

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

A low key start to the new year with another national lockdown to deal with.

There were more virtual competitions with Halesowen athletes gunning for glory on the national stage.

We welcome a top GB international athlete to the club who we hope to see competing in Tokyo this summer.

And there's a look at how our runners survived and thrived on a super snowy Sunday!

CLUB UPDATE

The national lockdown means that all club activity, including all 1:1 and coached sessions has ceased.

UK government guidelines allow exercise once per day and you should not travel outside their local area.

You can exercise with one person from outside your household, maintaining two metres social distancing at all times.

The club track and grounds do remain open for socially-distanced exercise, and the committee would like to remind all members that the track floodlights are NOT on a timer and need to be manually switched off if you are last to leave the track each evening.

If you are unsure how to do this then please get in touch with Matt Allen or Peter Dear.

The above COVID restrictions will remain in place until further notice.

Any changes to these will be communicated via the club Facebook page and website.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

EVENTS UPDATE

The English Schools Cross Country Championships due to be held in Kent in March have been CANCELLED but a virtual competition will be set up in due course.

Provisional dates have been released for the Midland Track and Field League this summer.

Division 4 South West meetings are due to be held on Saturday May 22nd at Hereford, Sunday 20th June at Stourport, Sunday 18th July at Newport in South Wales and on Sunday 15th August at Tipton which the club will be hosting.

These dates are subject to alteration or cancellation should COVID restrictions not allow the events to take place.

Promotion and relegation in the leagues will only apply if all four fixtures take place.

And the dates for the UKYDL fixtures have also been announced.

The Lower Age Group meets are on Saturdays on 24th April, 15th May, 5th June, 17th July and 4th September, with the Upper Age Group on Sundays on 2nd May, 30th May, 27th June, 25th July and 5th September.

The first two rounds of fixtures will run to a restricted timetable, and there will be no promotion and relegation this year. The September finals weekend is now a regular fixture. Further changes are possible due to COVID restrictions.

WELCOME SOPHIE!

We would like to welcome GB international pole vaulter Sophie Cook to the club.

Local girl Sophie is the current British Indoor Champion and was second in September's British Championships in Manchester.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

After coming back from a serious car crash three years ago in which doctors told her to give up pole vaulting, Sophie is now a leading contender for a Team GB place in this year's Tokyo Olympics.



Sophie Cook on her way to gold at the 2020 British Indoor Championships PHOTO: Mark Shearman / Athletics Weekly

Sophie has joined us from Birchfield Harriers and has been spending recent months training at our track and gym, supplementing her usual training base at Loughborough University.

We will be keeping a close eye on Sophie's progress in the forthcoming months, and you are more than welcome to follow her on Instagram @sophiecookpv.

ENGLISH VIRTUAL ROAD RELAYS

As dreams of speedy Saturdays at Sutton Park became ever more distant, England Athletics launched their virtual Road Relays competition for 2021.

The qualifying round ran through late December and early January with mixed teams of four men and four women from all over the country competing for a place in the top 50 to make it through to next month's national round.

Aided by Paul Allen's successful plea for an extended deadline due to the snowy and icy conditions, twelve Halesowen athletes scoured their localities for fast five mile courses.

Peter Dear was the fastest male with a run around the Huntlands Estate, and he finished 196th in 27:45.

Lily Higgins chose an out and back route along the Worcester and Birmingham canal and was fastest woman in 930th in 32:29.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

Completing the points scoring places for the men were Dave Turvey (28:12), Andy Butler (29:56) and Andy Yapp (30:01) and for the women were Simone Jones (33:43), Katrina Simpson (36:35) and Sam Morton (37:49).

Also taking part for the club were Lucas Wolf-Pudney (31:03), Jamie Sircom (38:47), Anna Cosimetti (43:40), Bettina Wolf (45:11) and Paul Allen (46:02).

Halesowen finished in 64th place with an overall time was 4 hours 16 minutes and 30 seconds.

And although that wasn't enough to earn qualification for the national round, we did come away with an unofficial virtual trophy as the fastest team in Worcestershire!!!

BMAF 10k

Andy Butler was the club's sole representative in the British Masters Virtual 10k.

Despite dodging snow and ice and on a hilly Bell End course (near Bellbroughton!), Andy ran an excellent time of 38:22 to finish in 85th place.

AIN'T SNOW STOPPING US NOW!

The first significant fall of snow in a couple of years saw some especially challenging conditions for those heading off on their Sunday run on 24th January.

But as recent months have proved, neither wintry weather nor lockdown restrictions were going to stop our intrepid band of athletes from getting out for their officially allowed and socially distanced form of daily exercise.

And most also took their phones with them and captured some stunning winter scenes ...

Halesowen Athletics Club
Newsround



Thanks go to all our photographers: Chris White, Peter Dear, Roger Mallard and Jackie Bradshaw

Most ran, some walked and Richard White even sledged!

Romsley, Walton Hill and Clent were popular spots, along with Woodgate Valley and the well trod Sheepfields run.

According to the Halesowen Athletics Club group on Strava, 25 runners covered between them a distance of 330 kilometres (205 miles), averaging 13.2 kilometres per runner!

And eskimo-in-chief was Glenn Lacey, who covered an incredible 29 kilometres entirely around his beloved Arrow Valley Park route.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

A new WhatsApp group "HACCentral" has been set up as a one-stop club noticeboard for ALL club members covering races, results and other essential club information.

But fear not, the existing men's and women's WhatsApp groups do continue to be available for team information as well as the less important stuff that make the groups what they are!! #bantz

And although the current times remain challenging, a new sub-committee has been set up to manage forthcoming virtual events as well as looking a future club events and races when regulations allow.

Whilst no significant changes to COVID restrictions are expected over the next four weeks, any important updates will, as always, be posted on the club Facebook pages, website and from now on, on the new HACCentral WhatsApp group.

Up Owen!

JAMIE SIRCOM

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