

EKAC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2012

Once again it was a good year for EKAC athletes. Performances improved and many new personal bests were registered. We continued to work with Whitemoss AAC to get a new athletics centre built trackside. We held a joint track & field championships in September and this was a very tangible demonstration of what could be achieved as a single club. Another joint initiative was where we took on a Club Development Officer for both clubs, Caitlyn Mackie, and she helped to address areas we needed to develop or where we were particularly weak. A significant milestone this year was when East Kilbride AC was awarded Scottish Athletics Accreditation, essentially a quality assurance mark for our sport. Our thanks went to Derek Leitch for his hard work in bringing this to a conclusion.

January 2012

The year opened with the Inter-District Cross-country Championships at Edinburgh. U15 Boy Martin Lynas was rewarded for some good runs prior to Christmas by being selected to represent the West of Scotland at this event. He was cheered on by members of the EKAC travelling 'tartan army' who were themselves rewarded at the course when BBC commentator Brendan Foster presented them with a trophy from UK Athletics for their support of GB cross-country teams abroad.

February 2012

The EKAC Cross-Country Championships were held on Feb 5th at the Showpark. Club champions were Georgia Herson and Owen Selfridge at U11, Rebecca Russell and Martin Lynas at U13, Catherine Lambie and Aidan Gilbride at U15, Rachel Fairlie and Vincent Hastings at U17, and David Gorman at Senior level. EKAC were represented by 15 athletes at the National Cross-country on 18 February. Run of the day was probably Martin Lynas in 19th position in the U13 Boys race, but Grant Baillie's 79th place in the Senior 12k race is also worth a mention.

March 2012

Meanwhile, on the indoor track, at the Scottish age group indoor Championships on 4 March, EKAC athletes picked up 3 medals. There was a 1-2 finish in the Ladies U18 60m from Laura McCracken and Arlene Barr, and a fine silver medal for Callum Field in the U14 200m. 11 of our junior athletes contested the Young Athletes National Road Races on 18 March at Rouken Glen. We finished 2 teams, with the U15 Girls in 11th place and the U13 boys in 12th.

April 2012

At the first CSSAL Division 3 meeting at East Kilbride on 29 April we finished in 2nd place overall. The CSSAL result always depends on filling as many competition places as possible, so this was a great performance given we had no U17 women and very few Senior Women or U17 Men. 'A' string female winners were Chloe Mason and Rachael Thomson in the 100m, and the U15 Girls 4x100m team of Chloe, Sarah McCusker, Alisha Montgomery and Nicole Sharp. On the male side, winners were Owen Selfridge in the 600m, the U11 boys relay team of Owen, Ewan Barrie, Callum Hickey and Aaron Gilbride, Callum Field, Aidan Gilbride, Ross Malloch, Luke Kirwan, Kieran Rankin, Andy Coutts, Kevin Downie, Keith Garrow, Willie Taylor, and the men's relay team which was completed by Niall Walker and David Thomson.

May 2012

Several of our athletes were picked to represent South Lanarkshire at the first Young Athletes League meeting at Wishaw on 6th May. Shannon McMahon was named South Lanarkshire's female athlete of the match. She was 2nd in the 100m before going on to win her 200m in a PB time of 27.0. She then came from way off the pace to anchor South Lanarkshire to first place in the 4x100m. Keiran Rankin (U17) recorded a new PB of 53.2 seconds in the 400m and Callum Field (U15) notched up a PB of 12.9 in the 100m before running the 200m. Rebecca Russell (U13) and Alisha Montgomery (U15) were also selected - Rebecca in the 800m and 4x100m and Alisha in the 200m. We ran a bus to the Lanarkshire Relay Championships at Carluke on 8th May. The young athletes were rewarded with 3rd in the U11 Girls 4x100m, 2nd in the boys, 3rd in the U15 Girls and 2nd in the U15 Boys event. In the longer 3x800m relays the U15 Boys were 2nd and the Seniors were 3rd. EKAC athletes won three medals at the West District Championships at Ayr in mid May. Kieran Rankin won a silver in the U18 400m and Shannon McMahon (U18) won bronzes in the 100m and 200m. Chloe Mason ran well and was unlucky to finish just outside the medals in the U16 100m and 200m. (The U18 women's 100m was a 1-2-3 for Laura, Arlene and Shannon and the 200m a 1-3 for Laura and Shannon of the EK elite sprint squad). Five EKAC athletes turned out for South Lanarkshire at the 2nd Scottish Young Athletes League meeting at Grangemouth on May 27. Shannon McMahon (U17) finished 2nd in the 100m in a PB 13.10, 2nd in the 200m and 2nd in the 4x300m relay. Chloe Mason (U15) was 3rd in the 100m, 2nd in the 200m, 2nd in the 4x100m and 1st in the 'B' shot putt. Aidan Gilbride (U15) was 3rd in the 800m in a PB 2:13.80. Kieran Rankin (U17) was 2nd in the 'B' 200m in a PB 24.60 and 2nd in the 4x400m. Nick Coupland (U17) won the 'B' shot putt and was 2nd in the 4x400m.

