

# Derby AC Juniors

# Run Jump Throw

**A Strategy for 2021-2025**



**Version 1.1**

**A Derby Athletic Club Project**

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## Introduction

This is a strategy document for Derby AC Juniors Run, Jump, Throw for 2021 until 2025.

It is envisaged that this strategy will be reviewed in 2024.

Derby AC Juniors – Run, Jump, Throw (DAC Juniors) is a project of Derby AC.

## The Aims of Derby Athletic Club

(Taken from the Derby AC Constitution adopted 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016

- *To offer coaching and competitive opportunities in Athletics*
- *To promote the club and athletics within the City of Derby and wider catchment areas*
- *To manage the club in an efficient and sustainable manner*
- *To ensure a duty of care to all members and users of the club*
- *To provide all its services in a way that is fair to all members and others who may have use of them*

Juniors is generally considered to be all athletes from 7 years old up to and including athletes in the U15 age group. Athletes in the U15 age group tend to move towards their preferred events groups or become multi-eventers.

## **Where are we now ?**

Derby AC is well catered for in endurance running for Junior, Intermediate and Senior sections (for those that essentially wishing to train - and compete - specifically in middle distance and longer distances). Junior athletes can join the run section and progress in much the same way as at a typical running club that caters for juniors.

There are also currently good training and coaching opportunities for those progressing into Multi-events, Rotational throws and Sprint events.

There appears to be limited provision in several events and a danger that the potential numbers progressing from a successful Junior section may overwhelm current provision.

The “Induction Group” which previously provided an introduction to athletics for potential athletes aged 7 upwards at Derby AC was declining following the changing priorities and retirement of key coaches running the sessions.

## SWOT Analysis

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Two coaches with experience in developing junior sections from scratch and other volunteers wishing to get involved.</li> <li>2) An established, outdoor facility catering for all events with facility time available.</li> <li>3) A good quantity of quality equipment.</li> <li>4) A large catchment of new potential athletes and volunteers.</li> <li>5) A tradition of providing athletics opportunities for local people.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) No significant indoor facility for inclement weather to promote all-year participation in Run, Jump, Throw activities for younger athletes.</li> <li>2) Recent history of low numbers participating in U11/U13/U15 Sportshall and Track &amp; Field competitions.</li> <li>3) Lack of clarity in pathways of opportunity in all events as athletes' progress.</li> <li>4) Clash of facility time where older athletes rightly get event station priority.</li> <li>5) Current Annual Membership Scheme requires a commitment which is probably not conducive to encouraging young beginners from outside the athletics family.</li> </ol>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To establish two weekly Run, Jump, Throw Sessions, early Thursday evening and Saturday morning Run, Jump Throw sessions providing increased opportunity for coaching athletes and the best position to promote participation in early competitive opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thursday evening provides a direct opportunity to link athletes to the club's existing event group sessions.</li> <li>- Thursday also provides an opportunity for younger siblings or children of athletes to attend a session at the same time.</li> <li>- Saturday morning provides the smoothest possible transition from attending coaching to representing the club in competition as they are at the same time and often the same place !</li> <li>- Saturday morning provides the developing athletes with unfiltered use of the facility which is not available at other times.</li> <li>- Saturday morning is an opportunity for event group coaches to support one off sessions facilitating links to event groups sessions without</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Establishing new sessions has short-term resource implications and creates longer-term resource club commitments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There will be a increased facility hire cost from Saturday mornings which may be a loss leader while the session is establish and grown.</li> <li>- Additional administration will be required to support new members (including increased: administration of memberships and finances, specific and direct communication, marketing/ordering/selling of club merchandise).</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) To retain increasing numbers of volunteers, there will be an increased administrative load which may overload existing volunteers and there will be an increased financial cost if training is to be supported.</li> <li>3) Possible reluctance of existing club members to embrace changes that may be perceived as upsetting the status quo.</li> <li>4) Lack of club "stand out" identity in training and competitions may reduce retention (low feeling of belonging)</li> </ol>

