

**Minutes of the
Irish Universities Athletics Association
Annual General Meeting**



Saturday 14th October 2017

**University College Dublin
Belfield, Dublin**

Organised by University College Dublin Athletic Club

In Attendance:

IUAA Universities Committee Members: Damian Walsh (Chair), Eric Brady, Enda Fitzpatrick, Stephen Lipson, Garrett Dunne, David Matthews.

Members: Evan Crotty (UL), Hannah Gibney (UCD), Ciara Rooney (UCD), Jonathan Quinn (UCD), Karl Fitzmaurice (AIT), Vicky Harris (AIT), Conor Wilson (AIT), Justin Bloomer (UU), Dean Adams (UU), Adam King (DCU), Mark Rogers (DCU), Alannah Cooley (DCU), Paddy Shaw (DCU), Niamh Reynolds (TCD), Cuara Barry (NUIG), SORCHA McAllister (TCD), Cliona Murphy (TCD), William Flynn (NUIG), Dylan Byrne (QUB), John Moroney (TCD), Ruairi Kennedy (UCC), Cyril Smyth (TCD),

Apologies: Timmy Crowe (IUAA), Jamil Saidi (IUAA) Michael Deady (IUAA), Dave Mansfield (Garda)..

The Chairman Damian Walsh (DW) welcomed all attendees to the AGM 2017.

1. Minutes of the 2016 AGM.

Stephen Lipson (SL) said that the minutes had been available online for the last few days, but that he would summarise the main points. The main points were then summarised.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes.

Garret Dunne (GD) clarified the process of Athletics Ireland 'University Athlete of the Year' and that the AAI would only accept one nomination. Cyril Smyth confirmed this.

GD explained that the IUAA was satisfied that the UL disqualification from the Road Relays was due to an innocent error on behalf of UL. CS reminded everyone that a 'Student off Books' cannot compete.

The Minutes of the 2016 AGM were proposed by DW and seconded by Enda Fitzpatrick (EF).

3. Review of the 2016–17 Championships

3.1. Road Relays – NUI Maynooth – November 2016 [hosted by NUI Maynooth]

DW outlined the key points including how the new course had been maintained due to its significantly improved athlete safety, the new start and the removal of the orchard section. The numbers of participating colleges and teams had been high and were steadily increasing year on year. Both races had been competitive and the post-race meal in the new student canteen had worked very well.

3.2. Indoor Track & Field Championships –Athlone Institute of Technology– February 2017

DW described the event as competitive and reminded the meeting that three records had been set in the women's events and that there had been a lot of competitors in the men's field events. DW said

that the list of Officials and Event Assistants had been circulated in advance via Facebook, but that there were still problems with having to drag people out of the stands to help. It was essential that Colleges bring Officials and Event Assistants with them to ensure the smooth running of these championships. Ciara Barry (CB) inquired if the list could be issued with the invite. SL advised that it could be. Eric Brady (EB) reminded the floor that an Event Assistant did not need to be skilled. EF reminded the floor that the timetable only worked when events ran on time, otherwise issues would arise with the same area of the track or field being required by more than one event at the same time which was not possible. The 400m women's race had had to be rerun due to a speaker facing the wrong way, which was not helped by excessive noise from the surrounding spectators. Dave Matthews (DM), EF and GD reminded everyone of the importance of officials in assisting in keeping the spectators quiet, but that all colleges had a responsibility in this regard out of respect for fellow athletes. DW thanked the AAI for operating the electronic timing.

3.3. Cross Country Championships –Abbotstown– March 2017 [hosted by the IUAA]

DW explained that the championships were hosted by the IUAA on the new national cross-country course in Abbotstown and that this had been the first championships in a number of years which had been held independent of the Schools' Championships. The championships had been hosted by the IUAA with a view to finding a host college for 2018. It was highlighted that there were limited changing facilities on the day. EF explained that more had been promised in advance than had materialised on the day. The view was that the course was a good cross-country course. Tom O'Keeffe (TOK) asked if the lap had been shortened compared to the one that had been advertised in advance. DM explained that this may have inadvertently happened whilst trying to make the course spectator friendly during course setup and that if the IUAA hosted again at Abbotstown, this mishap would not be repeated. Jonathan Quinn (JQ) said that it was either this or the race had been a lap short as some of the UCD men's team had worn GPS watches and the distance was 6.8km. DW discussed the banquet and outlined that it had been organised as requested by the members at the AGM. It was held in Dublin city centre and it was good to see the large number of members attending.

