

EKAC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2018

January 2018

We had 3 athletes selected for the Inter District Cross Country events in Edinburgh on 13th January. Hannah Anderson (6th place in U15 race), Grant Baillie and John Fergusson acquitted themselves well in their respective events. On the same day but indoors, Greg Kelly registered club record of 7.02 in placing 3rd in the 60m in the Scottish Indoor Open Championships. Also away from the mud, the Scottish Athletics Indoor League was in full swing at the magnificent Emirates Arena. We entered several teams in this 3 match League spanning Winter 2017/2018 and giving many of our younger athletes some valuable indoor competition, as well as an unforgettable experience. Greg followed this up later in the month with a 6th place in the Scottish indoor Championships Senior 60m. Hannah Anderson occupied the same position in her U17 800m final at the same event.

February 2018

79 athletes attended our Club Cross-country Championships on 10 February in Strathaven. We incorporated a new sprint handicap race this year, which was won by Jacob Connelly. Club cross-country champions were Aimee Anderson and Ryan Byrne at U11, Leah Muirhead and Paul Cairns at U13, Hannah and Hamish Anderson at U15, Lucy Muirhead at U17, Julia Dunn at U20 and Vivien Thorpe and Jamie Clements at Senior level. The Scottish Cross Country Champs were held at Falkirk on 24 February. The first highlight of the day was successfully managing to put up the club tent! First EKAC finishers on the day were Leah Muirhead and Paul Cairns at U13, Hannah Anderson (in 8th place) and Hamish Anderson at U15, Lucy Muirhead at U17, Heather Addison (in 12th place) at U20, Kelly Baillie and John Fergusson (in 39th place) at Senior level.

April 2018

The 2018 Outdoor Track & Field season started in April. With Spring well underway, a host of EKAC athletes competed in the Lanarkshire relays on 28 April at the Wishaw track, and the club came away with 7 medals after an exciting evening of athletics. These were: 5 gold, U11B 4x100, Senior Men 4x100, U13B 3x800, U15G 3x800, Senior Men 4x400; 1 silver U17M 4x400; 1 bronze U15B 3x800.

May 2018

The first major Track & Field Championships of the Summer were the West Districts in mid May. Our athletes reached 20 finals, winning 2 golds from Hannah Anderson in the 800m and Calum Charters in the high jump, 1 silver from Heather Addison in the 1500m and a bronze from Harry Mulvey in the javelin. At the first CSSAL Division 3 meeting at end of the month, EKAC won the match quite comfortably by over 150 points from the next club. This was a great team performance and was delivered mainly on the results of our young athletes as there were gaps in our event coverage at the older age groups and Seniors. The second CSSAL meeting at the beginning of July was cancelled due to the unavailability of sufficient graded officials. The third CSSAL meeting early in September saw us once again struggle to field many Senior or U17 athletes, due to fixture clashes, with the result that we finished 4th in that match in a very tight competition for top place, where 75 points covered the top 4 teams. The end result for the league was that

we finished in 3rd place, but with more match points than the first 2 clubs! Due to this fact and some re-structuring, the CSSAL League agreed to promote us to Division 2 for 2019.

June 2018

The track was closed for re-surfacing from the middle of June. Initially we thought this was going to take 4-6 weeks, but it ultimately stayed closed until the end of August. We were found an alternative venue at Brancumhall, where a 200m track was painted out on one of the grass football pitches. This helped a little but didn't allow us to train the younger athletes at the technical events. Still, they got to see a lot of the wonderful nature trail at Calderglen during the long spell of dry weather. Throughout the Summer EKAC athletes competed in a number of Track & Field leagues. The Youth Development League had 3 meetings and a final and our U13/U15 athletes competed as part of a composite South Lanarkshire Team. These athletes had great successes and prompted some thoughts of trying to enter an EKAC team in this event in future. Many thanks to Eevamiaja Anderson for organisation work for this league.

July 2018

EKAC were represented by 2 athletes at the Scottish Combined Events Championships in mid-July at Grangemouth. Recovering from injury, Calum Charters performed exceptionally well to win the bronze medal in the U13 boys pentathlon.

