

## 2014 British Athletics Facts

### ABAC Fact File 25     The cost of changing implement weights in 2014

**1. Background.** Historically the weights of throwing implements used around the world were based on standards established by the AAA's in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In January 2012 the IAAF changed the weights for Under 18 women. The UK, with the exception of Scotland, do not currently have Under 18 age competitions. Scotland will stop having Under 18 competitions from 1 April 2014.

In December 2013 UKA (British Athletics) announced that the weights of Under 17 and Under 15 women's throwing instruments would be brought into line with IAAF U18 regulations. To further confuse the situation UKA announced that it would not send a team to the 2014 Youth Olympics.

There is now a requirement to re-stock with new implements and this will be costly. The question is how many people will benefit and what will be the cost? We asked Rob Whittingham.

**2. New standards.** UKA has decided that from April 1 2014, the lighter IAAF U18 women's implement weights will be compulsory for all Under 17 and U15 competitions.

Thus U17 women will move from 4kg to 3kg in the shot, 4kg to 3kg in the hammer and 600gm to 500gm in the javelin.

The U15 women will move from 3.25kg to 3 kg in the shot and 600gram to 500gram in the javelin.

**3. Competition implications.** From 1 April 2014 the UK will have no regular U18 competitions. The only competitions where this is relevant are the World Youth Championships and the Youth Olympics. In the past a very small number of special competitions with U18 specifications were held to select athletes for these championships. **In 2013 only 2 athletes selected would have been affected by these weight specifications.** It should also be noted that the women U18 hurdles specifications have not been changed (a no cost option) and so special competitions will still be needed for those wishing to achieve registered performances.

**4. What numbers and cost?** An analysis of numbers likely to be affected has been based on UKA Power of 10 rankings for 2013. These are:-

**Shot** - (now to be 3kg), There were around 1100 U17 and 2400 U15 female athletes who will now need to use the new shot in 2014.

**Hammer** - The U17 hammer throwers will use the current U15 hammer.

**Javelin** - (now to be 500gm). There were around 1000 U17 and 1600 U15 female athletes who will need to use the new javelin in 2014.

**5. Equipment required.** The required new implements are currently used by veteran female athlete age groups. The 3kg shot was used in 2013 by 176 veterans compared to the 3500 U17 & U15 athletes who will need it this year.

The 500gm javelin was used in 2013 by 55 female veterans compared to the 2600 U17 & U15 athletes who will need it this year.

So there will be a big shortfall in numbers of implements needed in future. All 200+ stadia in the UK will need to obtain around 6 new shots and 6 new javelins in order to host matches for the young female athletes. The cost will exceed £100,000. In addition individuals, clubs and coaches will require implements for training purposes.

**6. Concluding remarks.** Up till now the performances of young British Athletes have not been included in the IAAF Under 18 women's throwing rankings because we have used different implement weights. A **very small** number of extra athletes may now appear in these rankings. There are requirements that young throwers must use IAAF approved weight implements to record performances as qualification for World Youth Championships and Olympic Youth Games.

So the answer to the questions ABAC posed to Rob Whittingham is:

***Two top young female athletes may benefit from the new changes at a cost of more than £100,000 to the sport.***

Once again clubs have not been consulted. If they had they would have pointed out that this cannot be regarded as value for money.