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GUIDE TO 2026

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JANUARY 2026



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COACHING INSIGHT

JACK GREEN EYES
THE BIGGER PICTURE

RISE & SHINE

Pole vault star Molly Caudery plans
to make this a year to remember



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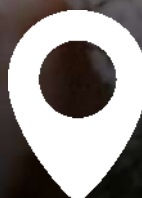




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FRESH OPPORTUNITY



Euan Crumley
AW Editorial Director

A question for you to start the new year: When it comes to athletics, what is it that keeps you coming back for more? If you're a competitor, regardless of your level, is it the challenge of finding improvements, the hard work, the shared struggle, the battle with the opposition or even the battle with yourself?

Ours is not an easy sport and many an athlete will tell you that you don't always get out what you put in. Just ask Molly Caudery, who did her best to dot every i and cross every t last year but still found herself sidelined by a freak accident that left her sidelined right when she was looking to take on the world.

She speaks to Jason Henderson on p24 not just about her recovery process but her enthusiasm for the year ahead. After all, it's worth remembering that, after every setback, more often than not there will soon be another opportunity to seize – and there are plenty of those lying in wait in 2026.

This could be considered as a "down year", given the absence of world championships or Olympics, but try telling that to an athlete who could potentially be competing at the world indoors, Commonwealth Games, European Championships and World Athletics' Ultimate Championships in the coming months.

Spectators and fans certainly won't be short of viewing material but, with so much in the schedule and so many working parts to the track and field calendar, it can be hard to keep track. With that in mind, for this first issue of the new year we've pulled together all of the key events and fixtures that are on the horizon. Hopefully it will help you make a plan to chart a path through what promises to be another breathless, high-speed season.

And, going back to that opening question, I'll ask it again but in a slightly different way. What is it that keeps you coming back to AW? We celebrated the 80th birthday of our magazine in 2025 and we're also in planning mode for the year ahead in terms of how we can best continue to cover this brilliant sport of ours.

Please get in touch to let us know what you'd like to see more (or less) of in these pages, on our website or on our ever growing social media channels. As always, we'll be doing our level best to keep you fully informed, as well as entertained.

Happy new year to you and here's to another memorable one that will keep us all coming back for more. **AW**

PUBLISHING

AW, Iconic Magazines Ltd, 22 Princes Street, London, W1B 2LU

General enquiries:
officemanager@athleticsweekly.com

athleticsweekly.com
x@athleticsweekly
facebook.com/athleticsweekly
instagram/athletics.weekly

EDITORIAL

Editorial director **Euan Crumley**
euan.crumley@athleticsweekly.com
Head of digital **Jason Henderson**
jason.henderson@athleticsweekly.com
Product reviewer **Paul Freary**
paul.freary@athleticsweekly.com
Editorial and digital assistant **Jasmine Collett**
jasmine.collett@athleticsweekly.com
Multi-media producer **Tim Adams**
tim.adams@athleticsweekly.com
Photographer **Mark Shearman MBE**
mark@athleticsimages.com

Photography by Mark Shearman (unless stated)

Design: Duncan Jackson

Editorial contributors: Katy Barden, Ben Bloom, Martin Duff, David Hewitson, David Holmes, Katharine Merry, Verity Ockenden, Denis Shepherd, Adrian Stott, Richard Thurston, Mark Woods

ADVERTISING

Head of Sales **Paul Bramley**
07976 471245 / paul.bramley@athleticsweekly.com

PUBLISHING AND PRINTING

Managing Director **Wendy Sly MBE**
wendy.sly@athleticsweekly.com

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SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACK ISSUES

INTERMEDIA

Unit 6, The Enterprise Centre, Kelvin Lane
Crawley, West Sussex. RH10 9PE
Tel: +44 (0)1293 312168
Email: athleticsweekly@subscriptionhelpline.co.uk
Web: athleticsweekly.imbmsubscriptions.com

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AW INTERVIEW

MOLLY CAUDERY

Playing it safe

Former world indoor pole vault champion Molly Caudery tells Jason Henderson why, after a series of unfortunate events, she will be exercising caution off the track as she aims to seize the many major opportunities that await in 2026

Molly Caudery is taking no risks when it comes to her 2026 season that includes the European Championships, Commonwealth Games and World Indoor Championships. "I don't even see it as a training, because I usually have to be in a certain mood to go," she says. "That's what the British pole vault medalist and 2014 world indoor champion's mood of caution is like." "I've been in a similar mood to the pole vault medalist and 2014 world indoor champion's mood of caution is like." "I've been in a similar mood to the pole vault medalist and 2014 world indoor champion's mood of caution is like."

"I'm almost faster with a pole than without a pole. It's as though this is what I was born to do. But as soon as I'm off that runway it's not good. I can easily trip over my own feet."

24 Molly Caudery is hoping a cautious approach can combat her "clumsiness"



AW GUIDE TO 2026

THE YEAR AHEAD

And we're off!

With the new year now upon us, welcome to your guide to 2026

The time is down, the pressure is on, the stakes are high. The new year is here, and with it, the start of a new season. The year ahead is full of opportunities, challenges, and excitement. It's time to get ready for what's to come.

30 Your in-depth guide to the year ahead across the athletics world



AW PERFORMANCE

NEW YEAR NEW SHOES

Paul Freary looks at the latest models from the top brands for the start of 2026

GUORA CELULA
NEW BALANCE
The Guora Celula is a new addition to the Guora line, designed for runners who want a shoe that's both comfortable and performance-oriented. It features a new midsole and upper, making it a great choice for those looking for a new pair of shoes.

PRODUCTS

PUMA
PUMA
The Puma Nitro 2 is a new addition to the Nitro line, designed for runners who want a shoe that's both comfortable and performance-oriented. It features a new midsole and upper, making it a great choice for those looking for a new pair of shoes.

NEW BALANCE
NEW BALANCE
The New Balance 1080v5 is a new addition to the 1080 line, designed for runners who want a shoe that's both comfortable and performance-oriented. It features a new midsole and upper, making it a great choice for those looking for a new pair of shoes.

BROOKS
BROOKS
The Brooks Adrenaline GTS 25 is a new addition to the Adrenaline line, designed for runners who want a shoe that's both comfortable and performance-oriented. It features a new midsole and upper, making it a great choice for those looking for a new pair of shoes.

90 The shoes to help you put your best foot forward in 2026

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MARK ROE/RED BULL
CONTENT POOL

PICTURE THIS

TWISTS AND TURNS

One of the talking points of the European Cross Country Championships on December 14 was the challenging course laid out for the competitors at the resort of Lagoa in the Algarve.

The tight corners, sandy surface and strength-sapping short hills were far removed from the traditional mid-winter mud but it made for eventful racing. "It was tough, it was like a BMX track, it is hard to keep up the pace and changing all the time," said British athlete Matt Ramsden. "Uphills and downhills all the time, and the little BMX jumps that we had to get over. The lactic hits you with the change of pace, and it's hard to gain any distance on anyone." **AW**

The Algarve analysis: p20





PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

THE MONTH IN NUMBERS

PHOTO BY JERRY SUN



M70 (45.24) and M75 (49.65). Such was his brilliance, he was named World Athletics masters athlete of the year three times.

