

# Minutes of the Irish Universities Athletics Association Annual General Meeting



Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup> 2009

Dublin City University  
The Nursing School, Health Sciences Building  
Room H206

12.30 p.m.

Organised by Dublin City University

**In attendance:**

**IUAA Universities Committee Members:** John Saulters (Chair), Eric Brady, Paul Butler, Stephen Lipson, Laura Loughlin, Jacqueline Mulhall, Damian Walsh & Donal Walsh.

**Members:** Simon Taggart (TCD), Aisling O'Brien (TCD), Kathryn Carson (UU), Sean McMAhon (UU), Andrwe Brennan (DCU), Sinead Denny (DIT), Paddy Flynn (WIT), Andrew Connick (WIT), Brian McGinley (WIT), Joe Warne (DCU), Katy Byrd (UCC), Peter Fennell (UCC), Aisling Gould (UCC), Bryony Treston (TCD), Claire McGlynn (TCD), George Boyle (UCC), Paul Domrty (DCU), Enda Fitzpatrick (DCU), Beth Walsh (DCU), Brona Furlong (DCU), Craig Delenii (RCSI), Roisin Howard (UL), Rory Moloney (UL), Cyril Smyth (TCD), Julianne Harrington (UCD), Steven Colvert (UCD), Andrew Agnew (QUB), Eamonn Sweeney (QUB).

**Apologies:** CIT, Letterkenny IT.

John Saulters (JS) welcomes everyone and thanks DCU for arranging the venue for today's meeting. JS outlines the importance of attendance at Association Meetings as they are the platform for discussing the direction of the Association.

**1. Minutes of 2008 AGM.**

The minutes were taken as having been read, as they had been on the IUAA website prior to the AGM.

**2. Matters arising from the minutes.**

The Minutes were proposed by Jacqueline Mulhall (JM) and seconded by Donal Walsh (DoW).

**3. Secretarial Report.**

See point 6. Chair's Address below

#### **4. Financial Report.**

This report followed point 6 below. JS outlined that 21 members had paid their subscription. That the year had been run at a small surplus and proposed that the membership fees should be kept the same. EB added that the IUAA has a small income, has no sponsors and that there is no money coming from the AAI.

The importance of maintaining and caring for the IUAA trophies was discussed. CS informed the meeting that the women's T&F trophy is currently missing and we have so far been unable to locate it. EF said that DCU must obviously have it. CS said that all trophies in the UL trophy cabinet were badly tarnished and colleges should be careful when storing trophies near swimming pools, but added that colleges were also returning trophies tarnished and that they should be bringing them back polished. Some of the IUAA trophies are very valuable and must be looked after. EB said that the trophies had been valued in the early 1990's by Weirs on Grafton street and were worth over a million. CS added that bases were going missing and asked colleges to ensure that they were engraved. SL asked colleges to bring the trophies back the following year so as they could be presented. BT asked about a sign out system. CM suggested fining colleges who lose or don't return trophies. EB pointed out that UCD had paid to replace a lid that they had lost.

The Report was proposed by CS and seconded by PB.

#### **5. Review of 2008/2009 Championships.**

See point 6. Chair's Address below

#### **6. Chair's Address.**

(This point immediately followed point 2 above). JS outlined that due to the new committee structure the Chair would be covering the next points on the Agenda, namely points 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6. At the last AGM the meeting dissolved the IUAA and inaugurated a new Universities Committee, but that the AAI was proving slow to integrate with.

The Road Relays had seen most colleges competing than in previous years and that we had had access to AAI equipment such as the gantry.

The Indoors had seen lower numbers than the previous 10 year average, but the number competing was higher than the previous year. This was now the second consecutive year that the championships had been in February.

The Cross Country had seen similar numbers to last year but the lack of complete women's teams was an issue.

The Track & Field had seen higher than average numbers and there had been a large number of records.

JS opened the discussion on the championships to the floor.

