

WORKING DOCUMENT FOR THE CROSS COUNTRY REVIEW 2014/2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working document is a consolidation of responses from a variety of sources including AAI County Boards, AAI clubs, AAI coaches and individuals passionate about cross country. In total the data represented in this document stems from twenty-two separate submissions in varying formats. Due to the breadth of the material submitted, it was not possible to draw conclusions or make definitive recommendations. Therefore the aim of this working document was to summarise and accurately represent a wide variety of views. In the process of consolidating participants' responses, an attempt has been made to represent the views of all participants. Any omission of views has not been intentional. Efforts have been made to capture the views of participants as originally expressed in their submissions and incorporate these original statements into this working document.

The data from the submissions for the cross country review process have been organised under ten central themes.

1. Season Structure
2. Competitive Structure
3. Competition Categories
4. Rules and Regulations
5. Identified Gaps in the Calendar of Events
6. Participation and Retention
7. Promotion and Finance of Cross Country
8. Race Governance and Standards
9. Athlete Development
10. AAI 2014 Congress: Motions Referred to Cross Country Review Forum

Two main areas were consistently referred to across the submissions. The first area is the need to address the development of young athletes. It was argued by many that national competition targeted at younger age groups was detrimental to long term participation, and therefore detrimental to the sport in general. A significant number of submissions called for the review of juvenile competition distances and the amount of competition at the younger age levels.

The second area that received considerable mention across the submissions was the need to review the structure of the cross country season. There were nine different proposals as to how this could be achieved. Many argued that it was not possible to introduce sustainable changes to the structure of the cross country season without also reviewing existing competition categories and the overall competitive structure.

The ethos across the submissions was the importance of the longevity and quality of the sport and the need to review and change for the greater good of the sport. This working document is a step towards further work required to achieve this aim.

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1. SEASON STRUCTURE

Following on from motion 38 “that the National Cross Country events post-Christmas be moved to January (Masters/Intermediates) and February (Interclubs) to ensure continuity in the Cross Country season” and motion 50, “that the Cross Country Championships be spaced out more evenly” proposed at the 2014 Congress, one of the most disputed areas in the participant feedback was the length and structure of the cross country calendar. Although there were many different views, nearly every submission suggested that change in some form or other was needed. Recommendations as to how the calendar of events should be structured can be broadly grouped under three lines of thought,

- 1) structured by distinct periods
- 2) structured differently for different competition categories (e.g., juveniles vs. senior)
- 3) structured around major competitions

For Juveniles, there were arguments for and against spreading out the cross country season. In the main, the arguments against extending the season for Juveniles into the New Year was the implications this would have on a) recovery and b) the indoor season. Arguments for spreading out the season stemmed from the view that a short season (i.e., 8 weeks) is not enough time for an athlete to perceive they are improving or sustain/recovery from even a minor injury. Secondly, a season with a short window does not take into account all of the young athletes who also participate in other sports (e.g., the GAA) and who cannot train for cross-country until late August/early September. In addition, some believed that it was not possible to make changes to the juvenile calendar without the AAI and the Schools working more closely together to work out a competition schedule that takes into consideration Long Term Athlete Development.

At the Senior level many argued that combining the inter-club and inter-cross country championship into one race, would provide a focal point for the season and therefore provide a more structured year. It was also highlighted that there was an expectation that mid/long distance athletes were expected to run indoors at all levels as well, thus adding to the challenge of structuring the cross country calendar. The following are nine different recommendations regarding season structure proposed by participants in the review process.

Recommendations 1, 2, 3 & 4 proposed structuring the calendar by distinct periods.

Recommendations 5 and 6 proposed structuring the calendar differently for different competitive categories

Recommendations 7, 8 & 9 proposed structuring the calendar around key events.

