

EKAC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2010

2010 has been a good year for EKAC athletes. In general performances have improved and many new personal bests have been registered. The sprint squad in particular have been very successful and have started creating new Scottish age group records. In addition to this we have seen, for the first time in many years, a number of home grown young athletes break through into the Senior ranks.

January 2010

Early in the New Year Beth Duff and Sophie Smith, U20 and U15 respectively, were selected for the West team at the Edinburgh Inter-district District Cross-country race, where both ran well despite the wintry conditions. At the Scottish Closed Indoor Championships there was a strong showing in the sprints & jumps by the EKAC sprint squad. Ross Maxwell won the long jump, was 2nd in the 60m and 3rd in the 200m. Shannon McMahon was the other medallist with 3rd in the 200m. A fine run by Nick Coupland gave 4th in the 60m final, while Laura McCracken and Arlene Barr ran well in the heats. The Club cross-country championships were held on 24 January, again in the grounds of the John Wright Sports Centre complex. The turnout was 42 athletes, an improvement on 2009. Club champions were Rebecca Russell and Aidan Brown at U11, Megan Stewart and Luke Kirwan at U13, Sophie Smith and Scott Hernon at U15, Rachael Thomson and Adam Gatens at U17, John Fergusson at U20, Kelly Baillie and Grant Baillie at Senior level, and Graeme Haddow for the Veterans. At the end of the month Kelly Baillie was highest place EKAC runner at the Scottish 4K Cross-country Championships in 27th position. In the men's race best placed was John Fergusson in 37th (7th U20) and EK were 10th team.

February 2010

At the National Indoor Track & Field Championships on 13 February, an open event, Ross Maxwell won the long jump and was 2nd in the 60m. Shannon McMahon was also competing in the 60m and the 200m where she finished 4th in the B final. 25 athletes competed at the National Cross-country Championships which were held again at Falkirk towards the end of the month. Beth Duff in 5th place in the U20 women's race and John Fergusson 21st place in the U20 Mens race were probably the best Club performance on the day.

March 2010

At the Young Athletes National Road Races on 21 March Beth Duff was a close 2nd in the U20 Womens race and the U20 Mens team of Jamie Clements, Davis Gorman and John Fergusson took 3rd place. EKAC numbers were down from 28 in 2009 to 15. Later in the month a group of 9 EKAC tartan army members kept the club profile high by attending the World Cross Country Championships in Bydgoszcz Poland, and some interesting contacts were made with coaches at the highest level in the UKA coaching structure.

April 2010

EKAC finished 3rd at the first CSSAL meeting of 2010 on April 25th. There were lots of great performances, but special mention goes to Zoe Haddow (3), Christopher McCall (2), who won multiple events. Other winners were Mia Coffield, Iona Thomson, Sophie Smith, Megan Stewart,

Laura McCracken, Beth Duff, Ross Maxwell, Nick Coupland, Ben Stafford, Scott Herson, Grant Baillie, Kevin Downie and Keith Garrow.

May 2010

On the 2nd May Ross Maxwell broke the Scottish outdoor record for the U15 long jump at the Scottish Young Athletes League division two meeting at Wishaw. His fourth and final jump measured 6.33m - one centimetre in front of the old record - despite being well off the front of the board. He also won the 100m in a new PB time of 11.85 and anchored the 4x100m team to a wide-margin win. Ross, who also holds the Scottish U15 indoor record, was given the athlete of the day award for his age group. East Kilbride AC athletes were competing as part of the South Lanarkshire team on the day. Laura McCracken won the U17 women's 100 and 200m, Shannon McMahan won the U15 girls' 200m and finished second in the 100m and Nicholas Coupland finished second in the U15 boys' 200m. Nick was also part on the winning U15 relay team while Laura and Shannon ran excellent anchor legs to achieve top three finishes. Ben Stafford ran well, finishing strongly for second in the U17 boys' 800m. On the 11th at the Lanarkshire Track Relay Championships EKAC got 1 x 2nd place and 5 x 3rd places, despite being without most of our sprint squad who were concentrating on the National Championships. On the following weekend Ross Maxwell won a gold and two silvers at the U15/U17 Closed Scottish Championships at Wishaw. Competing in the U15 age group he won the long jump with 6.11m, and finished second in the 100m (11.84 PB in heat) and second in the 200m (23.18 PB). Other finalists were Nicholas Coupland, Laura McCracken and Shannon McMahan, each recording personal bests. At the 2nd CSSAL meeting at Dumfries there were A string first place finishes for Aiden Brown U11 800m, Luke Kirwan U13 1500m, Ben Stafford U17 1500m and the Under 11 Boys 4x100m team, Megan Stewart U15 1500m, Jenna Low in the Senior Long Jump and new a new club 1500m record of 4:30.3 for Beth Duff taking 9 seconds off the previous record. The club eventually finished 4th at this match.

