

Queenborough Little Athletics Centre Report Season 2009/2010

Falling registrations were a concern for the Queenborough Centre with a total of 119 athletes registering. The inclement weather delayed the start to the season and this did impact with a number of former athletes and intending athletes deciding against registering.

Average attendance for the season was 75 athletes. Despite registrations being down, our attendance at meets over the summer holiday period did not fall away to the extent they have done in previous years. While numbers were slightly lower at some of these meets they remained at a sufficient level to successfully run the program without combining age-groups.

The imbalance in numbers across age-groups continues to provide some challenges in running some field events, particularly in the older age-groups. Additional parents have been trained in operating the starting and timing equipment and in recording. A number of people took on new roles and this did free up some people previously performing these roles to take on greater responsibility for coaching. It has also ensured the ongoing success of the Centre as some of our more experienced committee members approach the time that their children will leave Little Athletics. Regular age-group coordinators have helped the program run smoothly throughout the season.

The season was successful in terms of the individual performances of athletes. By the end of the season 19 club records had been broken and many of these were broken on more than one occasion during the season. A total of 87 athletes received awards on PB Day and 54 athletes received the welcome back badge. It is a little disappointing that only 37 athletes received the 85% attendance award and this is something we could aim to improve next season.

The performances and the behaviour of our athletes at State events were once again exemplary. Of particular note was the increased participation and success in the State Relay Championships. Four teams entered six events and brought home six medals. Thanks for this must go to the parents who provided assistance in organising the teams. It was also pleasing to see 8 athletes travelling to Launceston for the Northern All State competition.

Unfortunately numbers were down for the Challenge Day and feedback indicates that this was due to athletes and families having some issues with the structuring of the previous Challenge Day with the long wait times and fouling of younger children in throws events. It is felt by parents that this day should have provided an opportunity for education of athletes in a fun environment with emphasis on showing how to do things correctly before a mistake is made, rather than penalising for incorrect performance without some guidance beforehand. The delayed start to the season also made promoting the day challenging.

Eight Queenborough Athletes entered the Tasmanian Multi Event Championships held at the Domain on Sunday 7 February. Between them they won two gold, one silver and one bronze medal. Congratulations to Lochie Boucher for breaking the State Record in winning his gold medal.

It was pleasing to see most athletes who had achieved state qualifiers choosing to enter the State Individual Championships with 17 athletes making the trip to Launceston. A substantial number of personal bests were achieved with many making finals. The centre won a total of 43 medals at the State Individual Championships and this is an amazing number considering the size of the centre. Congratulations to Ben Robinson for his selection in the State under 13 team and in being awarded the State U13 sportsmanship award.

A number of equipment purchases were made prior to the season. The most significant of these were a new starting pistol and related equipment as well as a new timer. The change away from a timer linked electronically to the starting equipment did provide some challenges but overall the transition was a great success. Most equipment is up to date and preliminary investigations have been made into the development of an all-weather high jump area. This has the support of the Hobart City Council and will be the next major development undertaken by the Centre when sufficient funds allow. Prior to the beginning of next season some minor maintenance of throwing implements is required and we also need to look at the provision of new hurdles for the under 6 and 7 age-groups due to the deterioration of the plastic in the existing hurdles.

Dew continues to be an issue for hurdles events on morning programs and scheduling for next season should ensure that more twilight meets are held, particularly over the holiday period. The possibility of using the northern side of the track for hurdles events for those running 60 metres should also be explored given that this side of the ground tends to remain drier when dew is an issue. The use of both fields has allowed greater flexibility in the placement of high jump events and, apart from weeks where rain was an issue, it was generally easier to go ahead with high jump in weeks where wet conditions were a result of dew.

The newsletter has continued to be a valuable source of information for parents and greater use has been made of distributing this electronically. The website continues to develop both in terms of quality and in the information it provides. Many parents now use this as their first port of call when seeking information and this has reduced the workload created by dealing with messages via phone.

The committee continues to have a committed core and it has been pleasing to see yet again that a number of parents have volunteered to be involved next season. The Centre could not run without the support of these wonderful volunteers. Rather than singling out individuals I would like to thank all involved.

The following quote from a visitor shows that Queenborough continues to provide a centre focussed on the participation and the enjoyment of the whole family.

“Thank you for allowing us to attend last night’s meet, it was the friendliest, best organised club we have attended yet. Not to mention the beautiful grounds!!”

I think that quote sums up what Queenborough continues to be all about.

David Boon
President