2:30:43

Britain's Calli Hauger-Thackery won the women's race at the JAL Honolulu Marathon on December 14, clocking 2:30:43 in wet conditions to come home ahead of Kenya's Cynthia Limo (2:31:33).

356,250

Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone is one of a number of stars owed six-figure sums by Grand Slam Track at the time of writing. The American, who lit up the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo by winning the 400m in 47.78, competed at the Kingston, Miami and Philadelphia Slams.

However the fourth and final Grand Slam Track event of 2025 – in Los Angeles in June – was cancelled following cash flow problems and poor crowds at the first three events.

Last month the pro track league filed for a Chapter 11 Bankruptcy, aimed at restructuring the business and eventually staging a comeback.

But court documents showed that seven athletes are among the 20 biggest creditors collectively owed millions by Grand Slam Track. McLaughlin-Levrone is due \$356,250 while 2023 world 1500m champion and double Olympic medallist Josh Kerr is awaiting \$218,750. **AW**

A look back at some of the biggest news and best performances of recent weeks

2:06:38

In what was only his second marathon, Olympic triathlon champion Alex Yee clocked 2:06:38 to finish seventh in Valencia on December 7 to go No.2 on the UK all-time rankings. Only Mo Farah, with 2:05:11 from Chicago in 2018, has gone quicker.

Overall victory went to John Korir, as the Kenyan clocked 2:02:24, adding to his Boston Marathon victory from earlier this year.

Natasha Wilson (née Cockram) ran a Welsh record of 2:24:21 in the women's race that was won by Kenya's Joyciline Jepkosgei in a course record and 2025 world-leading mark of 2:14:00.

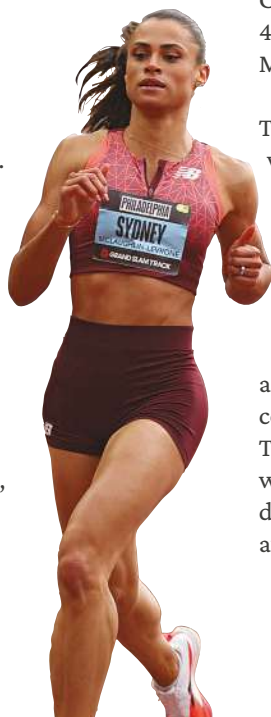
87

Guido Müller, arguably the greatest masters athlete of all-time, died on December 9 aged 87. The German enjoyed a 38-year career in masters athletics where he won 48 world, 103 European and 156 German titles.

He also set a stack of age-group world records, some of which still stand – such as his 300m hurdles marks as an M60 (42.31), M65 (43.88),

ABOVE: Alex Yee completes the Valencia Marathon in a superb time of 2:06:38

BELOW: Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone is owed \$356,250 by Grand Slam Track





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UPGRADE YOUR WORLD

Sheikha Asma Al Thani: championing perseverance at the Doha Marathon 2026

PUSHING BOUNDARIES



As the countdown begins for the 14th edition of the Doha Marathon by Ooredoo on January 16, one name stands out among the voices inspiring a nation to run: Sheikha Asma Al Thani.

A seasoned mountaineer, adventurer and Ooredoo's official brand ambassador, Sheikha Asma has long been a symbol of resilience and ambition.

Her presence at the press conference for the 2026 marathon

was more than ceremonial — it was a reaffirmation of her commitment to empowering individuals of all ages and abilities to embrace sport as a path to both personal growth and stronger community bonds.

"The marathon inspires people to push beyond boundaries and come together in the spirit of perseverance and community," she said, echoing the ethos of the event that is expected to draw over 20,000 runners from around the world.

Sheikha Asma's journey is one of breaking barriers. From summiting Everest to advocating for inclusive

sports in Qatar, she continues to redefine what it means to be a Qatari athlete and ambassador. Her involvement in the marathon campaign brings a powerful narrative to the forefront — one that blends elite achievement with grassroots encouragement.

As the Doha Marathon by Ooredoo expands its reach with new features, including the Blue Fun Run for children with autism and enhanced wellness zones, Sheikha Asma's voice remains a guiding force.

Her message is clear: sport is for everyone, and every step taken is a step towards transformation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: DOHAMARATHONOOREDoo.COM



**MARK ROWLAND**

MY GREATEST RACE

Olympic Games, Seoul, September 30, 1988, Men's 3000m steeplechase, bronze, 8:07.96 (British record)

A late convert to the steeplechase, the Englishman had a steep learning curve but a quest for technical perfection culminated in being beaten only by Kenya's Julius Kariuki and Peter Koech – and a British record-breaking run which remains untouched

It was my coach Alan Storey and my agent Kim McDonald who came with the idea of me switching to the steeplechase heading into the 1987 season. I wanted to be Steve Ovett. I thought maybe I'd have to move to 5000m but Alan knew I probably wouldn't be the world class 1500m runner I'd have loved to have been.

I went to Portsmouth for a development day and I met John Miller, who was a 400m hurdles coach. Every Thursday evening, I'd go down to Portsmouth and learn how to hurdle and do technical drills. I also coached myself. A lot of the stuff that I ended up doing then is

what formulated who I am now as a coach. We adapted. We changed. I really wanted to get my hurdles right.

My water jumping was terrible. My ankle used to swell up, which ended up being a nightmare. I was trying to take videos of my jumping and hurdling and we broke it down. These days it's easy to do with a mobile phone but, back then, it was a completely new field. Everyone was telling me it looked okay but I was knackered so I knew it wasn't.

I worked out, on one freeze frame, what I was doing wrong. It was just little things. I did a little hurdling work with David Hemery, too, and all the little pieces came together.

I did core work every morning and I'd

ABOVE: Mark Rowland on his way to Olympic bronze in Seoul



I WAS MOTIVATED TO EARN A LIVING AND PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE BUT, FUNDAMENTALLY, I WANTED TO BE SUCCESSFUL. TO BE THE BEST

hurdle after every track session. I'd always do 100m run overs, over hurdles, just to build up hurdle endurance, because I wasn't a natural steeplechaser. I needed to learn that. I became obsessive. I wanted to prove the people who'd said I couldn't do it wrong.

I'm a working-class lad. I'm not an academic. I'm not a smart guy. I just worked hard. I only did eight steeples before the Seoul Olympics. At the 1987 world trials, I hit the barrier and got a haematoma with blood clots and was out for two weeks. But I was completely bought in.

Having two young kids, family, drive, hunger – I was motivated to earn a living and put food on the table for the kids. But, fundamentally, I wanted to be successful, to be the best. It was just the penny dropping in 1987 that I could be good at this despite the criticism.

I didn't think I was that gifted, so I had to be better. I'm a butcher's son but I cut out red meat. I wouldn't advise that to anybody, but I did it. At that time, it was thought: "There's more fat there." I wanted to do everything, anything that I could do to be the best I could be. I wasn't a Coe, Ovett or Cram. I trained with those guys but I had to be meticulous in all the other areas.

