

Report of the Honorary Competitions Secretary 2003/2004

Once again the association's championships proved to be a huge success in terms of both organisation and level of competition.

The IUAA is one of the few athletics bodies in which the interest in team competition perhaps surpasses that of individual competition. Four different colleges shared the eleven team titles on offer and the following table reflects the rivalry amongst the big '6'

Road Relays	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Men	DCU	TCD	QUB
Women	UL	UCD	UCC
Indoor T&F	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Men	UL	UCD	TCD
Women	UL	TCD	UCC
Outdoor T&F	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Men	UL	UCD	UCC
Women	UCC	UL	TCD
Overall	UL	UCC	UCD
Cross Country	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Men	DCU	UCD	TCD
Women	DCU	UL	UCC
Overall	DCU	UCD	UCC
Combined Events	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Overall	UL	TCD	

This table also highlights the fact that despite the fact that the IUAA has a membership of 25, most members do not, realistically have the opportunity to challenge for team honours.

Should the IUAA perhaps be exploring the possibility of running provincial XC and T&F Championships in the run up to the National Championships? With the proposed CUSAI/ISSA merger likely to happen in the near future should the IUAA attempt to bring the all Ireland IT championships under its umbrella? If such competitions were to take place annually with the backing of the IUAA more colleges would have the opportunity to aim for team honours.

Over the years the role of the Honorary Competition Secretary (HCS) and the Honorary Secretary within the executive have blurred into each other. In an attempt to create a distinction between the two posts I am suggesting the following 'Job Description' for the HCS.

The remit of the HCS should encompass the following, (i) athlete registration (ii) organisation of officials and helpers (iii) ensuring that facilities at proposed venues are adequate (iv) ensuring that event timetables are sensible and operable (v) organization of Antrim International match teams and finally (vi) ensuring that colleges represent themselves in races with appropriate college colours.

I will now address each of these areas in turn with specific reference to my experience this year

(i) Last year registration details and ID scans were obtained from athletes at some of the events throughout the year. Not all athletes were checked and as a result it was not possible to ensure that all athletes competing at our championships were in fact eligible to compete. It is my opinion that all athletes should fill out a registration form and supply their College ID for inspection at least once throughout the year. Athletes who do not have ID at a particular race should be allowed to compete but they should not receive team/individual medals until such time as their eligibility is confirmed.

(ii) The provision of officials and helpers is an issue which arises mainly at the track and field championships. Usually organizing colleges supply competent event officials and the IUAA designates 'helping duties' to colleges. Colleges have responded well over the last number of years to this system and as a result our championships have managed to run on time on a consistent basis. It is the position of the HCS to ensure that organizing colleges have recruited sufficient numbers of experienced officials.

(iii) It is essential that organizing colleges provide adequate changing and showering facilities at events especially the cross country. This year Carlow IT ensured that despite the fact that the course was not located near any fixed facility that tents were provided for changing and that shower facilities were available if needed at the nearby campus. However this year Carlow IT was also blessed with splendid weather conditions on the day; what would have happened if the weather conditions deteriorated?? Once again in an attempt to define the role of the competition secretary I am suggesting that in the future the HCS should liaise with the host college for the XC and ensure that facilities that can cater for all weather conditions are immediately available (This example is in no way a criticism of the Carlow IT organizing committee. In my opinion as a veteran of 12 IUAA cross country championships, last years event was one of the best).

(iv) Both the indoor and the outdoor timetables have been in operation with a number of years and seem to operate with sufficient time between events. However the indoor time table will have to be adjusted this year to account for the fact that both high jump competitions cannot be held in parallel due to a lack of mats.

(v) This year the task of organising teams for Antrim fell to the Association President, who did a splendid job mustering up two teams that represented the association admirably on the track. The guarantee of an IUAA singlet ensures that athletes are very keen to represent the association when called upon. The HCS must take a more active role in team organisation in the future.

(vi) This final issue has come to light over the last couple of years with some colleges seeming to change their singlet design every season!! It is vital that colleges stick with a particular design so as to ensure that their athletes can be recognised easily by their opponents and more importantly by the electronic timing technicians. I was very disappointed this year in Cork while watching the men's 5000m to see two athletes running in the colours of DSD. Should we have a no singlet no run policy???

Yours truly,

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Honorary Competitions Secretary 2003 - 2004.

Report proposed by

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