Joe Warne (JW) asked if the February date for the indoors influenced the numbers competing as they had been low. JS advised that the benefit of the February date was that it was during the indoor season. Simon Taggart (ST) informed the meeting that the Senior championships were before the indoors this season. Enda Fitzpatrick (EF) said that common sense had prevailed when the decision to delay the start of the cross country was made. He added that the road relays run them selves, that UL had done well with the T&F but that at the indoors common sense hadn't prevailed but that we would discuss this later. Cyril Smyth (CS) expressed his concerns that only 3 women's teams finished the cross country and that hopefully this was a one off blip. EF added that there were three incomplete teams with three athletes each. JS pointed out that there were other races on on the same date which may have impacted on numbers but that the AAI was tightening up on this and restricting the number of races on the same date in each part of the country. He also said that the new 5km distance may have been an issue for recreational runners and this should be monitored. JM stated that numbers may have been up but it was only by one or two, however the number of women was down and that the increase was in the men's events and this was very evident by the number of straight finals in the women's T&F, but that this was being mirrored throughout Irish athletics. EF agreed and said this was the case in AAI seniors and juveniles and that maybe the proposal for a one day indoors would help. Athletics is a full day sport while all other sports are 1-2 hours. Bold decisions were required at all levels in athletics. He also asked where all the schools athletes disappeared to at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. Paul Butler (PB) outlined that the team spirit had decreased at college level because one college was winning, but that this wasn't a reason for other colleges to give up. Athletes are moving more towards individual, but the varsities is based on teams event. Captains have a responsibility to bring teams. It doesn't matter where the team finishes. Eric Brady (EB) asked was it a case that clubs had lost members or that people

didn't want to compete. Claire McGlynn (CM) said that girls didn't want to compete. This view was supported by Bryony Treston (BT). Laura Loughlin (LL) agreed. EB then asked that if this was the case were we providing the right events. CM said that coaching would help. EB suggested that a sub committee to attract people who currently train but don't compete should be considered. If we have people we need to encourage them into an IUAA event. DoW said that CIT held an inter-departmental competition with half athletes and half non athletes. Peter Fennel (PF) suggested a series of one day events. BT added that road racing in Ireland was on the up and that goodie bags and t-shirts may help. PF pointed out that multiple teams could be sent to the Road Relays. JM added that the Road Relays were the most successful championships. Damian Walsh (DW) pointed out that it is the college who have to get people out. EF explained that you can run a mile at the Road Relays each year and try and beat your previous years time, but that the Cross Country is a bigger challenge because it requires distance coaches to motivate athletes. Students aren't as good at getting athletes out. CS suggested that a tiered championships in the cross country may help. PB suggested that maybe teams of three would help in a tiered championships. Stephen Lipson (SL) pointed out that there would have to be four so as they could compete for the tier 1 trophy. JM asked had the tiered championships increased numbers as she wasn't convinced. EB said that the big colleges hadn't been getting numbers out in recent years but that the small colleges had been consistent and this was were we were losing numbers on five years ago. He went on to ask if clubs had coaches to help, as there doesn't seem to be as many former athletes helping out. DoW pointed out that this was the case in all walks of life. PB said that the larger colleges weren't providing numbers but the Tier 2 teams are interested and the tier 2 shouldn't be dropped. Andrew Connick (AC) said that the Tier 2 had really helped generate a rivalry between some colleges. JM said that this needed to extend beyond WIT and CIT. JS pointed out that CIT/ WIT may be promoted into Tier 1 but that Tier 2 shouldn't be scrapped. PB said that if a big college was relegated it might help. PB went on to add that a tier 2 in the cross country would help as it will generate rivalry but that the road relays don't need it as it is already there. AC said that colleges needed to get out and compete. EB agreed but added that the issue is bigger. AC said that clubs needed to put in the effort and get people out, both training and socially, especially through Christmas and into the Spring. There is a big gap from the Road Relays to the Spring. DoW suggested a social event. JM asked could students manage an extra event. AC said that he was a final year student and it was challenging. The college want it student run, he was trying to set up a committee to include a staff member and that the club would fail if left to students alone. EF said that student and staff involvement was essential. AC said it was very hard to get students. CM said that promotional material would help.

JS said tha the new IAAF technical rules would be implemented. EB asked if this needed AGM approval. SL advised that was only to deviate from IAAF rules. JM/CS added that the combined events is also changing to one false start.

JS went on to discuss the AAI integration and the extent of the issues, several of which couldn't have been foreseen. The issues were based around the transition from an amateur to a professional organisation and weren't unique to the AAI. He also stated that the IUAA relationship with CUSAI was unclear and that it was unreasonable to expect athletes to pay towards competing in international championships. The cross country in UU where that schools had competed and the T&F in UL where local clubs had helped out showed that integration could and does work.

