

2016 Athletic Facts

Fact File 56

Participation trends for County Championships

Background. ABAC has received a copy of a recent England Athletics document which claims that participation at county championships is increasing. Suspecting that the claimed improvements may be due to an increase in low level performers ABAC asked Rob Whittingham to look at the 39 English counties for the last 6 years using what might be regarded as reasonable club level performances as the cut off.

Ground Rules. This study was limited to an analysis of Senior and Under 20 athletes, both men and women, who achieved the tops ranking standards from 2011 to 2016. (The standards used are shown in a Table 2 at the end of the Fact File and are similar to Power of 10 standards). It was decided to use standards rather than just competitor numbers since these are Championships and should be judged by performance levels.

Results Summary. The total number of events at each County Championship for the senior, U20, men and women is 68 (The events are detailed in Table 2 at the end of this Fact File.) Multiply the 68 by the 39 counties and we have a total of **2652** county events open for competition in the country. Surprisingly the study showed that there was fewer than one competitor per event on average who achieved a reasonable club level standard of performance. The total figures are listed in Table 1.

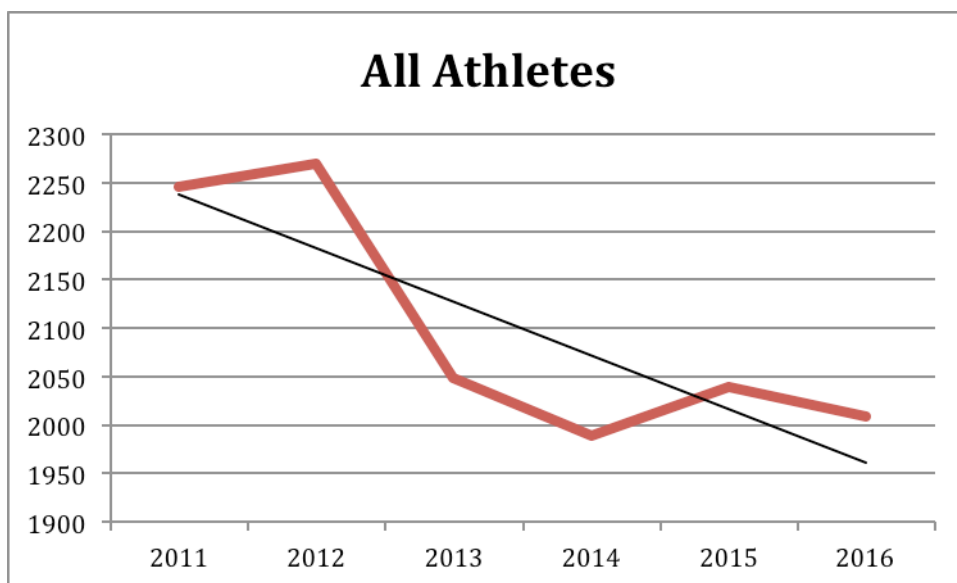
Table 1. Total number of athletes achieving standards for 39 Counties.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total athletes</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Total athletes</u>
2011	2245	2012	2269
2013	2048	2014	1989
2015	2039	2016	2008

The individual county numbers can be found at

<http://www.topsinathletics.info/default.asp?page=adhoc&filename=LatestStats.html>

Showing the numbers graphically with a trend line



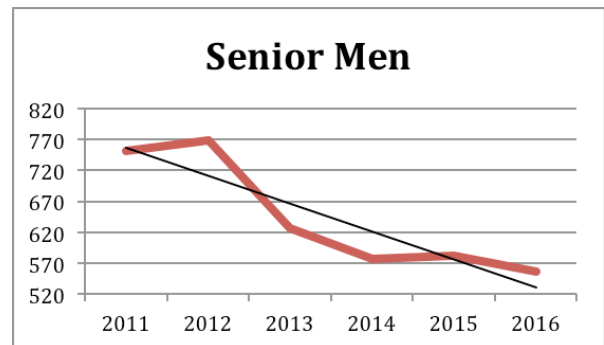
The trend line shows a decrease of 12.5% over the 5 years.

