



## DOUBLE LEAGUE SUCCESS FOR WORCESTER ATHLETES

On a breezy cool summer evening at their Nunnery Wood home track, Worcester Men's & Women's Veteran track & field athletics teams were both crowned League Champions in the Midlands League Southern Division for a fourth successive year. During 2016, the ladies team showed their complete dominance with four excellent wins from the four league meetings. For the Men's team it has been the usual battle with local rivals Bromsgrove & Redditch Athletic Club throughout the season with the final league meeting deciding the outcome.

The ladies team remains undefeated this season and once again was convincing winners with 142 points to Stratford-upon-Avon's 121 and Bromsgrove & Redditch's 120 to add to their already large cumulative 53 points advantage. Worcester Ladies easily retained their title from runners-up Bromsgrove & Redditch & with Stratford-upon-Avon third. Over the last few seasons the ladies team has grown in both strength and depth and can now compete with the best Veteran Ladies teams in the UK.

The men's team with already two league meeting wins and a second place and having to contend with unavailability to some of their star athletes produced a great all-round team performance to beat off challenges from local rivals Stratford-upon-Avon AC & Bromsgrove & Redditch. Going into the last meeting Worcester & B&R were both tied on 386 match points but succeeded in bringing home a convincing victory with 140 points to 116 from Stratford & 115 from B&R. Although not at full strength they still managed to retain the league title, winning for an impressive twenty-sixth occasion in the last twenty-seven years.

The eight team line up contesting the league with Worcester comprised Bromsgrove & Redditch A C, Stratford-on-Avon A C, Halesowen A C, Dudley & Stourbridge, Droitwich, Kidderminster & Stourport, Sparkhill Harriers & Midland Masters.



Ros Townsend-Hope (left) at the start of the W60 100m

In the ladies 200m sprints Iris Holder (W70) Ros Townsend - Hope (W60) Mel Garland (W50) Cat Goulder-Davies (W40) and Victoria Watkins (W35) all delivered excellent times and set the tone for the evening with 38 points from a maximum 40.

In the 800m Townsend-Hope was running again, but this time in the W40 age category, plus (at W35) Rebecca Freeman and (at W60) Liz Bowers. They each returned top three finishes, whilst



Liz Bowers (and friends!) at the start of the W60 800m

the 3000m runners Freeman (W35) Amanda Steer (W40) and Rachel Ward (W50) went even better, as they all finished in the top two in their age categories. The 2K race walkers Liz Bowers (W50) and Wendy Bennett (W35) also achieved good finishes securing excellent points for the team.



Becky Freeman, pounding out the distance for some excellent team points

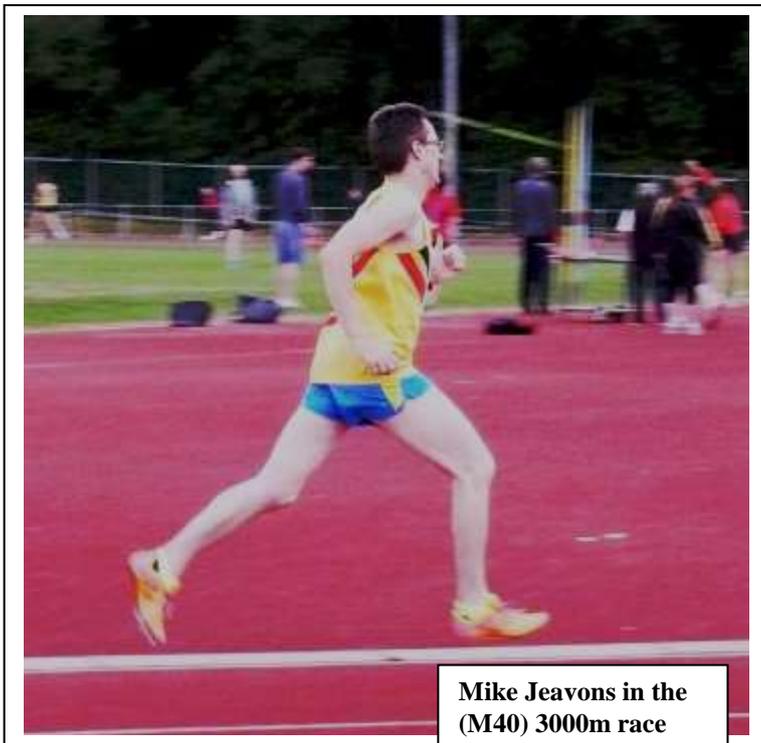
Meanwhile in the field events, Marion Loveridge (W50) obtained second place and seven points in the Discus, then placed third in the W40 Javelin. Jan Timberlake was second in the W35 Long Jump, Pam Price second in the W60 Shot Putt and Mel Garland second in the W40 Triple Jump. Iris Holder with a fine victory for maximum points (W60) Triple Jump rounded off the field events

The final event on the track, in the final league match of the season was the ladies 4 x 100m relay, where Townsend-Hope joined Goulder-Davies, Watkins and Garland believing that a top-three finish would secure a match victory. Garland got the quartet off to a flying start before handing the baton to Townsend-Hope to run the back straight. Watkins was next around the top bend and she passed both the baton and a strong second place to Goulder-Davies.

Cheered on by team members and supporters alike, Goulder-Davies ensured Worcester Veteran Ladies held onto second and a time of 61.3ses, as well as winning the match itself - and with it the league title.

It was a fantastic team effort across the whole season culminating in this victory where Worcester Ladies team had seven winners and nine second placed athletes. In the twenty-one events contested Worcester Men's team scored consistently throughout the evening with ten individual winners, three runners-up and three third places to retain their league title just ahead of local rivals Bromsgrove and Redditch.

British 400m Champion Laurence Oldfield cruised to victory in M70 200m getting the team off to a flying start shortly followed by sprint star Steve Buttler comfortably winning M40 200m and also leading the team off in the victorious 4 x 100m relay.



Mike Jeavons in the (M40) 3000m race

In the distance events both Darren Salisbury M50 & Mike Jeavons M40 outclassed the opposition in winning their respective 3000m races.

Worcester's track star Dave Hall had a busy night taking second place in both M35 800m & 3000m followed up with a leg in the victorious relay team.

Derek Jackson set yet another club record taking second place in M60 800m to earn a valuable 7 team points.

The team got another flying start in the first field event, the Pole Vault, with all-rounder Pete Stewart M40 & Team Manager Dave Hope M60 getting maximum points in winning their respective age groups.



Pete Stewart shows how to make good use of a bendy stick, in clearing a height of 2.50mt!

Star performance of the meeting was from British Shot & Discus Champion Mike Small who was once again in impressive form gaining maximum 24 points in winning the M60 Hammer, M50 Javelin & M40 Shot.

In the final event of the evening Graham Davison & Henry Hopkins teamed up with Steve Buttler & Dave Hall to successfully get the baton around the track to win the 4 x 100m relay from a fast finishing B&R team.

Other notable performances were produced by Alec Taylor M35 & Roger King M60 both placing third in the long jumps, Nick Hitchings third in M40 800m, Les Scrivens fourth in 2Km Walk, Henry Hopkins & Richard Perkins both finished fifth in M55 & M60 200m respectively all securing valuable team points.

Martyn Cole guesting in the 3000m knocked a few seconds of his own club record setting a new mark for the M55 age group.

The season concludes with the Regional Cup Final on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September at Nuneaton with Worcester defending the Men's title and the Gold cup for the combined team won at Nunnery Wood Sports Centre last year when both teams take on the Midlands best.



**Part of the successful Worcester AC "Veterans" team that clinched the Midland League (South) title for the fourth successive year**