JS thanked NUIM, UU and UL for hosting that championships and said he looked forward to visiting NUIM, CIT and TCD for this years championships. He said that there wouldn't be a Celtics in 2010 and that alternatives were being looked at. He also added that the AAI had provided the athletes gear for the 2009 event.

JS went on to discuss the new committee structure and said that delegation among the committee needed to improve, but that there had been better communication than in the recent past, both between committee members and the committee and the membership. He went on to thank all officials, the universities committee, Brian Foley for all the online entries and results website work and Cyril Smyth for looking after the medals and the starting.

The Report was proposed by EF and seconded by BT

ST reverted back to the Celtics and pointed out that the lack of support in Cornwall was due to the location, that the UK was the host, but weren't a Celtic nation and that in 18 months time it was hoped the event would be back with the schools again. AC added that the Celtics were a great opportunity and that finding a competition is important. EF pointed out that the calendar is very tight in March. He also added that the AAI games were on and could we encourage the AAI to let the IUAA compete as it would provide athletes with a competition. JS said this was an idea. A discussion followed and it was agreed to keep the focus on finding an event.

## **7. World Student Games Track & Field 2009 - Review.**

The event was held in Belgrade and John Dooley had been the coach. The results were presented. JS detailed that as a committee we were concerned about costs and communication and the size of the support team. The IUAA was currently writing to CUSAI. EF said that it was wrong that an athlete going to the WSGs should have to pay. Also the kit was €300 and had been completely unsuitable. JS said that the IUAA had expressed concerns at the time to the AAI, but that the AAI had pointed out that it was CUSAI who made the decisions. Brona Furlong (BF) pointed out that the gear had been soccer gear. EF said that the IUAA need to deal with this head on. JS said that a letter is composed, but that he would be attending the next meeting. BF said that athletes didn't know that they had to contribute. JS pointed out that this was poor communication within CUSAI. EF said that the cost had been approx €2200 per athlete, that sports council funding had been cut and that CUSAI were looking for €1500 from each athlete. He also pointed out that the deadline for achieving the standards was too early in the season, but added that it had been changed to a date nearer to the championships. CM asked if there was anything that the college could do. PB said that CUSAI was separate to the IUAA/AAI. The IUAA is fighting CUSAI on this issue and we aren't siding with them on this issue. The IUAA has limited power. College sports officers are CUSAI representatives. Colleges can lobby their sports officer. With the cross country two years ago the IUAA successfully lobbied CUSAI to send a team. EB said that the only people with a vote are the college sports officers. DoW said that it was like the Olympic Council. EF said that it is possible that the costs will prevent teams from attending and that CUSAI need to start raising money in addition to government funding. JS said that the new interim CEO of the AAI had already raised the issue of sponsorship for the IUAA. CS stated that he had never seen in a report any details about how much money NGBs and the Sports Council contribute. He also raised the question of whether AAI money was subsidising other sports. SL said that coordinated action within college clubs to the sports offices could help.

#### **8. World Student Games Cross Country 2010 – Preview.**

The event would be in Canada in April 2010. The coaches hadn't been selected and no decision on whether CUSAI were going to send a team had been made. EF said that this was a race Ireland could win. PB said that the selection process was important and that it must be done right. EF said that the IUAA cross country should be used. CS said that there had previously been problems with selection from the IUAA cross country with athletes first across the line not automatically being selected. JS said that the IUAA was to provide a costing to the High Performance committee who would see if it was affordable and then make a representation to CUSAI. EF said that the AAI would support it but that CUSAI must fund raise. JS said that CUSAI didn't have the expertise. CM/PB/BT said there was too much politics involved. JW said that we had been fighting CUSAI for years and that lobbying the sports officers would have little effect. EB We have to put pressure on them and it must be collective.

#### **9. IUAA / AAI Integration – Progress to Date**

JS outlined the AAI committees that IUAA committee members sat on:

JM sat on the competitions committee

SL sat on the competitions systems committee

EB had been co-opted on to the finance and risk committee.

