

Spring 2025



**SWINDON
HARRIERS**

NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It has been a very busy start to the calendar year for the club. Competition-wise, our athletes have excelled over the country, picking up numerous awards and medals in the Oxford League, South West Schools Championships, and the National Championships, including an England representative honour for Finley Byrne. Outstanding stuff.

Road has seen many excellent individual and team performances at home and abroad, why would you want to run road races in Spain when you can run them in Highworth or London!!!

The club has also now got lockers available in the clubhouse, power to the containers, all aspects of the floodlights finally signed off.

Our first open meeting of the season (Mark Cawte) had an incredible number of entries, and thanks to kind weather, there were many excellent performances. Thanks also to Swindon Cricket Club for their assistance with parking, that also proved a great success.

The new website is now up and running, have a look at the new features, Pen pictures of athletes, member of the month, training and fixture information, updated calendar etc, drop us a line if you have any suggestions.

On the front page you will see our fundraising for the 'track refurbishment'. There will certainly be more information and ways we will be looking to add to 'the pot' going forward.

Howard Moscrop

Track Fund
£29k!

GOAL



Fantastic news! Nationwide Building Society's Colleague Grants Scheme has awarded £2,736 for Swindon Harriers Athletics Club to buy some much-needed Sportshall Games equipment, for use by U11 and U13 club members & for the club's community outreach.

(And if you work for an organisation with similar community giving initiatives, the club's Fundraising team would love to hear from you:

swindonharriersac@gmail.com or
stephensparkes331@btinternet.com)

CLUB NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

COACHING NEWS

Many congratulations to Matt Nicholls and Mike Beard, who have each qualified as UKA Coaches (Level 2).

This means on a Thursday night with the Under 11s we have a Level 2 coach leading each of the four disciplines. I'm sure there are not too many clubs in the country that can claim to have such quality and expertise on tap.

Thank you very much to Matt and Mike for taking the time out to achieve these qualifications and to the club for funding the course fees.

Steve Sparkes

FUNDamentals Group Coordinator

New Sponsor

The eagle-eyed will spot that our volunteer Match Officials (e.g. Timekeeper, Referee, Field Judge) are wearing new kit.

We're delighted to announce APD are sponsoring our Match Officials for the next three years. The kit is required so the club can comply with league rules.

APD Car Parts has been operating for over 80 years and has ten stores around the M4 / M5 corridor and two stores in Norwich. APD holds over 50,000 car parts in stock access to a further 1 million parts through its supply partners.

We thank APD for their generous sponsorship.

An official launch will be included in the next newsletter.

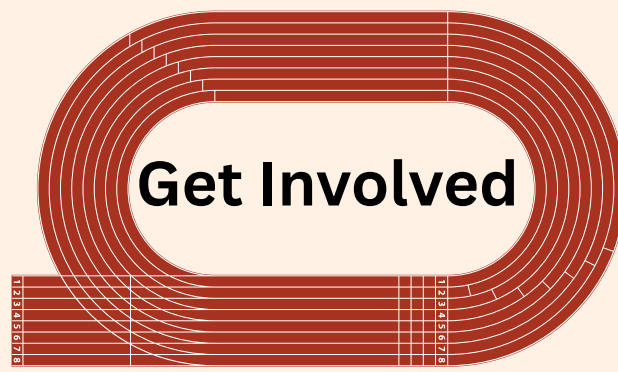
OFFICIALS NEWS

Contact:

· Interest in becoming a Match Official: kierangolding@hotmail.com

· Interest in becoming a Sponsor of Swindon Harriers:

swindonharriersac@gmail.com or stephensparkes331@btinternet.com



We're Starting A Fundraising Group!

In the past, the club has raised funds mainly through income from competition entry fees, membership fees, and profits from food, drink, and clothing sales.

The cost to replace the track surface calls for a more structured focus. This led to a working party looking to set up a Fundraising Group. We're now at the exciting point of launching the Group.

The General Committee has set out two objectives for 2025/26:

- Attract additional income to accelerate meeting the track repair target.
- Bring in income that will offset the £7k outlay the club has paid to transport athletes and their supporters to a series of Away league meetings in 2025.

The good news is that we have identified a range of realistic, achievable avenues for income, such as seeking sponsorships, corporate giving, and paying for trackside advertising.

We need to expand the team from the original five people. We're keen to hear from anyone with a background in fund-raising (both amateur and professional), advertising, marketing, or those who are none of the above but keen to lend a hand.

Your Fundraising Group can only go as fast as our spare time allows and there's a clear need to at least double the size of this group if we're to take advantage of the opportunities we've identified, some of which you'll read or hear about over the coming weeks. A bigger group also means more freedom for individuals to dip in and out from time to time, in terms of involvement.

