



## Track & Field Report – 2006 – Team Director - Men

### **SENIOR MEN**

It is planned to produce a Winter report at the end of the season

In the **British League National 1**, what at the start of the season promised to be a promotion drive ended as a comfortable consolidation of our place in the Division. We finished 4<sup>th</sup> (one place lower than last season) but did extend our excellent Team Spirit and we did give more of our promising talented youngsters a baptism in the British League. We also had 2 long distance matches to contend with and proved that we are a Club that can travel and still compete with a strong team. Another contributing factor was the need to select our top Junior sprinters thus putting a constant strain on them to compete at their best in two national competitions and the fact that for most of the season we only had four athletes available for the four middle distance places thus reducing the competitive edge in training. The signs are very promising on this front for 2007 as our Junior sprinters move up to Senior, thus reducing their work load and we will hopefully have more middle distance athletes available as I expect the excellent and tremendously talented **George Martin** to make an impact and the long awaited return from injury of another youngster, **Greg Stokes**, should provide interesting internal competition. The longer distance too has strength in depth with the addition of the powerful running of **Nathan White**. I have made it very clear in my selections that if an athlete is deemed good enough and his coach agrees, then age is no barrier nor is reputation. The retirement after 17 years loyal service by **Dave Huck** will be a hard act to follow but I and the team wish Dave well in his retirement from competitive athletics. **Julian Golley** has gone from strength to strength this season and when he chooses to stand down the Club will have a major headache in finding his replacement. **Andy Clements** proved yet again his credentials as an extraordinary captain and motivator and the evergreen **Mark Holloway** again proved to be a backbone for the club. In the field we relied heavily on the experience of **Mike Small** and the youthfulness of the talented **Tom Norman**. 2007 should see hardly any travelling and I hope that we can select a regular team and also field a full and competitive team in the **Southern League Division 1** where only a great start meant that we held our place in the division finishing in 15<sup>th</sup> position. Athletes must be prepared to compete in this League and prove their fitness and ability for selection in the British League team. With so many Junior athletes joining the senior ranks I hope that **Peter Virgo** will have a different headache next season, in deciding who to leave out instead of how to fill the team. In the **BAL Cup** we produced one of our best performances for some seasons but unfortunately met a Belgrave side that on the day was too strong for anyone and therefore we did not make the Final.

### **JUNIOR MEN (Under 20's)**

In the **National Junior League, Southern Premier Division**, the first season under a joint scoring system with our women, we exceeded all expectations when as a result of a paper match we reached the National Final and what a final it turned out to be. We finished an incredible 6<sup>th</sup> and in the race for a place in Europe the Men finished 4<sup>th</sup>. Gutsy performances from **Stephen Walker**, a new found confidence and mature running from **Ian May**, with **David Cole** (injured for most of the season but still turning out week after week) saving to last his best performance of the season when he retired as Junior Field captain with a leap of 1.95m in the high jump to capture gold – a fitting end to his Junior career. **Rion Pierre** opting to compete for his club and colleagues in the Final, despite having just returned from the **World Junior Championships in Beijing with a bronze medal in the 4 x 100m relay**, showed his worth by winning the 100m. The team spirit created by the joint team was a key factor in our success and the Womens management team of **Paula** and **Abigail Fudge** brought a fresh approach to the squads and showed what could be achieved by letting athletes enjoy themselves and just concentrate on their events with a quiet thank you to each after they had competed. **Craig Johnson** proved a responsible and sensible leader and hopefully his time will come to show his true form on the track. 2007 will be hard for the men with so many having moved to the Senior ranks, but we did like Derby and those Finals, so I expect similar performances from our new breed under the new inspirational captaincy of **Kieran Edward** (track) and **Matt Townsend** (Field).

### **UNDER 17's, UNDER 15's and UNDER 13's**

In the **National Young Athletes League, Southern Premier Division** the team competed extremely well under the new management team of **Lynda Bussley** and **Wendy Bangs** to reach the Main Final where we finished 4<sup>th</sup>. The headache for Lynda all season was the absent athletes from the under 17 ranks putting great strains on those who did participate to double up. In the local **Alder Valley League**, the team finished runners-up to Aldershot by just 23 points and actually won both the Under 13 and Under 15 sections but constant incomplete teams in the under 17 section due to athletes deciding not to compete proved our downfall.

### **GENERAL**

A unique partnership with athletes from Newbury and Epsom and Ewell bedded well in the Junior League and I sincerely hope that this new found bond will continue. My thanks to **Glyn, Sean and Kerry** for their endless help on this front. Thanks to all our travelling officials and to my superb lieutenant, **Robin Cole**, who as everyone who knows him will agree, is respected by all for his common sense and athlete awareness - a great asset to any team management. I cannot thank **Peter Virgo** and **Dennis Daly** enough for their advice and support in the way I feel the teams and Club should function. My aim for next year is to attempt to change the attitude of those who just want to take up the valuable coaching time of our coaches without any intention of competing for the club. We must remember that we are an athletic club and NOT a fitness and leisure club – There is a time and a place for both, but for me I only have time for participating athletes, whatever their standard. Lastly, it would be nice to see our International band of athletes appear on the Track/Field in a Windsor vest competing for the team. Thanks to all for their continued confidence in me and my sometimes unconventional methods and I hope that I have proved that the athlete must and will always come first provided he supports the Club which is at all times bigger than any one person whatever their standing in the sport of athletics.

BRYAN GOODMAN