

Birmingham Invitation Cross Country League

Chairman's Report for Season 2023/24

Without a doubt the summer preceding this season was the busiest I have ever known. We were looking for a new Secretary for Division 1 to replace Ray Morgan who was not able to give us much notice that he was standing down and we had decided to trial online entries in division 2. The trial was due to be in division 1 but it was felt that it would be too much for the new divisional secretary, so Daniel Connolly agreed to take it on for division 2.

At this point I should formally thank Ray for all the work he has done over many years. When he took over, the results were done manually. He automated the process to the extent that the results were available on the league's website shortly after every race.

It was always going to be a hard act to follow, and we initially had no volunteers and we were close to announcing that there would be no races in division 1 for the season when Bryan Mills agreed to do it for a season to allow the Division 1 clubs to find a permanent successor. I must confess I was not happy we had to accept his offer as Bryan was already our Web Master and I do not like one person holding more than one office because if the trend continued, we would have the league run with fewer and fewer people and that constitutes an operational risk for the league.

Another issue was that we were having difficulties getting sufficient venues and this lasted right up to the weeks before the first fixtures. In the end we had to hold a joint fixture for divisions 1 and 2 on the first weekend to get all the fixtures completed.

In the end it was with great relief that we started racing!! As usual there were four rounds of fixtures with two on the first weekend and three on each subsequent date and eight being joint fixtures with the Midland Women's league and my thanks goes out to the host clubs, without whom we would not have a league. I repeat what I said last year in that many of these host every year but we must not always rely on them, and the other clubs must seriously consider how they might host either on their own or share the hosting with another club or clubs. If you do this then assistance will be available for you from the league.

I didn't get to division 3 the previous season so I started the season with them at Aldridge Airport and then saw division 1 at Wolverhampton in December. I was back with division 3 in January at Pelsall Common and finished the season at Worcester with division 2.

The trial with online entries went well and Daniel Connolly reported to the executive that it made his job much easier. At this point I must thank Sarah Bland for all her help with this trial. We could not have done it without her.

Daniel gave the league a year's notice that he would be standing down and I am pleased to say that Nick Wilson of Nuneaton has offered to take on this role for next season.

Although he said he would only do it for one season Bryan Mills has confirmed he will continue with division 1 and Ian Clarke is continuing with division 3.

Another departure from the executive is our Treasurer Dan Jordan. I am pleased to report that Martin Ludford from BRAT has offered to take over from him.

This means all executive positions are filled, subject to endorsement at the AGM, which is a very satisfactory position to be in. Can I formally thank Daniel and Dan for all the hard work they have put in for the league during their time on the executive. Both of them have made a significant contribution to the league and set a high standard for their work.

Once again Coventry Runner sponsored our numbers, and we are extremely grateful for their generous support. I am pleased to say that they have confirmed they will continue their support next season.

Finally, I want to thank our Secretary Carolyn for all the support she gives me to ensure the league runs smoothly.

Noel Butler
Chairman
4th June 2024