

2019/20 – an overview

Katie Gumbrell

Since the last AGM, our volunteer coaches have:

- Been out in all weathers, coaching on **100 track nights** over the year
- Provided in excess of **500 active coaching hours** at Palmer Park
- Dedicated themselves to being the best coaches they can, by: volunteering to plan and prepare sessions, communicating with members, reassuring athletes in the approach to their races, congratulating athletes on their successes and commiserating when things go wrong. It is estimated that this dedication is in excess of 1000 hours of volunteering – thank you to everyone

We have two new **Coaches in Running Fitness**, brought in 12 new **Leaders in Running Fitness** and several coaches have completed the **Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity** course. Some of the team have already booked the next steps in their coaching journey and this will provide additional cover both on and off the track.

Lesley Whiley and Nigel Hault are taking a break from coaching for the time being and we hope to see them back when they're ready; after 7 years of volunteering, Claire Marks has stepped down; Roger Pritchard has also stepped down, having been a volunteer coach for more than 30 years. Thank you to them all.

To further improve the athlete's experience, we have:

- Updated the Coaching Policy Document
- Established an email group for coaches to communicate with each other, including a weekly update
- Met regularly to discuss changes to provision and how best to coach in an athlete-centred way
- Held Athletes' forum events to share what's going well and what we can do better
- Conducted an Athlete Survey to encourage more athletes to have their say
- Initiated a new induction process
- Focussed training on overall goals
- Given an overview of sessions which are available on Wednesdays
- Gone on and on and on and on and on about the Track Rules...

Most of this work has been in a direct response to the Coaching Review, an overview of which is given below.

Coaching Review

At its April 2019 meeting, the RR Committee tasked the Coaching Coordinator with the following:

Please review how coaching is provided by the club and make recommendations for enhancements to our overall approach to coaching, including, but not limited to:

- how members would best benefit from coaching provision – e.g. stick with a coach vs. switch around; published coaching objectives vs. exercises
- how we encourage members at both ends of the performance spectrum
- how the coaches are deployed – e.g. buddying?
- the alignment of perceived coaching needs with the present complement of coaches, both in terms of numbers and qualifications
- outline training plan for coach development
- any ancillary materiel that would enhance members' experience of coaching
- any Committee support that isn't readily obtained
- cost & timescale implications of any recommendations for change

Since then, members have been canvassed and interviewed, sessions observed and coaches questioned; two athlete forum events have been held and 97 responses to the athlete survey have been collected.

Phase 1: to December 2019

What's going well?	What comes next?	Who will do it?	When by?	What's the cost?	Follow up
Club sessions are available to all	Review/rejig of the induction process; buddies to support new members	Roger (as induction lead) plus Katie (as Coaching Coordinator) and others as required Alexa as Mental Health Ambassador Katie as induction lead	September 2019 progress is ongoing and a change in induction lead means that there has been a necessary delay	Volunteer time	Done
Session plans are published and easy to understand	All sessions need to have clear aims and objectives and be published on the club website	Coaches	ASAP – August 2019 at the latest	Volunteer time – also has implications for the Webmaster	Done
Coaches are knowledgeable and helpful	Publish a 'jargon buster' on the club website	Coaches; Webmaster	ASAP	Volunteer time – also has implications for the Webmaster	Done
Club has paid for many members to become First Aiders	First aiders are identified at the start of each track session	Katie as Coaching Coordinator – to be included in pre-session briefing notes	ASAP	None	Done – now included in pre-session briefing on Wednesdays
Track rules are clear to understand and well-publicised	Members are reminded of track rules regularly, especially during busy Wednesday sessions	Katie as Coaching Coordinator – to be included in pre-session briefing notes	ASAP	None	Done – 'track rule of the week'/reminders now included in pre-session briefing on Wednesdays

Phase 2: to June 2020 ** active document, up-to-date at time of publication

What's going well?	What comes next?	Who will do it?	When by?	What's the cost?	Follow up
RRs support runners in all areas of the performance spectrum*	Informal coaching/run leading remains available to social runners	Leaders in Running Fitness (LiRF)	Held regularly by April 2020	LiRF course currently £140	Done – to be developed so that Coaches can encourage their athletes off-track to ease congestion
	*Competitive athletes feel that they are not being catered for: needs investigation and solutions-focussed approach	Coaching Coordinator	ASAP	Volunteer time: communication to members; meeting time	Ongoing – for next Coaching Coordinator
RR is inclusive	Set up team of 'buddies' to support newer and first time members to meet other athletes	Mental Health Champion (Alexa) to lead with team of buddies	In place by March 2020	Volunteer time: communication to members and potential new members	Done
Coaches are well-regarded	Profiles of coaches so that people can have an idea which group to join	Coaches/Coaching Coordinator	April 2020	Volunteer time: coaches, webmaster	Done
Communication of sessions is improved	Coaches to ensure athletes understand necessity to train specifically for goals	Coaches	ASAP	Volunteer time: communication with members via newsletter and other channels	Ongoing
	Athletes communicate goals to coaches, so that sessions are planned in an athlete-centred way	Coaching Coordinator/Athletes	On-going	Volunteer time: communication with members via newsletter and other channels	Ongoing
Athletes valued the opportunity to speak about coaching and possible developments	Hold Athletes' Forum again in May/June	Coaching Coordinator	May/June 2020	Volunteer time: meeting; communication of date to members	For next Coaching Coordinator