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**Thurrock Harriers AC**

**Track and Field, Cross Country and Road Competition Handbook.**

This is a comprehensive guide to all athletic competitions you may take part in.

The information is aimed at athletes and parents.

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**Foreword**

**Thurrock Harriers provides competitive opportunities for track and field, cross country and road racing.**

**We are affiliated to England Athletics, Essex AA, South of England AA, Eastern Athletic Association, Essex XC League and Essex Masters AC (EMAC).**

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**1.Competitions**

There are 3 main types of Track and Field competitions in which athletes can participate:

**League matches**

**Championship events**

**Open meetings**

* 1. **League matches**

For all League matches, Club vests must be worn.

The club competes in 3 track and field leagues which are specific to particular age ranges.

The reason for competing in leagues is to provide competition suitable for all club athletes and they are able to measure their improvement.

It is important that the league teams perform well, in order to ensure an adequate standard of competition in the following year. Promotion to a higher league can provide better competition for athletes.

League teams can only be successful if the majority of the events are filled. Too many gaps in the team results in loss of points so **athlete turn-out is important for the club**.

The following list gives a short overview. More detailed information is given on subsequent pages about each league.

**Eastern Young Athletes League.**

5 matches from April to August with a final in September.

Young athletes aged 11 (school year 6) to 16 for the current competition year (see section 2 for definitions)

**Southern Athletics League (SAL)**

5 matches from April to September.

Senior Men’s and Senior Women’s age-group events only, but Under 20’s and good standard Under

17’s may participate, competing as seniors.

**Eastern Masters League (EMAC)**

4 matches from April to July with a final in September.

Any athlete aged 35 and over can compete, once registered with Eastern Masters Athletics Club (second claim). The league is subdivided into three age categories each for males and females.

The following table shows which age groups and the league they can compete in:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| League | U11 | U13 | U15 | U17 | U20 | Senior | Vet Over 35 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Eastern YA League |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Southern Athletics League |  |  |  | (1) | (1) |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Eastern Masters League |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

NB: (1) May compete as seniors using senior equipment and over senior distances and hurdles

**U11s (below school year 6) may only compete in a designated open competition for that age group.**

**1.2 Championship events** – Championship events are organised annually by Essex County Association, Eastern Counties AA, South of England AA, UK Athletics and England Athletics. The

entrants are required to be eligible by birth or residence in that specific area. For all Championship events, Club vests must be worn. Competitions are outdoors in summer and indoors in winter.

**1st tier - County Championships: Essex AA Championships** – are open to all

athletes who were born in the county or who have been resident for at least 9 months. Most Thurrock Harriers athletes are likely to be eligible for Essex. The outdoor championships are usually in late May.

There are normally medals for the first three athletes in all County Championship events.

Any athlete finishing in first or second place may gain selection to represent Essex at the Southern Inter-Counties Championships later in the year.

Essex and Eastern Indoor Championships take place in February or March.

**Who can/should enter?**

Essex AA championships are open to athletes in all the UKA competition age-groups listed

below and offer a full range of events. Only the Under 11’s are not eligible, because it is not an official age-group under UKA rules.

Most Thurrock athletes should consider entering their County Championships.

In the UKA rules (three events maximum for all young athletes, four for Under 20’s and unlimited

for Seniors).

**How do you enter?**

Entry to County Championships is made by the individual athlete, and an entry fee has to be paid. 2022 fees were £12 per event.

The club will link entry forms on the T&F fixtures page of its website: [www.thurrockharriersac.com](http://www.thurrockharriersac.com)

Essex County AA has a website where information and entry forms can

also be located at <http://www.essexroadrunning.org.uk/>

You will need to include your UKA number in your entry which you have been given as a member of Thurrock Harriers.

Entry confirmation is normally by e-mail unless you send a self-addressed stamped envelope.

**Essex Schools Championships.**

This is a competition run by schools. Athletes may be asked by their school to compete for the Thurrock Schools team. The club works closely with the Thurrock Schools Team Manager to help select the best team. This event is always the 2nd Saturday in June. Thurrock Schools Team Manager will provide vests on the day.

Any athlete in the top 2 places at this event and who achieves the qualifying standard should get selection for the English Schools Championships in July.

**2nd tier - The Eastern Counties AA Championships** – is open to all athletes from Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex.

**Who can/should enter?**

There is a full range of events, over one day, for all age-groups except under 13’s, for whom there is a

limited selection of events. They are the next level up from the County championships.