Recommendation #1

The cross country season should be divided into **two** distinct periods with 8 primary events before Christmas and only 4 after Christmas. This structure would allow for the inclusion of the Indoors track and field season

1. Early season (Mid September to December): -
 - XC relay fixture;
 - Regional Leagues x 3;
 - Gerry Farnan XC (masters trial);
 - County Championships for all age groups;
 - National Novice;
 - National Inter-Clubs (**Total: 8 primary events**)
 2. Late season (January to Mid-March): -
 - Regional Leagues x 1;
 - National Masters XC combined with Uneven Age Groups (i.e. u/15s, u/17s, u/19s);
 - National Inter-Counties XC combined with Even Age Groups (i.e. u/16s, u/18s, Junior);
 - National XC League Final <optional> (**Total: 4 primary events**)
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Recommendation #2

Divide the Cross Country season into **two** distinct periods. Combine and hold the Inter-Club and Inter-County Championships before Christmas.

September to December/early January- Cross Country

January to March: Indoor or Road Racing

Recommendation #3:

The year of athletic competition should be divided into **three** distinct periods.

1. Sept/Oct-Dec: Cross Country
 2. Jan-March: Road races & indoor season only (potentially some schools cross country events)
 3. April-July/Aug: Track & Field
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Recommendation #4:

1. Oct-mid Jan: Cross Country
2. Mid Feb to end of March: Indoor track & field
3. May onwards: Outdoor track & field

Recommendation #5:

The year of athletic competition should be divided differently for different competition categories.

Schools: Cross country completed before Christmas. Zones competition in October, Provincials in November, All Irelands in December. The argument for this structure is to maximise participation and *give athletes more time to concentrate on Track and Field after Christmas.*

Juveniles: Cross country season should commence after the end of the Schools cross country season finishes.

Senior and Junior: Cross country season completed before Christmas. Suggested dates

County Senior and Junior	Last Sunday in October
Provincial Senior and Junior	2 nd Sunday in November
National Inter Clubs	Last Sunday in November

Novice, Intermediate and Masters: Cross country season start in December after the conclusion of the National Inter Clubs and run until the end of February. The argument for this structure is that it leaves all athletes who are eligible for these races free to run in the Senior races and also gives those who ran in the Dublin City Marathon time to recover.

Recommendation #6:

The year of athletic competition should be divided differently for different competition categories.

Juveniles: Cross country season completed before Christmas. Argument for this recommendation is that it will *give athletes more time to concentrate on Track and Field after Christmas*

Senior level: Inter clubs late January/early February

Recommendation #7:

At present the cross country season starts too early and clashes with the GAA season at the local level. The season should be spread out and should revolve around the major competitions.

Schools/University: September – October

County Championships: November/December (All Grades)

Interprovincials: December/January

All Irelands: Jan/Feb/March (All grades with the exception of U23)

Recommendation #8:

Revolve the structure around one national senior title race to take place in March – combining Inter Clubs final race and Individual championship.

Oct – County

Nov/Jan – Connacht/Provincial Leagues/championships

End Nov – Trial for the Europeans and Intercounties team event (Inter counties /Senior Trial and Junior Trial for Euros)

Mid Dec – Novice

Early Feb – Intermediate and Masters

Early Mar – Inter clubs Senior/League final (Senior and Junior)

Individual Senior championships

As an alternative, bring the post-Christmas events back to end Jan/End Feb to tighten up and focus the season i.e. Oct-Feb.

Recommendation #9:

The timing of two of the main competitions over the year should be reviewed. The following recommendation was made:

- Inter-clubs held before Christmas
 - Inter-counties held in February
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2. COMPETITIVE STRUCTURE

Many of the submission indicated that changes to the cross country calendar of events could not take place without taking into consideration the current competitive structure.