I did all the physical and mental preparation, instilling confidence and belief. I ended up doing some tapes for relaxation, calming myself down. My nature is always to be worried about the environment but I learned I can't control anyone else, or control the weather. I can control me, now.

Headed to Seoul, I'd run 8:07 in a time trial at the holding camp. I didn't know how much faster I could go but, by that point, I wanted to win. It was all about winning. The Italian Francesco Panetta was the world champion, so he was a big player. I knew there were always three Kenyans, so I had to do something good.

We anticipated the hardest thing was going to be the heat, and running the semi rather than the final. Semi-finals were harder because they're slower. I was better running quickly because there was more efficiency.

I went to the medical centre in the village to get quite loose. I'd never had a massage in my life, but I needed to get loosened out after the heat frightened me. Then you keep focused. You stand on the line and just ignore everybody. For the

final I was really in the moment, in the zone.

I knew it was going to be quick. I just needed to keep them in touch. You never know what pace it will be run in, but I would have probably ignored that anyway. The one thing you don't want to do is to hit the hurdle and I skimmed the very first one. It woke me up because I didn't want to over-hurdle. That tuned me in. It might have been a blessing in disguise.

Then there was a critical moment when the Kenyans started to go with 1000m left. That's a critical moment when it went down. Panetta had died back but some of the East Germans had come back, and they started to get to the front.

I remember, with about 800m to go, thinking: "It's on here, just stay with them." Alan had told me: "Just don't start sprinting and stick with as many as you can."

I couldn't do anything down the back straight. I was looking back, seeing a blur of blue vests. I thought: "Don't look back." I was in third and I couldn't do anything about it. I'd come fourth at the world and European indoors in 1987. That had killed me because I put it on the line there.

Peter (Koech) hurdled the water jump and then I went in and I was pretty good. I felt myself closing more. I just attacked every hurdle. It went into slow motion over the last 300m. I attacked the last one, I got over, and it was just there – the finish line.

I'm not disappointed that no-one has broken my British record since then. But, now, I'd love to coach someone to break it. **AW**

Mark Rowland is head coach of the Edinburgh University Endurance Programme

As told to Mark Woods

FACTFILE

Born: March 7, 1963

Events: 3000m steeplechase/1500m

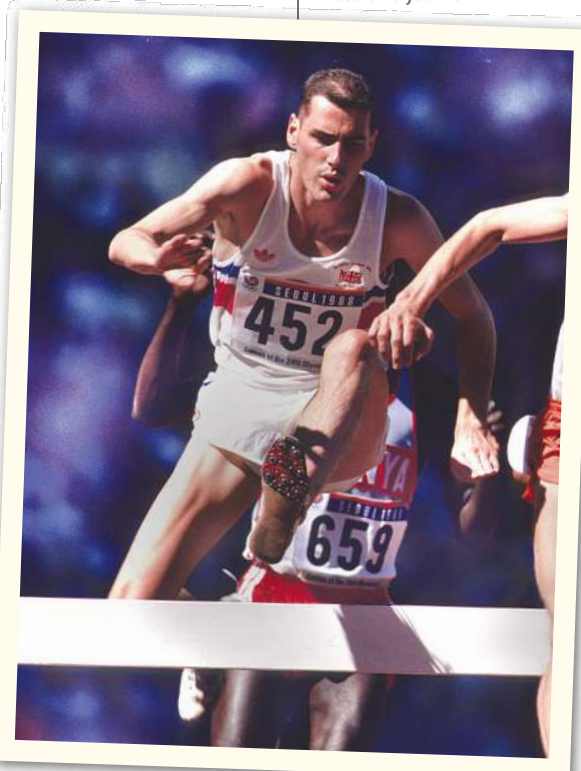
PBs: 8:07.96/3:34.53

Honours

1990: European Championships 3000m steeplechase silver

1988: Olympic Games 3000m steeplechase bronze

BELOW: Rowland's time of 8:07.96 is still the British record 28 years on



RISING STAR

MICHAEL CLARK

FACTFILE

Age: 17

Club: Norwich AC

Coach: Jane Clarke

Events: 3000m/5000m

PBs: 8:09.43/14:08.97

Jasmine Collett speaks to an up and coming distance athlete who has not followed a typical route to representing Great Britain

Michael Clark summed up his European Cross Country debut last month as “bittersweet”. Losing a shoe a little more than a minute into the under-20 race could have ended his day, but instead the 17-year-old fought through the rest of the course to finish 18th against a largely older field. Despite running in clear discomfort and with a foot torn to shreds, his effort helped secure the British team a silver medal.

It was a fitting way to close the 2025 season, one that was full of milestones. Clark won the English Schools 3000m, represented Great Britain & Northern Ireland at the European U20 Championships and claimed victory at the European Cross trials in Liverpool.

None of that seemed likely three years ago, when he was still living in Hong Kong before making the move to the UK.

Born in Japan to a British mother and Australian father, his route into athletics has been far from typical. Having spent much of his life in boarding schools – he’s still in one now – Clark’s experience has been very different from many of his team-mates. But, with more independence to come once he



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

leaves school, his trajectory suggests his best performances may still be to come.

How did you get into athletics?

I actually started off with triathlon. I didn't live in England until I was 14 years old – I lived in Hong Kong – so I'm still quite new to England and how it all works but, as a young kid, I was always the fastest in school so my mum decided to put me in some fun little 5km mountain race.

I was six at the time and ended up winning the race, which had adults in it, so that's when my mum realised that I had a little bit of talent and she should probably help me unlock that.

She put me in a little triathlon group and then, from the age of around eight to 14, I did triathlon and ended up representing Hong Kong regionally, which I was really proud of at the time. When we finally decided to move over to England, I decided I would just stick to my best out of the three disciplines, which was running.

I did a parkrun and, over time, I just chipped away and went sub 18 without being in a running group. I ended up winning the county champs and I was still not in a club. I then got scouted by David Pring at City of Norwich Athletics Club (CONAC) and he began to incorporate some proper training. A

little under four months later, I ran pretty close to the under-15 British record for 5km and that's when things properly kicked off.

What is boarding school like for a talented athlete your age?

When I compare it to someone who could be at home, it is very disadvantageous. I'm really lucky that my school is quite lenient and they give me all the support I need. They allow me to go off campus to do my training with my CONAC group in the city.

But, when it comes to things like food, nutrition, it's very limited as it comes down to what the school offers. Sleep is impacted too, obviously everyone has to wake up for school but for me I have to wake up and have breakfast at school which takes up a bit more time. It's hard but I make it work, the school gives me the most amount of support that they can and I am very grateful for that.

What was your mindset going into Liverpool?

I knew it would be very tough, but at the same time I knew that I had the fitness and the mindset as well. I was ready for the battle and the race. I knew from the start that Will Rabjohns would be the guy who would be very hard to beat, but I always look at my previous accomplishments before I go into a race and I thought: "I've represented Great Britain, why can't I win this race?"

I knew I was in great shape from my previous track season. Obviously, I had to really work hard to beat Rabjohns, but I had a sneaky feeling that I knew I would win.



Michael Clark (right) and Will Rabjohns battle it out in Liverpool

// WHEN I RUN, I REMIND MYSELF WHO I AM, WHAT I'VE DONE AND WHAT I CAN DO

What did it mean to you to represent Britain for cross country?