<p>neglecting their event group sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Saturday morning gives an opening for older athletes to put something back and/or build a volunteering CV without missing training. Many previous athletes become coaches in the long-term – this will be more likely if they have a enjoyable, early experience of it.</li> </ul> <p>2) With a regular and greater number of younger athletes becoming club members, the club has the potential to repeatedly recruit new volunteers (coaches, officials, administrators, general helpers, etc) from a new catchment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is potential to form a sub group of new volunteers to administer and micromanage the junior section of Derby AC reducing central administration and providing a bank of possible full committee members in the future.</li> <li>- Many Coaches and Officials recruited from the younger members’ families often follow their athletes through the age groups, training session and competitions supporting the opportunity to develop event groups and provide more competition.</li> </ul>	<p>and recruiting (lack of visibility of team identity or possibly existence).</p>	<p>4</p>
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## **Where do we want to go and by when?**

In this plan we have identified clear, stepped aims over five years to reach the proposed ideal scenario !

The ideal scenario is a sustainable, thriving section that provides quality coaching, training and competitive opportunities for children and adolescents run by the community of the athletes involved.

This requires coaches, officials, administrators (team managers, session registration etc) and other volunteers to be continually recruited as young athletes move through the age groups.

Traditionally the youngest athletes (for reason of expediency/resources and/or limited facility time) in many clubs only have filtered use of athletics track and the field event areas. This reduces the athletes' quality of experience and the opportunities for newer coaches to learn the events appropriately.

However there is also significant advantage in younger siblings attending at the same time as older siblings and for younger athletes and new families to be welcomed into the whole club environment.

To meet the demands of club unity, family commitment and quality opportunity it is proposed that one "filtered" evening session (where priority of resources and facility must be given to event groups of older athletes) and one "unfiltered" weekend session where youngest athletes (and developing coaches with them) have access to the whole facility and resource opportunity.

As well as quality facility and resource opportunity for athletes and developing coaches, there is a continual need to recruit new volunteers and this is significantly helped by having a team identity with clear support structures in place.

**In year 1 “Create and Establish” (2021):**

1. Create and maintain two established regular weekly sessions (Thursday evening and Saturday morning). By establish we mean two self funding sessions with regular coaches and athletes in attendance.
2. Provide athletes to compete representing Derby AC in all MiniLeagues (Sportshall, Track&Field, Cross Country) and Lower YDL matches.
3. Recruit and begin to train/mentor team managers/officials/coaches/helpers from parents and families of those attending DAC Juniors sessions.
4. Imbed a culture of parents/families of all athletes expecting to take a role supporting the club.
5. Support a cohesive team identity through a culture of wearing recognizable club clothing and kit in training and at competitions.
6. Build streamlined, effective, sustainable administrative procedures to support all of the above.

**In years 2 & 3 “Retain, Maintain and Grow” (2022-23):**

1. Create and maintain training subgroups within DAC Juniors with coaches in teams supporting small groups of no more than 12 athletes of similar biological / social&emotional / training ages.
2. Provide full teams of athletes (all event coverage) representing Derby AC for lower ages (U11, U13) of MiniLeagues and YDL Competitions.
3. Teams managed by volunteers related to children attending DAC Junior sessions.
4. Have a majority of Level 1 officials at events where DAC Juniors are competing to be made up of volunteers related to the children attending DAC Junior Sessions.
5. Cohesive team identity established through immediately recognizable clothing and branding.
6. Organise two formal opportunities a year for parents/carers/volunteers to provide feedback and review Derby AC Juniors.



**In years 4 & 5 “Sustainability” (2024-25):**

1. Imbed coach/helper mentoring schemes within DAC Juniors with two people (ideally a coach and assistant coach/helper) supporting small groups of no more than 12 athletes.
2. Develop and promote clear pathways for coaches and athletes to progress to events group sessions.
3. Be in contention to compete for team as league winners across all age groups (U11, U13, U15) of all MiniLeague competitions and Lower YDL by providing full teams of athletes (all event coverage) representing Derby AC for all lower ages (U11, U13, U15).
4. Initiate a tradition of mentoring new team managers as new volunteers are recruited from relatives/carers of younger, newer athletes attending DAC Junior sessions.
5. Have a team of officials (Level 1 & 2) where DAC Juniors are competing to be made up of volunteers related to the children attending DAC Junior Sessions.
6. Establish a formal club sub group to administer and manage DAC Juniors (training, kit, competition, volunteer recruitment etc), rotating positions with guaranteed opportunity for new volunteers to get involved each year while continuing with at least two review meetings a year.