The breakdown by gender and age shows very different trends

Senior Men

2011	751
2012	768
2013	626
2014	577
2015	582
2016	555

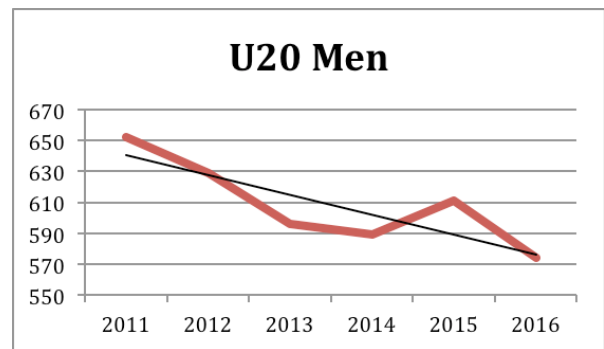
The trend is down 30%



Under 20 Men

2011	652
2012	629
2013	596
2014	589
2015	611
2016	574

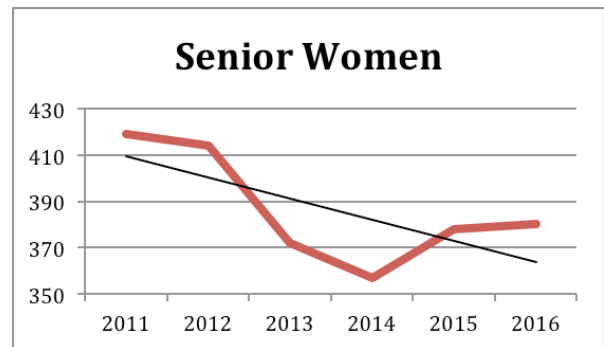
The trend is down 10%



Senior Women

2011	419
2012	414
2013	372
2014	357
2015	378
2016	380

The trend is down 11%



Under 20 Women

2011	423
2012	458
2013	454
2014	466
2015	468
2016	499

The trend is up 14%

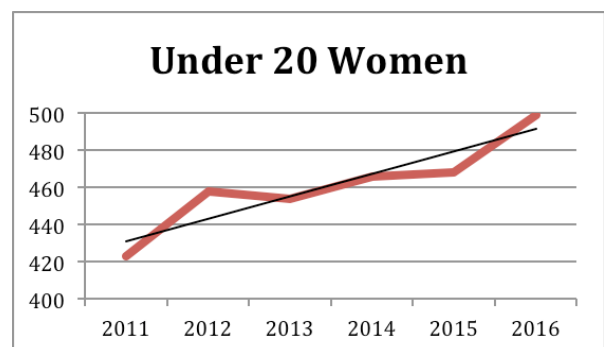


Table 2. The standards used in this study with the total number of athletes achieving each standard in England during 2016

	<u>Men</u>	<u>U20 Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>U20 Women</u>
100	11.3 (824)	11.5 (625)	12.85 (657)	13.15 (918)
200	23.05 (748)	23.45 (566)	26.45 (658)	26.95 (769)
400	52.0 (679)	53.0 (482)	62.0 (543)	62.5 (335)
800	2:00.0 (740)	2:03.0 (533)	2:21.5 (620)	2:27.0 (831)
1500	4:08.0 (668)	4:18.0 (535)	4:42.5 (541)	5:05.0 (731)
3000	9:07.0 (636)	9:35.0 (422)	10:50.0 (495)	11:40.0 (475)
5000	16:00.0 (493)	17:00.0 (113)	19:30.0 (257)	20:00.0 (24)
1.5kSt				6:30.0 (208)
2kSt		7:25.0 (137)	8:40.0 (145)	8:40.0 (65)
3kSt	11:00.0 (278)		13:00.0 (32)	
100H			17.0 (255)	17.7 (155)
110H	17.0 (174)	18.0 (104)		
400H	62.0 (246)	64.0 (63.96)	71.0 (210)	73.0 (136)
HJ	1.75 (529)	1.70 (484)	1.51 (495)	1.49 (567)
PV	3.25 (297)	3.00 (194)	2.50 (235)	2.30 (228)
LJ	5.85 (769)	5.70 (607)	4.92 (626)	4.75 (730)
TJ	11.95 (491)	11.70 (401)	9.90 (473)	9.80 (368)
SP	9.50 (516)	9.50 (216)	8.40 (511)	8.00 (286)
DT	28.00 (483)	26.00 (183)	26.50 (385)	24.00 (371)
HT	28.00 (328)	28.00 (89)	28.00 (311)	25.00 (179)
JT	37.00 (567)	35.00 (232)	26.00 (369)	26.00 (203)

Comments. It is incredible that on average fewer than one person per event achieves a standard level performance across all counties and all events. In the majority of counties competition is limited to very low level performers. In just a handful of counties are there enough “real” athletes to make competition interesting and meaningful.

The individual county numbers can be found at

<http://www.topsinathletics.info/default.asp?page=adhoc&filename=LatestStats.html>

End. Nov 14 2016