June 2012

Four EKAC athletes took part in the Scottish Schools Track & Field Championships at the beginning of June, with all making their finals. Callum Field won a silver medal in the U15 200m in a PB time of 26.37 despite a minus 3 metres per second wind. He was also 8th in the 100m final after achieving a PB time of 12.83 in his heat. Chloe Mason won a bronze medal in the U15 100m after achieving a PB of 13.12 in her heat. She was also 6th in the 200m final after a PB time of 27.48 in her heat. Shannon McMahon was 4th in the U17 100m final and 5th in the 200m in a PB time of 26.85. Kieran Rankin was 5th in the under-17 400m final. The 2nd CSSAL meeting on 10 June was at Dumfries, so we ran a bus to it and had a great day out! We finished 3rd in the meet and again the problem was lack of numbers in significant age groups, compared to the other clubs. However this League does perform the function of giving a chance for young athletes to experience track & field competition. The U11 girls relay team of Georgia Hernon, Lara Brown, Rebekah Sykes and Ciara Boyle are a case in point, as they won their event. Another 2 track debutantes were coaches Gemma Kirwan and Gordon Selfridge. Gemma surprised herself by winning both the masters 200m and 1500m, whilst Gordon finished second in both these male events. Other winners on the day were Aidan Gilbride (U15 200m and 1500m) and the men's relay team of Gordon, Niall Walker, Jamie Clements and David Thomson. On 16 June we hosted the Hugh Wilson 5 Mile Road Race. We moved this race to the Summer to avoid the usual poor weather in its normal December slot, and changed it to 5 miles in an attempt to attract more runners to a novel distance. This didn't really work as the weather was terrible and we only got 23 entrants. Some more thinking is required for next year as we don't want to drop this event. Eight EKAC athletes turned out for South Lanarkshire at the third and final Scottish Young Athletes league meeting of the season. Shannon McMahon won the U17 women's 100m and 200m. Chloe Mason (U15) was mistakenly entered for the 'B' 100m, which she won in a faster time than the 'A' race winner. She was also

2nd in the 200m. Kieran Rankin won the U17 men's 400m and Nicholas Coupland won the 'B' race in a PB. Aidan Gilbride was third in the U15 boys' 800m and won the 'B' 200m. Luke Kirwan was third in the U15 boys' 1500m and Martin Lynas was fifth, winning the 'B' race. Rebecca Russell was also 5th in the U13 girls' 800m. Shannon, Chloe, Kieran, Nick, Aidan and Rebecca all turned out the 4x100m relays with Chloe and Kieran / Nick in winning quartets. A striking feature at this part of the season was the number of personal bests recorded by our athletes. This is to be expected as young athletes develop, but the fact that they are moving in the right direction is also an indication of the effectiveness of our coaching. At the U12 Superteams on June 23rd, EKAC were represented by a boys team of Callum Hickey, Mark Leadbitter, Luis Goncalves and Owen Selfridge, who acquitted themselves well in 13th place in this mini-decathlon event. 8 EKAC athletes contested the Calderglen trail races on 29th June. Martin Lynas was 2nd in the 3K race, while Grant Baillie won the senior 5K race and picked up the 1st team prize through excellent backup from Jamie Clements and Niall Walker. Kevin Downie finished 6th in the 10K race, his last run before emigrating to San Francisco.