3.4. Outdoor Track & Field Championships – Cork Institute of Technology– April 2017 [hosted by CIT]

DW outlined how the event had been organised by DM and the CIT athletes and staff. Everything had gone off smoothly with a big audience on the live streaming. Numbers had been low in the steeplechase, but overall the numbers competing in the championships had been high and several championship records had been set. Cork County Board and the AAI assisted by providing officials. DM thanked the officials for their efforts. The trophies were awarded at the banquet which was very well attended with 380 tickets sold. DW explained that a lot of work had gone into the organisation of the championships and the banquet and thanked DM for all his efforts in coordinating everything. DW highlighted that not all of the IUAA trophies had been available to be presented on the night and reminded Colleges that they should bring them back for the formal presentation. DM said that the IUAA T&F was the second biggest T&F in the country. A lot of work had been done by CIT staff and student involvement had been key to the organisation of the event. The hotel had emailed him after the event to say that the banquet attendees had been one of the best sets of people they had ever hosted. Large ticket sales had caused the meal to be split between two rooms. EB stated that the trophies were very expensive and it would be nice to see them at the events.

3.5. Irish Universities vs Scottish Universities – Santry– May 2017 [hosted by IUAA]

The international at Santry Stadium vs the Scottish Universities had taken place on a very wet day which had resulted in a long stoppage due to the torrential rain. DW explained that there had been challenges contacting athletes and that the results showed how important it was to get two athletes per event. Ciara Rooney (CR) raised the issue of the sequence in which athletes were contacted as UCD had an athlete who had finished 3rd in the T&F, but had not been contacted and was accordingly disappointed. DW explained that selection needed reviewing, but that it had been challenging going through the list of finishers. CR said that the IUAA should endeavour to contact athletes through recognised College contacts. DW & Garret Dunne (GD) said that the IUAA would take this on board. GD explained that when athletes dropped out at last minute, it became a scramble to fill vacant team places in the last few days. CR suggested a subs list. Ruairi Kennedy (RK) reminded the meeting of the importance of colleges confirming athlete availability. This had been discussed at the captains' meeting following the T&F championships in Cork. EF said that the athlete in question would have been a worthy selection. Evan Crotty (EC) said that there had been a large number of drop-outs in the men's sprint events and that he had not been contacted: How where people skipped? RK explained

that it was difficult contacting people at the last minute and that last minute dropouts did not help. EF commented that these questions showed that the event was important to athletes and that maybe the IUAA should have a register in place at the T&F for athletes to register interest. EB suggested setting up an IUAA email address for the event for athletes to register interest. GD said that getting names made sense as it was hard to track people down. Cyril Smyth (CS) commented that with people dropping out with 4-5 days to go it became in his experience a logistical nightmare. In good faith one took whoever was able to be contacted. The competition could be lost by not having two people in an event. In 2016 the Scots could have won if they had had more athletes doubling up. DE said that there was a lot the IUAA could take away from the meeting to improve on for 2018. Niamh Reynolds (NR) said that more helpers were required at the international. GD said that the event had been held with the AAI combined events, but that the delay caused by torrential rain had caused havoc with the timetable. DW said that while the rain delay had not helped, there were areas in which the IUAA could improve. EB explained that the event had been shut down by the AAI for safety reasons. The IUAA had pleaded with the AAI to let the international continue as soon as feasible. The throwers had been happy to continue in spite of the wet conditions. Parents had helped out. RK said that everyone had pulled together to get through the programme. NR said that the IUAA should not be afraid to ask students to help. The post-event meal in the Crown Plaza had gone well and it was nice to see that the IUAA athletes allowed the Scots to get their food first.

3.6. Universiade – Chinese Taipei– August 2017

DW moved on briefly to the World Student Games. The AAI had sent 10 athletes who had all performed well.

4. Ratification of Future Intervarsity Hosts

SL outlined the issues facing the IUAA when it came to identifying both host colleges and suitable venues for both the Cross Country and the T&F. Not all colleges had suitable venues and not all venues were suitable. Currently there was no host identified for the 2018 T&F and if one could not be found at the AGM, then the IUAA would be forced to host the event. GD stated that Colleges were looking to the IUAA to solve this problem. It was obvious that the IUAA did not have the same resource capabilities as a host college, hence why the IUAA wanted to move to a partnership arrangement. SL explained that the partnership arrangement would mean greater IUAA involvement in the organisation of the varsities, but in a way that supported the host colleges. The IUAA had significant expertise, but not the resources and that the IUAA needed a partner college for the 2018 T&F. EF said that, if one could not be found, then the IUAA would be hosting the event in Dublin. DM said that officials were important and technical expertise was important. He had seen this first hand in what the Cork County Board had brought to the table when CIT had hosted the T&F. DM suggested that Tullamore could be used as the club there was used to assisting with national events. John Moroney (JR) asked if Tullamore town was big enough. EF pointed out that the ploughing championships were held there on a regular basis. JR said that it had to be affordable.