Eastern Championships Indoors usually combines with Essex.

There are normally medals for the first three athletes in all Eastern championship events.

***Your Coach will advise you as to your suitability for entry.***

UKA rules (three events maximum for all young athletes, four for Under 20’s and unlimited

for Seniors).

**How do you enter?**

Entry to Eastern Championships is made by the individual athlete, and an entry fee has to be paid. The club will post a link to the entry forms on the T&F fixtures page of the club website.

Entries have to be returned directly (usually electronically) to the event secretary not to the Club. Forms can also be found at www.easternaa.co.uk. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope for confirmation/timetable.

**3rd tier – The South of England (SEAA) Championships** - is open to all athletes from the South

of England. The Championships normally take place over two days of a weekend. These are of higher

standard than the Eastern Championships.

The SEAA Indoor Championships take place in December/ January

There are normally medals for the first three athletes in all SEAA Championship events.

**Who can/should enter?**

There is a full range of events for all UKA age-groups and a limited number of events for under 13’s. Entry standards apply.

***As a guide, athletes who gained medals in their County Championships, or***

***who are ranked in the National top 60 in their event, should consider entering the SEAA***

***Championships. Your Coach should advise you.***

UKA rules (three events maximum for all young athletes, four for Under 20’s and unlimited

for Seniors).

**How do you enter?**

Entry to SEAA Championships is made by the individual athlete, and an entry fee has to be paid. The club will post a link to the entry form on the T&F fixtures page of the club website, which then has to be returned directly to the event secretary. Information will also be posted on the website [www.seaa.org.uk](http://www.seaa.org.uk).

**Top tier - National Championships** - is open to all athletes born or resident in England. There is a

full range of events for all UKA age-groups except for under 13’s, and the championships normally take place over two days of a weekend. There are normally medals for the first three athletes in all National Championship events.

**Who can/should enter?**

These are of high standard, suitable only for those athletes who are in the top 30 in their event on the Power of 10 rankings. Entry to National Championships is made by the individual athlete, and an entry fee has to be paid. Entry standards apply to National events.

***Only athletes who have achieved the entry standard in their event should enter National***

***Championships. Their coach should advise.***

UKA rules (three events maximum for all young athletes, four for Under 20’s and unlimited

for Seniors).

**How do you enter?**

If you have recorded a performance during the past 12 months which meets the entry standard, ask your coach for entry details. Entry forms are available from the England athletics website

http://www.englandathletics.org/england-athletics/english-national-championships . Entries have to be

returned directly to the event secretary.

**The athletics season calendar**

For annual dates, please check the fixtures listing on the club’s website at

[www.thurrockharriersac.com](http://www.thurrockharriersac.com)

and also on the websites of the individual organisations above.

**1.3 Open Meetings**

During the season there are a number of Open Meetings run by Athletics clubs around the region, which are open to anyone. Lee Valley, Chelmsford, Havering, Watford and Woodford are examples. There are many road races during the year which offer distances such as 10k, ½ marathon and marathons. There are also Park Runs. Some are run on age-group basis and some on “graded” basis, and some, but not all, give medals. These are a chance to set a new personal best, or just try out another event.

**Who can enter?**

Age-groups will vary according to the meeting and will be detailed on the publicity.

***Guidance – It is advised that athletes compete in some of these meetings, especially***

***“pre-season” (before or around Easter as a “warm-up” before the main T&F***

***season), and the late season events.***

UKA rules (three events maximum for all young athletes, four for Under 20’s and unlimited

for Seniors).

**How do you enter?**

Entry is in advance by individual athletes. The entry form must be returned with the entry fee to the

event secretary. Coaches will normally know of what events are taking place and details will be

circulated within the club where available and posted on the club’s website.

Always include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for confirmation with your entry or specifically ask for an e-mail confirmation.

There are links to the entry information on the Club website under Track and field fixtures, and details of some open meetings also appear on <http://www.openmeetings.co.uk/find-an-open-meet.php>.

**2. Leagues – detailed information**

**2.1 Eastern Young Athletes League (EYAL)**

A series of five league matches of good quality each involving seven teams. The major clubs in the

league only meet each other once during the season, so the opposition is different at each match. Thurrock has been in the top half of this League for the last few years and has made the Plate Final.

It is normal for Thurrock to have one home fixture and four away fixtures, the away fixtures being normally up to 1¼ hours journey time.

There are also Cup and Plate finals in September (see below).