At the juvenile level it was argued that juvenile athletes were advanced to National competition much too soon. The most consistent recommendation was to eliminate national competition in younger age groups. There was a lack of consensus as to the age at which national competition should commence, with most indicating U/14 or U/15. There was also a lack of consensus as to what age provincial championships for juvenile cross country athletes should commence with responses ranging from U/11, U/12 to U/13. The second theme that was identified at the juvenile level was the amount of competition in which young athletes were expected to participate. Respondents believed that addressing the age at which National competition commences and the number of competitions at Juvenile level was important for the long term development and retention of athletes. Participants' views on competition structure for younger athletes has been organised into three subheadings 1) national competition in younger age groups, 2) rationalisation of the Juvenile competition structure and 3) other

At the junior and senior level, many of the submissions called for the combination of the Inter-club and Inter-county cross country championships. It was argued that the quality and participation numbers of the Inter-club Championships had declined. Others believed that combining Inter-club and Inter-county would provide a focal point for the national cross country season and provide a more structured competitive year. The recommendations at the junior/senior level provided by the participants are summarised under one subheading, 1) Integration of Inter-County and Inter-Club Championships.

Juvenile

National competition in younger age groups

- All Irelands for those U/14 should be eliminated.
- National competition at the younger age groups eliminated. Suggestions u11, 12 & 13 at provincial level and u9 & 10 at county level.
- U9s to U14s to compete in regional and inter-Club leagues only, eliminate national competition.
- National Juvenile XC championships to start at the U/15s age group. 12-14 year olds should not participate in All Irelands.
- Discontinue All-Irelands for U12, U13. Juvenile all-Irelands for U-14 and U-15 should be inter-provincial (no club or county teams). Athletes to compete in their own year-age group only.
- Under 14 Club Competition, Under 15 Schools.

Rationalisation of the Juvenile competition structure

- Consider dividing competitive structure between AAI and Schools. AAI having U14/16/18 CC and Post Primary Schools U13/15/17 and Senior.
- AAI should host the even age groups, while schools should look after uneven.
- Juvenile 'B' Development races abandoned.

Other Suggestions

- U16 U17 U18 all-Ireland should be inter provincial only (10 per province). Athletes could run their age group and a year under with the exemption of U16.
 - Provincial championships should be Inter-County only (no club competition) (10 per county). This should include U13 upwards confined to own age group.

Junior & Senior

Integration of Inter-Club and Inter-County Championships

- National Inter-clubs and Inter-county integrated into one race.
 - Irish teams for the European XC championships are selected based on the race results.
 - The winning club teams will have the opportunity to represent Ireland at the European Club Cross Country Championships the following February.
- National Inter-Counties XC to be a 'County' only competition (but may also be used as a 'trial' for national teams).

3. CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION CATEGORIES

A number of suggestions were made regarding changes to the current competitive categories. Common recommendations were to create a 'youth' category which would possibly include U/16 up to U/19 and to rationalise age categories at the developmental level. Below are the views voiced with respect to changes in competitive categories.

- At the developmental level remove either Odd or Even ages events completely as per UK model.
- Juvenile cross country: either the even or uneven age groups are scrapped. 2year age band should be introduced. A 'B' Championship would have no benefit.
- Consideration given to a "Youths" age-group to cater for athletes in the Junior, U/17, U/18, U/19 categories.
- A "Youths" category which would include U/16, U/17 and U/18s.
- Disband U/19. The under 19 category serves no purpose.
- Novice and intermediate categories are too similar in focus. Elimination of the Intermediate category.

4. RULES AND REGULATIONS

There were was some feedback with respect to Motions 47 and 48 “that the National Cross Country Championships U18’s be allowed to score on both U18 and Junior Teams.” This is addressed later in the document. There was only one submission that suggested other changes to the current scoring system. This has been outlined below.

Intermediate: Top three plus first team be ineligible in all future intermediate championships. Members of winning intermediate team, second and third place individual runner can be re eligible after two years provided they were not successful at senior level (top three or scoring winning team) but must complete a senior all-Ireland Cross Country championship. This would promote participation at Senior Competition.

