

## Avon Athletic Association

**Minutes** of a Management Committee Meeting of the Avon Athletic Association, held on Thursday 16th November 2023, by Zoom, starting at 7.00pm.

**Those Present:** Debbie Brooks (Yate & District AC), Alex Copping (Team Bath AC), John Deaton (General Secretary), Pam Gooding (President), Ray Gooding (Endurance Officials Secretary), Steve Grant (T&F Officials Secretary), Robin Crawford (Yate & Sodbury Striders), Hilary Nash (Treasurer/ Bristol & West AC), John Robbins (Life Vice-President / Trustee), Jim Strudwick (Avon Schools AA)

**Apologies:** Roland Gibbard, Arthur Renshaw (Thornbury RC), Mark Thomas (Team Bath AC).

**Chair of Meeting:** Jim Strudwick took the Chair of the meeting for the first item.

### **Tri-Counties XC Championships / Gloucestershire AA League Meeting:**

Alex Copping (Lead organiser for the December 10th meeting) discussed various aspects of the event:

1. Race numbers: the Gloucestershire League will distribute these, both for the Tri-Counties competitors and for their own entrants. Entrants in any of the four incorporated County Championships will also need to collect County identifier letters A/G/S/W from the respective County tent.
2. The Gloucestershire League would be meeting the expenses of the meeting and envisages a small surplus, to be distributed among the four Counties. The Gloucestershire League would be able to supply many of the meeting officials, but would still need assistance with marshalling (Team Bath AC would be helping in this respect).
3. Alex's concept was that the County identifier would be worn on the back of the vest. However, it could be awkward to establish County identity particularly in the case of a bunch finish. Counties are recommended not to try to make medal awards immediately after the finish, but as the League organisers hope to have race results available within 15 minutes, counties ought to be able to distribute medals from their own tent fairly soon afterwards.
4. Race timetables: competitors need to be made aware of the timetable and the age-group combinations. In particular:
  - 4.1 The Under-13s races will be held before the Under-11s races
  - 4.2 The Under-17 Men and Under-17 Women will be running in the same race. The Under-17 Women will run further than in previous years, but still within the UKA guidance for races for this category.
5. The Tri-Counties Championships had in previous years held a Senior Men's Team Competition (six to count; a single set of medals; clubs from Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire would be eligible, and may include athletes eligible for any of the three counties), and a Senior Women's race (same conditions, but only four athletes to count). John Deaton was prepared to work out these results for 2023, but would probably not be able to provide these on the day.

John Deaton would approach the Gloucestershire AA to see if they would like to participate in this in preference to their customary County awards.
6. Marking stakes: the Gloucestershire league had a set of stakes particularly suited for marking off the finish area. Other stakes would be needed: the suppliers' stakes would be assigned to marking a particular area of the course so that they go back to the respective owners at the end of the day.

7. Can anyone bring one or more load-hailers?
8. Attendees who are not regular visitors to Bath University need to be reminded of the car parking situation (mobile-phone payment via the JustPark app. only). John Deaton would contact JustPark to see if arrangements can be made for advance booking of parking slots [Update: no, they can't].

Alex Copping left the meeting at about 7.25pm for another commitment.

Pam Gooding (President, Avon AA) joined the meeting at this point and took over the Chair.

**Minutes of previous Committee Meeting** (September 11th 2023): accepted.

**Matters Arising** not dealt with elsewhere in the Minutes.

1. Nick Till [name corrected] has examined the 2022 Accounts; the signed-off version has been circulated. Nick would be offered a suitable Gift Voucher: agreed value [redacted for website version].
2. Cleeve Road Relays / Avon Road Relay Championships: Stuart Hancock and Kate Britten were looking towards a new Avon AA medal design including the Sea-Stag image; Hilary Nash would investigate costs.
3. John Deaton has purchased the Zoom package: the quoted £120 price did not include VAT, but John received a 23% discount as a new subscriber.

[Post meeting note: The Avon AA meeting on Wednesday October 16th on the sole topic of Age Group changes, plus comments from activists unable to take part, was overwhelmingly opposed to the proposals, and John Deaton reported this to the EA website survey. However, the UKA Board approved the changes, but not to take effect until April 2026.]

**Treasurer's Report:** (Distributed in advance; copies available on request)

1. The Avon AA would pay the normal subsidy towards courses attended recently by Bitton Road Runners activists.
2. Hilary planned to look into the sourcing and pricing of Avon AA medals for forthcoming events.

**T&F Officials Secretary's Report:** (submitted by Steve Grant, copies available on request). Steve Grant was now a level 3 Track Judge and Level 2 Field Judge. There was a shortage of qualified Photo-Finish officials in Avon, but there would be limited opportunities for competition experiences for them.

**Endurance Officials' Secretary's Report:** (submitted by Ray Gooding) Nothing to report.

**Road Running / Endurance Matters.** Nothing to report.

**Track and Field / Sportshall Matters**

1. Sportshall: The Avon Schools Trials meeting will be held on Saturday 27th January at the Bristol Grammar School Sports Hall.
2. Avon AA / Yate & District AC Masters T&F Meeting: it was hoped that this could go ahead again in 2024. Pam Gooding / Steve Grant would draft a letter of thanks to Henrietta Anstey for her work on the 2023 event.

