**Chair’s 2019/20 review**

As I write this we’re in a very different year from that of 2019/20.  A year we’re not half way through but already with many firsts (and hopefully lasts).  We’re in lockdown and social distancing.  Club training sessions, award ceremonies and social events have been cancelled as we social distance and avoid large gatherings.  Road races, including our own Roon the Toon, and track and field events have been cancelled or postponed.

And all this followed on from a successful 2019/20 for the Club as we continued to grow and see improvement and success throughout.

Roon the Toon, Roon the Country, Ruby’s Race and Killiween were all organised by the Club and open to the public.  Open graded and league track and field events and District Cross country were also hosted at the AAA.

The Club participated in the Youth Development League (YDL) and the Central & South Scotland Athletics League (CSSAL) and many members participated in road (and off road) races of varying distances across Scotland and beyond.

In both the YDL and the CSSAL we won Division 2 gaining promotion to Division 1 – although now deferred for a year! Both the Under 13/ 15 and Under 17 teams qualified for the YDL finals

At the indoor sprint relays we had 4 teams qualify for the finals with the added bonus of the young athletes getting to compete at the Muller Grand Prix meet at the Emirates.

In the SAIL (Scottish Athletics Indoor League) where in recent past we have done well without actually getting any teams qualified for the finals this season 6 age groups teams out of 10 ( From Under 11 s right through to Under 20s ) qualified.  Unfortunately, due to a mechanical problem at the Emirates the finals were cancelled

There was also numerous individual winners and medallists at both District and National level on the track in the field on the road, and over the country Where the club had 5 Athletes selected for the inter district cross country

But probably more pleasing was we had more young athletes than before competing at District and National Championships.

At the senior level we are seeing more strength in depth with good team and individual performances and numerous personal bests have been improved.  A 3rd place for the team at the George Cummings Road Relay was a highlight in this high-quality event. We had winners of the West District Half Marathon Championship and the Ayrshire 10-mile championships.  We had champions and medallists at the Scottish Indoor and Outdoor Masters championships.

Amongst all these successes, a few individual highlights would be:

·        Scott Martin taking 2nd place in the European Masters Half Marathon Champs V50 in Italy,

·        Richard Mair representing Scotland at the British and Irish Masters XC taking 5th place overall. Also lowering his 5k and 10k PBs to 15.02 and 31.04 respectively.

·        Kara Tait, after a lengthy period of injury, has combined her running and swimming talents and became the Scottish Aquathlon champion and secured British age group selection for the world and European age group Aquathlon championships.

Club Development

During the past twelve months the club implemented one of the biggest changes in structure of the Junior section seen in any club in the country as we build on the delivery of a fit for purpose athlete pathway. This has led to more athletes being able to attend the training, lowering the waiting list.

Following on from these changes we are looking at the senior running sections, with a plan to implement some structure in this area of the club.

In partnership with Scottish Athletics the club also delivered an in-house Coaching Assistant course for members, eight new coaches qualified at this level,

As we move forward, we are looking to implement a Young Coaches Academy for up to 12 young members to train to become coaches. There will also be a number of coaches workshops throughout this year to help upskill the current and new coaches in the club, these will be delivered in partnership with SAL, EAL and Sportscotland.

As everyone is probably aware the club cannot run without volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers, coaches, committee members, trustees who work really hard to keep Kilmarnock Harriers running smoothly.

During this challenging time we all have to pull together. We will get through this and hopefully be back training with our friends at the club soon.

Kate Todd

Chairperson

May 2020