**Chat from the Chair January 2017**

It has been some time since my previous communication in October. But first let me wish everyone connected with the Club a very Happy New Year and a successful 2017 in whatever you aspire to achieve.

2016 had its highs and lows in athletics terms. Since October the Club has been involved in the North Midlands Cross Country League and the younger age groups are setting a very good example in terms of team and individual performances. With 1 more race left to run let’s hope that they continue to run away with it.

The Derbyshire Athletics Cross Country Mini League proved very successful and the Club was overall winners and Valentina Costa won the U13 Girls title with 3 first places (in the 3-race series), and Amy Rouse was 4th; Alice Crane was 4th in the u15 Girls. The boys were not outdone either - Corey Rose and Billy O’Sullivan finished 1st and 2nd respectively and Jack Davies was 4th in the u13 Boys; and in the u11 boys James Rouse finished runner-up and Stanley Lowe 4th. In the team races the u13s proved too strong for the opposition. Credit can be attributed to the runners who supported the races and the Team Manager Paul Martin for his continual encouragement.

The Sports Hall Mini League continues but the Club’s success is limited due to the unfortunate low numbers supporting these events. The numbers have varied from a peak of 25 to a low of 12.

The County Cross country Championships saw in excess of 40 Club runners in Nottingham but only 4 Senior Men entered their Championship. 18 athletes have been selected to represent the County in March. Several individual titles were won plus 5 team titles. Well done to all the athletes.

Ben Connor followed his European Cross Country Team Gold medal in December in Italy with selection for the GB team at the Edinburgh Great Run on 7th Jan along with Hugo Milner (U20). Congratulations to both athletes.

We have had to adopt a waiting list for new members joining the Foundation Course due to the lack of coaches – we need more Coaches – the few are feeling the pressure! Can you help please even if it means holding a stopwatch or raking a sandpit. Every little helps.

A universal membership fee has been suggested starting in April 2017. **We would welcome the Club’s views on this proposal please.**

We were saddened to be given a final figure of between £4000 and £5000 to recommission Moorways Sports Hall for the winter (originally it was £400-£500). Needless to say we declined this offer.

The Club has a busy schedule for summer competitions and will need much support in terms of Team Management, Officiating and Catering. The latter is extremely important because it is the Club’s second largest item in its income stream (the first being Membership fees). Catering also plays an important role when it comes to other (non-Club) matches at Derby – schools fixtures, other clubs, County Champs, etc. Even if it is for an hour Jayne would be very grateful for your help. **She also needs help on Thursday club nights – any volunteers?**

We are planning on holding an extra fixture in April - a mid-week evening and using electronic timing (Photo Finish). The Athletics Festival is planned for 10th September and the Club needs assistance – planning begins now. Anyone prepared to assist please contact a Committee member – we are willing to teach anyone the skills needed to organise a Track & Field meeting. You could learn a new skill and it would help to reduce our work-loads.

Good luck to our athletes, team management and Officials in the huge number of Championships fast approaching – Derbys Schools, Northern Cross Country and Indoor Track & Field, National Cross Country (in Nottingham), English Schools Cross Country, Northern and National 12 & 6 stage Road Relays.

Barry Parker