

EKAC REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2021

January – March 2021

Like everyone else, we went into a second lockdown in January 2021 and were unable to return to group training. Some virtual events were put on by Scottish Athletics, and 5 club members took part in the Scottish Virtual Road Challenge at the beginning of February. Keith Charters finished a great 2nd in the M55 ½ marathon, while John Edwards was 8th M40. Ben Baillie, Euan Thorpe and Zoe Baillie were all inside the top 20 in their respective races. In order to keep things going, the Coaches posted sessions each week for their athletes to complete, under parental supervision. This took everyone through the winter snows and frosts until we got the go-ahead to resume training on 16 March. We started back at the track 1 day a week, under the same protocols as the previous autumn, with the junior groups training 6-7pm and the others 7-8pm. We had exclusive track access on Tuesdays and then trained outside on Thursdays. Most groups continued to meet at the Sports Centre, for convenience. As there were no competitions during this period, we also made the decision to postpone our Cross Country Championships until later in the year. There was some bad news in mid-March when we sadly lost Pat Russell, a club member since the early 1980s and valued Coach for the past 25 years. As a gesture of respect for Pat, we held a minute's silence for him on our return to the track where he coached for many years.

April 2021

On a Tuesday training evening in mid-April, the Senior squad got together to hold a time trial for Daryl Reid over 5,000m, to replace an invitation event in Wigan which had been cancelled. Daryl finished in a time of 14:34, cheered on by all the junior athletes. This was the fastest 5k by an EKAC athlete since 1985 and places him as 4th fastest of all time. Later in the month we saw another impressive ultra-marathon run from Vivien Thorpe, recording 7:59:02 for the 12-hour, 52-mile Pyllon Exposure virtual ultra and ranking her 5th woman and 21st overall. Meanwhile, Greg Kelly opened his season on 25 April at the Loughborough Open meeting, running 3rd in a high class 100m in 10.95.

May 2021

A total of 61 athletes met on the 8th at the ShowPark for the Club XC Champs and Sprint handicap. Olivia Baxter won the handicap, in a close finish with Zak Lindsay and James MacIntyre. After an exciting series of races, EKAC XC Champions for 2021 were Sophie Eatherington and Jacob Jeffrey at U11, Matilda Frew and Ben Baillie at U13, Aimee Anderson and Calum Charters at U15 and Emma Livingstone at U17. Senior champions were Sophie Smith and Daryl Reid, while the family duo of Kelly and Grant Baillie captured the Masters titles. The very next day, Greg Kelly ran a windy 21.41 for 200m in the Scottish Invitational meeting at Kilmarnock, finishing third with half a metre covering the top three. This was Greg's fastest time over the distance and the fastest ever 200m by an EKAC athlete. The rest of the month saw the return to some form of competition for the majority of our athletes, with the Scottish Athletics Together Apart series of events held on club nights at the track. The first of these on 11 May, consisting of a 100m sprint and an 800m, saw 72 athletes register 103 performances, many of which were personal bests. The senior 800m was notable for being run entirely in lanes for the full 800m, due to the prevailing Covid rules for adults. To their credit, the athletes pulled out some great performances. For the next one, a week later, with 75m, 200m, 600m and 1500m events, we again had 72 athletes, this time registering 100 performances, with a similar effect on the PB lists and club record tables. The 3rd and final event on the 25th saw us return to the 100m and 800m events, while adding 300m/400m longer sprints and a 3,000m event. This last event was notable for Scottish Athletics sending a photographer along to capture the proceedings for their

website. This seemed to give many of the athletes extra incentive! Thanks to Kenny Clements, Jim Caskie and Anne Thomson for all the timekeeping, place-keeping and results, and to Vivien Thorpe for being Team Manager and completing the on-line results input.