The club runs a coach to any away fixtures that are over an hour away by car, for which there is a cost.

All Athletes and parents are encouraged to use the coaches whenever possible, in order to help minimise the losses on hire costs, to create better team spirit amongst the athletes, and to help the club be as environmentally friendly as possible.

**How does the league work?**

The league is specifically for athletes in the age range 11 – 16, and athletes compete in their own age group, with the scores for all age-groups totalled to give the overall match result.

Each club can enter two scoring athletes into each event in an age-group (except hammer and pole vault which are limited to one per club). The athletes are designated “A” and “B” competitors according to their ability (personal bests are kept on record) – “A” should be the best athlete – and track races are run as “A” and “B” races. Field events are run all together with “A” and “B” results separated afterwards. All “A” and “B” competitors score points for their team (normally 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 in a 7 team match).

Non-scoring athletes are also permitted in most events, and these provide the opportunity for new

athletes to get a registered performance for future team selection, or for athletes who are already in a

scoring event, to do additional events. There is a limit to how many N/S athletes are allowed in events per club: Field: 2 per event and Track: 5 for 100m & 200m only.

The normal range of events is: 100m, 200m, 300m/400m (not U13’s), 800m, 1500m, Hurdles, Long-Jump, High-Jump, Triple-Jump (U17’s only), Pole-vault (not U13’s), Shot, Discus, Javelin, Hammer (not U13’s), 4 x 100m relays.

**How do the Cup and Plate finals work?**

The top 6 clubs from the overall league contest the Cup Final and the 7th -12th placed clubs contest the

Plate Final. The club qualifies for the finals as a whole rather than by individual age-groups i.e. based on the seasons aggregate club points score.

There are no non-scorers in finals but otherwise the same range of events with “A” and “B” string competitors.

The finals provide a match where the clubs can be very evenly matched and give good competition.

**The Timetable,**

EYAL matches currently commence at 11.45am and aim to finish before 5.30pm, and are always on

Sundays.

**Who can compete?**

All club athletes who are aged between 11 and 16 on 31st August of the competition year.

**How many events can each athlete compete in during the match?**

All matches are run under UK Athletics rules, which permit any athlete in the age range 11 – 16 to

compete in a maximum of three individual events plus a relay on any day. In this league athletes can do a mixture of scoring and non-scoring events, and team managers will always try to give athletes as

many events as they would like within the maximum limit.

We recommend that athletes should try different events as non-scorers, but especially for longer distance runners it is suggested that these should be after their main event, or separated by a significant time period.

There are some restrictions on particular age-groups as follows:

Under 13’s and Under 15’s are not allowed under UKA rules to contest more than 1 event of greater

than 600m on any one day.

Under 13 athletes are not allowed to run 300m or 400m events.

Under 15 Girls and Boys and Under 17 Women race over 300m instead of 400m.

**How do you get involved?**

At the start of each season and before each league match, the Team Managers circulate information via e-mails to the athletes’ parents.

Parents are asked to reply to the e-mails for each match, regardless of whether their child is available or not. The responsibility is with athletes/parents to reply, not for the team managers to chase you.

If you say you will compete, you will then be expected to be at the match, unless you contact the team

manager to let them know that you have a problem. When athletes who have agreed to compete fail to show up it can give team managers a major problem, and lose the team points.

Fixture lists are also published on the club website

The Club always needs help at the matches to do field judging or as a team manager, so Parents, please volunteer. It isn’t as difficult as you may think.

**EYAL fixtures can be found at:**

[Thurrockharriersac.com](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cgerry%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5Cmicrosoft.windowscommunicationsapps_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5CLocalState%5CFiles%5CS0%5C140%5CClub%20Competition%20Handbook.docx) and the EYAL website <http://www.eyal.org.uk/>

**2.2 Southern Athletics League (SAL)**

A league competition for both men and women using Senior equipment only, but under 17s, under 20s,

and Masters, can compete for the team.

There is a full range of track and field events, and the league has effectively 6 divisions, and covers the whole of the South of England.

Thurrock Harriers are in Division 2North and East in 2023.

The club usually runs several cars to most away fixtures. Family support with transport is always welcome.

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**How does the league work?**

Males and Females compete in separate events but are scored together for the overall match result.

Each club can enter two scoring athletes into each event. The athletes are designated “A” and “B”

competitors according to their ability – “A” should be the best athlete – and track races are run as “A”

and “B” races with the exception of 1500m, 5000m and steeplechase. Field events are run all together

with “A” and “B” results separated afterwards. All “A” and “B” competitors score points for their team

(normally 6,5,4,3,2,1 in a 6 team match).

