

14<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Dear Parents

Rothwell Harriers Juniors has gone through a fantastic period of transition and development over the past 10 years that have seen us develop from a small club of 10 children to a club on the edge of 80 -90 regular child members.

We are glad you have been part of our journey.

We have developed from a predominantly road and cross country club into a club that now caters for all parts of the sport. The coaches at the club love what we do and love seeing the children develop over the years with us. We want to believe that every child who has run with us has gained skills and friends for life from their time with us. Some of our athletes represent the county, some are national finalists, some use the fitness we provide to excel in triathlon and football and rugby, some are mountain running champions and all are proud to be the best they can.

Funding in any club structure is always a contentious issue, and running our club gets increasingly expensive as the years go on. In the 10 years of running the junior section we have only made one significant change to the structure and cost of membership and sub payments despite the increasing background costs and we are very hopeful that the changes we have made are now sustainable at this level for a very long time to come.

Some clubs decide to charge all their membership fees upfront in one large sum at the beginning of the year for England Athletics, Northern Athletics, and club membership as well as the subs for being a club member and training. This in some cases can be £200 upfront. We have strongly gone against that route as we believe it prohibitive to most families. It is also grossly unfair. If you child decides athletics is not for them then our system of 10 monthly payments allows you to leave and stop paying at the point you leave and we can offer the place to a new member.

We have a limited number of spaces at the club. This is self-imposed to ensure that we never have groups that are too large for the number of coaching staff and so your child can get the best attention. Rothwell Harriers has one of the highest ratios of Coaches, Coach assistants, and qualified athletics leaders in the west Yorkshire region. This we feel is important to make your child safe. We are happy to support any parents who want to start this coaching pathway.

The recent introduction of a sprint group lead by Ian is a fantastic development for the club. However, it means that those athletes who mainly sprint are going to be doing mainly track based work. This unfortunately means that these athletes might have slightly higher costs due to the track fees imposed by Leeds and Wakefield Councils on use of their services. We have investigated the cost of hiring venues and including taking this into a single

membership fee but at present the costs the councils want to charge are excessive and would push costs of membership for everyone even those who never go to track to the levels mentioned at other clubs. I have brought this to the attention of England athletics but there seems to be little they can do to support our case for lower costs. In the winter Ian is unable to train anyone who is sprint focused on a Monday at our club track session so these athletes attending on a Wednesday for his excellent tuition will have an extra track cost to pay. If they wish to attend on Monday at Leeds I will be working with Ian to ensure they have an appropriate training regime that complements his work on a Wednesday.

In the interests of clarity, I am writing this letter to help parents understand how we use your fees so you can help us maintain the balance we think we have right for your children.

The juniors accounts and seniors accounts are always presented at the club AGM and you are welcome to attend that. We are lucky to be able to keep ourselves on an even footing each year with some spare for emergencies and to provide treats for the athletes when we can such as trips to international meets in Birmingham and Sheffield.

#### How you fund the club and what we do with it.

Membership fee £23 pro rata depending on joining month to £15

£15 pounds of this this year, and £16 next year goes to England Athletics for athlete registration and Juniors Insurance. £2 goes to Northern Athletics. £1 for an additional insurance policy for all juniors to provide some additional cover if serious injury was to happen at training or on way to events. We are not planning to increase this in the next few years but we are aware that England Athletics are having their funding squeezed by government and will be pushing it up by a pound every year. It will hit £20 soon but where we can we are trying to soften the blow from club funds. The club effectively keeps nothing from membership for other activities

Monthly subs £10 (for 10 months) = £100 per year paid via the auto collect Nochex system

As all the membership fee is used to pay for all the required affiliations we have this is the money we use to pay for the everyday, recurring and constant expenses we have even if nobody turns up for training. This allows us to deliver 3 training sessions for all athletes for most of the year on Monday (John Charles), Wednesday (Outlon / Wakefield sprints), Saturday (Rothwell)

Costs :

We hire the Oulton School facility – The council are very good to us with a good rate at present thanks to Jason but this increases year on year. We believe that this is a great base as we have access to a hall in winter for strength and fitness training, a field in summer to train on and playgrounds and grounds to use when it is dangerous or too dark to go out to the park. It is safe to collect and drop off, but has a cost.

We fund coaching courses – To maintain our numbers we fund parents to become coaches. Our coaches are all volunteers and to be fully accredited and insured to coach costs. We want the best and we have the best. If you are interested, please talk to us. To train someone to a full athletics coach level takes 2 years, 2 sets of courses, 6 days of classroom teaching, 6 months of assessed work and in field experience and £600. Coaches fund additional development themselves out of their own pockets.

We fund free sports events – Like the yearly Rothwell Harriers games at the track just for the club to get together September 29<sup>th</sup> this year (see Paul Howards post to enter). The food at the joint seniors and juniors relay events.

We subsidise kit – Unlike other sports athletics clubs are not permitted to have any form of sponsorship on their kit. This makes being part of the gang expensive if you want kit that matches your friends so we subsidise the costs of the kit that we purchase as much as we can to make sure the prices are as low as possible so all can have the same kit.

We purchase and replace training equipment at Oulton.

We pay for Insurance – like any insurance it gets more expensive.

We fund the great trips and provide coaches to take a team to significant events if we get enough athletes going such as the National Cross Country in Nottingham. We take the kids to inspirational events such as the indoor championships in Sheffield and Birmingham.

We subsidise costs at awards events to help as many families attend as possible.

In addition to all this we are, as a club, going to be required to have some qualified officials if we want to still be permitted to enter events such as the West Yorkshires, Northerns, Nationals and York League. Previously we have been permitted to just have parent volunteers present. To qualify requires a day's course which costs as well as the time needed from volunteers and travel costs which we would want to pay for that as well.

Therefore, we ask that all members pay the monthly subs while training and remaining an active part of the club even if you don't attend a Wednesday session at Oulton regularly.

We welcome any parents who want to get involved and help. Especially if there is anyone who would be happy to be an admin secretary on junior committee to help with admin and bring additional skills to our mix as coaches and free us more time to plan sessions.

We try to keep the costs as low as we can and I hope that this now explains a bit better what we use the funds we have and how you help us be one of the best clubs in the North of England (personal view).

Thank you

Dr Marc Randall  
Lead Coach Rothwell Harriers Juniors