EB expressed the view that it should be Dublin based as the IUAA was largely Dublin based. At this late stage it had to be Dublin. Another option was for the Dublin Colleges to come together to organise the championships. Sarah McAllister (SMc) said that if the IUAA went with centralised venues then this severely limited the host college. GD & SL clarified that the venue would rotate. EF asked where the IUAA went from here and that maybe the IUAA should fix the event in Santry for the next 3 years. EB said that a number of colleges could put people forward to help and that the IUAA had the structure and stability to support. The championships had become very technical and the IUAA needed to bring colleges together so that everyone could get something out of hosting the event. NR pointed out that if every event was in Dublin, then this would become expensive for colleges who had to travel every time. RK said the UCC were reviewing club grants. EB asked the floor to make a decision regarding the hosting for 2018? EF said it should be the Dublin Colleges in Santry. Cliona Murphy (CM) said that TCD would assist. EF said that other colleges needed to get involved. CS asked if colleges could revert by the Road Relays. GD said that the IUAA would increase its involvement. CS said that small colleges could host. EF said that the hosting of the meal could be difficult.

SL outlined that currently TCD were confirmed as hosts of the Cross Country in 2018 and that AIT had asked to host the T&F in 2019 so the outstanding championships were the T&F in 2018 and the Cross Country in 2019. Dylan Byrne (DB) of QUB offered to host the 2018 T&F, but he would have to discuss this with the QUB sports office first, but would confirm within two weeks. RK said that a rota of

future hosts would help. Mark Rogers (MR) proposed that QUB and UU co-host in 2018. It was agreed to allow DB two weeks to confirm whether or not QUB could host the 2018 T&F. The fall back would be an IUAA-hosted championship in Dublin.

The following venues and dates were confirmed by the AGM:

Road Relays	NUI Maynooth – Saturday 18 November 2017
Indoors Track & Field	Athlone IT – Friday 9 February 2018
Cross-Country	TCD – Saturday 3 March 2018
Outdoors Track & Field	QUB (TBC)– Fri / Sat 13/14 April 2018, (Fallback IUAA in Santy)

4.1 World University Cross Country Championships – St Gallen, Switzerland – April 2018

Conor Wilson (CW) asked about the World University Cross Country Championships and the AAI control of the selection criteria for this event. EB/GD/SL all expressed the view that there could be no guarantees that the AAI would pick the first three athletes across the line at the IUAA Cross Country Championships. EF said that the AAI would pick the first three. CS said that Student Sport Ireland ultimately decided. EF said that the IUAA should push for the first three across the line. The Student Sport Ireland AGM was coming up soon and IUAA colleges should attend to push for this.

5. Financial Report

EB went through the sources of income and expenditure and highlighted the following points:

- An opening balance was required as there were some early season expenditures.
- Colleges were slow to pay.
- Insurance costs were likely to increase.
- Host College grants were discretionary, especially if the host college made a profit.
- Medals were good value when one considered how many were awarded each season
- Timing was an IUAA expense. The AAI covered the indoors.
- The IUAA covered first aid costs.
- Banking fees were increasing.
- There was a loss of €1k for the year, but if all colleges had paid, 2016-17 would have been in profit.
- Colleges were very poor at lodging money directly into the IUAA account and often did it without a payment reference.
- Colleges had to be chased for arrears.
- Live streaming had become core, but cost €4k last season, which had been funded through sponsorship. However, long term the income was not there to sustain this.
- Nearly all the income came from Tier 3 and 4 colleges.
- The current fees had remained unchanged since 2011.

EB proposed that the fees be increased as follows in order to cover long-term commitments and development:

Tier 1 €175 to €175; Tier 2 €500 to €600; Tier 3 €750 to €950; & Tier 4 €1,000 to €1,300.

