

SOME GUIDANCE FOR YOUNG ATHLETES TAKING PART IN ATHLETIC COMPETITIONS

- The Club encourages and expects athletes that are members of the club to compete for the club. As the club continues to have a long waiting list young athletes that are not prepared to compete for the club and fail to attend regularly may be asked to leave the club.
- Dates of the competitions are usually circulated by the club at the beginning of the Track and Field and Cross Country seasons with a request for them to be put into diaries. Fixture dates can also be obtained from the club's web site and from the Sussex County web site
- E-mail reminders are also circulated particularly to the adult endurance runners
- Groups also use social media to keep in touch and encourage participation in competition.

Key League Competitions for junior athletes - The Youth Development League, the Southern Athletics League, the Sussex Under 13, Under 15 and Masters Leagues: The Sussex Cross Country League and the Sports Hall League

- Team Managers select teams after consultation with other LAC coaches.
- Athletes are notified of their selection for the team and are given details of the venue and when to arrive if travelling independently or departure details if transport has been hired.
- It is the athlete's responsibility to let their Team Manager know immediately if they are not going to be available to compete.
- Team competition means exactly that - the athlete is part of a Lewes AC team, a group of individual athletes seeking to achieve success collectively for Lewes AC but at the same time, trying to produce a personal best in their own events.
- Please remember that you may not always be able to compete in your preferred Track and Field event as the Team Manager has to try to get the best overall result from the combined ability of the athletes who are available on the day. However, you will not be expected to compete in an event that you have not done before, nor one that is inappropriate for you purely in order to get 'points for the team'.
- Because of last-minute changes that inevitably occur through illness on the day, it may be necessary to change your event/s because Team Managers will be forced to make several adjustments even for the absence of just one athlete.
- To help with Lewes AC team spirit at the competition, please sit or congregate together near the Team Managers and the Lewes AC banner and tent (for cross country) so that you can all encourage each other, and to make communication between manager and athlete much easier.
- There should normally be a parent or coach available on the day to act as a support to Team Managers. This person can help to answer questions that you may have, and thus allow the Managers to concentrate on their role.
- Please be aware of when you are supposed to be at your event or cross country race, and where you have to report.
- Carry out your warm-up routine so that you're ready to give of your best.
- Learn to think for yourself and to take responsibility for yourself - you cannot always expect your parents or your coach to do all the thinking for you!

Other league competitions: West Sussex Fun Run League, East Sussex Sunday Cross Country League.

- These two leagues are mainly for the adult endurance runners. All members are encouraged to take part in the events throughout the year. Details can be found on the web sites of these leagues

Championship Competitions and other non-League T&F Competitions (Open Meetings)

- Information about other competitions is available either from your coach, or displayed in the Club Room at the track or on the club's web site. However, now that there is more widespread use of the Internet, there are various sites that you can look at to find out what is going on elsewhere. This includes the Lewes AC web site at www.lewesac.co.uk which contains lots of information about the club, up coming fixtures and links to other sites.
- There is also a fixture list on the Sussex Athletics website: www.sussexathletics.net.uk. Entry forms are usually available to download or enter on line from the appropriate club or organisation's website. Championship information can also be obtained from the web sites of the sport's governing bodies British Athletics and England Athletics. From these site more information can be obtained about the sport of athletics.
- Check that you complete and send in your Entry Forms (when appropriate) with your Entry Fee for the number of events you are taking part in at the competition. The club pays the entry fees for athletes competing in Championship events. Ensure that you enter for the correct age group, the younger age groups are.

<u>Under 13</u>	must be age 11 on the day of competition or 11 or 12 at 31 August in the year
<u>Under 15</u>	must be age 13 or 14 at 31 August in the year
<u>Under 17</u>	must be age 15 or 16 at 31 August in the year

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO ON THE DAY OF COMPETITION

- Always make sure that you have with you all the equipment and clothing you need:
 - Lewes AC Club Vest - *must be worn for all League competitions and County and other Championships* - available from Intersport, Cliffe High Street, Lewes. (Can be worn over white or black T-shirt if wished)
 - Shorts / lycra knee shorts / lycra tights (preferably dark blue or black)
 - Lewes AC hoodie or rain jacket, other sweatshirt & jogging bottoms
 - Trainers (with good foot support, in good repair and laced up) / spikes - not more than 6mm for all-weather track surface but longer for cross country (Spikes are not essential for the youngest competitors on the track, but we would certainly recommend them from Under 15 age group upwards. It is *not* necessary to spend a fortune on them. (Some out grown spikes are available in the club house)
If you do have spikes, please make it your responsibility to loosen the spikes in the sole of the shoe when you get home so that they do not get rusted in if it has been damp underfoot - otherwise you'll find them almost impossible to remove when they need replacing.
- Outer jacket for warmth / waterproof
- A small supply of safety pins (for competition numbers)
- A notebook and pen/pencil to record your results. You can then see how you are progressing through the season and from year to year. Your 'personal best' results will then be recorded.
- Other equipment if required for your individual event
- Take a drink (water, fruit juice or squash - **not** fizzy sugary drinks) and some food - sandwiches, bananas (these are nutritious and easily digestible) - to eat *after you have competed*. It is essential that your body does not become dehydrated before, during and after competition so always have water with you.
- Make sure that you have any food well in advance of competing, preferably at least an hour and a half beforehand - your body cannot deal with exercise and digestion at the same time.

- Check that you know where and when you should be meeting. **ARRIVE IN GOOD TIME.** Sometimes you'll think that you're expected to arrive too early - it's much better to do this than to have to rush and maybe miss your event. Ideally you should be at the venue at least one hour before your first event. If in team competition, you will be advised when to arrive.
- For non-League meetings, collect your competition numbers when you arrive. Check when and where you have to report for the start of your event. It is important that you are in the right place at the right time! Report to Team Managers for all League Competitions.
- Sit or congregate together with other Lewes athletes so that you can encourage each other when competing.
- Warm up and do your stretching/mobility exercises where you see other athletes doing theirs. To give yourself the best chance it is important to carry out your warm-up routine properly and for an appropriate length of time. Try to do this away from your parents and, if you are with other club athletes at the same time, please concentrate on what you are meant to be doing!
- Always be aware of other athletes who may be competing on the track and in the field event areas - never walk across the in-field where throwing events take place.
- Listen carefully for any instructions given out over loudspeakers or from coaches who may be with you at an event. Make sure you are in the right place at the right time!

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING!

Everyone get nervous on the day of competition and especially when you're waiting for your event to start. If it's your first year of competition you can be sure that you are not the only one who is new to the experience. If, at the end of the competition, you can say to yourself that you have really done your best on the day then you should be pleased with yourself. If you have some feelings of disappointment, then LEARN from the experience and talk with your coach about how you can improve next time. You need the adrenalin to help your body to do your best. But, you also need to concentrate on your mind -

- ABOVE ALL - HAVE A VERY POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO COMPETITION. Tell yourself that you **WILL** be successful and have that thought in your mind all the time. Set yourself goals that you are able to achieve and **GO OUT AND ACHIEVE THEM.**

Positive thought will have positive results; negative thought will have negative results.

BE SUCCESSFUL, ENJOY YOUR COMPETITION, AND ASK IF YOU NEED TO KNOW ANYTHING - we can only help if we know you need help.

- After you have competed, results will be read out a short while later over the loudspeaker system or posted onto a board somewhere
- Keep warm by putting your tracksuit etc. on soon after you have competed so that you retain your body heat, especially if you have another event to compete in. When your competition has ended, remember to do a cool down and stretch properly as your coach will have suggested.

GOOD LUCK FOR THE SEASON