Novice: Top three plus winning team to be ineligible for all novice championship. Winning team plus second and third individual can become re-eligible after three years if having completed two higher grade all-Ireland championships without success (top three or scoring winning team). This would promote participation at Senior Competition.

5. IDENTIFIED GAPS IN THE CURRENT CALENDAR OF CROSS COUNTRY EVENTS

In the submissions there was a consistent argument for more Cross Country leagues primarily targeted at the Senior level held on Saturdays. A number of suggestions were given as to what a league might entail and these have been outlined.

Leagues

- A selection of races, perhaps league races to be held on Saturday afternoons.
- A league event in January to help senior level runners prepare for interclubs in late Jan/early Feb.
- A National Cross Country League starting after Christmas made up of 3 or 4 races (e.g., Belfast International, Ras na hEireann), culminating with the National Inter Counties.
- An all-Ireland league consisting of two open races pre European Championships (The Gerry Farnham and one other) plus the all-Ireland Senior championship (Three Grades Senior). Those races would act as trials for the European Championships.
- Option 1 League Structure - Events Including – November trial (first senior race), Novice, Intermediate/Masters and Clubs. 5 events. - 4 Divisions structure. 25 points for a win and so on down. Double points for Final race i.e. Inter clubs. - Prize structure for top 3 Division one and other winners. Promotion and relegation system. Also Junior prizes across the two Junior events in Nov and March. Individual prizes for Senior races i.e. Cash /BIK. -Existing county team competitions to stay in Novice Masters and Inters as well as Individual medals with medals for winning clubs only in each event. Small clubs could potentially join forces at county level and enter in League that way, i.e. below a certain membership level at adult, as per Track League. The essential point is the club title would be League based not a once off event, and the Interclubs event would be the main focus at end of season as befits a National competition.
- Option 2 Structure: (Less events in League etc) The League would be a 4 race event where the Inter Counties would not be part of this and would encompass Novice/Inters/Masters and Clubs. County events only in Intercounties (Senior) and Masters. Usual Individual medals /categories in all events. Other details as option 1 above.
- More XC leagues needed. The setting up of regional XC leagues (roughly based on 4 provinces plus Dublin) with juveniles categories also scoring towards an overall club score. Standardized scoring system. Divisions if necessary. Option to have a national final with the top 2 teams in each region to National XC League final.

6. PARTICIPATION AND RETENTION

A number of participants highlighted that dropout and retention was a significant issue. It was stated that a comparison of the statistics from 1999 and 2014 indicated that the participation numbers are significantly down in junior women's and junior men's cross country. It was noted that a very small number of athletes were moving up to the senior level. Many submissions held the view that an emphasis on competition in developmental athletes had negative implications for long term participation in the sport. It was highlighted that drop out of girls aged 14 to 15 is a significant issue in the sport and that measures need to be taken to address the issue of participation at a more fundamental level. The responses in this area have been organised under two sub-headings 1) long term participation and retention and 2) increasing participation numbers.

Long term participation & retention

- More programs such as Fit 4 Youth targeted at girls 8 to 12 years of age to increase the general overall fitness of young girls so that with a basic level of fitness, athletics is more enjoyable.
- More focus and attention should be given to programmes aimed at teens such as Fit For Teens. If more emphasis is placed into the Teens particularly those outside the top 10% it will help to address the drop out rate.
- Rationalisation of competition, distances, selection of suitable courses etc. The approach to addressing dropout needs to be multidimensional.

Increasing participation numbers

- In seniors and Juniors, clubs should be allowed to have 4 to score but any number to run in an effort to encourage participation.
- In senior/junior competition where a club doesn't feel strong enough to field a team, a county can put in a team, alternatively clubs should be able to amalgamate.
- Junior Inter Clubs held in conjunction with the Junior Inter Counties and the Clubs Under 18 to increase race participation.
- National Novice, Intermediate or Masters CC could be run on the same day as the Inter-counties to increase participation.
- National u/23's are run with the National Novices (due to distance). They run 6k at County and Provincial level.
- Combine events, Juniors with Under 23's or Novices to increase participation.
- AAI should do more to encourage the road racing community to participate in cross country events.

