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# Bedford and County AC Newsletter

June 2022

## About the Newsletter

This is the first edition of a new quarterly Bedford and County newsletter. If you have something you'd like to contribute to the next edition, please email [webmaster@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk). This could be an outstanding individual or team performance, a write up of a favourite training session, a memorable performance from years gone by (see the 'Blast from the Past' section), or something else that might be interesting or informative.

## News From the Teams

### Seniors

The standout achievement from the Senior Teams recently has come from the Men, who claimed bronze medals in both the Southern and National Road Relays. The National Road Relays, held in Sutton Park, Birmingham, on 9th April, were full of drama. Alex Alston, who was due to run the second leg, had to pull out with an injury during the warm up. Team Manger, Tony, and coaches Simon and Mark quickly reshuffled the pack, and, after a flurry of phone calls, Joe Strange jumped in his car and made the journey to Birmingham. Joe, who had already done a hard hill session, ran 16:38 on the last 3.2 mile leg to secure the bronze for the team. The race consists of alternating long (5.4 mile) and short (3.2 mile) legs. The team was: Jack Goodwin (2) 25:44 - this was the 5th fastest long leg of the day, Alfie Yabsley (3) 15:39, Dan Jarvis (1) 26:07, James Minter (1) 15:57, Ben Davies (2) 26:55, Craig Emmerson (2) 16:06, Ben Alcock (2) 26:05, Sam Winters (2) 15:58, Darren Deed (2) 26:45, Matt Bray (2) 15:39, Harry Brodie (3) 26:52, and Joe Strange (3) 16:38.

The NAL (National Athletics League) and the SAL (Southern Athletics League) have also both got underway, with the club finishing seventh in the first SAL match, and fourth in the NAL. There were some fine individual performances from Bedford athletes, and whilst it is fair to say that the teams were hampered by injuries, a strong turn out for the home NAL match at Bedford on 4<sup>th</sup> June, where we will be hosting some of the best club athletes in the country, would be much appreciated. The next SAL match is on 12<sup>th</sup> June at Mile End. A full report of the last match is on the club website: [www.bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](http://www.bedfordandcountyac.org.uk).

### Young Athletes

#### Youth Development League – Match one

The youngest members of the junior section of the club took part in a very tough first YDL Match at Bedford on 8th May as part of Team Bedfordshire, a composite team with Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Luton. We were up against some extraordinarily strong teams from Basildon, Brighton and Hove, Croydon, Herne Hill and Medway and Maidstone, and we finished fifth, with 261 points.

**Girls report by Team Manager, Tina Blackwell**



*The Senior Men's Team  
Claimed Bronze in the  
National Road Relays*

The girls came away with 25 PBs from Evie W, Holly V (3), Lauren S, Georgia M, Rosie P, Ellie H, Zahra H (2), Scarlett G, Lucie H (2), Caitlin M, Jasmine D, Megan B, Violet W, Eleanor S, Isobel S, Megan R, Izzy D, Sofia M, Etta H and Martha L. SBs came from Chloe K and Lily F.

A string top 3 finishes were

#### **U15G**

Lily F 800m 2.26.1 3rd

Chloe K pole vault 2.00m 1st

B string top 3 finishes

#### **U15G**

Holly V 75m H 13.8 2nd, long jump 4.31 1st

#### **U13G**

Violet W 800m 2.46.9 3rd

Izzy D 1200m 4.39.8 3rd

Lucie H Javelin 11.83 3rd

NS Top 3 finishes

#### **U15G**

Holly V 100m 14.1 (NS B)

Georgia M 800m 2.54.4 (NS A)

Rosie P 800m 3.23.27 (NS B)

#### **U13G**

Lucie H 75m 12.1 (NS A)

Caitlin M 75m 11.8 (NS B)

Eleanor S 800m 2.49.0 (NS A)

Isobel S 800m 3.21.7 (NS B)

A big thank you to Sergio, Simon and Sherwin who helped Martyn and Caitlin with Officiating duties.

#### **Boys report by Team Manager, Jodi Henderson**

Firstly, thank you to all the parents and athletes for such a warm welcome, which has made my job much easier!

Standout performances came from Dane Robertshaw in the shot, who came 1<sup>st</sup>, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> place for Bejay Moseray in the 80m hurdles. Also, a big well done to a number of new athletes who competed for the first time at either the EYAL or YDL in May. I look forward to seeing your confidence grow over the coming months!