The fact that it's cross country made me a lot prouder of myself because, last season, I got battered by the likes of Alex Lennon so to get another GB vest in a different discipline is really good.

Why do you love the longer distances on track?

For most people, they think longer distances on the track are more tedious and boring but I think the fact that you get to be on the track for a longer period of time is why I like it the most. Obviously it's just based on general fitness and my fitness is more aerobic than it is based on speed.

I've always loved the 5000m, that's

how I started off in the first place with parkrun. However, I would not like to go up to 10,000m, especially on the track. Even for me, that's too much – 25 laps on the track does not sound very fun to me.

Who do you look up to?

Jakob Ingebrigtsen. He knows what he's doing and he's very determined. He knows he's the best and he speaks like he's the best. In his interviews, he's right in the middle between being confident and being a bit on a cocky side, but that's what I think the sport needs.

You need to say how dominant you are in your field and Jakob can say what he wants and then he goes out and backs himself as well.

What do you think you've learned from athletics?

Everyone says have fun but, at the same time, you need to have fun and perform to the best of your ability. I'm the type of person who would just get nervous and break down if it was left up to me. But, when I run, I remind myself who I am, what I've done and what I can do as well and that all helps me focus and stay calm before the race. **AW**



EMBRACING THE CHAOS

Some unexpected developments at the end of 2025 brought a radical change of plan but also great opportunity, writes **Verity Ockenden**

Often, as January rushes in, stark and questioning, like cold air through an open window, I ask myself if I'm doing the right thing, making the right plan, to achieve the right goals. I think I need to have it all neatly figured out on day one, just because December feels like a punctuation mark.

Luckily, I'm getting forced out of this trope this year by circumstances I wasn't expecting, but am delighted to find myself knee deep in. At the time of writing, as Christmas looms and not a single present has been bought let alone wrapped, I'm also making a list (and checking it twice) of what's going to go into a suitcase

that has to stand me in good stead for three races and three different countries, as well as all of the training and festive social occasions in between until this time next month.

This is all because, despite finishing one second outside of qualification to the Great Britain and Northern Ireland team for the European Cross Country Championships during the trial race at Liverpool in November, I ended up competing in Lagoa as a last-minute substitution anyway.

The European Cross had always been our Plan A so I was physically ready to step up to the plate, but I did have to do a little bit of mental gymnastics to go from disappointment, to motivating myself toward training for Plan

ABOVE: Verity (second from right) and the rest of the Great Britain and NI women's squad celebrate a team silver medal in Portugal



//

MY YEAR WOULDN'T END WITH A COSY OPPORTUNITY TO WIND DOWN AND TAKE STOCK. BECAUSE I'M AN AMBITIOUS PERSON, I INSTEAD CHOSE TO BE MUSCLING ON THROUGH AT A MILLION MILES AN HOUR

B, to the disbelief of getting the reserve call-up, to being ready to make the most of the sudden opportunity to represent

Great Britain again.

As lap after sandy Portuguese lap passed and I finished the race exhausted but in 21st position, silver team medal and bouquet in hand, that chance opportunity grew into an even bigger opportunity. I was now in a position to be selected for the World Cross Country Championships in Tallahassee, Florida.

Now, call me greedy but, even with the prospect of my second ever global championships on the horizon, I didn't want to back out of the Plan B races that I had lined up in between now and then. Like most distance runners, I'm stubborn and I'd been holding a grudge against the 10km ever since I missed going sub 31:30 by two seconds in the spring.

I'd had the goal of putting that to rights by the end of the year ever since, and I wasn't about to give up on it now. That meant targeting the Ribble Valley 10km on December 28. The flights back to the UK from where we would be spending Christmas with family in Italy weren't cheap, so when I found out that there was also a hotly-contested 5km on the 31st in Newcastle to be had, I thought: "Why not make the most of the trip?"

I'd always wanted to experience the fireworks of racing my way into the new year anyway.

By then, once I'd officially been selected for the World Championships which, frankly, was the best Christmas gift I could have wished for, I realised there would really be no point in going home to Italy before needing to fly out to Florida with the team back in the UK again. And therein lies the tale of the Mary Poppins style suitcase I had to concoct.

The moral of this rather long-winded explanation, I think, is that sometimes when life starts to feel a little out of control, it's a good thing. This year's athletics schedule means that my year wouldn't end with a cosy opportunity to wind down and take stock which might have been the comfortable option but, because I'm an ambitious person, I instead chose to be muscling on through at a million miles an hour, making it all up as I go.

Suddenly I'll find myself halfway through January of 2026 and perhaps the next opportunity will already have presented itself, whether I've had time to sit down and dream it up or not. I'm sure I might feel a tad frazzled by then and will have to schedule some time for recovery for when it suits my body's calendar, but for now I think it's important to appreciate that what feels like chaos is actually momentum and I'm grateful to be heading into a new year with an abundance of it.

I don't have time for resolutions, but what will serve me well is trust in the skills that I already possess. The discipline to stick to my own routines wherever I go and prioritise accordingly goes a long way, but so does the flexibility it takes to adapt to any given situation and react well in the moment when life surprises you. I hope that 2026 will bring just as many as 2025 has. **AW**

ABOVE: the senior women's race in Portugal provided a stern test

ALGARVE ANALYSIS

Tim Adams looks back at the big moments from the 2025 European Cross Country Championships

The Portuguese resort of Lagoa provided a stern end of

year test for some of Europe's best distance runners and another memorable edition of the European Cross Country Championships.

There was plenty of intrigue about the course that featured grass and a little mud but mainly lots of sand and gravel, as well as challenging hills and turns. Competitors certainly had to have their wits about them and race craft was to the fore as some excellent contests unfolded.

BATTOCLETTI'S SIX OF THE BEST

Nadia Battocletti admitted to ambitions of becoming an architect in future and she has just completed her degree in Building Engineering and Architecture at the University of Trento. Right now, though, the Italian is in the process of constructing a highly impressive sporting career and she produced a golden finish to a year in which she had already won 10,000m silver and 5000m bronze at the Tokyo World Championships.

Her serene European Cross victory in Lagoa brought her a record sixth individual gold medal at these championships, with her having now won the under-20, under-23 and senior races twice.

Battocletti won by 15 seconds from Great Britain's Megan Keith, who recovered from a very early fall to produce an excellent run, with Yasemin Can of Turkey completing the podium as Belgium took home the team gold medal ahead of Great Britain.

"I thought 2024 as a season was good, given I got a silver medal at the Olympics, but 2025 has been amazing," said Battocletti. "I can't find the words to describe the feeling. I've been so consistent."



GRIGGS GETS HIS GOLDEN MOMENT

Second place was becoming all too familiar for Nick Griggs, who had won four silver medals at various distances and age grades in European competition. However, he came out on top in emphatic fashion by winning the men's under-23 race in style.

The Irishman was runner-up to Will Barnicoat in a close finish at the 2024 edition but this time round he left no room for doubt, beating France's Aurélien Radja by 12 seconds – the biggest ever winning margin in a men's under-23 race in the history of the European Cross.