June 2010

East Kilbride AC athletes won three gold medals on the first day of action at the Scottish Schools Track and Field Championships at Grangemouth. Ross Maxwell won the Group C long jump in 6.35m, which is a new championship and Scottish U15 record. He also won the 200m in a PB time of 23.58secs. Shannon McMahan made it a treble for EKAC with victory in the Group D 200m in a new PB time of 27.20secs. Laura McCracken had a great day too, reaching the Group B women's 100m final and twice recording a new PB time of 12.84secs. Day two of the Scottish Schools Track & Field Championships brought more success for EKAC athletes with Shannon McMahan and Ross Maxwell winning gold and Nicholas Coupland winning a silver in their 100m finals. Shannon won the Group D girls 100m in a PB time of 13.18 seconds while Ross Maxwell won the Group C boys 100m in 11.70. Nicholas Coupland was second in the Group D boys 100m in 12.08 after winning his heat in a PB of 12.05. On 19 June, a week after winning the Scottish U20 800m title, Beth Duff ran an excellent race to finish 3rd and win the Bronze Medal in the English U20 AAA 800m at Bedford. Towards the end of the month Adam Gatens donned the Scottish vest to compete in the World Mountain Running Youth Challenge in Italy, finishing 16th and second Scot in this toughest of events. The month ended with the final CSSAL meeting where EKAC finished 4th equal on the day, and 4th overall in league division 2.

July 2010

EKAC athletes had a great start to July as Laura McCracken won the girls' 100m at the International Children's Games in Bahrain. She clocked a PB time of 12.57 seconds to beat fellow finalists from Singapore, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Germany and Ireland. Laura and Arlene Barr also won a silver in the girls' 4x100m. In addition, Arlene made the 'B' final of the girls' 100m. Ross Maxwell took silver in the boys' long jump with a leap of 6.49m, which easily beats his own Scottish U15 record. He also won a bronze in the boys' 4x100m, where he was joined by Nicholas Coupland. Ross also took 7th place in the 100m. East Kilbride AC athletes made up half of the Lanarkshire team at the ICG in Bahrain - all returning with a medal or medals and memories to last a lifetime. The Games will be hosted in Lanarkshire in 2011, with the athletics events at East Kilbride, and it is to be hoped that some of our young athletes will be selected as team members when the time comes. On 10 July at Pitreavie the U13 boys team of Luke Kirwan, Callum Field, Aidan Gilbride and Stephen Leadbitter overhauled an early points deficit to take 3rd place medals in the first Superteams competition, to the delight of their supporters and Team Manager Gemma Kirwan. Ross Maxwell won a Scottish Schools International vest to represent Scotland at the U17 Schools International at Scotstoun. He was seventh in the long jump with 6.30m and also formed part of the Scottish 4x100m team. The following weekend Beth Duff won a silver medal at the Scottish Senior Championships over 800, finishing just behind UK International runner Claire Gibson.