Field event athletes get 3 attempts and the best 4 get 3 additional attempts.

Events comprise 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 100m/110m Hurdles, 400m Hurdles,

3000m/2000m Steeplechase, Hammer, Shot, Discus, Javelin, Long jump, Triple jump, Pole Vault, High Jump, Relays: 4x100m and 4x400m.

League points are allocated based on match position, and totalled for the seasons places. The top

teams in each Division are promoted and the bottom teams are relegated.

Non-scorers are permitted in all events subject to the Referee’s agreement, but are limited so that the

program remains to schedule. There is no league final.

**The Timetable**

Matches start at mid-day and finish by approximately 5pm

**Who can compete?**

All club athletes who are aged 15 and over can be selected, but priority is given to Senior and under 20 athletes.

The club expects athletes to compete to support the Club in the league, assess the progress of their training and guide their progress accordingly.

This league should be the first priority league for Senior and under 20 athletes in the club.

**How many events can each athlete compete in during the match?**

All matches are run under UK Athletics rules, which permit any athlete age 15 or 16 to compete in a maximum of three individual events plus a relay on any day, athletes aged 17 –

19 to compete in 4 individual events plus a relay on any day, and Senior athletes to compete in as many events as they wish. The full range of events in this league is shown above, but there are some restrictions on Under 17’s who are not permitted to run the 5000m or the Steeplechase.

**How do you get involved?**

The team is normally selected on recent performance. The team manager(s) will contact the athletes who are selected for the team, about two weeks before each match to check availability. Fixture dates are published on the club website. The Team Managers may use the club Facebook page or Whatsapp group to check availability of athletes and to post travel arrangements.

**The annual SAL fixtures:**

Are shown on the Club’s website

**The Team Managers contact details**

Can be found on the Club’s website.

**2.3 Eastern Masters League (EMAC)**

The league is specifically for veteran or “masters” athletes and is regionalised with a top 8 clubs final.

All scoring athletes must be members of EVAC, and 1st or 2nd claim members of their “team” club.

**How does the league work?**

Each club can enter one scoring athlete into each event in an age-group.

There are three age-groups: 35-49, 50-59 and 60+.

There are selected events for each age-group at each match, although there are fewer events for women men 60+.

Evening matches are “half matches” featuring only half the events at each match alternately

**How do the finals work:**

The top 8 male teams and the top 8 female teams contest the finals

**The Timetable,**

The league matches all have a different range of events for each age-group. Evening matches start at

7pm.

**Who can compete?**

All club athletes aged 35 and over on the day of competition, who must also be registered members of EMAC.

Athletes who are not members of EMAC may guest but not score.

**How many events can each athlete compete in during the match?**

All matches are run under UK Athletics rules, which permit any veteran athlete to compete in as many

events as they wish

**How do you get involved?**

You let the team manager know that you want to participate. At the start of each season and

before each league match, the team managers circulate information letters to the athletes.

If you say you will compete, you will then be expected to be at the match, unless you contact the team

manager to let them know that you have a problem. When athletes who are expected fail to show up it

can give team managers a major problem and lose the team points.

Fixture lists are also published on the website.

**The annual EMAC league fixtures:**

Are listed on the Club’s website.

**Team manager’s contact details:**

Are listed on the Club’s website.

**3. Competition age groups**

**The UKA specified age-groups** for Track and Field competition are as follows:

An Under 11 athlete is aged 9 or 10 on 31st August in the calendar year of competition (school years 4

and 5).

An Under 13 athlete is aged 11 or 12 on 31st August in the calendar year of competition (school years 6 and 7).

An Under 15 athlete is aged 13 or 14 on 31st August in the calendar year of competition (school years 8 and 9).

An Under 17 athlete is aged 15 or 16 on 31st August in the calendar year of competition (school years

10 and 11).

An Under 20 athlete is aged at least 17 on 31st August, but not more than 19 on 31st December in the

calendar year of competition.

A Senior Athlete is aged 20 or over on 31st December in the Calendar year of competition.

A Veteran or “Masters” athlete is aged 35 and over on the day of competition, and Masters age-groups are 5 year intervals.

**The official competition year** for Track and Field athletics runs from 1st October until 31st September

of the following year, so athletes change age-groups for T&F competition from 1st October. However

there is relatively little T&F competition between October and December so effectively the calendar year of competition is the year from 1st January onwards (when the indoor championship season starts).