Barnicoat, who had missed the Liverpool Cross Challenge because of an injury and spent the majority of November cross-training, ended up finishing 14th, while Ireland took home the team title as well.



INNES IS OUTSTANDING AGAIN

Innes FitzGerald admitted to AW in the Algarve that she has “had to grow up fast” in her short career and once again the British teenager showed great maturity – and dominance – in winning her third successive European Cross under-20 title.

Her winning margin of 32 seconds was the biggest ever seen in a women's under-20 race at the European Cross and she dismantled the opposition to say farewell to this age group – she will compete in the under-23 category at the 2026 edition in Belgrade – in some style.

France's Lucie Paturel took finished in second place, with bronze going to Ireland's Emma Hickey.

Britain's team victory was their 19th in 28 editions of the championships.



THE MEDALLISTS

UNDER-20 WOMEN

- 🥇 Innes FitzGerald *GBR*
- 🥈 Lucie Paturel *FRA*
- 🥉 Emma Hickey *IRL*

UNDER-20 MEN

- 🥇 Willem Renders *BEL*
- 🥈 Oscar Gaitan *ESP*
- 🥉 Alois Abraham *FRA*

UNDER-23 WOMEN

- 🥇 Maria Forero *ESP*
- 🥈 Ilona Mononen *FIN*
- 🥉 Pia Schlattmann *GER*

UNDER-23 MEN

- 🥇 Nick Griggs *IRL*
- 🥈 Aurélien Radja *FRA*
- 🥉 Pierre Boudiy *FRA*

SENIOR WOMEN

- 🥇 Nadia Battocletti *ITA*
- 🥈 Megan Keith *GBR*
- 🥉 Yasemin Can *TUR*

SENIOR MEN

- 🥇 Thierry Ndikumwenayo *ESP*
- 🥈 Jimmy Gressier *FRA*
- 🥉 Dominic Lobalu *SUI*

MIXED RELAY

- 🥇 Italy
- 🥈 Portugal
- 🥉 Great Britain & NI

FORERO'S FIGHTING FINISH FOR SPAIN

As expected, the under-23 women's race came down to a duel between the former under-20 champion Maria Forero and Ilona Mononen.

Each had won gold on the track at the European U23 Championships – in the 5000m and 3000m steeplechase respectively – and it didn't take long for them to lead the way. They were clear of the pack by the closing lap and the Spaniard ultimately came out on top, five seconds clear of her Finnish foe.

Pia Schlattmann of Germany won bronze, while France won a very tight battle with Germany to take team gold.



NDIKUMWENAYO PIPS GRESSIER IN THRILLER

Another athlete to have enjoyed a remarkable 2025 is the 10,000m world champion Jimmy Gressier but he was unable to end his year on a winning note.

He had run much of this race alongside Thierry Ndikumwenayo, with the pair having shot out to the front. As they entered the final stretch, however, it was the Spaniard – bronze medallist at the 2024 championships – who kicked hard and edged victory by three seconds.

The race for the final podium spot was even tighter between Great Britain's Scott Beattie and Switzerland's Dominic Lobalu. The bronze medal went down to a photo finish, with Lobalu getting the verdict. Spain's strength in depth saw them secure the team gold medal.

Gressier could console himself with the fact that he now has 12 European Cross medals (nine of them individual) from across the age groups.

Medals table

RANK	COUNTRY	G	S	B	TOT
1	Spain	3	2	3	8
2	Belgium	3	0	0	3
3	Great Britain & NI	2	3	1	6
4	Ireland	2	1	1	4
5	Italy	2	0	0	2
6	France	1	4	4	9
7	Germany	0	1	1	2
8=	Finland	0	1	0	1
8=	Portugal	0	1	0	1
10=	Sweden	0	0	1	1
10=	Switzerland	0	0	1	1
10=	Türkiye	0	0	1	1

BRITS' CROWN SLIPS AS THEY FINISH THIRD

The European Cross Country Championships has traditionally provided rich pickings for British distance runners. Up until last month's event, you had to go back to Edinburgh in 2003 to find a European Cross where another nation won more medals than Britain.

Since then, only twice has the nation ended up second on the medals table but on both those

occasions Britain won more medals in total.

All this came to a halt in Lagoa. With three golds and eight medals in total, Spain topped the medals table, with Britain finishing third with two golds and six medals.

Even sixth-placed France won more medals than Britain with nine, although only one of these was gold. This meant France topped the placings table – where points

are awarded from first to eighth positions – with Spain second and Britain third, just one point ahead of Belgium as Ireland finished fifth. The crown has slipped. No longer are British cross-country runners the kings and queens of Europe.

This may of course just be a blip for Britain. Only 12 months ago, after all, they topped the medals table in Turkey. Let's see what happens next time in Belgrade.

RENDERS' LATE ROAR

The men's under-20 race was a far tighter affair than the women's, with European under-20 5000m champion Willem Renders winning by just one second from Spain's Oscar Gaitan and leading Belgium to their first-ever team gold in this category.

Renders had moved to the front after the opening lap and was being pursued by a strong challenge from the likes of European under-20 1500m and 3000m champion Hakon Moe Berg, as well as his fellow Norwegian and last year's fourth placer Magnus Øyen, as well as Sweden's Karl Ottfalk and Sebastian Lörstad.

However, it was Gaitan who emerged as the main contender and moved into a late lead before Renders regathered himself to win the fight for the line. France's Alois Abraham just beat Türkiye's Ali Tunc to bronze.



MIXED FORTUNES FOR NADER

Since European Athletics introduced the mixed relay to Euro Cross back at Šamorín 2017, it has always produced some of the most dramatic moments at the championships.

That was once again the case in Lagoa as Isaac Nader worked his way through the pack to secure the host nation a silver medal behind Italy. Portugal were 14 seconds off the leaders and in sixth position when

Nader took over but the world 1500m champion showed why he won the title in Tokyo with an authoritative performance and a time of 4:16 for the 1640m leg.

He overtook Great Britain's Callum Elson on the last lap but couldn't do enough to chase down defending champions Italy. Italy won by four seconds to Portugal and Britain edged out France by just one second for the final podium spot. **AW**



PHOTO BY MARK ROE/RED BULL CONTENT POOL

Playing it safe

Former world indoor pole vault champion Molly Caudery tells **Jason Henderson** why, after a series of unfortunate events, she will be exercising caution off the track as she aims to seize the many major opportunities that await in 2026

Molly Caudery is taking no risks ahead of a 2026 summer that includes the European Championships, Commonwealth Games and World Athletics Ultimate Championships. “I don’t even run for a train now, because I wouldn’t want to run without warming up,” she says.

The root of the British pole vault record-holder and 2024 world indoor champion’s note of caution is the “clumsiness” that has led to several injuries in the past. Most notably she sliced her finger badly when a weightlifting session went wrong four years ago while, at the World Championships in Tokyo last year, she ruptured tendons and ligaments in her ankle after catching her foot on the mat during a run-up during the warm-up, although in fairness it was probably more a case of freakishly bad luck than pure clumsiness on that occasion.

