

## Report of the Honorary Secretary 2002/2003

Three years on and I am back writing the report of the honorary secretary, a report I should add, that I was not expecting to have to write. The absence of a competent secretary during my first year as President meant that I had to devote a large percentage of my time performing the daily running of the association, a position no President should have to find themselves in. It also gave me nearly complete control of the associations' two most meaningful and influential positions, a situation no democratic association should allow them selves to enter into.

It had been a long hard, but immensely enjoyable weekend in Cork for the 2002 IUAA Track & Field Championships and I remember leaving Cork on Sunday morning asking myself the question, Would CUSAI award the Intervarsity of the year award to the same sport (and event for that matter) two years in a row? Seven months later CUSAI answered that question by awarding Cork Institute of Technology the award. Having been part of the winning team twelve months previously I knew not only how much work and effort was required by a college to win the award but also how rewarding it is to have your efforts acknowledged in this way. The feeling of elation and pride experienced by the athletes and administrative personnel in CIT was truly deserved and justly recognised and rewarded. I would like to take this opportunity to again congratulate CIT on their achievement and to thank them for hosting such an excellent championships.

The Online Entries has now completed two full years under the management of the IUAA. The success of the system has been immense and the resources it has put at the disposal of the IUAA and the host colleges, has proved invaluable. This system, coupled with results software, has significantly advanced the administration of the IUAA and its championships. The days when we used to survive without this technology are now hard to imagine.

At the 2002 AGM, the issue of trophies and the manner in which they are presented, looked after, stored and returned became a talking point again within the IUAA, having not been one for a number of years. The behaviour of a small minority at the intervarsity dinner in CIT 2002 brought the issue to the fore once again. The IUAA trophies are a very important piece of the IUAA and should command respect. If colleges are not prepared to take responsibility for the trophies and the behaviour of their athletes then a major review of the current situation regarding trophies will have to be undertaken. The implications of losing a trophy are something we hopefully won't be faced with, but the events of eighteen months ago were a wakeup call that should never have happened.

After over half a century of involvement in athletics Cyril White has informed me that he will be stepping down from the IUAA at the upcoming AGM. Cyril has the respect of all those who have had the opportunity to work with him over the years and he will be dearly missed. The IUAA is indebted to his contribution over the last fourteen years since it was formed in its current guise and for his many years of service prior to that. The duty of starting races for the IUAA has all too often fallen on his capable shoulders and there is a big void to be filled now that he is retiring from the IUAA. His

workload on intervarsity weekends, in particular at T&F championships, puts the rest of us to shame and will not be quickly forgotten. On behalf of everyone involved in Intersvarsity athletics I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cyril White for all that he has done and to wish him all the best for the future.

The World University Games took place in Daegu, Korea, from 21<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August 2003. Patsy McGonagle was appointed Coach by CUSAI in November 2003. In a break from the norm CUSAI set the standards for Daegu prior to appointing the coach. The IUAA informed CUSAI that it would have preferred the coach to recommend the standards. CUSAI accepted this and agreed that in future years, as in previous years, this would be the procedure followed. Due to the high qualifying standards only a small number of athletes actually attained them prior to the date set for achieving them. However the coach recommended to CUSAI that a number of other athletes be selected based on the consistent progress they had been making all season and their very close proximity to the qualifying times. In total eight athletes travelled, six of them being IUAA athletes. There were a number of performances of note by the Irish athletes but the one that most deserves to be mentioned is the Silver medal won by Paul Hession in the 200m.

In April 2003 CUSAI appointed Mr. Ian O'Neill as coach for the World University Championships in Cross Country, which are being held in Collegno, Italy on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2004. This is Ian's first appointment of this magnitude and the IUAA wishes him all the best and will afford him any necessary support that is within our capabilities to provide. One significant difference about this appointment over previous years is the cooperation between the IUAA and the AAI. Both organisations agreed to submit a joint nomination for the position to CUSAI. It is hoped to continue with this procedure in the coming years in a manner that is of benefit to all.