June 2021

We held another competition night at the track for the older athletes on 1 June, only offering 150m sprint and 800m. This one produced 6 new club records in the more rarely run 150m. Congratulations to Emma Livingstone U20, Cait Minster U17, Aimee Anderson U15, Vincent Glennon Masters, Jordan O'Neill U20 and Jay Sharp U15. On the 13th we had more success in the Joint League at Grangemouth, where Greg Kelly ran a wind assisted 10.56s to win the 100m and record the fastest ever 100m in an EK vest. Hot on the heels of this, Calum Charters, Sam Hosie and Lewis Thorpe all clocked 400m PBs, despite the wind. The following week we had 9 young athletes in the South Lanarkshire team for the YDL at Kilmarnock. In good conditions, many recorded PBs, but special mentions should go to Jenna McNab and Ethan Selfridge in the sprint hurdles, who both ran well despite not having had access to hurdles all year. We were also able to start another 20 new athletes this month, over a range of age categories. The month ended with Daryl Reid setting a new road 5K PB of 14:35 in the Fast 5K event in the north of England.

July 2021

We started July with another club track competition night, where 83 performances were recorded over 100m, 150m, 300mH, 600m and 1000m. The success of these events was demonstrated by the impact on the EKAC PB tables. They gave many of our athletes the chance to try new events. The only disappointing thing was that we were still unable to put on any field events, due to the local track Covid precautionary measures. The Scottish Masters Championships were held at the weekend and the highlight was provided by Grant Baillie who successfully defended his M40 Scottish Outdoor 800m title. Grant clocked a time of 2:06.79 to take home the gold. On the 18th we had a great performance from Greg Kelly to set a new club 100m record of 10.62s at the Scottish Combined League match at Grangemouth. More from Greg later! Towards the end of the month, Jamie Clements announced the launch of a new EKAC club badge, which he had designed along with Andrew Forteach, as well as the forthcoming availability of new Nike kit (featuring the badge) from an online shop. This was a great initiative, both modernising our club logo and making kit easier to order without us having to hold stocks. The month ended with 8 of our athletes featuring strongly at the GAA Sprint Event at Scotstoun, where several PBs were recorded.

August 2021

26 of our young athletes started August with a bang as part of the South Lanarkshire team at the YDL in Kilmarnock. Several were making their competition debut for the club, but all performed well and quite a few PBs were set. Our thanks to Keith Charters for his efforts as Team Manager. Our online Club Shop went live on 6th August at [<https://www.3qsports.co.uk/East-Kilbride-AC>] thanks to the sterling efforts of Jamie Clements. We had 19 athletes at the East Lothian Open-graded event at Meadowmill on the 7th, and this was followed by a Scottish M55 masters 10,000m silver medal for Keith Charters. Off the back of a busy weekend, we had our season's final club competition event night on the Tuesday. This one comprised 75m, 100m, 200m, 800m and 1500m, and gave those aiming at the Scottish Age Group Championships the opportunity of a warm up race. 68 athletes produced 110 performances, 64 of which were PBs, showing the value of this successful series. On the 19th, SLLC track management removed the track restrictions that had been in place since March, giving us access on both club nights, which would mean sharing with other clubs and the general public. We did notice the track becoming more crowded and therefore took the opportunity to remind all Coaches and athletes about the track safety rules. August is usually the month for the Scottish Track & Field Championships and the seniors were first up mid-month. The highlights were

undoubtedly a senior 200m title for Greg Kelly in a club record time of 21.37s, and fine silver medal for Calum Charters in the U17 1500m steeplechase, in his first competitive run in this event. This resulted in a Scottish Schools call-up for Calum at the Schools International in Derby. The following weekend Daryl Reid won the Kilmarnock 10K road race in a course record 30:43, leading home another 9 EKAC athletes in this event, in a field of over 1000. The Scottish Age group Championships took place at the end of the month at Aberdeen and Dylan Edwards and Francis Santangeli ran well on day 1 in the middle distance events, gaining valuable experience at this level. The highlight on day 2 was a superb silver medal for Angus Wilkinson in the U13 Boys 1500 in a time of 4.35.41. This took a massive 13 seconds off the club record and was under the previous championship best! Ben Baillie finished a great 10th place in the same final with a new PB. Hannah Anderson was 7th in the U20 women's 1500 and both Rory and Carrie Charters had great runs in their respective U13 800m races.