“I’ve pretty much taken out all of my risks,” she says. “If I can roll my ankle doing what I do, then I don’t risk doing anything else. I am really clumsy and a lot of my injuries have come from being clumsy, which is not ideal!”

Caudery is more confident of avoiding problems when vaulting, though. “On the runway it’s so natural to me and I know where everything is. I could almost do it with my eyes closed. I’m almost faster with a pole than without a pole. It’s as though this is what I was born to do. But as soon as I’m off that runway it’s not good. I can easily trip over my own feet.”

That meant no ice skating over Christmas and definitely no skiing holidays. After being brought up on the north Cornish coast, though, she finds it hard to resist an occasional surfing session. “Surfing is just about the only thing I would do,” she says, “because I trust myself doing it. But there’s definitely no ice skating or skiing or anything like that. It doesn’t sound like much but those are the small choices you make.”

“

I’m almost faster with a pole than without a pole. It’s as though this is what I was born to do. But as soon as I’m off that runway it’s not good. I can easily trip over my own feet



A street meet in Oxford Street could be the highlight of the year. It would be the best competition in the world

Her clumsiness, she says, “stresses most people out”. She explains: “My mum is always on edge. My coach [Scott Simpson] also tells me to be sensible. When I nearly chopped my finger off [at Christmas in 2021], that was a breaking point really. I had to drive from Cornwall to Derby to get surgery, which was a bit of a palaver.”

Luckily, Caudery doesn’t have any lingering after-effects from her injuries. “My finger that had surgery doesn’t quite bend as it used to, but it doesn’t affect my pole vaulting as it’s my bottom hand and the pressure comes through my palm. Away from the pole vault runway I just try to stay safe and wrap myself in bubble wrap as much as possible!”

The 25-year-old is chatting to AW from her Loughborough home shortly before travelling down for Christmas with family. After Tokyo she spent several weeks with her foot in a protective boot, so the early part of the winter has revolved around working on basic fitness and conditioning. As we speak she is just about to put spikes on again for the first time and tackle a pole vault runway in training.

Looking back on 2025, she says: “It’s definitely not what I was hoping for coming into the year. There were lots of ups and downs. Probably more downs than ups really.

“I had a really great winter’s training and then, on my last day of camp in South Africa, I

got a little hamstring tear and from there I had no consistency all the way through to Tokyo when I blew up my ankle.

“It was frustrating as I didn’t get the chance to train how I’d like to train. We didn’t do a single speed session because it was my hamstring, then my calf and Achilles – and all over the place.

“But to have the year I did and still jump 4.85m and be around that mark consistently was the one thing that kept me going. Tokyo was heartbreaking. Especially after Paris [she inexplicably failed 4.55m in qualifying at the Olympics] I wanted to put myself back out there and get in the fight for a medal. But it was pretty much over before it started which was pretty much out of my control and really unlucky.”

On the injury in Tokyo, she adds: “It’s really rare. I’ve not seen anyone who has done it apart from maybe a couple of long jumpers who have done it when landing. I didn’t break bones but ruptured a couple of tendons and ligaments. I’m still quite new to the big league scene so not every year is going to be amazing. To have a bad year [but still be] jumping those kinds of heights is a good thing.”

This quest to make 2026 a good year will start with training in South Africa. The World Indoor Championships in Poland – and reclaiming the title Caudery won in Glasgow

PHOTO BY ALEX GRIMANIS/RED BULL CONTENT POOL



two years ago – is a possibility, too, but only if she feels she is 100 per cent.

"I won't do a full indoor season, although I'll hopefully go to the World Indoor Champs. But I don't want to go there in anything but 100 per cent shape."

She then plans to train in Turkey in April before hitting the competition circuit and the triple whammy of Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, European Championships in Birmingham and Ultimate Championships – World Athletics' new addition to the calendar in September that will feature the world's best facing each other in international colours over a fast-paced weekend – in Budapest.

"I'm really excited for the summer," she says. "I think it's going to be so much fun having the Commies and Europeans in the UK and then the Ultimate Championships as the last event of the season in Budapest."

"I will definitely try to do them all. At the Commies it's a straight final and then the Europeans a couple of weeks later the qualification round shouldn't be too bad. And then it's a straight final in Budapest, too. So it's not too dissimilar to jumping around on the Diamond League circuit."

On the new Ultimate Championships, she adds: "They're pouring a lot of money into it, which is always an incentive for athletes. For non-Commonwealth and European people I think this will be their most important event of the year."

There is also the mouthwatering prospect of jumping at a street athletics event on Oxford Street in central London on the Diamond League weekend in July – an idea that has recently been mooted by the event organisers.

"I think it could be the highlight of the year," says Caudery excitedly. "It would be amazing, so exciting for the sport."

"I saw women's pole vault isn't in the London Diamond League in 2026 and I've not done that well there over the years but want to keep going until I win there. Then, a few days later, I heard they might put on a street meet in Oxford Street, which would be the best competition in the world, to be honest."

Caudery's presence at such an event would also benefit British athletics. Since her world indoor victory in particular, her profile has exploded. On Instagram she has around 400,000 followers and sponsorship deals with Adidas and Red Bull, as well as NordicTrack treadmills and cross-training machines.

She has enjoyed a number of street pole vault events in recent seasons and says jumping at the railway station in Zurich as part of that

PHOTO BY MARK ROE/RED BULL CONTENT POOL

Diamond League meeting is a great experience. The Fly Athens pole vault meet organised by fellow vaulter Emmanouil “Manolo” Karalis – an event that unfolds against the backdrop of the historic and picturesque Panathenaic Stadium – is another of her favourites.

“They’re so much fun and bring in a great crowd. They’re great for the crowd and the audience,” says Caudery, who won the Athens event with 4.80m last July, too.

What’s more, her British record of 4.92m came at a street meet – the Toulouse Capitole Perche – in France in 2024. It is a performance that puts her No.7 on the world all-time rankings.

Caudery’s career might still be in its early stages, but already she has experience of travelling the circuit extensively, so what is her favourite venue, with the exception of her home track of ‘Carn Brea’ in Cornwall, of course?

“London is always hard to beat,” she smiles. “And Budapest really stuck with me. Coming fifth there [at the 2023 World Championships] was a turning point for me, so for the World Ultimate Champs to be there this year is exciting. Monaco is also beautiful and Paris was a beautiful stadium, although I’ve kind of blanked that out for obvious reasons!”

Caudery’s biggest success so far has been that world indoor title but she does admit that her ambitions extend far beyond competitions under cover.

“I prefer outdoors because it just means more,” she says. “Outdoors means more, [indoors] there’s no pressure and not everyone does it. Being world indoor champ is great but it doesn’t have the weight of a world outdoor



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

ABOVE: Molly Caudery celebrates her indoor world title in Glasgow

title. They have positives and negatives, as the wind and rain outdoors isn’t good, but on balance I prefer outdoors.”

