



UQ ATHLETIC CLUB

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019 / 2020

I am pleased to be able to report on the activities of the UQ Athletic Club for the past twelve months. 2019 / 2020 will be quite a milestone in the history of the Club. Fortunately the Club was able to participate in the entirety of the QA Track and Field season before the lock down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report will look at some of the achievements and shortfalls in the first six months of the competition year.

UQAC ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2019 / 2020

Strategic Plan: This year was the second year of working with our Strategic Plan and we need to report on any achievements in facilitating that Plan. A key metric in the Club's Strategic Plan was to update the Club's constitution. Brandon Dewar, a member of the Club's committee last year, and with legal expertise, took on this project. The updated constitution was presented to last year's Annual General Meeting and was adopted, and Brandon and his brother Nick, also on the committee last year, shepherded it through the acceptance process.

The second metric that was worked on was to try to improve the relationship between UQ Sport and the UQ Athletic Club. Two meetings were held between the Club and UQ Sport represented by Johnathan Turner, Gus Svenson and Paul Melville. A working document had been prepared looking at the benefits and the responsibilities of each party in achieving a stronger working relationship. Unfortunately, COVID-19 intervened before this process could be completed and it will have to be revisited in the coming year. One of the earliest tasks of the new committee will be to meet with UQ Sport representatives to hear their vision for the future of athletics at UQ, especially with major changes at UQ Sport as a result of COVID-19.

Membership: Unfortunately, we had a drop in membership from the 247 we had in 2018 / 19 to 189 in 2019 / 20. The Club did lose some members to the QUT club, as seemingly the QUT club can offer benefits we are not able to offer. This membership was made up of 35 UQ students, 1 UQ staff and 10 UQ Alumni, 124 Junior members, 17 general public and 2 volunteers.



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Competitions: The main reason most members join the club is so that they can compete at the inter club competitions (Shield meets) and state and national championships. Even with the drop in membership the Club gave a good account of itself in the inter club competition (Shield Meets). The Club continues to be strong on its home track by taking out the Jai Taurima Shield. It finished second in three Shield Meets and third in three Shield Meets and fifth in one Shield Meet. QEII continues to be the strongest Club. The QUT Club continues to get stronger and on a couple of occasions relegated UQAC to third spot. I believe the Club still has the capability to win the Inter Club competition, but we have to strive to have more representation at the Shield Meets

Once again, this past season the Club paid the entry fee for teams to compete in the QA Cross Country Relay Championships and the QA Track and Field Relay Championships. We continue to make our presence felt at these two events. In the cross country relays the Club finished 4th in 2018 and we had teams entered again in 2019, but I wasn't able to access the results to indicate where we had placed in 2019. In the track and field relays, the Club improved from 9th place in 2017 to a 5th place finish in 2018, but dropped back to 8th place in 2019. However, I believe we increased the number of teams entered, and I want to thank Andre Sinclair for his effort in co-ordinating the team entries and he was present on the day to pull everything together. The Club encourages its members to get involved with these relay championships.

Again this year the Club had very good representation at the State championships with many outstanding performances, but unfortunately the National Junior Championships were cancelled a week before they were scheduled and the Senior Championships also were cancelled..

On the international scene the year was highlighted by the selection of Samantha Phillips, Tori West and Liam O'Brien to the Australian team for the World University Championships in Napoli, Italy. Samantha finished 19th in the half marathon in 1 hr 21 min 3 sec, Tori finished 5th in the Heptathlon with a score of 5614 points and Liam finished 7th in the Javelin with a throw of 75.04 metres. The year was further highlighted by the selection of Caitlin Sargent-Jones to the Australian 4 x 400m Relay team to the World Relay Championships in Yokohama, Japan where Australia finished in 15th place. Caitlin was also selected to the 4 x 400m Relay team to the World Championships in Doha, Qatar where the team finished fifth in their heat, and Dane Bird Smith was selected to the 20 km Walk for these Championships and placed fifteenth.



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With regards UQ Sport Blues honours in 2019 both Natalie Ottway and Cara Feain Ryan were awarded half blues for their achievements during the year.

Club Member's Funding:

The Club continued from the past two years the following funding for club members..

- As the Open National Championships did not take place in 2019 there was no award of funding to athletes attending these championships.
- The Club provided funding of \$500 each to Samantha Phillips, Liam O'Brien and Tori West towards their expenses for the World University Championships.
- **'John Howes' Fund:** Just to recap the 'John Howes' Fund was set up by an anonymous club alumnus who offered to donate an initial \$1000, plus a minimum of \$200 every year for the next twenty years to establish a fund that will make small awards to disadvantaged members of the UQ Athletics Club who are deemed to deserve it. The first presentation, of the 'John Howes Fund' Grant, was made in 2019. The committee of Tom Brandt, Andre Sinclair and Callum Davies felt Nathaniel Scott was a worthy recipient for the inaugural grant. It is proposed that two awards be made in 2020 / 21 by the committee appointed at this year's Annual General meeting.