August 2018

It was a small squad of 12 EKAC athletes that ventured to Aberdeen for the Scottish Track & Field Championships over consecutive weekends in August. They reached 9 finals in total. U20 Greg Kelly won a bronze medal in the Senior 100 then returned the following weekend to complete the 100 and 200 double gold in the U20 competition. Calum Charters was the other medallist, with a fine silver medal in the U13 boys high jump. As already mentioned, U20 sprinter Greg Kelly had another fantastic year. He had multiple call-ups for the Scotland team, set a windy 10.7 time for 100m and a club record of 21.68 for the 200m in addition to winning multiple Highland Games sprint competitions.

September 2018

Amongst many fine performances from the 57 EKAC athletes who competed at the Lanarkshire Track & Field Championships on 1 September, our athletes won 5 gold, 3 silver and 5 bronze medals. Our Lanarkshire Champions were Ryan Clydesdale, Jordan O'Neill, Paul Cairns, Sam McGrory and Calum Charters. Two weeks later, at the EKAC Track & Field Championships our new champions were Tyler Kelly and Ryan McNamara at U11, Cara Gilbride and Calum Charters at U13, Holly McAneny and Cameron McDonald at U15, Hannah Anderson and Hamish Anderson/Owen Selfridge jointly at U17, Jack Kirwan at Senior Men and Kelly Baillie and Vincent Glennon at Masters. We have a lot of athletic talent in our club, and as part of our commitment to nurture and inspire this talent, we like to arrange visits from International athletes to come and chat with them. This year the athlete didn't have to travel too far – it was our own Greg Kelly who conducted a Q&A session with our young athletes, who did us proud by asking lots of superb questions.

October 2018

October saw the start of the Cross-country Season. The EK Senior Men's team were reigning holders of the Western Districts XC Relays title. Missing 2 of last year's winning squad they put up a spirited defence of their title in finishing 7th this year at Irvine Beach Park. A total of 31 EKAC athletes competed over all age groups with the day's best performance going to Hannah Anderson with 2nd fastest time in the U17 women category. The following weekend was the Lanarkshire Road Relays at Coatbridge and this was our best ever performance at this event! The U11s stole the show, winning gold medals in both girls and boys relays and setting fastest leg times by Matilda Frew and Ryan McNamara. More golds were delivered by the U13 boys (fastest leg Calum Charters), U15 girls and Senior men, rounded off by a great bronze medal from the Senior Ladies. Next up was the Scottish Cross-country relays, on 27 October at the usual Cumbernauld course. This year the underfoot conditions and weather were kind to all 44 EK athletes who competed. The Senior men finished 16th and we had a Senior women's team for the first time in a long while. 8 young athletes' teams was also a record number for recent years. After cleaning off the mud, we had our annual awards evening that night at the Ballerup Hall. The special awards presented were: Scott Walsh Endeavour Award – Sam Hosie; Athletes of the year – Calum Charters at Junior, Hannah Anderson at Youth and Greg Kelly at U20/Senior level; Sheila MacDougall Award – Hannah Anderson.

November 2018

Moving into November, we had a new intake of athletes into the entry and development groups. The first big event was the Scottish Short-course Cross-country Championships at Lanark Racecourse on the 10th. First home for the club were Abbie Kirwan and Chris Cairns at U15, Hannah Anderson (a fine 4th place) and Hamish Anderson at U17 and (a family double) for Kelly Baillie and Grant Baillie at Senior level. Grant followed this up with selection for the Scottish Masters team for the British & Irish Masters International at Swansea, registering a great 15th place. At the Lanarkshire Cross-country championships towards the end of the month, our younger athletes did us proud. The U11 boys won team gold, as did the U13 boys and the U15 girls, and the U11 girls won silver. Special mention must go to individual Lanarkshire champions Ryan McNamara at U11 and Calum Charters at U13 and to Leah Muirhead for a fine 2nd place at U15.