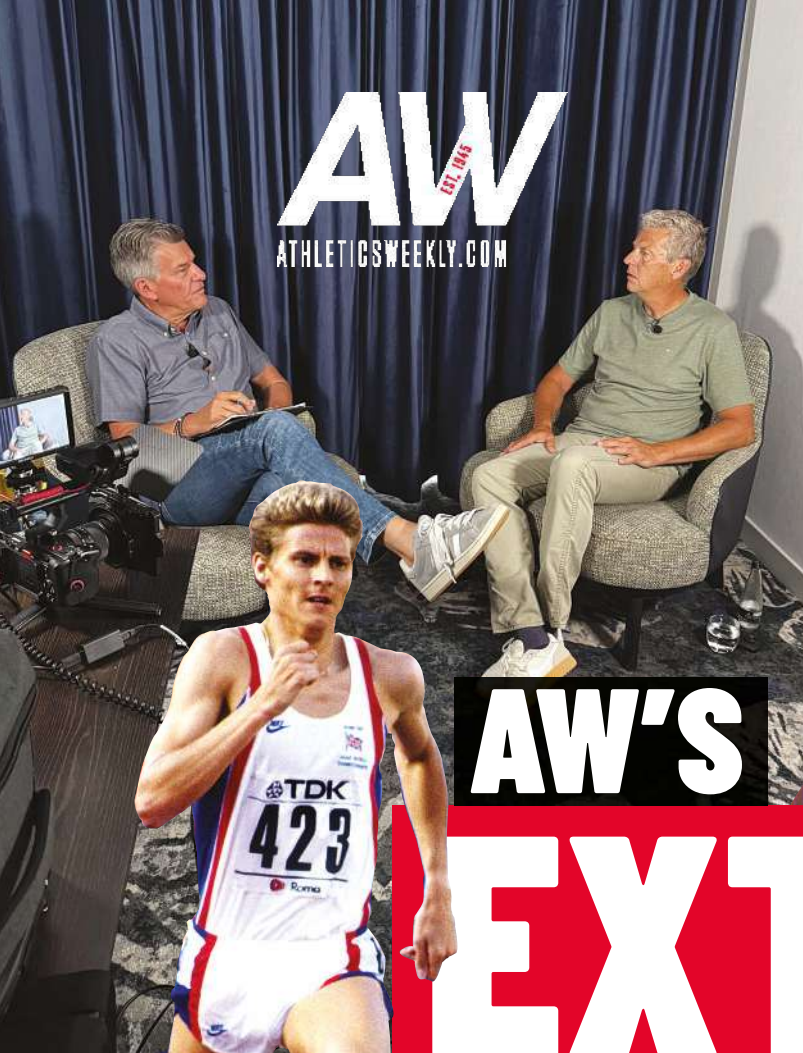
For now, though, preparation for the year ahead is taking precedence. “We’re not pushing too hard in training and doing anything crazy,” says Caudery. “I’d just like some consistency and then I’ll be in great shape.”

Some better luck in the clumsiness department would be a bonus, too. **AW**



To have the year I did and still jump 4.85m and be around that mark consistently was the one thing that kept me going

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PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

And we're off!

With the new year now upon us, welcome to your guide to 2026



he tree is down, the presents are all unwrapped. The resolutions have been made – and perhaps already broken. Summer might still seem like a long way off but now is the perfect time to look at what the sport of athletics has in store for us this year.

Over the coming pages we highlight what – and who – to look out for over 12 months that hold so much promise on the track, in the field, on the roads and even in the mountains.

READY TO ROCK...

There is so much to look forward to in 2026 but I'm incredibly confident that Birmingham will rise to the occasion and provide the biggest moments in the year ahead, writes **Katharine Merry**

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES



W

hat does Ozzy Osbourne have to do with the coming year in athletics? Well, more than you might think, actually. Before you start

wondering what on earth I'm going on about and if I'm still on the Christmas Bailey's, please just bear with me for a moment.

The Prince of Darkness is, of course, inextricably linked with Birmingham and the West Midlands. He, and Black Sabbath, have been one of the area's biggest exports and his passing last summer – with all of the emotional outpouring that created just a couple of weeks after what proved to be his farewell performance at Villa Park – brought a unity and a new energy to the city.

The region responded and not only has it changed the atmosphere on the streets among the residents but it has sparked initiatives and events that have attracted more and more people from across the world to come and see where Ozzy grew up, to see where he performed, to visit the Black Sabbath bridge on Broad Street in the centre of the city and simply pay homage to someone who had such star power and was such a life force.

"Yes, Katharine, that's all well and good but what does that have to do with athletics?" I hear you cry. Well, there's a strong link because Birmingham is going to be right at the heart of some of the biggest goings on in the sport in 2026.

From a British perspective, the national indoor and outdoor championships will be taking place there but the headline act, of course, is the arrival of the European Championships in August. It's been said so many times that Britain excels when it comes to staging major events but I'm going to say it again and, as we all know, the impression that a host city leaves can have a long-lasting effect.

The championships are going to fall less than a month after the anniversary of Ozzy's death, so his presence is going to be everywhere. Tourism is going to be high, people are going to be booking out hotels, the bridge and the murals are going to be swamped with flowers again...the athletes and athletics supporters will be arriving at a very, very exciting point in the summer.

Last summer on BBC Radio WM I presented the funeral cortège programme when Ozzy drove through the city for the final time. My emotional BBC West Midlands clip went viral and sits on 1.8 million views. That is the strength of Ozzy Osbourne and I have already



Katharine Merry

Olympic medallist and broadcaster



@KatharineMerry



@katharine.merry

LEFT: The Alexander Stadium in Birmingham will be the home of the European Championships in 2026



ABOVE: Ozzy Osbourne's presence is still very much being felt

had meetings with my producers on how we're going to build up to the championships and how we're going to spread the word. There has already been a fear of missing out that is prompting punters to start snapping up tickets.

The Commonwealth Games of 2022 at Alexander Stadium far exceeded people's expectations in how it was delivered and what it did for the region, and all the omens at the moment are pointing towards something similar happening. The athletes know that Birmingham can be relied upon to do a good job – and that goes a long way to enticing the biggest names to show up, too.

Personally, as a King appointed Deputy Lieutenant of the region, who won't live anywhere else... it's going to mean a lot! I never competed at a major championships

at Alexander stadium. Yes, I ran national champs there, represented my country there and, as a member of Birchfield Harriers, spent countless hours training there, but I never ran a major champs there. I'd have loved to have done that, like Matt Hudson-Smith did at the Commonwealths in 2022. I know he didn't get the result he wanted then but, fingers crossed, he can get it at the Europeans.

I'm proud to showcase these championships, to push them and get everybody as excited about it all as I am. Obviously, as president of Birchfield Harriers, it's another opportunity for us as a club to showcase what we do. It was well publicised at the time that the build-up to the Commonwealth Games was difficult for us to navigate but this time it looks like being much smoother. A lot of lessons have been learned from four years ago.



THE EUROPEANS ARE GOING TO FALL LESS THAN A MONTH AFTER THE ANNIVERSARY OF OZZY OSBOURNE'S DEATH, SO HIS PRESENCE IS GOING TO BE EVERYWHERE AND EVERYONE IS GOING TO BE BUZZING



ABOVE RIGHT: Local boy Matt Hudson-Smith competed on his home track at the 2022 Commonwealth Games



KATHARINE MERRY

I'm sure there will also be a lot to learn from this year's edition of the Games, which will have a very different look about them in Glasgow in July. This stripped back version seems to have saved the Games for now and, with India coming in to host 2030, there is at least a little breathing space.