My three years as secretary from 1997-2000 had been demanding but fulfilling. Rewarding positions are hard to come by and I am disappointed that no one came forward to fill the position from within the fourteen elected representatives. Historically the role had been undefined by the people occupying it. This was something that I went out of my way to change and the position was vacated with a clear, tough but flexible description. Looking back on the role and having thought about it again three years on, the role is more of an administrative assistant and has taken over the responsibilities of the competitions secretary, something that is clearly evident from the secretary's reports over the last five years. These are two roles that need to be looked at and possibly reshaped to meet the current demands of the IUAA. An overlap between the two roles exists with the boundary shifting depending on the incumbents of the two positions. A clearer distinction between the two job descriptions should enable the two positions to contribute in a more constructive and proactive manner to the running of the association. However the magnitude of the task of finding people to fill the positions was clearly highlighted at the 2002 AGM. The elections showed very clearly that too many people are only interested in sitting on the fringes of the committee and leaving the majority of the workload to a handful of committed people. If the IUAA is to move forward, people must be prepared to commit and to carry out their responsibilities to it.

Openness, transparency and accountability are areas that all organisations should be embracing with open arms. The more involved I get in the management and

administration of sport the more pressing those three issues become. The IUAA is well advanced in some of these areas. For example the minutes of all the general meetings have been freely available to the membership through our website for the last five plus years. Our constitution is freely available along with the vast majority of our rules and guidelines. But is this good enough? Is there more we could be doing behind those closed doors that are IUAA executive meeting? How and what issues do we address? Who is addressing them? Which of the elected people are actually attending these meetings and championships for that matter? These are all issues that the IUAA will be looking into and continually assessing over the coming years, the outcome of which will be visible.

As secretary it is my responsibility, in consultation with the President, to arrange executive meetings. Due to the geographical segregation of the executive it is difficult to arrange meetings at a frequency that is desirable to maintain the smooth running of the association. This became obvious on a number of occasions throughout the last twelve months. In order to efficiently utilise time there are executive meetings held at a minimum of three out of the current four championship weekends. In addition to this the executive meets in the early summer and prior to the AGM. As can be seen from Table 1 there are still issues and misconceptions among elected representatives regarding attendance at what would be considered their core duties as elected representatives. This is an issue that I hope to rectify through a number of initiatives, the outcome of which I hope will increase efficiency and eliminate avoidable oversights.

Before finishing, can I make one final appeal for a committed individual to come forward so as I won't be in a position whereby I will be writing this report next year. It now only remains for me to wish everyone all the best for the coming season, both in your athletic and academic careers.

Yours in sport

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Stephen Lipson  
Acting Honorary Secretary 2002-2003.

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Report proposed by

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Report seconded by

Table 1: Attendance record for the 2002-2003 IUAA executive committee, at IUAA Championships and Events, General Meetings and Executive Meetings.

Name	Position	Road Relay Executive Meeting	Road Relay Championships	Road Relay General Meeting	Indoor T&F Executive Meeting	Indor T&F Championships	Cross Country Championships	Cross County General Meeting	Cross County Executive Meeting	Celtic Cross Country	T&F Championships	T&F General Meeting	Antrim T&F	Summer Executive Meeting	Percentage Attendance
Stephen Lipson	President	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	100
Eric Brady	Past President	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	100
Cyril Smyth	Vice President	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	92
Tim O'Connor	Vice President	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Resigned	Resigned	54
Noel Pollock	Treasurer	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Absent	77
	Secretary	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	-
Siobhan O'Keeffe	Competitions Secretary.	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Resigned	8
	PRO	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	-
Michael Hillery	Committee 1	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	31
David Kelly	Committee 2	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	85
Tony Lilley	Committee 3	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	54
Dave Maley	Committee 4	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Absent	23
Lesley O'Connor	Committee 5	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Absent	54
Ian O'Neill	Committee 6	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	62
Ian O'Sullivan	Committee 7	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	54
Cyril White	Committee 8	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	69

■ Present 
 ■ Absent 
 ■ Resigned 
 ■ Vacant Positions 
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