#### **County Championships**

On the weekend of 14 & 15 May, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire held their County Championships. Well done to the boys' medal winners:

| Position        | Event                  | Name              | AAA grade |
|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | U13 800m (Beds)        | Berkley Barnicoat | G2        |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | U15 800m (Beds)        | Oliver Wilson     |           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | U15 80m Hurdles (Beds) | Bejay Moseray     | G4        |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | U15 Shot putt (Beds)   | Dane Robertshaw   | G4        |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | U15 200m (Cambs)       | Owen Thomas       |           |

Also, congratulations to U13 Oliver Coombes, who ran his 100<sup>th</sup> parkrun on 28 May and earned himself a PB.

### Masters

Bedford and County's EMAC League Men's team came second in the first fixture of the season (won by arch-rivals, Milton Keynes – boo! hiss!). For all those aged 35 or over, the remaining fixtures, for both Men and Women, are on 1<sup>st</sup> June at Milton Keynes, 22<sup>nd</sup> June at Cambridge, and 20<sup>th</sup> July at Bedford. And there is a league final in September if we qualify for it. Please contact Jim Keech (for the men) or Emma Coombes (for the women) if you'd like to compete.

### Wheelchair Section

Bedford Wheelchair Racing in its first three years of existence has progressed from strength to strength inspite of the severe impact of Covid.

In recent months the racers have been able to train together which always helps, and coaches Zoe Luscombe and Michael Blunt have ensured that sessions on the track and out on the Sustrans cycle path are both hard working and fun. They have been ably assisted by newcomer helper, Sharmila Harman who comes from Nepal and is President of the Paralympics Association of Nepal. With her spoken English rapidly improving she is performing a very useful role helping the coaches. We will be seeking to arrange for her to go on a coaching course as soon as possible.

Varun Bandi, the leading athlete, suffered a fractured leg following an accident between his wheelchair, when delivering newspapers, and a van on icy roads. He has now recovered and resumed full training. Also showing great promise are Jade Olulode and Katie Connolly, both of whom performed well in the 2022 Mini London marathon.

Three other racers, Rebecca Dean, Maisie Hughes and Hugo Cracknell are also stalwarts of the Club.

The track competition programme will be starting soon and we look forward to some Excellent performances.

Local Rotary Clubs continue to support the club financially and a recent grant from the Greene King trust will enable the purchase of much needed spare wheels, rims and gloves so that we can ensure that all taking part in races and training sessions are properly equipped.

Finally, we are expecting two new members shortly and are always willing to offer disabled people the chance to try out the sport.

## Outstanding Individual Performances

### Seniors

The first senior club record of the track season fell to Dan Jarvis, who broke his own 3000m Steeplechase mark with a performance of 8:37.58, whilst coming second in the Diamond League at Birmingham on 21st May. There have also been notable middle distance PBs for Jack Goodwin (13:51.66 for the 5000m), Sam Winters (1:51.50 for the 800m and 3:48.48 for the 1500m), and Alfie Yabsley (1:52.26 for the 800m). Stateside, Matt Leach was close to his 5000m PB with a 13:47.28 clocking in April, whilst Tabatha Walford set an 800m PB of 2:12.75.

Amongst the sprinters, Nathan Cox has improved his 100m PB to 11.17, and Aston Lockwood's 100m PB has improved to 11.18, whilst his 200m PB has improved to 22.71.

Stephen Simmons claimed fifth place in the England Athletics Under 20 Decathlon Championships on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May at Bedford, setting PBs of 11.35 seconds for the 100m, and 12.68 metres for the Shot Put.

### Juniors



*Jack*

*Goodwin and Ben Alcock  
in action over 5000m at  
Sportcity, Manchester*

There have been some fantastic performances from some of the younger members of the club. Ed Foy, who is a second-claim member, came eighth in the England Athletics Under 20 Decathlon Championships, setting five PBs, and chalking up a total of 6162 points in his first ever decathlon.

Newcomers, Theo Beale and Isaac Mitchell set new 800m PBs of 2:27 and 2:28 respectively in the county championships, and Archie Henderson has run 2.32 this year. Amongst the more established youngsters, Oliver Wilson won the 800m at the County Championships in a new PB of 2:19 (he has also run a 4:47 1500m this year), whilst Daniel Smith set a new 800m PB of 2:16 in the EYAL, taking 14 secs off his last year's time. Lyla Danobrega has taken 10 secs off her 1500m PB, reducing it to 4:45.5 and 7 secs off her 800m time, running 2:19.20 to finish second in the county championships, whilst she also has an excellent 3000m PB of 10:31.4. Milly Dunger achieved an excellent 1500m PB of 4:39.82 running at the British Milers Club Grand Prix in Manchester to go with her 10:10.3 whilst winning a 3000m in the Southern Athletics League at Hemel Hempsted. This puts Milly in the Under 17 UK top twenty for this year.

