

## **Midland League, Report of the Chair – November 2025**

We have once again enjoyed a successful season with good competition being provided for all clubs and athletes. One slight downside were variable attendances due to the allocated League dates clashing with other high-profile competitions such as the ESAA & UKA Championships. Hopefully this year will prove more satisfactory, but its hard to find dates for League competitions in spite of the numbers competing.

We made very few changes to the format of the League this year, but I believe that those that we did make, predominantly merging the B & C String scoring had a positive effect.

At last year's AGM we highlighted the potential effects of the changes to Age Groups by EA / UKA, and the implications for both Athletes & our League. We have a concern that the U20 Age-Group, in particular, may be poorly catered for by other Leagues.

After discussion we are proposing that the League moves to U18 as the youngest Age. This will remove a one-year cohort from eligibility to compete in the Midland League. We believe this to be the right decision for the development of younger athletes, but it may affect some clubs ability to fill events more than others. We will monitor the effects of the changes and listen to the views of both athletes and clubs as the 2026 season progresses.

As a League we are therefore in a 'Wait and See' position for the 2026 season, but if there is a need to bring forward any appropriate proposals the League Management Committee believe that there are solutions which could be offered at next year's AGM.

In terms of delivering competition, we all need to be mindful of our obligation to comply with the terms of our Licence before an event can proceed. This is not merely the provision of suitably qualified officials, but also First Aid and certificated venue with appropriate equipment. We experienced issues of both of the latter cases and there seems to be a continual decline in the quality of venues in terms of both their condition and their staffing.

I would like to express my thanks to our secretary Richard White for his tireless efforts to deliver the League. Also thanks to the Management Committee, Officials, Team Mangers & Athletes without whom the League would not take place.

Finally, please ensure that Referees are familiar with the League Rules and Scorers are familiar with the Results Program in advance of each match. This will greatly reduce the effort for Divisional Secretaries when checking the results.

Bryan Acford – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025