September 2021

September started with Daryl Reid running the 3rd fastest ever Parkrun time in Scotland – 14:47 at Strathclyde Parkrun. This was followed on the Sunday by a win for Gary Craig at the Run the Blades half marathon on the hilly trails around the Whitelee windfarm. Moving back to the track we had the Scottish Relay Championships on the 11th. We entered 5 teams for the 4x100m and 8 teams for the 3x800m. Best result of the day was the U13 boys 4th place in the 3x800m. Well done to the 43 EKAC athletes who competed. Back on the roads the following day, the club had 9 athletes running at the Stirling 10k which also doubled as the Scottish 10k Championships. In a race won by Olympian Andy Butchart, first home for the club was Daryl Reid in 6th place in a new PB. PBs were the order of the day for Calum Charters and Sam Hosie, both U17s and Emma Livingstone at U20, all 3 having excellent runs over the longer distance. 81 athletes contested our Club Track & Field Champs on a superb sunny Saturday in late September. Thanks to all the Officials, Coaches and parents who helped make this happen. We had a great afternoon of athletics which resulted in the following club champions: Zoe Baillie and Jacob Jeffrey at U11, Matilda Frew and Angus Wilkinson at U13, Aimee Anderson and Jamie Connor at U15, Ellie Hogg and Calum Charters at U17, Emma Livingstone and Sammy Dickie/Jake Vulkan at U20, Luke Kirwan at Senior, and finally Kelly Baillie and Colin Frew at Masters. The medals were presented at the end of the month along with, belatedly, the Club recognition awards for 2020. The Scott Walsh Endeavour award went to Millie Aitken. Athletes of the Year for 2020 were Matilda Frew at Junior level, Calum Charters at Youth and finally Daryl Reid at Senior level. Well done to all.

October 2021

With the track season over, 24 of our younger athletes contested the Scottish Secondary Schools Road Race Championships in early October. There was a brilliant team silver for Francis Santangeli, Ruairidh O'Neil and Dylan Edwards in the S2 boys race representing St Andrews and St Brides. In the same race Angus Wilkinson had the highest placing of the day in 5th, only 5 seconds down on the silver medal. In addition to those mentioned, there were also great top 20 finishes for several other club members. The traditional cross-country season opened on the 9th October with the West XC Relays on a hilly course at Alexandra Park in Glasgow, where we had 51 athletes turned out. The young females team of Matilda Frew, Rhianna Docherty and Aimee Anderson finished an outstanding 5th, the 2nd best position the club has ever had in this race. The young males team of Ben Baillie, Jamie Connor and Calum Charters finished a great 12th, their best position for a number of years. The Senior female team were 29th and the Senior male team finished 8th, continuing their tradition of a top 10 finish that stretches back many years. Also noteworthy in our company of middle distance and endurance athletes was one of our sprinters, Taylor McNamara, running in the ladies' race – she picked a tough introduction to cross-country. Having cleaned their spikes, it was back indoors for our young athletes the following weekend at the Scottish Athletics Indoor League at the Emirates Arena. For many of our 34 representatives, it was their first time running

indoors and for some it was their first experience of external competition at all, so their performances were outstanding. Thanks to Vivien Thorpe the Team Manager and the Coaches and parents who helped out on the day. We got more sad news on 21 October when we heard that Edgar Ramage, an EKAC stalwart from the mid-1980s and member of the EKAC Tartan Army, had passed away. He will be sorely missed by us and by so many in the wider athletics community. The next leg of the cross-country tour of Scotland, the National XC Relays, was on the 23rd in the grounds of Scone Palace in Perth. The girls A team of Matilda Frew, Rhianna Docherty and Aimee Anderson finished a fantastic 10th, the 3rd best finish in the clubs history for the young females race. The boys A team finished a great 12th, their best finish since 2005. Angus Wilkinson got the team off to a flyer coming back to the changeover in 2nd place. Jamie Connor and Calum Charters dealt well with the pressure of being so close to the front and delivered great performances. In the senior women's race the Vets women team of Vivien Thorpe, Kelly Baillie and Gemma Kirwan finished 11th in the Vets category. The senior men's A team of Daryl Reid, Jamie Clements, David Ross and Martin Lynas finished 17th. Daryl brought the team back in 7th on the first leg and the others showed great consistency to keep the team in the top 20. Good to see a large turnout for the club and also life member Hannah Anderson getting a team gold in the women's event while running for her University.

