

Strathearn Harriers Juniors

AGM 2023 Report

Summary

It's been another brilliant year for the juniors. Membership reached record levels, with good attendance at training throughout the last 12 months and a significant increase in participation in competition.

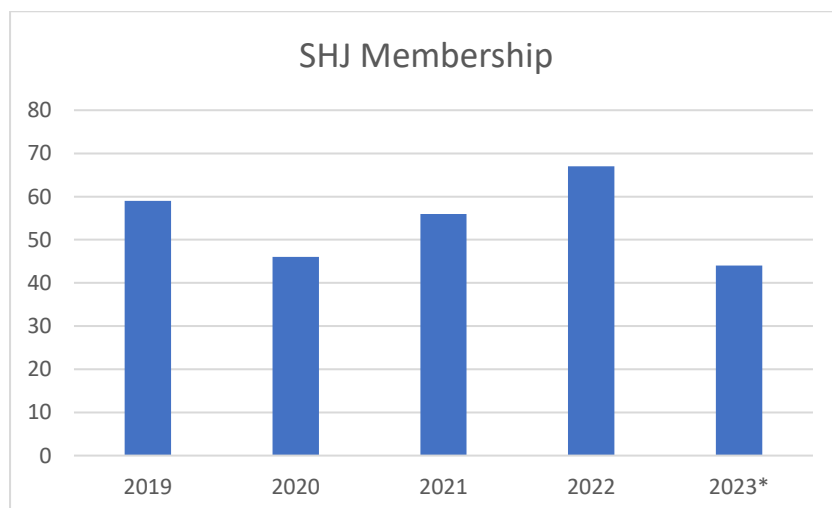
We continue to provide a strongly positive environment which encourages inclusion but also celebrates success, whether absolute (medals, records, top 10s, selection for representative teams) or relative (Personal bests and improvements).

Following the positive endorsement we received at the last AGM, we expanded the range of activities and opportunities including offering sports psychology and physiotherapy sessions from external professionals. These were very positively received and have broadened experience and understanding among those participating.

The group of juniors we have at the moment are amazing. Committed, hard-working, supportive and friendly and polite to each other, coaches and those outwith the club. They are a credit to the club, their families and themselves.

Membership

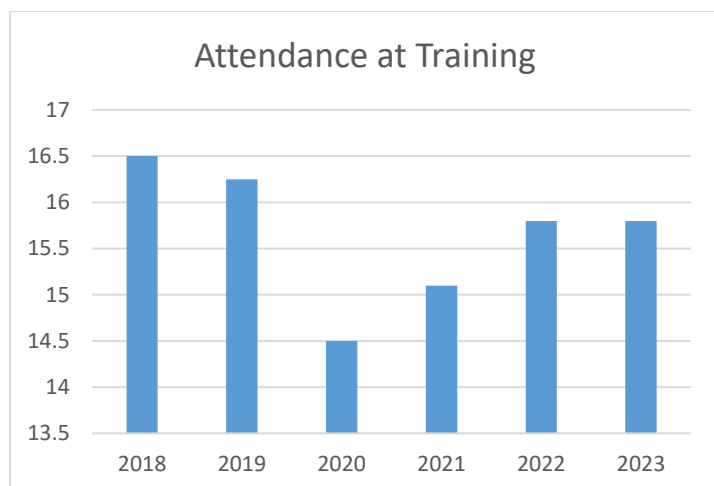
Membership peaked at 67 this year which we believe is the highest level ever (we have records up to 2012 and from 2019 on). There were quite a few non-renewers from 2022-2023 which means we are currently sitting at 44 members in 2023, but, based on last year, we would expect this to increase by 10-15 over the year as happened in 2022.



**2023 – NB in 2022, 12 new members joined between Apr and Sep*

Attendance at Training

We train twice a week and have been keeping records of attendance for many years. The lockdown restrictions disrupted our data for 2020 and 2021 so these numbers are not as complete as the other years. However, it paints a picture of healthy attendance with approx 25-30 athletes attending at least once a week.



Competition attendance

It's been a hugely busy and rewarding year on the competitive side of the club.