- The National Inter-Clubs Championships must have proper incentives attached (e.g. monetary prizes to clubs, away trips for athletes) and have a programme timetable that ensures a good attendance around the course for the major races.
- To increase incentive to participate the Inter-clubs be used as part of the selection of athletes for European Cross country events, providing incentive to participate and the Inter-counties be used as part of the selection of athletes for World Cross country events.
- “A Supreme Distance Running Competition”: A competition for males and females that would encompass 4 disciplines including cross country. For example, cross country (interclubs/intercounty), road ½ marathon/marathon, track & field indoor or outdoor (e.g., 5000m). Points given for each event. For example 20 points for 1st down to 1point for 20th. The individual with the highest number of points is the supreme distance running champion.
- Increase variety in cross country courses to increase interest/motivation such as creating courses including obstacles like jumps, fences, drains etc.

7. PROMOTION AND FINANCE OF CROSS COUNTRY

Across participant submissions the need to promote cross country was re-iterated. A couple of submissions called for the appointment of a cross-country commissioner. Participants responses linked to the promotion and finance of cross country were organised under four subheadings, 1) management, 2) media, 3) finance and 4) other.

Management

- A cross country commissioner is needed to promote, develop and foster cross country running. This individual should be appointed by the AAI Board.
- Closer links established at the management level between the GAA and AAI
 - Involvement of GAA in Cross country events, participation/venues – consider an initiative to attract GAA/sports teams into races like the GT race/BHAA.
- There is a need for County, provincial and national boards to increase their promotion of cross country.
- Cross country needs greater promotion within the Schools.
- Universities/Colleges should promote cross country running and encourage beginners to participate.

Media

- Greater media attention is needed to promote the sport to the wider public.
- Greater publicity should be given to the Inter-County championships as people tend to feel an empathy with their County.
- All athletes should be compelled to wear county colours as this would give a better appeal to the public, therefore raising public interest and publicity of the sport.
- Promotion/advertising of Cross County should be on par with road races.
- Press scheduling and advance notice of Cross Country should be on par with road races

Finance

- Proper funding and/or sponsorship of XC would help improve arrangements, media focus and the general attraction of the sport.
- AAI should support the attendance of athletes at World events.
- There should be more support for good athletes not included in the carded athlete scheme.

Other

- More automatic places on national teams for the finishers in the national championships will raise the profile of the events.
- Existing cups/trophies (e.g. The General O'Duffy Cup) should be on show at competitions which would contribute to the promotion of the sport.

8. RACE GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS

A number of submissions included recommendations regarding race governance and standards. These can be broadly divided into 1) race planning considerations, 2) scheduling and 3) other considerations.

Race Planning Considerations

- Presentation to the first three individuals and first county be made as soon as the race is completed.
- Subs medals available on the day of competition, inscription not necessary. Boards can decide if they want to cover the cost of inscribing sub medals.
- A track referee should be appointed before an event. The name of the individual should be communicated via the internet beforehand and he or she should be distinguished by a clothing item (i.e. top). The track referee would be responsible for inspecting the course and plan beforehand and ensuring that the course meets National Guidelines.
- Attention needs to be given to the vetting of juvenile courses to ensure these courses are age appropriate. In many instances juniors are run with intermediate/senior events and the course is inappropriate.
- Cross country venues should be decided well in advance and should be of a high standard with good access facilities, adequate parking and appropriate facilities (showers etc) . It was felt that AI should provide more of a financial incentive to organisers and provide help and guidance in how to organise the event to a high standard.
- Establish a database/register of Cross country venues and actively assist clubs/counties to establish and secure a Cross country venue in each county for the long term future of the sport. Ensure that these venues meet certain standards and criteria and are maintained to standards – whether Regional or National standard.