We'd love to hear from anyone interested. Contact: swindonharriersac@gmail.com or stephensparkes331@btinternet.com

High Jump Assistant Appeal

Hi All, this is Martin, I'm the lead coach for High Jump at the club. In fact I'm the only high jump coach at the club and I would like to appeal for someone to help me with my sessions, the main of which is on a Sunday Morning at 10am till 12pm. I also cover the Under 13/15 high jump training, as part of the Wednesday evening session run by Kat Silto-Baker. It would seem that the group I have after dwindling to two athletes is now starting to grow, which is great, but I can't manage the athletes effectively and essentially keep them moving! If you feel you can help and put up with my poor quality humour (part Scouse!) I'd love to hear from you. Either contact me through my email 139martin.smith@gmail.com or come and see me at the track. I'm usually there most of the time!

Thank You.

Martin.

Under 11s News

The club currently has 158 Under 11s on its books, from School Year 3 through 5. 22 attend Monday night's FUNetics section and the remaining 136 attending Thursday night training in FUNdamentals. We have 9 Year 4s waiting to join (patiently waiting for places to become available) and so far, 33 Year 3s preparing to start in September.

We accept applications once a child is in School Year 2 and give priority to the siblings and children of club members, extending that to the local running clubs. As the waiting list will grow to something like 95 children before the end of August, that's quite an advantage! (To apply, please go to the club web site.)

While we eagerly look forward to competing in the Quad Kids section of the Wessex Track & Field League, we've already had success in 2025. Many congratulations to Megan Rose coming 3rd in the Year 3 section of the National Primary Schools Cross Country Championship.

As you'll see from the attached photos, Swindon Harriers' youngest athletes had a successful day at the Salisbury Athletics Club Quad Kids quadrathlon competition on Saturday, April 19th.

The fourteen-strong squad took two first places, one second place, and three third places in the 75m, howler throw, long jump, and 600 m events.

The four girls who entered made a particularly impressive effort, securing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, respectively.

Congratulations to them all.

Steve Sparkes
U11 Team Manager



**SPECIFIC GROUP
UPDATES**



Another spring meant another club trip to Sutton Park in Birmingham to take on the 12-stage relays, consisting of 12x5k legs on a hilly course. The Midlands served as a qualifier for the nationals two weeks later, and we went to that with two full teams. The A team qualified for the nationals comfortably with our best performance to date, coming in 4th place, although heartbreakingly losing out on a medal within the last kilometer of the 60km race. The B team also secured the 4th B team spot and qualified for the nationals. It was a fantastic effort and a real credit to all the athletes who turned out, and a credit to the coaches at the club. Nationals came two weeks later, and despite some changes to the team due to availability, a very respectable 29th place showed the depth of our club against the best the country has to offer. Attention now turns to the Autumn relays over six stages. The event is open to everyone, so if you haven't been contacted about the relays and would like to compete, please let me know when you next see me. It would be great to beat our previous best of four teams. Notable performers were Harry Woods, who ran a club record for the course at the Midlands; Courtenay Chessell, who ran a course PB despite his protests about how slowly he'd run; Issac Mould, who broke 16 minutes on the course for the first time; and debutants Dan Giles and Josh Lugembe. We also said goodbye to Tom Hunton at the nationals, who competed for the last time before moving to Australia

John Dill

Well what a season Swindon Harriers have had from the both the Men's and Women's teams.

Starting with the girls - Ella Spencer as she dominated with 3 wins out of 4, coming 2nd in the last race already securing the individual win. Some strong running from Emily Blackstock too, only racing twice with two top 5 results and helped Ella and Swindon Harriers win the mixed team relays, along with Ben Cole and Harry Woods.

U17 men managed to come 3rd overall with good running from Matthew Hutton, Benjamin Charlesworth, Oliver Lewis, David Kowalski, Arthur Pearson and Joshua Steward.

U20 Women individual and Senior Women's team scores saw Freya Davidse representing and finishing with 3 top 3 finishes. One to watch as she is now mixing it with the Senior ladies.

U20 Men individual and senior team scores saw Harry Edwards running so strongly and now a regular scorer for the A team. He managed to claim the 3rd U20 male medal.

Senior Men - after the last few years of totally dominating and winning the league by the fourth race, this year we decided to add a little bit more excitement for the journey to the the win.

Having won the first and second rounds, we went into the 3rd round with a lead of 91 points. Due to injuries, illness and people doing other races, we turned up not as strong as the last two fixtures. And due to the Oxon Championships on this race day, the Oxford teams came in super strong. So after Round Three we ended up being 185 points behind with two races to go.