NOTE: At each Annual General Meeting three people should be appointed to administer the Fund – the club president, the club captain and a club coach. This committee should meet twice a year to consider whether any small grants should be made. Any grants that are made in any calendar year should be recorded in the minutes of the Annual General meeting.

Australian University Games:

The 2020 UNI Nationals were schedule to be conducted at the home of the UQ Athletic Club – the UQ Athletic Centre and the Club was hopeful of a large team representing UQ, and Natalie and Callum were working hard to recruit athletes to the team. Unfortunately about two weeks before these Championships were scheduled, they were cancelled due to COVID-19..

Coaching: The formalisation of a coaching process between the UQ Athletic Centre and the Club is still in a state of flux, and we will continue to work with UQ Sport in this regard. However I do want to acknowledge the following coaches who have provided a coaching service to the Club in the past year – Pat Clohessy, Eric Brown, Russel Hansen, Dave Smith, John Clancy, Luke Donatini, Geoff MacKinnon, Rajeev Balakrishnan, Kerry Schreiber and Andre Sinclair.



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The Club was successful in its application for a Grant to pay the course fees for Club members to attend a Coaching Course. The Grant of \$1300 will allow a number of members to attend such a course. The Grant has to be spent by January 2021 so members are encouraged to express their interest so assistance can be given to them. Any unspent funds will have to be returned.

Communication: I believe communication continues to improve through social media platforms. I want to commend Brooke Gilmeister and Emily Keehn for their efforts in this regard. A major step taken in 2019 was to engage Tori West's company to upgrade the Club's website. This has been done, and the club now has a much more professional look. It is now up to the Club to provide Tori with information to allow her to keep the web site up to date.

The Club engaged the services of Anthony Cox from **in2cre8tive** to take photos of athletes at the State Junior Championships. This was very successful and the Club now has a good catalogue of member pictures that can be used for promotion. This is an area to explore further on 2020 / 21 to further promote the club on social media.

Uniform: It was most pleasing to see more and more Club members competing in uniform at the summer shield meets and at the State championships. With the help of UQ Sport staff and Club committee members there is a better system available for athletes to be able to buy uniforms when it suits them. This seems to be a reasonable way to control the distribution.

Finances: The Club continues to be in a sound financial position as you will see in the Treasurers report. This is due to the good stewardship of the Club treasurers over the past twenty years, including Emily Keehn, the current treasurer. Traditionally our income is basically from Club membership. However in the coming year we will have income from athlete training fees due to the fact the Club is controlling athlete training and being charged track hire by UQ Sport. Additionally the Club has secured two State Government Grants - \$1300 for Coaches Training as already reported and \$2000 for equipment. A further Grant has been submitted for the purchase of a high jump mat and an "e gun" starting system as caps are no longer available.

Relationship With UQ Sport:

Our relationship with UQ Sport continues to be a work in progress. We have continued to try to comply with the UQ Sport requirements. This has been an area we have worked hard to turn around, and I believe we have been reasonably successful. Ongoing meetings has been referenced earlier in the report.



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CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

The following are the challenges for the coming year:

- Continue to improve communication through emails to club members, maintaining the web site, and other social media platform updates
- Continue to have uniforms available so as many members as possible compete in club uniform at the inter club events.
- Explore ways of improving the culture of the club so it is not only a conduit to compete at QA events.
- Explore ways of involving membership in the operation of the club - this could be in such areas as coaching, officiating, or helping out with fund raising.
- Continue to apply for Grants to improve the facility that is home to the Club.
- Continue to implement the Club's Strategic Plan.

Acknowledgement: In conclusion, I want to offer the following acknowledgments:

- I would like to thank the 2019 / 2020 committee represented by Luke Donatini (Vice President), Caitlin Jones (secretary), Emily Keehn (treasurer), Callum Davies and Natalie Ottway (Student Rep/Captain), Andre Sinclair (Coaches Rep), Brooke Gilmeister and Emily Keehn (Social Media Rep) and Eric Brown (Committee Member). I believe I can say this has really been a working committee. Those who have taken on specific roles have been serious about those roles, and have worked to deliver on their roles. Those without specific roles have stepped up when assistance was needed. I trust those on the committee in the coming year will continue with this attitude, and if they do, it can only help to move the Club forward.

Submitted by Tom Brandt

President UQAC



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