Scheduling

- Collaboration between AAI, Schools and Universities important in scheduling events.
- Agreement must be made with Intervarsity Association to regularise their competition dates.
- Scheduling all National races at least three weeks apart including Universities with proper advance notice given of races and no changes allowed.

Other

- University students should be allowed to have dual membership and be able to compete for their home club or college in AAI competition.
- All universities and third level colleges should have an AAI club and be affiliated to their local County board and compete in AAI competitions.
- Athletes representing Counties in all grades wear County colours. Athletes have the option of displaying the name of their club on their singlet.
- A national database of eligible athletes at Novice and Intermediate and Senior level to be created.

9. ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

There were a number of suggestions related to athlete development. The two main areas that were identified included 1) High Performance and 2) the role of cross country in the long term development of the athlete.

High Performance

- The work of the High Performance Endurance group should be aligned to the Cross Country programme of events.
- A panel could be selected from a Senior combined InterClub/InterCounty championship and trained with the assistance of AAI with an aim to take prizes at the European Cross Country Championships.
- There should be more organised squad training for a greater number of athletes and a greater level of athletes in regional locations via the National Endurance Coach, the Director of Coaching and the RDO's.

The Role of Cross Country in the long term development of the athlete

- Training of Cross country athletes should include the development of speed.
- Cross country training should be recognized as a developmental bases for athletes in subsequent Track and Field Performance.
- Introduce a development programme geared at cross country to encourage and support Junior athletes through to senior level.
- Cross country should be taken as part of the overall athletics development of the young athlete where the primary school age groups are offered –within club/county- a variety of multi event athletics experiences/challenges (e.g. sportshall, relays, multi event, track & field, cross country relays and races). As they move into the teens increase the distances ran in cross country/middle distance and encourage all athletes to experience 1 x run, 1 x jump, and 1 x throw discipline. Specialisation is encouraged too soon at the moment via intense competition at the National level.

10. AAI 2014 CONGRESS: MOTIONS REFERRED TO CROSS COUNTRY REVIEW FORUM

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
34. THAT: the 2015 Inter Club Cross Country Championships be reconstituted as a four division event, with a system of promotion and relegation and club awards for winners.	Not specifically referenced in the submissions	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
35. THAT: a National Cross Country Club League be introduced combining the National Novice, National Intermediate and National Senior Inter Club competitions with results in each of these events counting towards final points and awards.	**SEE SECTION 5 OF THE DOCUMENT: IDENTIFIED GAPS IN THE CALEDAR OF EVENTS	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
37. THAT: the Cross Country National competition locations be rotated so that one event is held in each province each cross country season.	1	
Arguments For:	None	
Arguments Against:	None	
Recommendations	Rotate the venues across the province, with one event in each province each year to facilitate numbers and travelling	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
44. THAT: the entry structure and race day management for National Masters Cross Country events (and other Masters Team events, if applicable) is simplified by ensuring that there is only one category for a Masters team (e.g. Over 35) in any given Masters race. Other Masters categories to be facilitated in their own specific race (e.g. Over 65).	2	3
Arguments For:	None	
Arguments Against:	None	
Recommendations	<p>Suggested Age Categories: Male O/35-49 Distance 7000m Male O/50 Distance 6000 Woman O/35-44 Distance 4000m Women O/45+ Distance 4000m</p> <p>“Masters” be changed to Over 40s (2 submissions)</p> <p>Discontinue O/35 Categories O/40; O/50 and O/60</p>	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
47. THAT: at the National Cross Country Championships U18’s be allowed to score on both U18 and Junior Teams.	3	3
48. THAT: at National Cross Country Championships in the Junior age groups where the event is held in conjunction with the U/18 age group athletes be allowed to score in both Junior and U/18.		
Arguments For:	None	
Arguments Against:	Allowing under 18s to Junior category is in most cases a ‘bridge too far in competitive terms and can have negative implications for developing athletes	
Recommendations	None	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
49. THAT: where the National Junior Cross Country is run in conjunction with a similar under age event, all athletes are eligible for Junior competition i.e. both events.	1	
Arguments For:	None	
Arguments Against:	None	
Recommendations	None	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
50. THAT: the Cross Country Championships be spaced out more evenly; start late October and run them into the New Year.	**SEE SECTION 1 OF THE DOCUMENT: SEASON STRUCTURE	
Arguments For:		
Arguments Against:		
Recommendations	Provided under Section 1, Competition Calendar	