**4. Cross Country and Road.**

**4.1 Competition age-groups** are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | U13 | U15 | U17 | U20 | Senior | 40+ |
| **Essex XC League** | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| **Championship and Open Events** | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| **Road Races** |  |  |  | √ | √ | √ |

**4.2 Championship Events**

Championship events are organised annually by County Association, Eastern Counties AA, South of England AA, UK Athletics and England Athletics as well as County and National Schools Athletics organisations (ESAA). Entrants are required to be eligible by birth or residence in that specific area.

**County Championship Relays**

Are open to all athletes who were born in the county or who have been resident for a minimum of 9 months. Most Thurrock Harriers are eligible to compete in Essex Championships.

There are normally medals for the first 3 finishers.

Any athlete finishing in the first 6 places plus 2 may be selected to represent Essex at the Southern and National Inter-Counties Championships events later in the season.

**4.3 Essex Cross Country League**

Thurrock Harriers AC competes in the Essex Cross country League which starts in October and finishes in February. The League consists of 5 race meetings. League tables are kept for both team scores and individuals. To count in the individual tables you must compete in at least 4 of the 5 league races.

**4.4 Road Races**

The road race season covers the whole year, with numerous races ranging from 5k up to marathon within Essex and the UK.

There are 6 Essex County Road Race Championship races at 5 miles, 10k, 10 miles, ½ marathon, 20 miles and marathon. There is also an Essex County Road Relay Championship race which is a team event.

Details of these can be found at [www.essexroadrunning.org.uk](http://www.essexroadrunning.org.uk)

In the Essex County Championship road races, there is a Grand Prix table for overall and age group categories. Prizes are awarded for the first 3 runners in each age category at the end of the season.

The Grand Prix tables are found on the essexroadrunning website.

**5. British Athletics Anti-Doping Information**

Medications for common medical conditions could contain ingredients that are prohibited within Athletics.

Before using any medications, whether prescribed by a GP, bought over the counter in a Pharmacy or even straight from a supermarket shelf, it is vital that athletes check whether they contain prohibited substances.

Medicines bought in the UK, USA, Canada or Japan, can be checked using GlobalDRO (www.globaldro.com)

When checking medication on GlobalDRO, the status of the substance will be provided for in-competition and out-of-competition and will be one of the following:

**Prohibited** - The substance is prohibited in this form and will return a positive test if found in an athlete's system.

**Conditional** - There is a limit to the amount of this substance an athlete can have present in their body, or there are conditions on the methods of its use (eg it can only be inhaled and not taken in tablet form). This is clearly detailed and care should be taken when taking a prescribed dose.

**Not Prohibited** - The substance is not currently on the WADA Prohibited List.

We strongly recommend that athletes check every single substance or medication before use, even if it has been used before. It is worth considering that medicines purchased whilst abroad, even in what appears to be identical packaging, may contain different or additional ingredients to those bought in the UK and should always be checked on GlobalDRO before use.

Strict Liability

One of the main principles of the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC) is that of Strict Liability. This means that each athlete is strictly liable for the substances found in his or her bodily specimen, and that an anti-doping rule violation occurs whenever a prohibited substance (or its metabolites or markers) is found in a bodily specimen, whether or not the athlete intentionally or unintentionally used a prohibited substance or was negligent or otherwise at fault.

**Prohibited List**

The List of Prohibited Substances and Methods is issued annually by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA ).

A new list is published every year on 1st January and it is important to check the status of your medications against the new list by using www.globaldro.com.

If you require any further information about registration of any medications please contact British Athletics.

You can find lots more information at http://www.britishathletics.org.uk/anti-doping/

For queries about anti-doping:

**Email**: antidoping@uka.org.uk

David Herbert - Anti-Doping Manager

Office: 0121 713 8432 Mobile: 07803 671978 Email: dherbert@uka.org.uk

Ellen Butcher - Anti-Doping Coordinator

Office: 0121 713 8466 Email: ebutcher@uka.org.uk

You should always speak to your coach about any medication you are taking and this should be recorded in the membership details and held on file.

For further info, refer to:

<http://www.britishathletics.org.uk/anti-doping/rules/>

Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club wishes you a happy and successful athletics career ahead and assures you that all members of the committee and coaching team are always on hand to answer any questions or support members in any way.

The Committee. 26/1/23