Administrator's Annual Report to the AGM November 2026

It's hard to believe that we've come to the end of another YDL year, with 2026 containing its fair share of complications and headaches. As ever, we're still short of volunteers to come onto the committee; whilst Nicola has been covering the role of Northern co-ordinator, she would probably welcome someone to take it on for the next 2 years, and the role of Midlands co-ordinator has been vacant for a few years, but it's become very apparent over the last few months that I can't continue to cover that role, so we really do need a volunteer to step forward for that role. We are a small committee and would welcome anyone interested in making the YDL work successfully.

As part of our work we carried out a survey for our clubs to give their view on the future of YDL and as expected there were contrasting opinions but has given us a starting point for improvement and our work will continue next year.

Arwel and his team at Liverpool once again delivered a great weekend of Finals at Wavertree, and I think all our athletes enjoyed the experience.

Simon once again introduced a few changes to improve the results software and the introduction of the recorders WhatsApp group helped all those results recorders at matches if they chose to use it. Grace has been worked tirelessly checking all the athlete registrations and helping Simon to update the records.

The changes in age groups presented a few challenges especially for the UAG when the number of U20s were substantially reduced, and this hasn't encouraged many of that age group to continue in the sport.

Fixture dates for 2027 have been difficult to organise especially from a league point of view, I hope that most clubs will find it easier than 2026 but there will be some unavoidable clashes. Unfortunately, there really is very little, if any, wiggle room.

We continue to check all the officials registered on the portals when they have been added in good time. We do ask clubs to put all their officials, and volunteers who may be working as officials in any of the YDL matches ahed of the season as this cuts down on the amount of work we have to do once we're underway. The system of recording officials for matches has worked well where clubs have co-operated and declared them on time using the drop down menus on the portal. It made scrutinising those matches much easier. We remain committed to persuading all clubs of the benefits of the system for all concerned. Given the number of officials and volunteers working at matches across the country we are very grateful of the hard work and dedication of you all – thank you. There is still some concern of the provision of officials generally in some matches and we ask that all our member clubs make every effort to recruit enough officials to cover their roles at each match otherwise others are having to do extra work which isn't very fair.

We remain the biggest league in the country by far, with 239 teams competing in one or both age groups, a deduction of 8 from 2025. In terms of the number of teams, the Midlands region remains the largest with 79 affiliated teams , the Southern region are just behind with 72 teams, and the Northern region had 65 teams; Scotland remains the smallest with just 23 teams in the LAG only.

In all we had 82 matches in the LAG, and 38 in the UAG, despite some difficult clashes which caused the cancellation of some fixtures. The Northern and Midlands had larger divisions than the Southern region so fewer venues and hosts were needed.

We've continued to run both single, and double header matches, those being predominantly in the Midlands. In terms of providing officials, the double headers fare better than some of the single headers, as clubs are paired up to provide a full team of officials between the 2 partner clubs.

In terms of structures, the Midlands continued with 2 Premier divisions in both age groups, the remainder of divisions organised horizontally to try to equalise their strength and to reduce the environmental impact of travel. The Northern region similarly has 2 Premier divisions but remains a linear structure, in the LAG this resulted in a few divisions catering for some very small clubs, who are having to undertake long journeys, less so in the UAG. The Southern region had one Premier division in both age groups, the LAG having 5 divisions organised horizontally based on geography where possible, to reduce travel and the length of the day, the UAG retained a linear structure. The Scottish region had just 3 divisions: two 8-team divisions in double header matches operating on a half timetable, and one division with 7 teams. Unfortunately, long travelling distances are inevitable given the geography of Scotland.

The majority of events in UAG suffered a drop in numbers, unsurprisingly given the new U20 age group, but the usual track events which still suffer from lack of numbers generally are the sprints and hurdles, whilst on the field, the numbers in Hammer dropped and the Pole Vault and Triple Jump are very low in competitor numbers.
The LAG is difficult to compare with 2025 because of the changes in age groups but we are keeping a watching brief to see it will work in 2027.
We would appreciate any input from event leads as to how we can work together to promote those less well-supported events.

On a personal level, I'm very grateful to our management committee for their support and assistance during the year. Janice and Grace have helped with the scrutinising of the bulk of the Northern matches, Joyce Tomala, a past member of the management committee, also helped with the Midlands results; without their help I couldn't have covered it all. They've made a big difference to my workload for which I am indebted.

Last and by no means least, I would like to thank all those who work in our member clubs supporting their athletes and officials and helping our league to function.

Marian Williams
UK YDL Administrator