November 2021

Moving on to November, the highlight of the Scottish Short Course XC Championships at Lanark racecourse was a first ever team medal for the club in the U15 girls event. Aimee Anderson 8th, Rhianna Docherty 10th and Amy Andrew 30th ran well in cold, wet and windy conditions to win the silver. This is also the first time in 15 years the club has had 2 athletes in a national top 10 in the same race. The U15 boys team of Jamie Connor, Aaron Thomson and Jonathon Hunter also performed well in finishing 7th. In the Senior races the women were 18th team and the men 11th. Despite, or maybe because of, the weather, everyone had a great time and the young athletes in particular made sure they got selfies with all the Scottish Olympians present, like Laura Muir, Andy Butchart and Jake Weightman. November ended with a flourish as 15 of our athletes headed south, with travelling supporters, to contest the Liverpool Cross Country Challenge. This also doubled as the Senior and U20 trial races for the Euro Cross in Dublin, so the fields were large and filled with all the top runners. Big congratulations to Angus Wilkinson with the Club's best finish of the day of 3rd place in the U13 Boys race. Amongst great performances from everyone there, other top 20 finishers were Hannah Anderson, 11th at U20, and Zoe Baillie, 15th in the U11 Girls race. Our AGM and election of new office bearers took place on the 30th and was held over a Zoom call. From our assessment night at the end of October, we started another 16 young athletes at the end of this month.

December 2021

The first big event in December was the West Districts XC Championships, held again over the hilly course at Balloch Country Park, but this time in more benign weather than 2019. The club's 36 athletes finished the day with 2 individual champions, a 2nd place individual and 3 team medals, possibly our best ever showing at this event, and a testament to all the hard work by the athletes and their coaches. Matilda Frew got the club off to a flyer with a superb silver in the U13 girls race. Her amazing uphill sprint finish saw her go from 8th to 2nd in the last 200m. She was ably supported by Kara Lindsay and Carrie Charters to finish 4th in the team event. Angus Wilkinson was victorious in the U13 boys race, with a blistering finish up the final hill. Supported by Ben Baillie and Euan Thorpe, the boys took the 2nd team prize. The U15 girls continued their team medal winning ways with a great 3rd, with a team comprising Rhianna Docherty in 7th place, Aimee Anderson and Amy Andrew.

Jamie Connor in 11th led the under 15 boys to 3rd place in the team race, backed up by Aaron Thomson and Jonathan Hunter. Vivien Thorpe and Kelly Baillie were 7th and 9th respectively at M40 while Gemma Kirwan was 6th M50 in the womens race, combining for 5th Masters team. In the mens event, Grant Baillie led the senior team home in 13th, which won him gold in the M40 category. Our other 13 men brought the

senior team a 5th place and the masters team a 4th place. Meanwhile, in the East District Championships, Hannah Anderson took a victory in the U20 women's race, running for her University. This makes her possibly the first person in the club to be an East and a West District champion. The 2nd SAIL meeting of the season took place indoors at the Emirates on 12 December. This afforded many of our young athletes their first chance at track & field competition since they joined and they grabbed the opportunity to register some great performances. In the junior Christmas handicap on 18 December we had 23 young athletes in fancy dress contesting the 1.24km route on pavements next to the Strathaven Road. After some fun racing, winners at U11 were Daisy Clarke & Noah Anderson, with Amy McIvor & Aidan Glennon winning the combined U13/U15 race. Fastest age group times were set by Zoe Baillie & Jacob Jeffrey (U11), Kara Lindsay & Ben Baillie (U13) and Rhianna Docherty & Francis Santangeli (U15). The Senior Christmas Handicap in the afternoon reverted to the old Auldhouse course. With 18 participants enjoying the cool but sunny conditions, a guest, Ryan Stevenson, got to the finish first, but club member Mark Loveday took the win and David Ross recorded the fastest time of 21:44.