a lot of work to be done to pull of the information together and make this a meaningful process for the club. We are grateful to Paddy for his guidance.

The club is grateful for the assistance we receive from the Sportsplex staff, the Council's Sports Development Unit, Jonathan Moffett, Sports Development Officer and Tanya Fisher, his assistant. Jonathan and Tanya have been transferred to the operators of the Aurora Leisure Centre, Serco. The Sportsplex staff continue as employees of NDBC, with Paula Hooker as centre manager.

North Down continues to have members involved in all facets of our sport. David Seaton has been re-elected to the position of Chairman, Athletics NI and continues to be an excellent

ambassador for our sport. Barry has been re-elected as YAL Chairman, with Rodney Brown as Treasurer and Tony Wall as committee member. Brian Smith was elected as a Vice President of ANI. Tony Wall has been re-elected as Minute Secretary, ANI and member of the cross country committee. Geoffrey has been re-elected as Chairman of NDSAC and David Seaton continues as NDSAC Executive Council member.

We are indebted to the officials of the **Athletics NI** who always support our events and promotions. We acknowledge that without whose help, events would not happen. Our own officials continue to work hard to ensure events are run to the highest possible standard. We pay tribute to Daphne Hamill, Eddie Wilson, Mike Moffitt, Pat Moffitt, Pat O'Driscoll, Philip West, Tony Wall, David Seaton, Brian Smith, Paul Curran, Ian Atkinson, John Saulters, Lynne Kerr and Roy Kerr, Ange and Roger Perrott for their dedication to the sport of athletics.

Thanks to **Jill Aiken** for continuing to co ordinate the ordering of the club kit this year again.

Our **Monday night group** continues to thrive and is the fastest growing section of the club. Thanks to Brian, Davie, John and Ange for their enthusiasm, development and mentoring of the runners.

We continue to receive grant aid support from **SEELB**, which we very much appreciate especially in these difficult financial times. This enables us to provide transport for our Young Athletes League meetings, assist with hire of facilities and financially assist our coaches obtaining coaching qualifications.

Our **club website** is without a doubt one of the best and the envy of other athletic clubs, all thanks to Barry and the many hours he spends keeping it up to date and accurate. Our new updated website up is now up and running.

I would to pay tribute to our coaches; Claire, Barry, Brian, Tony, David, Paul, Francis, James, Alex, David Hewitt, Lynne, Paddy,

Nicky Wakefield, Tracey Catherwood, David McMeekin and Jim Taylor who dedicate their time and knowledge to our athletes. We have welcomed Charlie McNutt, Michael Roberts and our former member and talented athlete Roger Sexton as coaches this year. However, we still require more to come forward as coaches to support our talented young people.

Our team captains; Kathy, John, Kenny, Ange assisted by Francis and David have a difficult task organizing and co-coordinating teams. I would like to thank our outgoing captain Ange Perrott for the time, support and effort she has given to the position of Ladies Captain. I know she will be a hard act to follow!

Finally I would like to thank our outgoing Chairman Roy for his support and guidance throughout the last three years and the outgoing committee for all the time that they give to our club. I welcome Paddy McGrattan to the role of Chairman and look forward to working with him. We would appeal for more members to join the committee (there are several vacant positions) to continue the vital work of the club, ease the burden on a few key members and to ensure continued success and maintain the club's vibrancy. Our sport only exists because of volunteers!

Whilst I make every effort to include as much information as possible in my report, it is difficult to include all, considering the size and number of members we have now and all the varied events in which we participate. I am happy to take amendments/additions to the report.

Gillian Weir, Honorary Secretary 16 January 2013

Report on North Down Special Olympics Club

Our numbers remain steady at about 50 athletes and 30 volunteers. Training during the winter continues in Bangor Grammar in 2 sessions 6.30 to 7.30 and 7.30 to 8.30pm to accommodate all ages and special needs.

We continue to have volunteers from schools and youth organizations. For the last year we had Glen Willis who was completing the community service element for his Queens Badge with First Bangor Boys Brigade.

Training at Bangor Sportsplex commenced in April until June and will start again in September, on Monday evenings.

We entered 1 team in the Belfast Marathon Relay. Each athlete is supported by two volunteer runners to ensure the safety of each special need athlete. Extra training sessions were organised for the athletes and volunteers in the weeks leading up to the event. After the event the PSNI invited us to come to Newforge Country Club for refreshments. This has become a very important part of the whole Marathon event. The Marathon relay is also an important fund raiser for the club.

2012 began another 4 year cycle of competitions. 30 athletes competed at Antrim Forum in the Ulster East Games on June 8. We came home with 47 medals. All but 2 of our athletes won a gold medal. 17 athletes have been selected for the next round in June 2013.