July 2012

This month was initially quiet then we had the opening of the London Olympics, followed by the big event of the month, the Scottish Young Athletes League Final at Grangemouth. The South Lanarkshire team made this final with the help of selected athletes from EKAC, Whitemoss and Cambuslang over 3 previous meetings in May and June. 8 EKAC athletes were there, and medals were won by Chloe Mason (3rd in the U15 200m), Aidan Gilbride (3rd in the U15 800m), and Shannon McMahon (1st in the U17 100m and 2nd in the 200m). Others present were Sarah McCusker, Georgina Massie, Callum Field, Luke Kirwan, and Martin Lynas.

August 2012

Like July, the first half of the month was pretty quiet, probably due to the influence of the Olympics. We had the final CSSAL meeting on the 19th at Wishaw. Another 3rd place finish saw us come 3rd overall in the League, missing automatic promotion to Division 2 by 1 place. However, we were delighted to find out later that, due to league re-structuring, we have been promoted to Division 2 after all. Selected event winners from this meeting were new members Lucy Muirhead and Calum Hopkins in the U11 600m and long jump respectively, and dad Andy Clydesdale in the 'B' string Masters 100m. Other victories from Rachael Thomson, Georgina Massie, Alisha Montgomery, Owen Selfridge, Mark Leadbitter, Callum Field, Michael Stewart, Martin Lynas, Aidan Gilbride, Kieran Rankin, Keith Garrow and Billy Muir made a big contribution to the overall result. The Scottish Age Group Championships at the end of the month saw Callum Field come 2nd in the U14 Long jump and 5th in the 200m, Chloe Mason come 8th in the U16 200m, Nick Coupland pick up 3rd in U16 100m, 2nd in 200m, and Shannon McMahon come 3rd in the U18 100m & 4th in the 200m. Aidan Gilbride was third in his heat of the U16 boys' 800m and just missed the final. These were exceptional performances at the highest age-group level in the country.

September 2012

September was a busy track & field month for the club and for the many new athletes who had joined over the Summer, or in the wake of the Olympic Games. The Lanarkshire track & field Championships saw our athletes win 9 events, coming 2nd in 8 and 3rd in 6. Lanarkshire Champions in 2012 were Owen Selfridge (U11 100m), Chloe Mason (U15 200m), Callum Field (U15 100m), Aidan Gilbride (U15 1500m), Kieran Rankin (U17 400m), Shannon McMahon (U17 100m & 200m), Rachel Fairlie (Senior 1500m), and Jamie Clements (Senior 800m). The 2012 Club Track &

Field championships were a combined event with Whitemoss AAC held on 16 September. By agreement the event was opened up to include Calderglen Harriers and also local schools, so that a true East Kilbride Championships could be achieved. It took a lot of organising, but it was a resounding success, and there were some great performances and close competitions to end the track and field season for most of our athletes. Club champions for 2012 were Amy Beckwith in the U9s, Lucy Muirhead and Calum Hopkins in the U11s, Rebecca Russell and Grant Myles in the U13s, Chloe Mason and Aidan Gilbride at U15, Vincent Hastings at U17, Rachael Thomson at U20, Jamie Clements at Senior level and Gordon Selfridge at Masters. This event superseded the kids' fun-run we have organised on previous years.