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
53. THAT: Under the Juvenile category, the Inter County Cross Country Relay competition be discontinued.	2	3
Argument For	Need to re-introduce more XC relay events	
Argument Against		
Recommendations		

Motion	No. of Submissions Agree	No. of Submissions Disagree
<p>55. THAT: the distances for girls U13 to U17 Cross Country be changed to: -U13 2000m -U14 2500m -U15 2500m -U16 3000m - U17 3500m</p> <p>56. THAT: distances for Juvenile Cross Country for U11 be amended to 1200m, U12 to 1500m and U13 to 2000m for the 2014/2015 season.</p>	11	6
Arguments For:	<p>Race distances increasing too quickly.</p> <p>Reduced distances for under 15s only</p> <p>We feel that the present distances for juveniles up as far as u 15 are too long. We suggest shortening the distances by 500m in each age group. Also it was felt that if the distances were increased as the season progressed it would allow athletes more time to train for the longer distance. So we suggest a progressive increase in distance from county to provincial to national level.</p>	
Arguments Against:	<p>Changing distances for girls will not lead to greater participation. It is more likely that the result will be further drop in standards of girls over the age of 15.</p>	
<p>Recommendations: (Seven recommendations in total)</p> <p>1. We would recommend:</p> <p>U9 Boys 600m; U9 Girls 600m U10 Boys 800m; U10 Girls 800m U 11 Boys 1000m; U11 Girls 1000m U12 Boys 1500m; U12 Girls 1500m U13 Boys 2000m; U13 Girls 2000m U14 Boys 2500m; U14 Girls 2500m U15 Boys 3000m; U15 Girls 3000m U16 Boys 3500m; U16 Girls 3500m U17 Boys 5000m; U17 Girls 4000m U18 Boys 6000m; U18 Girls 4000m U19 Boys 6000m; U19 Girls 4000m</p>		

2. We Would Suggest:

U11 Boys & Girls reduced from 1500m to 1000m
U12 Boys & Girls reduced from 2000m to 1500m
U13 Boys & Girls reduced from 2000m to 1500m
U14 Boys & Girls reduced from 3000m to 2000m
U15 Girls reduced from 3500m to 2500m; Boys from 3500m to 3000m
U16 Girls reduced from 4000m to 3000m; Boys from 4000m to 3500m
U17 Girls reduced from 4000m to 3500m; Boys from 5000m to 4500m
U18 Girls reduced from 4000m to 3500m; Boys from 6000m to 5500m
U19 Girls unchanged at 4000m; Boys unchanged at 6000m

3. I would suggest the following:

Under 13 Boys 1500m Girls 1500m Schools
Under 14 Boys 2000m Girls 2000m
Under 15 Boys 2500m Girls 2500m Schools
Under 16 Boys 3500m Girls 3000m
Under 17 Boys 4500m Girls 3500m Schools
Under 18 Boys 6000m Girls 4000m
Under 19 Boys 6000m Girls 4000m Schools

4. Intro distances at local and county levels should be shortened –ditto athletes will finish in same positions as when distances are longer –increase the distances as competition progresses via province and Nationals.
5. Yes I feel the present distances are too long especially in the younger age groups.
6. Under 20 Boys 6000m Girls 4000m
7. Provincial distances in juvenile are 20-30% or 500m shorter. County distances a further 20% shorter or 500m less (round figures)