So the team knew the importance of the next two races. And the Swindon Harriers family came out in force to help retain our title.

And 62 points and 64 points in the last two rounds allowed us to win the league yet again by 193 points. And congratulations for Daniel Giles' first season with the club. Claiming 3rd senior male overall.

Thanks to everyone that took part and that helped out. And a big shout out to Simon Byrne for looking after the team tent, making sure it was up and ready for the first races and staying till the end.

The **Wiltshire Junior Race League**. is an annual series of races affiliated to Wiltshire Athletic Association. This League is new to the Swindon Harriers calendar this year. The 8 non track races are spread out until October where the best 6 count. Individual and Team points are at stake. An award shall be made to the club with the highest scoring team in the First Division of The League. An award shall also be made to the highest scoring Boys and Girls within The League in the U11, U13, U15 & U17 age categories. There will also be county achievement medals on offer to those athletes attaining reaching target scoring levels: Bronze = 360-479, Silver = 480-539 and Gold = 540+ with the best six performances out of the available eight races to count.

The purpose of this league is to promote junior running within the county and raising the profile of Wiltshire clubs and athletes. I have run many local races myself and the knowledge I gained was huge certainly around how to pace, dealing with adverse weather conditions, and how running for a position is different to running for a time. Variety is everything so young athletes should try as much as they can when then can.

The first race was the Smartt Smasher 1 Mile was on 16 February in Calne where Swindon Harriers performed well against the 10 or so other wiltshire clubs taking part.

Great friendly marshals and warm up made a relaxed atmosphere. Also, great post-race cake and a super medal.

There were some great performances over the 1.5km course

- U11 Girls Scarlett Morris was 1st
- U11 Girls Imogen Beard was 2nd
- U11 Girls Alexandra Czerczak was 11th
- U11 Boys Harrison Lowe was 8th
- U13 Boys Finley Garrett was 3rd
- U13 Girls Mistral Lyon was 6th



We had similar success in round 2 Calne Clock Change Challenge on 29th March

- U11 Girls Scarlett Morris 2nd
- U11 Boys Evan Rowlett 6th
- U11 Boys Harrison Lowe was 10th
- U13 Boys Finley Garrett was 5th
- U13 Girls Matylda Krause was 3rd



These great results means after two rounds Swindon Harriers Team are currently sitting in 2nd place in the overall League. Pretty good for a first season so far

Further information can be found on the Wiltshire Athletics site or please reach out to Mike Beard.

[Wiltshire Junior Race League Fixtures 2025,](#)

[Wiltshire Junior Race League Results 2025](#)



Wessex and YDL

We have had a great start to our young athletics competition campaign with a relatively convincing home win in the first Wessex League meeting (27th April), with an overall team total of 590 points.

Our U13s had a fantastic day with both the girls and boys teams winning. This was all the more significant, given for many, this was their first taste of league competition. Stand out track performances were from Tamiah Roswell winning both her 100m and 200m sprints (a 200m club record), Pippa Wall and Molly McMeeking in the 1500m. We also showed great strength in depth in the field events, which earned us valuable points. With first's in A and B strings in the High Jump with Nina Vestey and Mistral Lyons, Shot with Emily Wilkins and Sophie Silto-Baker, and Roaslie Hiscock in the Discus. For the Boys field, we won the A and B string for Javelin, Discus and Shot and High Jump. Of note was Arthur Adams who looks like he has great potential (more about him later!)

For the U15s, the Boys finished 1st whilst the Girls were 2nd. Back after injury, Ethan Bryon showed he had lost none of his speed with two excellent wins in the 100m and 200m. With strength in depth in the U15Bs sprinters which showed in 4 x 100m relay with an easy win. Douglas Kirby had a great win in the 800m, and in the field, we won both the A and B string Discus with Jacob Pender and Josh Kench.

For the U15 Girls, wins from Lowri Prosser (A String 300m and High Jump), Thea Scobey B string 300m, Freya McMeeking A String 800m, Ellie Charlesworth and Amy Harris the A and B string. Ellie showed her versatility by winning the A string Javelin and coming second in the Discus.

In the U17s the Women there were good wins in the 200m A string from Mayah Trybala-Lugembe, and it was a good return from injury for Ella Nicholls with wins in the B string for both the 100m and 200m. Holly Scott had to step away from the Hammer, given it is not contested in the Wessex League, to yet again win valuable points, with a win in the A string Hurdles, the Discus and second in the Shot. Evie Wilkins made it a double in the Discus with a win in the B string. The U17W also had a strong win in the 4 x 100m relay with Jess Tanner bringing home the baton.