1. Avon AA T&F Championships 2024: The meeting was aiming for a one-day meeting for the majority of the events. Hilary Nash had already put in provisional bookings for YOSC for May 11th and May 12th. The meeting was anxious to avoid a clash with the Wiltshire Championships: Debbie Brooks would contact the Wiltshire AA to determine their planned dates. [Post-meeting note: Wiltshire will be holding Endurance events on Friday 10th May, with the main meeting on Saturday 11th May and no Sunday event. So, Avon would use Sunday 12th May as the main Avon AA Championships day].

Debbie Brooks has contacted Graham Howell about the possibility of using the Hurdles events in the Yate Sprints and Hurdles meeting in Spring 2024. Graham was sympathetic, but owing to the race seeding arrangements in place, he could not guarantee that all Avon Championships contenders would be in the same heats. Contenders need to be reminded that the Sprints and Hurdles meeting usually sells out rapidly.

2. The Avon Track and Field League was at the time of their October AGM down to five member clubs. As a Competition Provider, the League needs to affiliate to EA (the fee will rise to £200 in April 2024), as does the Avon AA. John Deaton had suggested to the Avon League AGM that a link between the League and the Avon AA (details would need to be discussed) might avoid this duplication of cost. John would contact the Avon League.

### **Cross Country / Trail Matters**

1. Tri-Counties Championships December 10th: some domestic matters were discussed, including:
  - 1.1 The Avon AA Tent (currently at YOSC) would need to be brought up to Bath and returned.
  - 1.2 The first three Somerset or Avon finishers in each category [note: not three from each County] will (subject to confirmation within a reasonable time) receive automatic selection for the relevant Avon & Somerset team for the UK CAU Inter-Counties Championships (assuming the event goes ahead).
  - 1.3 Athletes needed for both Club and School teams are first-claim to the School team (UKA Rules).
  - 1.4 Masters categories for Avon AA awards would be: (Men) M40, M50, M60; (Women) W35, W45; W55. Men of 65 years or over would be entitled to take part in either the 6.6km race or the 10.3km race (only the latter would make them eligible for Avon AA M60 awards).
2. South-West Cross-Country Championships (January 7th 2024, RNAS Merryfield): John Deaton would not be at this event, as he would be presenting medals at the SW Indoor Championships event also being held that day. Steve Grant would represent the County instead.

As in previous years, the first two South-West athletes in each U13/U15/U17 race would (subject to confirmation within reasonable time) receive automatic qualification for the South-West team for the 2024 London Mini Marathon. The remaining four team places and two reserve slots would be decided on the basis of application forms received: John Deaton would ensure that these were available for non-attendees at Merryfield.

Avon athletes may wear the Team Avon vest if they have one, or their normal club vest. [note that all athletes who register as Avon will be considered as Avon Team members: at least one other SW County does not allow this].

**Adaptive Athletics:** Jim Kyle has been in discussion with the South-West Schools AA about including adaptive athletics event in the South-West Schools Combined Events Championships on June 22nd / 23rd. Jim will be canvassing the other counties to notify potential competitors.

**Information from Outside Bodies (e.g. MCAA, EA, SW Council)**

1. UK CAU: there is no news yet of an alternative venue to Prestwold Park for the Cross-Country venue, nor of any arrangements for the Inter-County Track and Field Championships.
2. The YDL AGM is to be held on Saturday November 25th: discussions may lead to significant changes in the League structure.
3. The EA South-West Conference was held on Saturday November 11th; awards to Avon activists included:

... EA South Volunteer Awards:

Newcomer to Volunteering: Joint award: Moni Brady (Bristol & West AC)  
Club Leader of the Year: Runner-Up: Tom Hutchison (Team Bath AC)  
Coach of the Year: Winner: Mark Thomas (Team Bath AC)  
Coach of the Year: Runner-up: Julian Emery (North Somerset AC)  
Inspiring Officials (not prioritised): Pete Davenport (Bristol & West AC)  
Inspiring Officials (not prioritised): Stuart Nunn (Yate & District AC)  
Services to Athletics and Running (not prioritised): Pat Gallagher (Westbury Harriers)  
Services to Athletics and Running (not prioritised): Dave Turner (Avon Schools AA)  
"Room 2 Reward" Prize: Moni Brady (Bristol & West AC)

... Regional Council Recognition Awards:

Long service in the South-West (not prioritised): Di Viles (Team Bath AC)  
Leadership in the South-West (not prioritised): Jeremy Dale (Yate & District AC)  
Club Development in the South-West (not prioritised): Iain Osborne (Team Bath AC)

... South-West Athletes of the Year Awards:

Junior T&F Athlete of the Year (Field): George Leite (North Somerset AC)  
Junior Male Off-Road Athlete of the Year: Dylan Stoneman (Team Bath AC)  
Senior Female Off-Road Athlete of the Year: Ellie Wallace (North Somerset AC)

The full listings can be found at <http://athleticssw.uk> .

**Information from member Clubs / Associations:** Ken Holmes had stepped down as the Chair of the Avon Schools AA; Jim Strudwick would be covering this post.

**Any Other Business:** None.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 22nd January 2024, 7.00pm, via Zoom. Preferred Day of the Week for meetings: various people had asked to avoid Thursdays, so Avon AA meetings would not be held on Thursdays except in special circumstances.

**Meeting Closed** at about 8.40pm.