We were successful in winning the AVIVA Insurance UK Community Fund Grant. Two of our committee members Nikki Gregg (Former member NDAC) and Daniel Allen were very proud to be invited to receive the award in Birmingham. Lucy McKinty, one of our volunteers also received Volunteer of the Year Award.

We held our end of year BBQ and prize night at Camphill Community Glenraig catering for over 100, athletes, parents and friend's.

Our Christmas night out was on 10 December (over 80 including carers attended). The athletes enjoyed bowling, Pizza Hut and a visit from Santa at the Odyssey.

Athletes of Note 2012

- **Matthew Martin- Javelin:** NI and AAI Champion U20, 7th at U20/U23 English championships and World Trials
- **Celtic International Selection:** Andrew Mellon (member of the record breaking 4x400m relay team); Matthew Stockton (Jav)
- **Mark Patterson- 800m:** 3rd 800m BMC Grand Prix, 2nd BMC Gold Standard Races, 3rd Trafford Grand Prix, 3rd Welsh Athletics International, 6th AAI Championships
- **Niall Robinson – Middle Distance:** Mc Connell Shield winner. Ranked 10th Indoor 1500m U23, 3rd NI Relay championships
- **Michael Dyer – Middle Distance:** 1st NI Relays championships, 1st 1500m BMC Regional Races, competed at the British Athletics League, won Park run 74
- **Kathy Hetherington- Discus & Shot:** ranked 9th Discus, Silver at NI Championships, 7th at U20/U23 English championships and World Trials
- **Beth Wilson –Shot & Discus:** Ranked 4th in UK in Discus, 2ND Ulster Schools and Irish Schools at **Discus**; NI Senior Champion U20, 2nd Irish championship,
- **Tom Reynolds – Multi Events:** Tenerife Decathlon 5 seasons best, hurdles win. Ranked 14th PV, 2ND Woodford combined events
- **Julie Balmer –** Ranked 18th V35 Marathon (2.57.50) and a half Marathon PB (85.39).
- **Lauren Scott – Middle Distance:** Ranked 15th 1 mile

- **Ben Reynolds** – Multi Events: 1st NI indoor championship 60m, 1st 60m at BUCS, 1st 60m U20 London Senior Games
- **Oliver Wakefield** – Sprints & Multi events: U15 Star of Down Award for best overall athlete in AAI competitions. Age group champion 80m & LJ, Irish Schools champion LJ, 1st LJ u14/u16 Scottish Championships Outdoor and Indoor, Won all his events at the YAL
- **Mark Burton** – TJ Age Group Champion
- Peter Glass: **Decathlon**: Tenerife Decathlon PB, PBs 400m, 110m, 400h, PV, competed in the British League Premiership, 4th in Arona, Spain combined events, 3rd Woodford Green combined events, Ranked 8th Decathlon
- Hannah Lewis: **Sprints & LJ** 1st at Intervarsity match 60m & LJ, 1st LJ indoor BUCS championships and 2nd LJ Outdoor Championships, 6th at the AAAs U20/U23 Champs LJ, 2nd NI Championships LJ. Competed for team at National League 100m & 200m. 5th 200m at AAI champs
- **Andrew Mellon: 400m** Celtic International selection (member of record breaking 4x400m relay team), U17 AAAs 7th, Schools interprovincial selection, UK School Games trails, Ulster (& Irish schools winner, 5th 100m National League, 2nd Powerade 100m challenge
- **Alexandra Catherwood: HJ** U17 AAAs selection, UK School Games trails, 1st Ulster Schools (PB 1.66M), 2nd Irish Schools, 1st National League, 1st Team Trophy, 1st 2 rounds of YAL, 1st U14/U16 Scottish Champs,
- **Callum Hunter: Decathlon** 1st U20 NI, Ranked 15th U20 Decathlon. PBs in 150m, 200m, 400m and 1500m

- **Alan Kennedy: LJ Senior Champion**
- **Matthew Stockton: Jav Ulster Schools Championships - 2nd (Senior), Irish Schools championships: - 2nd (Senior), Ulster Age group Championships: - 1st (Under 18), Irish Age group Championships: - 1st. (Under 18), The Celtic Games: - 1st, Represented Ireland at Under 18 level, Represented North Down in the Irish Senior National league winning Round 1, coming second in Round 2 and winning in the Final.**
- **Michael Gaffney: Jav Irish Schools Bronze Medal Winner**
- **Paddy McGrattan: Throws NI Masters Hammer 1st and Irish Masters Hammer 2nd and Weight for Distance 3rd**
- **Jessica Craig: Tremendous year with PBs in 1500m, 3K, 5K, 5mile, 10k and 10 mile. Led the women's team home at Bangor 10K, Malcolm Cup, and won the McConnell Shield and 2nd at our Bangor 10k and 1st Runher 5k. Ranked 12th GB U23 5M.**
- **Michael Roberts: 400m Irish Masters Champion**