

2013 British Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 24

No Olympic Legacy for track and field following mass exodus in 2013

Background. The legacy target for the 2012 London Olympics was 'to inspire a whole generation'. ABAC has sponsored an in-depth statistical analysis to determine the dropout rate from 2012 to 2013. The result has shown that there has been a massive dropout of the 2012 athletes.

The analysis. The analysis used data from the independent athletics web site "Tops in Athletics". In 2012 this site recorded 32,968 athletes who competed in a sanctioned track and field meeting. The same site then checked which of the 2012 athletes recorded a performance in 2013.

The analysis showed that of the 32,968 athletes competing in 2012 only 19,976 competed in 2013.

This represents a dropout rate of almost 40% in the post Olympic year.

The analysis also broke the figures down by gender and age group. It showed that:-

The total dropout rate for men was 41.5% and for women 36.5%.

The demography analysis combined both male and female athletes. The age breakdown looked at six groups and produced the following dropout rates compared to 2012.

Senior 36%, U20 38%, U17 43%, U15 39%, U13 40%, Veteran 36%

Comments and Conclusions. If all athletes who competed in track and field in 2012 were included the drop out rates would be even worse. The athletes who are missing from the "Tops in Athletics" site in 2012 are those performing at the lowest levels including many U13s. It is known from previous analysis that the lower the performance level of an athlete the more likely they are to drop out.

The sports NGB, British Athletics, funds the Power of 10 (P10) website which records athletes whose performances go right down to rock bottom levels. P10 has about 20 percent more performances recorded on their site (Low level additions). ***It would help this debate if British Athletics commissioned a similar study using P 10 data and added this extra 20% to the ABAC findings. The information is there. They just need to do it. And lastly it would also be helpful if Sport England published their target growth figures for all of the sport.***