### **Masters**

Alan Turnbull has been enjoying a purple patch, setting three M55 road bests in less than a month: 28:15 for 5 miles at Great Yarmouth on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 34:41 for 10K at Langstoft on 1<sup>st</sup> May, and 57:20 for 10 miles on 15<sup>th</sup> May. Well done Alan.

## **Club Development Plan**

In response to the recent members' survey the committee is putting together a development plan to help the club to rebuild after COVID. A number of priorities have been identified including:

- Meeting new England Athletics requirements on club governance and having the correct policies and procedures in place.
- Increasing membership numbers and supporting athletes to achieve their potential
- Recruiting more volunteers to help with running the club, particularly technical officials to support matches
- Improving communication with members and providing social activities
- Supporting the development of wheelchair athletes.

Work has already started on:

- Meeting parents to recruit volunteers
- Updating our policies and procedures
- Publishing a club newsletter on a regular basis.

The idea is to provide an update on progress from time to time in the newsletter.

If you think there are things we have missed and have ideas for improving the club, please let Bob Thompson know by emailing [committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](mailto:committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk).

## **Volunteer – make a difference!**

The club needs many helpers to keep it running.

Volunteering to help at the club is a great way of:

- Helping your children to enjoy their sport
- Increasing your own knowledge of athletics, and
- Contributing something to your local community – as well as a means of getting out and perhaps even getting fitter.

Volunteering can be as active as you like – some people choose to officiate or coach because they want to be involved with the sport at close hand, while others may be more willing to help behind the scenes, with administration, fund-raising, or catering.

Whatever your skills and interests, get in touch and we'll try to find you something appropriate and rewarding to do. Please contact us by email at

[committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](mailto:committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk).

Finding the opportunity to volunteer for our club can be rewarding in many ways.

### Immediate need for Technical officials

Currently we are very short of technical officials to support our teams at league matches.

Indeed, unless we are able to provide adequate numbers of officials there is a real possibility that league matches will not go ahead and/or that athletes' results from track meetings will not be published/validated.

Please consider if you can offer some time at some of our league meetings to help with officiating. To find out more please contact us at [committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](mailto:committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk).

In the first instance we'll arrange for you to shadow one of our technical officials to find out what is involved. If you then decide to go ahead and train as an official, we'll provide you with all the support and training needed.

Being a track and field technical official will take you to new athletic stadiums and enable you to meet some fantastic people along the way of a wide range of abilities. Whether you favour timekeeping, track judging or field officiating we'll support you all the way to which ever level you wish to reach.

- To find out more about volunteering for the club, go to <https://www.bedfordandcountyac.org.uk/index.php/about-us/volunteers>
- email [committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk](mailto:committee@bedfordandcountyac.org.uk)
- or fill in a volunteer form: <https://www.tinyurl.com/BCACvolunteer-form>

## Blast from the Past



*Robbie Grabarz, with wife Ros, and daughter Lyra*

Robbie Grabarz is a former member of Bedford & county AC, and is pictured here with his wife, Ros, and daughter, Lyra, after receiving his upgraded 2012 Olympic High Jump silver medal, from his friend and 2020 Olympic Champion Gianmarco Tamberi at the Muller Diamond League Meeting in Birmingham.

Robbie still holds the overall club high jump record with 2.27m and the U20 record with 2.22m. He equalled the British outdoor record clearing 2.37m in 2012, a year when he was also the European Champion and won the Diamond League title. In November that year, he presented the club awards on a memorable evening at the University Drama theatre.

Ros (nee Gonse) was an international Heptathlete and is a life member of Bedford & County AC. She still holds the club records for Heptathlon (5798 points), Long Jump (6.01m) and shot (13.76m).

Lyra (aged 7) has yet to compete - if she wants to 😊

## Upcoming Fixtures

### League Matches and Championships

No matter what age you are, there are opportunities to compete for the club in league matches, and county, area and national championships over the next few weeks. For details, see the fixture list on the Bedford and County AC website:

<https://www.bedfordandcountyac.org.uk/index.php/fixtures>

### Open Meetings

There are too many open meetings out there to list on the club website, but one good way to find an open meeting, is to use the fixture lookup facility on the Power of Ten website:

<https://www.thepowerof10.info/fixtures/fixtureslookup.aspx?datefr>

(you will also be able to see national and regional rankings on the Power of Ten website, and all your results – try searching for your name!)