

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

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

### **UK WOMENS LEAGUE – PREMIER DIVISION (Division 1)**

We started the season well, placing 4<sup>th</sup> in our first match, which should have been enough for us to maintain our Division 1 status with relative ease. But it was not to be and our 9 year reign in the Premier Division reached what I hope will be just a hiatus.

It was noticeable that apart from Rugby all the teams in the Division were strong and fairly evenly matched and that any team(s) that showed weakness were going to be in trouble. And so it was. We had a bad year injury-wise. But in addition, whilst team spirit abounded at every match, there appeared to be a lack of commitment by a minority of our athletes, who seemed not to place importance on their appearance at the fixtures.

The result was that whilst other teams “turned it on” in the close fight for the League title or to avoid relegation, we were unable to do so and finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place at the end of season.

So we will be in Division 2 for 2007. We **should** bounce back up to Division 1 with absolute ease, however, **that**, that will depend entirely on the commitment of all of our senior athletes to fight for it.

On a positive note, only WSEH and SALE shared the unbroken 9 year reign in Division 1, whilst other powerful teams such as Birchfield, Woodford Green, Glasgow & Edinburgh faced relegation at least once during that period. And the team is still placed inside the top ten in the UK.

### **NATIONAL JUNIOR LEAGUE – SOUTHERN PREMIER DIVISION**

Our joint men and women’s team did exceptionally well, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the Southern Premier Division. They were then victorious in a paper match to fill vacant National Final slots. With the commitment that they had shown all season, the team placed a creditable 6<sup>th</sup> in the Final.

With this season’s team featuring a number of committed and talented under 17 athletes, the future looks bright. Hopefully the successful mother and daughter partnership of Paula & Abi Fudge will continue with their successful style of management for the foreseeable future.

### **NATIONAL YOUNG ATHLETES LEAGUE – SOUTHERN PREMIER DIVISION**

We continued our long standing record of success in this league, placing a close second to Blackheath & Bromley in the Division and a brilliant 4<sup>th</sup> in the National Final.

Under the management of Geoff Bayles, the girls section of the team continues to be a force to be reckoned with.

### **SOUTHERN WOMEN’S LEAGUE**

**Division 1** Another good year. We just missed out on making it 4 league wins in succession, but were close runners up to Herts Phoenix, who did not have to contest the last fixture of the season one day and contest the National Young athletes Final the next day. So a great result!

**Division 2** Once able to field a complete team and hold a safe mid table position, the club has struggled to get more than a handful of athletes to division 2 matches. In fact, we did not take a team to the matches. We took a handful of athletes, who over-stretched themselves so much in an effort to cover the required number of events that they could not expect to perform well in their key event(s). The team finished firmly in the relegation zone.

### **ALDER VALLEY LEAGUE**

The commitment of our young female athletes was again evident as we took the League Trophy once again. It has been over 10 years since any other club in the League has managed to get the better of us. It is an excellent record and a superb way to close the 2006 season.

### **GENERAL**

I want to thank the officials who continue to support the ladies teams, particularly Dave Weston and Julian Schlaepfer who attended most of the ladies fixtures during the season. As a result, they officiated on both days of many weekends. Others whose support proved invaluable were Amanda Sanders, Arthur Fairhurst, Jane & Doug Scott and Dennis Daly. Another small but stalwart band also support the men’s teams. They should all be commended for the amount of effort that they put in and the number of weekends they give up.

I also want to thank the coaches, whose efforts and co-operation contributes to the success of our club.

IRENE SPELLER