October 2012

The club's endurance section was in action from the start of the cross-country season in various relay races. First up was the West District Cross-country Relays at Kilmarnock. We started 2 Girls teams, with the fastest time going to young Lucy Muirhead, who was in to get some valuable experience. 3 of our boys teams toed the starting line, with the A team being composed, uniquely, of Kirwans – Matthew on first leg for U13s, Luke on 2nd leg for U15s and Jack on 3rd leg for U17s. Team Kirwan performed well to finish in 23rd place. Fastest EKAC young athlete was U17 Vincent Hastings, in a welcome return to form. The 4-man Senior team of Grant Baillie, John Fergusson, Jamie Clements and Niall Walker had their best performance in a few years in 7th place. This is a relatively young team that has come all the way through the ranks of the young athletes and shows great promise for the coming year. The Under 11s had their first outing of the season at the Lanarkshire Road Relay Championships the following weekend. Due to a clash with the school holidays, Lucy Muirhead was the only one of our U11 Girls there, but she proceeded to beat everyone else in the 1st leg of the relay and set the fastest U11 time of the day. The U11 Boys had a full team of Callum Hickey, Owen Selfridge and Calum Hopkins and they lived up to their promise with a great 3rd place. The U15 Boys comprising Aidan Gilbride, Martin Lynas and Luke Kirwan finished in 2nd place, and in the final event the Senior team of David Thomson, David Gorman, Jamie Clements and Niall Walker were 3rd. The early season relays culminated in the Scottish Cross-country Relays over a notoriously hilly course at Cumbernauld. 3 Girls teams started, but we only had enough older athletes present to finish 1 team. Fastest Girl over the demanding course was U15 Mhairi Boyle, but she was closely followed by newcomer Chloe Mulligan. Two EKAC boys teams completed the course with bragging rights for the fastest EK time going to Vincent Hastings again, although he was pushed close by Aidan Gilbride. 2 Senior teams competed, with the fastest time going to John Fergusson.

November 2012

After the October relays, November saw the Club return to the Kilmarnock Cross Country races, which incorporates an enormous hill in the Dean Park course and is traditionally the muddiest course of the year. There was a great turnout from the U11 Boys, with Calum Hopkins leading the squad home in 3rd place, chased closely by Elliot Bain in 7th. U11 Girls Lucy Muirhead in 2nd and Sarah Connolly in 5th had great runs, and with this kind of start to the proceedings, the older athletes took inspiration. Aidan Gilbride won the U15 Boys race and the team of Martin Lynas Callum Field and Ross Malloch helped him win the 1st team prize. Not to be outdone, Vincent Hastings in the U17 Men and Rachel Fairlie in the U20 Women both won their races. The Senior athletes had a different event that day in the shape of the National 4K Cross-country Championships. Best run was by John Fergusson in 58th place. The following weekend was the

Lanarkshire Cross Country Championships, over the usual course at Drumpelzier Park in Coatbridge. With more than 30 athletes this was the biggest club turnout at this event for many years and it was rewarded with 2 Lanarkshire Champions, 4 individual medals and 6 team medals shared by 18 athletes. The U11 Girls started the ball rolling with 1st and 3rd places for Lucy Muirhead and Sarah Connolly, backed up by Georgia Hernon to win the 2nd team prize. The U11 Boys team, slightly weakened by illness, still managed to pick up 2nd place through fine performances from Owen Selfridge, Elliot Bain and Michael Friel. The U13 Girls team of Rebecca Russell, Jessica Hagan and Laurie May kept up the winning ways in 3rd place, as did the U15 Girls team of Mhairi Boyle, Georgina Massie and Megan Barrie. The U15 Boys race was won by Aidan Gilbride with a demonstration of front-running, and once again he got solid backup from Martin Lynas and Callum Field to register 2nd team place. The day's final event saw the Senior men's team of Grant Baillie, Jamie Clements and Niall Walker outdo their younger counterparts for once with a fine team victory. This incorporated a 3rd place finish by Grant. The club's annual ceilidh and prizegiving was held that very evening at the Murray-Owen centre and was judged to be a great success. Thanks go to Anne Thomson for organising the event and to Graeme Haddow for the trophies. Highlight of the evening was the awards presentation where the club track & field trophies, 10 event championship and special awards were presented. David Thomson, in his first full year at the Club, showed supreme consistency to win the 10 Event trophy. The Scott Walsh Endeavour Award, for the club member showing exemplary commitment, attitude and effort was shared this year by Martin Lynas and Niall Walker. The Athlete of the Year recipient was U15 middle distance runner Aidan Gilbride for his tremendous improvement by taking his 800m best down by more than 20 seconds to 2:08, as well as winning races from 200m up to 1500m on the track and also excelling at cross-country. This cross-country season has also been notable for the number of our athletes finishing races with only 1 shoe – Aidan Brown at the National Relays, Michael Field at Kilmarnock and Shona Burt at the Lanarkshire's. It is to their great credit that they still finished. Note to coaches – we need to make sure their laces are tied tightly enough at future races!