

2013 Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 23

Podium Funded Athletes' performances at the 2013 World Championships.

Introduction. In Fact File 15 ABAC looked at the performances of podium funded athletes at the 2012 London Olympics. It was noted that of the 46 individuals on Band A and B funding in 2012 only 28 (61%) made it to the Games. Of these just 9 athletes (21%) made it to the top 8 in individual events and of these 5 (10%) reached the podium. In this fact File we look at the performances from the 2013 Moscow World championships.

2013 World Championships. In 2013 the number of athletes on individual event podium funding had reduced to 32. Of these just 16 (50%) made it to Moscow of which 11 (34%) made the top 8 in individual events. 3 athletes (10%) reached the podium in 4 individual events. 2 of the medal winners (Farah and Porter) live (and are coached) in the USA leaving just Christine Ohuruogu as the sole UK based medal winner. The achievements of the 16 podium funded representatives are as follows (alphabetical order).

Hannah England (4th), Mo Farah (1st, 1st), Adam Gemili (5th), Robbie Grabarz (8th), Dai Greene (5th semi), Sophie Hitchon (19th in qual), Katarina Johnson-Thompson (5th), Steve Lewis (nh in qual), Brett Morse (23th in qual), Christine Ohuruogu (1st), Andrew Osagie (5th), Tiffany Porter (3rd), Shara Proctor (6th), Greg Rutherford (8th), Will Sharman (5th), Laura Weightman (11th Ht).

Team Demography. We note that a number of younger non funded athletes were also part of the Moscow team. However the ages of the funded athletes are of concern as several of them will be well above medaling age by the time the Rio 2016 Olympics come round. Here are the ages of the 32 athletes currently on podium funding.

Yamile Aldama (41), Julia Bleasdale (32), Holly Bleasdale (22), Lawrence Clarke (23), Lisa Dobriskey (30), Hannah England (26), Jessica Ennis-Hill (27), Mo Farah (30), Adam Gemili (20), Robbie Grabarz (26), Dai Greene (27), Sophie Hitchon (22), Phillips Idowu (35), Emma Jackson (25), Katarina Johnson-Thompson (20), Steven Lewis (27), Jenny Meadows (32), Brett Morse (24), Christine Onuruogu (29), Lawrence Okoye (22), Andrew Osagie (25), Jo Pavey (40), Tiffany Porter (26), Andrew Pozzi (21), Shara Proctor (25), Greg Rutherford (27), Goldie Sayers (31), Will Sharman (29), Chris Tomlinson (32), Andy Turner (33), Laura Weightman (22), Nathan Woodward (24)

The average age of the 2013 podium funded athletes is 27.3 years. Should these same athletes remain on podium funding until the 2016 Rio Olympics by then their average age will be 30.3 years, 2 will be in their 40's and 13 will be in their 30's. Although it is possible for the very top athletes in the world to win medals in their 30's it is very rare indeed for athletes in their 40's to succeed. This year only Mo Farah of the current over 30's went to Moscow.

To put this in perspective we analysed the demography of the 2013 Moscow medalists. The average ages for medalists in all events were:-

Men:	Gold	26.0 years	Silver	25.7 years	Bronze	26.2 years
Women	Gold	27.5 years	Silver	27.0 years	Bronze	26.8 years

The spread of ages for medalists in the various disciplines was also note and are as follows :-

Track:	Men:	Gold	19 – 31 years	Silver	19 – 33 years	Bronze	21 – 31 years
	Women	Gold	22 - 34 years	Silver	19 - 37 years	Bronze	22 - 34 years

Field:	Men:	Gold	22 – 30 years	Silver	20 – 31 years	Bronze	22 – 36 years
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Women: Gold 23 – 32years Silver 23 – 34 years Bronze 23 – 33 years

Concluding comments. The number of GB athletes podium funded for individual events dropped from 46 in 2012 to 32 in 2013. Of these 28 (61%) made the 2012 Olympics but only 16 (50%) made it to the 2013 World Championships. The ratio of athletes actually achieving a podium finish remained constant from 2012 (5 athletes) to 2013(3 athletes) at 10%. The positive news is that whereas only 9 athletes reached a final in 2012, 11 achieved that target in 2013.

Looking at the age distribution of athletes winning medals in a major Championships the average age for men medaling is 26.0 years and for women 27.1 years. From this statistic it is clear that by the 2016 Rio Olympics practically all of the presently funded athletes will have little chance of medaling let alone reaching a final. The new funding list will be produced in a few weeks time (Oct 2013?) and all the indications are that many younger athletes, who are knocking on the door, will be included at the expense of some of the current ageing team members.

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