

2016 British Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 51

Senior athletes in a minority in the Southern Athletics League (SAL)

Background. In our continuing drive to quantify the changing pattern of participation by age groups we asked Rob Whittingham to analysis the results of this year's first SAL held on April 16th 2016.

The SAL is the one league which is expanding as the format of joint men's and women's teams proves popular with track and field clubs. While the SAL has seen some advances at the top end, it is also a microcosm of the current problems with track and field athletics today.

Ages of Competitors. This analysis provides a breakdown of the ages of the competitors in all 6 divisions and looks at the lower divisions to access the support for lower level entry clubs. Here is how the age groups stacked up.

For all 6 divisions

	Men	Women
U17	277 (18.1%)	374 (31.3%)
U20	348 (22.8%)	309 (25.9%)
Senior	563 (36.8%)	317 (26.6%)
Veteran	341 (22.3%)	194 (16.2%)

The lower divisions. We found that the percentage of junior and veteran athletes is greatest in the lower division teams. The most remarkable figures come from Division 3 SW

	Men	Women
U17	55 (24.0%)	83 (40.1%)
U20	66 (28.8%)	61 (29.5%)
Senior	65 (28.4%)	39 (18.8%)
Veteran	43 (18.8%)	24 (11.6%)

N.B. In all divisions the largest female demographic group is U17 women. 40% of team members competing in Div 3 SW comprised of people eligible for the YDL. We note that at one stage UKA considered banning U17 from senior leagues. Should this happen none of the SL teams would be viable.

Performance levels. We also note that the high numbers of non senior athletes are having a detrimental effect on performance standards. [Topsinathletics.info](http://www.topsinathletics.info) is currently showing complete rankings for all standard events from week 1 of the SAL.

http://www.topsinathletics.info/default.asp?page=league_page&id=52

Median is the performance half way down the rankings, the power of 10 standard is shown together the number and percentage making this level.

Men					
Event	No	Median	Po10 Std	No to Std	%
100	308	12.0	11.5	69	22.40%
200	276	24.3	23.4	70	25.36%
400	199	55.6	53.0	44	22.11%
800	215	2:12.2	2:04.0	47	21.86%
1500	211	4:38.2	4:20.0	36	17.06%
5000	179	17:33.1	16:45.0	56	31.28%
110H	103	20.30	18.0	29	28.16%
400H	140	68.95	63.0	40	28.57%
HJ	159	1.60	1.73	37	23.27%
PV	130	2.50	3.00	41	31.54%
LJ	198	5.46	5.80	65	32.83%
TJ	165	11.06	11.80	48	29.09%
SP	204	9.22	10.00	75	36.76%
DT	202	25.12	28.00	74	36.63%
HT	180	23.40	26.00	75	41.67%
JT	190	32.42	37.00	60	31.58%
Totals	3059			866	28.31%

Women					
Event	No	Median	Po10 Std	No to Std	%
100	248	13.7	13.2	77	31.05%
200	231	28.1	27.0	61	26.41%
400	175	65.02	64.0	71	40.57%
800	158	2:35.0	2:27.0	40	25.32%
1500	165	5:28.5	5:05.0	32	19.39%
3000	131	11:48.84	11:30.0	45	34.35%
110H	95	18.61	18.0	41	43.16%
400H	108	76.95	74.0	43	39.81%
HJ	161	1.40	1.50	43	26.71%
PV	71	2.10	2.30	29	40.85%
LJ	177	4.44	4.75	58	32.77%
TJ	147	9.05	9.50	57	38.78%
SP	200	7.64	8.30	76	38.00%
DT	184	19.90	25.00	50	27.17%
HT	164	23.10	25.00	75	45.73%
JT	188	20.50	25.00	54	28.72%
	2603			852	32.73%

It is clear that for a relatively new league, that is second only to the BAL/UKWL in hierarchy , there are a very low percentage of athletes making the Power of 10 standards. The tops website also shows the very low levels at the bottom of the Southern League rankings.

Once again participation and performance levels continue to fall.

End.