Conor Wilson (CW) asked if it was possible to go back to Fyfes. EB explained that the IUAA was looking into this, but that right now nothing was agreed. GD explained that at this point last year Fyfes was committed, but that this was not the case so far this season. CB asked if the fees would come back down if a sponsor was secured. EB explained that this was a long-term issue. DB pointed out that the northern colleges had suffered since the Brexit referendum due to the fall in sterling exchange rates. DM pointed out that the last increase in fees had been in 2011 and that the cost per athlete per event was very low compared to other sports. Jonathan Quinn (JQ) said that some colleges had already applied for their membership fees grant for this season and would not be able to reapply for any increase in the fee for 2017-18. CR suggested that the proposed increases be deferred for 12 months. DM queried how colleges could apply for grants when the location of the T&F had not been decided upon yet. EF stated that the IUAA needed the extra money. EB explained that the IUAA had

an income of approximately €15K and that it could not afford live streaming long term. William Flynn (WF) expressed the view that live streaming was important, but if finances were tight, then maybe continued live streaming should be deferred until next season. EF said that the meeting should vote for increasing the fees for the following season. EB said that the decision should be deferred until the next AGM. CS said that the meeting should vote today for the following season so that Colleges could budget for 2018-19. The University of Ulster asked if the increase was in lieu of a sponsor. DW explained that sponsorship was not off the table. EF said that sponsorship was still important. CB asked if the AGM was setting the fee levels for next season. JQ asked what the balance was in the bank account. GD pointed out that the IUAA did not operate on credit. DW asked the floor to vote on the proposed increases which would come into effect for the following season. The result of the vote was 1 against, 1 abstention and everyone else in favour. The increase was deemed to have been passed. SL said that the IUAA would post out advance notice of the increases.

6. Universities International for 2018

DW outlined that the IUAA was in the early stages of discussion with the Scots and that the IUAA would keep colleges updated throughout the season.

7. Chairman's Address

DW thanked the Committee, Michael Deady for all his efforts in bringing in sponsorship and the live streaming, the Host Colleges, Officials and all the athletes. DW went on to thank Brian Foley for all his continued work on the results on the IUAA website, DM and EF for organising the cross country, CS for acting as starter and organising medals, all the first aid crews, and EB for managing the money. DW finished by saying that he had one more year of his term of office to run and that he would step back after this was completed.

8. Motions

No motions were received.

9. Election of Officers

As DW had been elected for a two-year term the position of Chair was not open for election, but all other positions were.

The following officers were elected:

- Assistant Chair: Garrett Dunne [Proposed by Enda Fitzpatrick, Seconded by Damian Walsh]
- Hon Secretary: Stephen Lipson [Proposed by Damian Walsh, Seconded by Garrett Dunne]
- Finance Officer: Eric Brady [Proposed by Jonathan Quinn, Seconded by Ciara Rooney]
- Competition Officer: Mark Rogers [Proposed by Enda Fitzpatrick, Seconded by Adam King]
- Development Officer: Enda Fitzpatrick [Proposed by Mark Rogers, Seconded by Adam King]
- PR Officer: Laura Brennan [Proposed by Niamh Reynolds, Seconded by Sorcha McAllister].
Hanna Gibney and David Matthews were also nominated for the position of PRO.
- General Officers:

The following candidates were proposed and seconded:

- Adam King**
- Ruairi Kennedy**
- Hanna Gibney**
- John Moroney
- Justin Boomer

** Elected following a vote.

10. A.O.B.

DW asked CS to present the nominations for Athlete of the year. CS explained that his list of nominations came solely from performance in the Varsities, the Universities International and the WSG. CS proposed the following Female Athletes: Michelle Finn, Phil Healy and Shauna Heaslip. Nominations for Emma Mitchel and Catherine McManus came from the floor. Phil Healy was chosen as the IUAA Female Athlete of the Year for season 2016-7. CS proposed the following Male Athletes: Neil Johnston, Paul Byrne and Thomas Barr. Neil Johnston was chosen as the IUAA Male Athlete of the Year for season 2016-17. CS said that both athletes would receive their awards at the Road

Relays. A vote then took place to determine which of the two IUAA winners would be chosen to go forward to the AAI awards presentation for University Athlete of the Year. Phil Healy was chosen. CS indicated that he would contact AAI with this name.

SL informed the floor that passwords for the online entries would be issued along with the official invite to the road relays. SL also informed the floor that changes had been made to the online entries to enable athletes details to carry from one season to the next which would make it easier to register athletes.

EF said that the IUAA should look at a sprints trophy in memory of Joana Dignan who died last year. The IUAA agreed to review the suggestion.

CS asked if colleges could check their trophy cabinets for the IUAA trophies as some were missing.

EB said that 2023 was the 150th anniversary of the 1st varsity T&F competition, which had taken place in UCC.

CS said that Dublin University Athletic Club (known as DUHAC since 1921) was founded in 1871 and that TCD would like to host the T&F in 2021 to mark the 150 years since the club's founding. However, he still needed to convince TCD of this.

DW thanked UCD for hosting the AGM.

[Minutes compiled by Stephen Lipson]