

2016 Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 45

The numbers of athletes in male technical events decline just 5 years after coaching structure is re-vamped.

Background. In 2010 UKA completely changed the coaching structure for athletics. Gone was specialisation and in its place a system was introduced which required all new coaches to be proficient in all events prior to specialisation. At the time many criticised this approach claiming that individuals interested in a narrow specialisation would not embark on a more general pathway. It was predicted that coach numbers would fall.

Now after 5 years ABAC asked Rob Whittingham to quantify the levels of participation in all technical events, by age and on a year by year basis. He looked at the jumps, throws and track hurdles. What he found was startling.

In 2015, in every age group and in every event, numbers have fallen since 2010

The decline.

The following table shows the number of athletes making the rankings on Power of 10 website over the last 5 years.

	Performance	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
MHJ							
U15	1.50	556	516	498	577	571	546
U17	1.65	422	387	340	357	373	323
U20	1.70	219	224	197	206	208	209
All	1.73	677	639	588	587	582	573
<i>Totals</i>		1874	1766	1623	1727	1734	1651
MPV							
U15	2.20	111	122	97	96	92	105
U17	2.65	116	120	124	93	113	102
U20	2.80	123	118	111	111	125	119
All	3.00	447	448	463	434	414	406
<i>Totals</i>		797	808	795	734	744	732
MLJ							
U15	4.80	726	716	695	747	699	710
U17	5.40	548	545	505	535	538	483
U20	5.70	315	294	271	279	288	277
All	5.80	916	854	805	817	842	816
<i>Totals</i>		2505	2409	2276	2378	2367	2286
MTJ							
U15	10.00	423	407	356	406	407	326
U17	11.00	508	476	483	427	407	363

U20	11.50	246	226	200	203	194	202
All	11.80	718	709	632	605	581	583
<i>Totals</i>		1895	1818	1671	1641	1589	1474

MSP

U15	9.50	556	495	482	489	463	456
U17	10.00	440	459	414	372	364	349
U20	10.00	234	212	180	187	186	179
All	10.00	568	558	538	467	479	451
<i>Totals</i>		1798	1724	1614	1515	1492	1435

MDT

U15	23.00	457	445	392	454	400	399
U17	25.00	435	435	410	395	368	371
U20	25.00	225	214	201	227	215	189
All	28.00	609	582	581	538	532	496
<i>Totals</i>		1726	1676	1584	1614	1515	1455

MHT

U15	23.00	194	173	167	172	159	169
U17	24.00	194	189	182	166	156	160
U20	25.00	105	119	98	110	104	87
All	26.00	473	457	436	420	413	407
<i>Totals</i>		966	938	883	868	832	823

MJT

U15	30.00	423	375	351	374	335	336
U17	35.00	370	358	321	297	274	290
U20	35.00	257	235	220	207	225	199
All	37.00	731	698	672	616	651	571
<i>Totals</i>		1781	1666	1564	1494	1485	1396

MSprintH

U15 (80)	14.0	418	412	386	409	460	375
U17 (100)	16.0	232	245	221	221	214	229
U20 (110)	18.5	143	127	109	128	137	127
All (110)	18.0	265	265	260	245	234	225
<i>Totals</i>		1058	1049	976	1003	1045	956

M400H

U17	65.0	165	173	158	116	123	107
U20	64.0	148	156	115	131	116	109
All	63.0	417	431	391	362	324	294
<i>Totals</i>		730	760	664	609	563	510

MSteeplechase

U17 (1.5k)	5:10.0	116	121	103	76	101	91
U20 (2k)	7:30.0	155	136	119	131	138	110
All (3k)	11:00.0	359	339	294	271	282	266

<i>Totals</i>	630	596	516	478	521	467
MMultievent						
U15 (Pen) 1600	233	189	191	200	209	184
U17 (Oct) 3350	87	86	69	71	70	70
U20 (Dec) 3000	59	53	46	56	58	51
All (Dec) 3000	84	67	61	80	75	71
<i>Totals</i>	463	395	367	407	412	376
Grand Totals	16223	15605	14533	14468	14299	13561

In the last 5 years the number of male athletes in technical events has fallen 16.41%.

And even more startling --In every event, and in every age group the number of athletes achieving the ranking performance is lower in 2015 than in 2010.

The *Grand Totals* record a downward trend over the last years of 16.41%, with the largest drop in 2015.

N.B. It is noted that many athletes do several events so that the grand totals above exceed the actual number of competing male athletes in technical events

Comment. The most probable explanation for the decline in the number of male technical event athletes is the lack of technical coaches. A decline in specialist coaches has been reported from grass roots and the cause can be attributed directly to the new UKA sponsored coaching programme introduced in 2010.

Since 2011 ABAC has tried to obtain coach numbers from England Athletics but they have refused to quantify the number of licensed coaches on countless occasions.

Again over the years ABAC has asked Sport England to obtain coach numbers and has received some information which provided over-inflated numbers. ABAC claim that despite giving England Athletics £millions for coaching projects, Sport England does not have accurate numbers for practicing licensed club coaches.

In the absence of accurate information ABAC suggests that Sport England must know that coach numbers are down and £millions have been wasted.

The facts could not be clearer – a government investigation is required into the whole question of athlete coach numbers and the role of Sport England in the business of providing grant aid without proper checks and balances.

End. March 2 2016