

2015 Athletic Facts

Fact File 33

An analysis of male thrower numbers in 2015

Background. The two male throwers at the 2015 World Championships in Beijing illustrates the very poor state of throwing events in the UK at the moment. It is clear from reports coming from this year's track and field Leagues that numbers have slumped for the Javelin in particular. ABAC decided to investigate.

The increasingly popular *topsinathletics* website has a new feature which enables the Rankings of any event at any time in the year to be compared to the equivalent data in any proceeding year where comparable records have been collected. (i.e..back to 2010).. We found that by mid August 2015, 504 men had thrown the javelin over 37.50 metres. At the same time in 2014 the number of men who had achieved this distance was 599. ***This represents a drop off of 16% in one year.***

Alarmed at this we asked Rob Whittingham to carry out a more detailed study for the javelin and to carry out a quick analysis of the other throwing events. Here is what he found.

Number of male throwers. The figures below give the numbers of men who achieved a certain standard. These figures are for mid Aug 2015, mid Aug 2014, the end of 2014 (To check how many more performances may be coming this year), and for the end of 2010. There were no athletes who achieved further than 80 m in the javelin in either 2014 or 2015. **There were 2 athletes who threw more than 80m in 2010.**

Javelin

	Mid Aug 2015	Mid Aug 2014	End 2014	End 2010
Over 70m	6	7	7	12
Over 60m	30	31	32	49
Over 50m	122	128	135	165
Over 45m	229	240	255	318
Over 40m	399	452	474	560
Over 37.50 m	504	599	627	706

It may be deduced from this table that the largest reduction in numbers is at the base of the pyramid. While for the longer distance throwers the drop in numbers is not as large it is club level performers who are reducing rapidly in numbers. Clearly as the better throwers retire there will be a much smaller pool of throwers from which the next generation of good throwers will come.

If 2015 follows the pattern of 2014 there will be about another 30 athletes achieving over 37.50m by the year end. So let's say the end of year figure reaches 534 this represents a reduction of 172 (706 – 534) from 2010. ***That is a drop off of 24% since 2010.***

Shot , discus and hammer.

The number of shot putters has fallen 8% from the same period in 2014 and by 21.5% in 2010.

The number of discus throwers has declined 5.5% since the same period in 2014 and 18.5% since 2010.

The number of hammer throwers has declined 1.5% over the last year and 11.5% since 2010

Coaches. ABAC has requested coach numbers from UKA and Sport England but neither Organisation has felt able to release data on coach numbers in general and throws coaches in particular.

Summary. All throwing events have shown a decline in numbers over the last year. There is evidence that this decline has been going on since 2010 and has accelerated over the last year with the exception of the hammer.

Since 2010 participant numbers in each of the disciplines have fallen sharply. Javelin numbers have declined by 24%, shot declined by 21.5%, discus declined by 18.5%, and hammer declined by 11.5%.

End