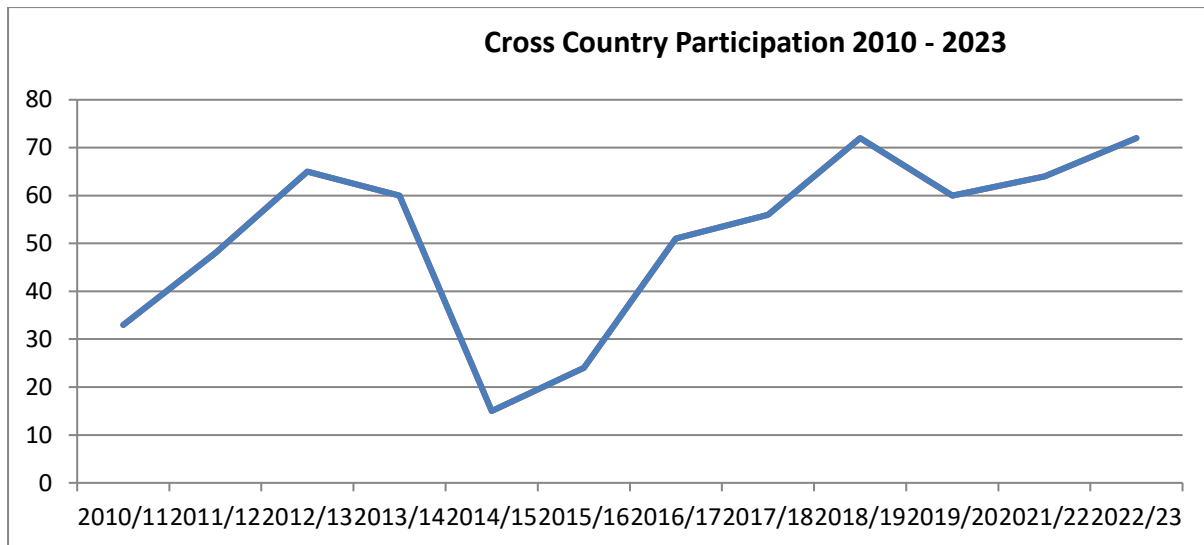
Despite a couple of events happening at awkward times (e.g. half-term breaks etc) and in far flung locations (e.g. Gala and Peebles), we have equalled our highest ever number of performances at cross-country races over this last season. This shows huge commitment from athletes and parents and makes it really rewarding for the coaching team.

We entered the Scottish Athletics Indoor League as a joint team with Perth Strathtay and this proved popular and really useful in giving a first taste of indoor competition for some and useful early season practice for some of our regular competitors. We also took part in the SUPERteams competition with two U12 Boys teams. This was a wonderful occasion with hundreds of youngsters from all over the country getting the chance to take part.

Last year saw a return to some normality for the Outdoor track and field and hill running season. Our athletes responded with good levels of participation and performance at Open Graded, Sprint Galas and Championship events as well as the junior hill running league and championships.

For the winter 2021/22 season (excludes indoor T&F), we have seen a high level of participation. Had it not been for race 1 of the East District Series being in Hawick(!) we would probably have had a record year this year.

Our intra-club events (time trials, track day and intra-club XC) have all been well supported with lots of evidence of improvement and progress both individually and as a club. We have also seen good support from junior Harriers for junior Parkrun in MacRosty park. Perth and elsewhere. The Parkrun is a great way to dip toes into competition and it's proved a good funnel for some younger athletes to join the club.



Performance

It's been a great year for our athletes with some very fine performances across the year. Here are just a few of the highlights

- 7 club age-group records for our club mile time trials
- 5 junior girls running sub 6 mins and 3 boys running sub 5 for the mile time trial
- Scottish indoor record holder at 1500m
- 2 athletes gaining Scotland vests (International Youth Mountain Running Cup, Mini-Marathon)
- Bronze at Interdistrict XC Champs
- Silver Medal at National Cross Country Champs
- Silver at Scottish Schools Outdoor champs
- 3 silver medals at National Indoor champs
- Bronze at Scottish Schools indoor champs
- Bronze at National Road Race Champs
- Gold and silver at East District T&F champs
- Two silver medals at East District Cross-Country Champs
- For the second year running, three athletes selected for East District Cross Country Team

There are so many other fine performances and achievements, but this hopefully gives a sense of what a year we've had.

Coaching Team

We have an excellent group of coaching assistants and helpers with some new faces joining the team which means that we almost always have enough helpers to run the sessions. We have also seen a good increase in the number of parent helpers taking the UKA Coaching Assistant course which is the first step towards the full Coach qualification.

We have two qualified Athletics Coaches (Phil and Andrew) which is sufficient to manage our current activities. However, it would be great to see one or two of our CAs take the next step to give us more resilience, capacity and flexibility in our coaching.

Finally...

This report only scratches the surface of what the juniors have been up to this last year. I have also deliberately steered away from mentioning individuals by name as there are so many that deserve mention and just not enough time or space to ensure everyone gets the specific praise they deserve. Suffice it to say, that our current crop of juniors is the best we have ever had and every single one of you make coaching a genuine pleasure!