JM said that it was a frustrating committee as the IUAA had been allocated a role on the mass participation sub committee, which was irrelevant to the IUAA. The committee had met 3 times and the sub committee had met 6 times.

SL outlines that the AAI was planning on building an all encompassing software package to cater for entries, championships, results, registration etc and for all types of championship, but that the IUAA would have to wait and see if the end product would replace the current IUAA systems.

EB said that the committee was a difficult one considering the current economic climate but that it was a good committee.

EB went on to say that the IUAA should continue get on to these committees. SL said that the AAI was envious of what we had in terms of online applications and championship software and that we were light years ahead of them. PB said that there were no negatives of being part of the AAI but we needed to stay involved. JM agreed. EF said that the interim CEO was making very positive noises.

#### **10. Motions concerning amendments to the Constitution and Rules of Championships.**

The first motion discussed was a proposed change to Rule 10.4 and 12.3 concerning the naming of the men's 35lb/16kg and the changing of the weight for women to 20lb/9.08kg. The motion was from the IUAA committee.

It was pointed out that the women's weight had been a problem for years and that the IAAF have a 20lb which can be bought and that the current 8kg weight can't be bought.

The motion was passed with zero opposed and zero abstentions.

The second motion discussed was a proposal to change the events in the pentathlon, both indoors and outdoors to match the current IAAF events. The motion was from the IUAA committee.

EB pointed out that the current events were not an official IAAF events as some of the events in it were not recommended by the IAAF. EF said that the proposal was thrower orientated. SL asked would it be over two days as it had timetabling implications. ST said that the proposed events didn't look balanced. CM suggested using the decathlon events. PB said that the choice of events should increase participation. ST said that the HJ is a high scoring event. EB said it depended on what we though we wanted. Rory Maloney (RM) said that the proposed new event looked better. JM said that we are replacing an unofficial event with an unofficial event as we were planning in holding it over two days. Sean McMahon (SM) said that the events should be more balanced and shouldn't favour any one category of athlete. E.g. throwers, jumpers etc.

The discussion continued.

The motion was voted down with seven in favour, seventeen opposed and two abstentions.

The third motion was to remove the distance relay and the pentathlon from the indoors to enable the championship to become a one day championship. The motion was from the IUAA committee.

JS informed the meeting that the IUAA was proposing a one day championship from 11am through 7pm, to incorporate all IAAF recovery times and that the 1500 and 3000 would be straight finals seeded by athlete if the races required. EB said that seeding by athlete was a break away from the norm. JS went on to say that there were no breaks in the timetable, that colleges would have to contribute, that extra officials would be needed and that it would reduce costs for the IUAA and for the colleges. CM said that accommodation was still required due to the early start and the long day. ST said that there were a lot of events and the relay would put pressure on sprinters to compete in multiple events. CS suggested taking the fastest times to decide the medals. EB said that doubling up is now less attractive. JS pointed out that it was the nature of a one day championship. SL said that we would be breaking from IAAF qualification. ST said that it would be a time trial sprint and not a championship. JS asked if there was anyone in favour who wanted to speak. PB said that a one day event puts a lot of pressure on officials. EF said lets go with it and tap into the AAI resource of officials. EB said we should go with it and clarify the details at the road relays. CS said that we should come back at the road relays with alternative. ST said that the standard would drop as there would be less doubling up. EB said that the pentathlon should be kept.

The motion was amended to include the pentathlon in the one day championships.

The motion was passed with four opposed, two abstentions and the remaining in favour of a one day indoor championships, including pentathlon.

The fourth motion was that the following text is inserted into Part II Section 9, Part II Section 10, and Part II Section 11. "Medals and trophies will be presented at the competition venue immediately after the conclusion of the event for which they are presented." The motion was from DCU.

JS pointed out that the calculation of the points may prevent the trophies from being presented. AC said that if people don't turn up for the trophies than that is their problem and that they should be presented at the meal as it is a great event. JS suggested that the medals should be trackside and the trophies should be at the dinner. JM said that there were too many trophies. SL said that there was only 8-9 trophies but that the relay medals represented 12 presentations. SL asked DCU if this was intended as a general guideline or was it to be inserted into the constitution. EF said DCU would be happy if it was a general guideline. It was agreed that the medals should be presented at the race and the trophies at the dinner. All members agreed.

