

# STRATHEARN HARRIERS

The club for runners in the Crieff and Comrie area of Perthshire

## President's Report 2024-25

Presented to the Annual General Meeting, 14 March 2025, by Jon Williams

The presentation of this report to the club AGM marks the end of my first year as president after two years as Secretary.

In the past year the club has continued to build for the longer term. In 24-25 we continued to build on the solid foundation of performance, inclusion and ambition for the club already in progress. My thanks go to all those on the Committee for their participation and support throughout the year.

In May the Club successfully moved its membership platform from LoveAdmin to membermojo following LoveAdmin's decision to dramatically increase its fees. This was accomplished without major difficulty and the membership platform appears to work satisfactorily and with fewer issues than LoveAdmin.

Work has continued on getting a sustainable balance between support for performance along with participation and inclusion. The Juniors continue to excel across all types of activity (track, road, trail and cross country). For the Seniors, we've seen a continuation of the renewed engagement and success in hill running in particular, alongside continued participation in road with winning British V45 and Scottish V50 Half Marathon championship performances. We have also seen some Senior success in cross-country with greater numbers participating as teams. There was an outstanding performance at the Scottish Disability Sport National Athletics Championships where a Strathearn Harriers athlete won gold in the 5kg shot put. Thanks go to Ronan McDermott and Gareth Marchant for their continuing work on disability athletics.

We have continued to promote wider involvement in the club's organisation. It has been good to see an increased interest from members in joining the committee, as the club's future is best served by preparation for succession as longer serving members step down as required by the constitution. There has been welcome new involvement in the club's race committees too. Work continues to ensure future new involvement in the running of the club.

### Governance

The club has been run in keeping with its constitution. The Strathearn Harriers Committee has met regularly, with all meetings quorate. The character of the committee has been positive, with sufficient common ground in our vision for the direction of the club, but also having sufficient diversity of views for creative discussion.

The Committee undertook a review of the Club's culture and values the results of which are briefly set out below:

Priority Area	Progress
Cohesion	Badaguish, Monzievaired and other events helping. Increased participation in competition. Widened range of club races.
Outreach	Website updating now with Tony Wayte. Better use being made of External Facebook page. National Running week offering to be developed.
Beginners / Recreational runners	Current membership numbers holding up well. Co-ordinator to be appointed for 2025/26 to align with National Running Week.
Education & Training	Additional sessions trailed in 2024. Continue to develop a structured budgeted programme.
Strategy	Additional coaches in development. Perhaps form a sub-group to consider future developments in 2025.
Competition & Performance (club/individual)	Juniors continue to be excellent. Better participation in competitions particularly XC. Need to consider how we use coaching resources better to assist in Seniors development.

## Club Activity

### Training

Club training has continued to draw active participation during year for both Juniors and Seniors. The Tuesday night Senior training session has engaged Juniors' parents and drawn in other participants. The provision of home baking after the Comrie sessions has proved an added attraction. Attendance has been good overall and seems to be trending upwards. Our thanks to thanks to Morrison's Academy and Comrie Cricket Club for our the continued use of their facilities.

### Club Championship

The club should be proud of the diversity of running it encompasses. However, that's given a long-running challenge as to the configuration of the Senior Club Championship in order to recognise the variety of road, trail, hill and cross-country running seen in the club. Whilst there is never going to be a perfect configuration, changes made this past year have built on review and feedback and seek to increase engagement with the championship.

### Club Races

Last year saw the successful re-establishment of the Simon Wake Comrie Hills Relay Race, and the Strathearn Marathon. The tireless efforts of Andy Gallagher and Marathon the race committee made the 2024 Strathearn Marathon a successful and enjoyable event. The successful 2023 relaunch of the Simon Wake Comrie Hills Relay was followed by another very successful event in 2024 thanks go to Phil Mestecy and the race committee for efforts. The Crieff 10k continued to be a successful and popular event, thanks to all those involved and the provision of some amazing home baking. This year sees a new addition to the Clubs events with the Ben Chonzie Hill Race in April giving the Club a fixture in the Scottish Hill Runners Calendar.

## **Race Participation**

The club, despite its relatively small 'catchment area', continues to enjoy notable success in many aspects of the Scottish running scene, and in both the Junior and Senior parts of the club. The fact that we can put out a substantial bulletin on a weekly basis is testament to the broad range of competition in which club members engage. This isn't the place to pick out individual successes (and avoiding the risk of omission) I want to particularly note the Juniors' continued successes, including national representation and success, with specific appreciation of Phil Mestecky commitment and dedication to coaching the Junior section, and those others who support both Junior activity and the competitors.

## **Media and Communications**

Jason continues to email a weekly bulletin to members, covering general club matters, Seniors News and Juniors News sections. Most members continue to subscribe to the bulletin with very few opting out. We make good use our members-only Facebook groups 'Strathearn Harriers Members' and 'Strathearn Harriers Juniors' to communicate and interact with our membership. We also use a public Facebook page, 'Strathearn Harriers' which is used somewhat highlight club activity to the public. A long-standing issue that needed addressing was the refreshing of our website. Thanks to Tony Wayte for his work on this, and the improvements already put in place. Thanks also to Al Nichol for his continued support in maintaining the Club's web presence

## **Social Activity**

My thanks to our social secretary, Liz Mestecky for leading so successfully on this important aspect of the club's activities. The club continues to be happy and healthy, and that's reflected in the social activity of the club. Particular successes were the Badaguish away weekend, the Monzievaird Relay with first time organizer Fran Coles doing a fantastic job, the Mince Pie Run and another well attended Ceilidh in January. The 40th anniversary of the club's founding was marked with some fun 'Taskfaster' activities organized by Tony and Clare McClelland.