The U17 Men showed some great strength on the track with double wins in the 400m - Al Virgilio (A) & Ben Janes (B), the 800m - Ben Charlesworth (A) & Alex Leak (B) and the 1500m - Josh Steward (A) and Harry Burdekin (B). Unfortunately, several gaps in the field meant they finished second. Given several key athletes who were not available due to injury or competing in other events, it certainly holds us in good stead for challenging for the Wessex title again.

Our first YDL meeting took place at Gloucester on Sat 3rd May and we again gave a good account of ourselves in the Under 13/15 category with a provisional second place. Although we're still awaiting the final results, that should be confirmed later this week.

Notable wins for the Under 13 Girls were, Tamaiah in 75m and 150m, Molly McMeeking and Matylda Krause in the 800m and Nina in High Jump. But several of the girls gained valuable points across the board. For the boys, the same could be said, with notable wins from Loki Fisher 1200m B String, Elliot Bray B String Javelin, but Arthur Adams deserves particular praise for winning the Long Jump A String, second place in the Shot, but in the A string Javelin, unleashed a massive PB, Club Record 37.85m throw! A bit not bad...

In the Under 15s there were wins again for Freya McMeeking in the B String 800m, Esha Bhalero and Lowri Prosser in A and B string Pole vault (2.71m, a new club record for Esha!), Lottie Harding in A String Hammer. For the boys, there were wins for Dylan Necrews B String 800m, James Mayneord and Olly Hughes in 1500m A and B String, Jacob Pender in A String Shot and Discus.

Overall a great performance from the team over both meetings with loads of PBs and dips into the Team Manager's PB treats bag!

Craig, Gemma and Martin are very happy Team Managers!

FIXTURES AND EVENTS

TRACK AND FIELD

May

YDL #1 - 3rd May (Gloucester)

Wiltshire County Championships - 10th May (Swindon)

Wessex League #2 - 18th May (Southampton)

Wessex League #3 - 25th May (Abingdon)

June

YDL #2 - 1st June (Swansea)

Wiltshire Schools - 14th June (Swindon)

South West Schools - 21st June

July

Wessex League #4 - 6th July (Marlborough)

YDL #3 - 20th July (Swindon)

SW Championships - 20th July (Exeter)



HEALTH AND NUTRITION ADVICE



Food of the Season – New Potatoes

New potatoes, including popular varieties like Jersey Royals and Maris Peer, are one of the UK's most cherished spring and early summer crops. Harvested while still young, these small, waxy potatoes have delicate skins, a subtly sweet flavour, and a firm texture. They're typically in season from April to July, especially thriving in the mild, wetter climates of regions like Cornwall and the Channel Islands.

Unlike maincrop potatoes, new potatoes are dug up before they reach full maturity. Grown in well-drained soil and often planted in early spring, they don't require peeling and cook quickly, making them a convenient and wholesome option for warm-weather meals. Their low environmental footprint and short supply chain during peak season also make them a sustainable choice for UK kitchens.

For runners and other track and field athletes, new potatoes are a fantastic source of complex carbohydrates, the body's preferred fuel for endurance and recovery. They also contain potassium, which helps maintain fluid balance and supports muscle function, and vitamin C, essential for tissue repair and immune health.

Naturally low in fat and easy to digest, they provide the energy athletes need without weighing them down.

In the kitchen, new potatoes are incredibly versatile. Boiled or steamed with a touch of butter and herbs, they're a quick side dish for any post-training meal. Toss them into cold salads with protein for a balanced lunch, or roast them with olive oil for a comforting but performance-friendly dinner. Their slow-digesting carbs help sustain energy, making them ideal before long runs or as part of a recovery meal.

Whether you're training, competing, or just fueling your active lifestyle, new potatoes are a seasonal superstar worth celebrating.

Spring into Summer: Train Strong, Stay Healthy

Longer days and warmer weather bring fresh energy to your training routine—but smart habits are still key to staying healthy, strong, and injury-free all season long.

Fuel for Performance

Spring and summer training often means more sessions, longer distances, or higher intensity. Fuel your body with carb-rich foods (like new potatoes, whole grains, and fruit), lean proteins (chicken, tofu, eggs), and hydrating snacks (melon, cucumber, smoothies). Warmer weather means more sweating—so up your electrolyte intake with foods rich in potassium and magnesium, or consider adding electrolyte tabs to your water during longer workouts.

Stay Cool and Injury-Free

Don't skip your warm-up just because it's warmer out—dynamic stretches and mobility work prepare your muscles for performance and prevent injury. Dress in light, moisture-wicking layers and protect your skin with sweat-proof SPF if training outdoors. After your session, cool down properly and rehydrate ASAP.

Enjoy the sunshine, train smart, and let the season fuel your goals! 🌞 🏃 🍓