The fifth motion was that the Universities Committee of the Athletic Association of Ireland shall host an awards ceremony which will be incorporated into the Track and Field Dinner and that this ceremony would recognise outstanding athletic performances of IUAA athletes. The motion was from DCU.

EF said that the presentation was intended for outstanding athletes, e.g. Olympians. Andrew Brennan (AB) said it was a great idea. JS asked if the committee could come back to DCU at the road relays. CS said that this had been done in the past. E.g. Michael Hillary and Cyril White at the varsity 125yrs celebrations. CS added that this was not a new concept but maybe if could be formalised. SL suggested a committee to make recommendations.

The sixth motion was that deviations from the IAAF rules be permitted at the discretion of the appropriate competition official. This motion was from DCU.

EF explained that common sense doesn't prevail all the time. BT said that finals should be at heats time. PB said that we need to encourage athletes to stay. SL said that the current rules were sufficient. EF said that he didn't protest all incidents. EF said that there should be a change to the IUAA committee. SL said that this was currently in the constitution. DCU withdrew the motion.

The seventh motion was that the following text be added to 5.3. "A member of the Universities Committee of the Athletic Association of Ireland shall be a member of staff or a student of a member institution". The motion was from DCU.

JS said the non members can't vote and that the membership had the opportunity to vote every year and that they can vote on or off who ever they want. The committee members can vote also. EF said that the same people were on the committee every year and that it should be students and staff only. EB said that people should be linked to a club to get elected. CS said that he wasn't staff but was involved and thought that such people should be involved. SL added that all positions were up for election annually and the chair every two years. JS said that he was happy to go with the existing rules. EF agreed and DCU withdrew the motion.

The eight motion was that the Universities Committee of the Athletic Association of Ireland will lobby CUSAI to abolish student contributions for those students competing at FISU competitions. The motion was from DCU.

DCU immediately withdrew the motion.

#### **11. Ratification of future varsity hosts.**

This section of the agenda was held after position 12 election of officers. The following were ratified as hosts for the cross country and T&F for the following season.

Cross Country 2011	DIT, pending discussions on a suitable venue
T&F 2011	QUB an the Antrim Forum.

#### **12. Election of Officers for 2009/2010**

This section of the agenda was brought forward from position 12 to position 11.

The following positions were open for election.

- 7 x Officers

JS advised the floor that Proportional Representation would be used. EB suggested that JS and CS should be the tally people.

The following nominations were made

Donal Walsh	Nominated by Enda Fitzpatrick and seconded by George Boyle
Eric Brady	Nominated by Julianne Harrington and seconded by Stephen Lipson
Stephen Lipson	Nominated by John Saulters and seconded by Enda Fitzpatrick
Laura Loughlin	Nominated by John Saulters and seconded by Eric Brady
Damian Walsh	Nominated by Paul Butler and seconded by Simon Taggart
Paul Butler	Nominated by Stephen Lipson and seconded by Claire McGlynn
Enda Fitzpatrick	Nominated by John Saulters and seconded by Donal Walsh
Sean McMahon	Nominated by John Saulters and seconded by Luura Loughlin
Peter Fennell	Nominated by George Boyle and seconded by Katiy Byrd

Proportional Representation was used. John Saulters announced the results in the order in which the names had been nominated. The following were deemed elected:

Donal Walsh  
Eric Brady  
Stephen Lipson  
Laura Loughlin

Damian Walsh

Paul Butler

Enda Fitzpatrick

**13. A.O.B.**

SL announced that there were two membership applications to be considered. The first was from Griffith College and the second was from the National College of Art and Design. Both applications were supported by the executive. The motion was passed with zero opposed and zero abstentions.

EF thanked Jacqueline Mulhall for all her work over the previous years.

SL announced that the online entry passwords would be posted with the Road Relay Entries.

AC asked about checkin for events. SL said that it was in person and that the final of the 1500 would be at semi final time if it was a straight final.

Julianne Harrington asked about the 800m. SL said he would have to check the minutes of the last IUAA committee meeting.

PB said that captains should prepare their people for the IUAA procedures and what for expect at a championships. He went on to say that assistance with officials would be required.

SL said that colleges should familiarise themselves with the rules.

JS thanked DCU for hosting the AGM.