August 2010

Running for Scotland, Laura McCracken finished third in the 100m at the Celtic Games in Ireland on August 7, recording a time of 12.58 seconds in the U16 event. Congratulations go to Ross Maxwell who won the U15 long jump at the England Athletics Outdoor Championships for U15s and U17s in Bedford. Ross jumped 6.47m (the second biggest leap of his career to date) to secure the gold. Ross has now won an U15s Grand Slam of long jumps: Scottish Schools Indoors, Scottish Closed Indoors, Scottish Open Indoors, English Indoors, Scottish Schools Outdoors, Scottish Closed Outdoors, Scottish Open Outdoors and English Outdoors - not to mention breaking the Scottish record indoors and out. Laura McCracken won the 100m and 200m at Bute Highland Games. Ross Maxwell won two golds and a silver at the Bank of Scotland Age Group Championships at Scotstoun. First up was the long jump, which he won with a leap of 6.15m. Then it was on to the 100m, where gold was secured with an U15 club record time of 11.59 seconds. Finally, there was a second place in the 200m with a time of 23.39 seconds. Laura McCracken and Shannon McMahan also made the finals of their events - Laura in the U17 100m and Shannon the U15 200m. Also competing well were a girls and boys team in the U13s Superteams event. At the East Kilbride open graded Grand Prix on 25th August, 17 of our athletes took advantage of our home track and the high standard of competition to record a series of great performances, including a club record 1500 from Beth Duff. In the Lanarkshire Track Championships on the 28th, EKAC athletes won 6 Lanarkshire titles, 2 x 2nd places, and 2 x 3rd places. The champions were Shannon McMahan (U15 100m & 200m), Kieran Rankin (U15 800m), Laura McCracken (U17 100m), Beth Duff (Senior 800m) and Kevin Downie (Senior 3,000m).

September 2010

The EKAC children's Funrun was moved from June because of uncertainty around the continuation of the EK half Marathon and was held on 8 September. A change of course was required due to building works on the area previously used as the start and finish. Around 170 youngsters lined up for the 2km course and first home was our own Vincent Hastings. Thanks are due to Coca Cola

Enterprises who provided water and juice for all the competitors. The 2010 Club Track & Field championships were held on 12 September with the same 4 event format as before (3 for the U11 age group). There were some great performances and close competitions to end the track and field season for most of our athletes. Adam Gatens was selected to run for Scotland in the Home Countries Hill Running International to be held in Dublin on Sunday 19 September. Our sprint squad of Shannon McMahon, Laura McCracken, Nicholas Coupland and Ross Maxwell rounded off the season in style with victory in the Youth Relay at the Pitlochry Highland Games.

October 2010

The Club's annual Ceilidh took place on 2 October in the Ballerup Hall. This was well attended, and with a format that gave more time for dancing, I think everyone who was there would agree that it was a very enjoyable evening. Some special awards were presented on the night: Athlete of the year was Ross Maxwell and the Scott Walsh Endeavour award went to Laura McCracken. October heralded the start of the cross country and road relay season. 23 athletes contested the Western Districts XC Relays at Rouken Glen on the 9th. The boys team were 16th while the girls team were 34th and the senior team were 17th. Stand out run of the day was from new U13 athlete Becky Ballantyne, who ran the fastest girls time of the day. The highlights of the Lanarkshire Road Relays on the 16th were victories by the U13 Boys team (Aidan Gilbride, Martin Lynas and Luke Kirwan) and Ben Stafford in the U17 race, which was run as an individual race.

November 2010

From an EKAC perspective, the twin highlights of the Kilmarnock Cross Country were wins by Vincent Hastings in the U15 Boys race and Grant Baillie in the Senior Mens race. The Mens team of Grant, Jamie Clements and Andy Shaw were first, and Willie Taylor was first V40. The Lanarkshire Cross Country Championships at the end of the month saw Beth Duff win the Senior Women's title, and U13 Boys Luke Kirwan, Aidan Gilbride and Martin Lynas lift the team title in a repeat of their performance at the Lanarkshire Relays in October. Ben Stafford took 3rd place in the U17 Mens race and the U17 Women (Rachael Thomson, Rachel Fairlie & Emma Fairlie) packed well to take the 3rd place team medals. The Club held the 22nd edition of the Hugh Wilson Memorial Race on 27 November. The start had to be moved to the Whitemoss Roundabout because of building works adjacent to Whitemoss Grove. A covering of snow required a concerted effort from a team of helpers to clear strategic points to ensure safety and a vote of thanks is due to all those who helped. At 83 runners, numbers were down substantially from previous years, and this has led to much discussion about moving the race date and perhaps changing the course and distance.

December 2010

The snow theme continued into December with disruptions which include the postponement of the West Districts Cross Country Championships and our own Christmas Handicap. This did not extend to EKAC Tartan Army who once again braved the warm conditions mid-December on their annual trip to the European Cross Country Championships in Portugal.