I hope Glasgow proves to be a big success again. I know the Commonwealths don't excite everyone, but I do think they represent a huge and important opportunity for athletes that I think would be sorely missed from what is an ever-changing calendar.

I want Glasgow to be a success and I want Birmingham to be a success. I think, if both of those go to plan, then everything else should take care of itself. The Diamond League isn't perfect but it's made up of long established events that are hugely dependable and we know it's going to deliver fast times, big jumps and long throws.

There is intrigue around how World Athletics' inaugural Ultimate Championships might work out but, again, Budapest has a track record for putting on a great show after the 2023 World Championships so there are reasons to be encouraged there, too. It's not some step into the unknown.

Overall, my wish for the new year is to see more of our brilliant athletes producing inspirational performances and that's another reason to hope for success at these big championships.

Steve Cram and Steve Smith recently announced an initiative that hopes to keep more youngsters in athletics and I applaud them for it. They are looking for opinions

and ideas from across the sport about how to combat the worrying dropout rates among teenagers and I hope they get a wide cross section – from coaches and officials to athletes themselves – having an input.

It's not an easy issue to tackle. Both of my kids play football and have never really shown a desire to try athletics or asked me if they could go down to the track and I can't honestly put my finger on exactly why that is. I know athletics can be very lonely, given its individual nature and being so different from team sports, but there is so much it can teach you and give you – not to mention the potential lifelong friendships that are there to be made.

I think it's important that athletics doesn't try to compete with sports like football, which is in a world of its own in terms of participation and attention levels. I think instead we should be doing our utmost to promote all of the advantages that come with being involved in track and field – and then being in the best situation to take advantage of those who might decide the big team sports aren't for them any more. Matt Hudson-Smith was with Wolves' academy, for example, and Adam Gemili was at Chelsea before going on to become an Olympic sprinter.

Having exposure to well-known athletes doing amazing things will help the cause, too, which is another reason to hope these major opportunities that await in 2026 can be seized with both hands. "I'm going through changes," as Ozzy once sang. The same could be said for athletics, so will this be the year when the sport can take another significant step forward? **AW**

Country pursuits



The cross country events to watch out for in 2026

WHAT?

The World Athletics Cross Country Championships

WHEN?

January 10

WHERE?

Apalachee Regional Park, Tallahassee, Florida

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

14:45 Mixed Relay

15:20 Junior Women's 6km

15:55 Junior Men's 8km

16:35 Senior Women's 10km

17:20 Senior Men's 10km

Mass participation races will take place from approximately 19:00

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Fearsome racing and African runners to come to the fore once again. The last time an athlete born outside of Africa won the senior men's title came in 1985, when Carlos Lopes of Portugal took victory. The last

non-African-born winner of the senior women's race was Australia's Benita Johnson in 2004.

"Our theme for the event is 'welcoming the world to Florida'," says Taylor Wheaton, senior sports director at Visit Tallahassee of this year's course. "So we have devised the different elements to mimic different spaces and areas of Florida.

"There will be a water feature, which showcases Florida's waters and beaches. We have a sand element that will showcase Florida's beaches. There is a mud element which will be themed after our Everglades. And then there is 'alligator alley', with wooden alligators."

FIRST EDITION?

That came in 1973 in the Belgian town of Waregem.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

Belgrade stepped in at short notice in 2024 after the original hosts of

Medulin and Pula in Croatia were forced to pull out, World Athletics having described their "preparations as not sufficiently advanced".

At Friendship Park in Serbia, Kenya's Beatrice Chebet successfully defended her senior women's title, while Jacob Kiplimo of Uganda won his second successive senior men's gold.

Kenya retained their mixed relay title, winning by 28 seconds from Ethiopia, while Britain took bronze. In the U20 races, Kenyan Samuel Kibathi led his country to team gold with his victory and the then 15-year-old Ethiopian Marta Alemayo caused an upset in winning the women's contest.

DID YOU KNOW?

The world cross was last staged in the USA in 1992, at Boston's Franklin Park. John Ngugi of Kenya won the senior men's race, with USA's Lynn Jennings winning her third consecutive senior women's gold. Britain's Paula Radcliffe won the junior women's race.



Key UK cross fixtures for 2026

February 7

UKA Cross Challenge
London

February 21

English National Cross
Country Championships
Sedgefield

Scottish National Cross
Country Championships
Falkirk

March 7

UKA Cross Challenge
(inc UK Inter-Counties
Championships)
Nottingham

* At the time of going to print, no venue had been secured for the BUCS Cross Country Championships and UKA 2026/27 Cross Challenge fixtures were yet to be published

WHAT?

The European Cross Country Championships

WHEN?

December 13

WHERE?

Friendship Park, Belgrade

TIMETABLE

TBC

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Some of Europe's finest distance runners providing an entertaining off-road end to the year.

FIRST EDITION?

1994 in Alnwick.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

See p20

World Athletics Cross Country Tour

Remaining fixtures for 2025/26

January 18

LXXXII Elgoibar Cross
Country Juan Muguerza
Memorial

Elgoibar (ESP)

January 25

69° Campaccio - International
Cross Country

San Giorgio su Legnano (ITA)

Cross Cup de Hannut

Hannut (BEL)

February 1

LV Gran Premio Cáceres de la
Diputación de Cáceres

Cáceres (ESP)

February 8

49.º Cross Internacional das
Amendoeiras em Flor

Albufeira (POR)

February 14

Sirikwa Classic Continental
Tour Gold

Eldoret (KEN)

March 7

59th White Cross

Belgrade (SRB)

DID YOU KNOW?

Jakob Ingebrigtsen has won gold in every one of his seven appearances at the championships since making his debut in the under 20 race in Chia in 2016.



Inside stories

Taking you through a packed indoor season ahead

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World Athletics Indoor Tour

GOLD LEVEL MEETINGS

January 24

New Balance Indoor Grand Prix
Boston (USA)

February 1

Millrose Games
New York (USA)

February 3

Czech Indoor Gala
Ostrava (CZE)

February 6

World Indoor Tour Gold Madrid 2026
Madrid (ESP)

February 8

INIT Indoor Meeting Karlsruhe
Karlsruhe (GER)

February 11

Belgrade Indoor Meeting

Belgrade (SRB)

February 19

Meeting Hauts-de-France
Pas-de-Calais Trophée EDF
Liévin (FRA)

February 22

ORLEN Copernicus Cup
Toruń (POL)

SILVER LEVEL MEETINGS

January 16-17

Reno Livestock Events Center
Reno (USA)

January 18

CMCM Luxembourg Indoor Meeting
Luxembourg (LUX)

January 21

Tampere Indoor Meeting
Tampere (FIN)

January 22

BAUHAUS-galan Indoor
Stockholm (SWE)

January 24

ISTAF Indoor Düsseldorf
Düsseldorf (GER)

January 24-25

IV. Astana Indoor Meet for Amin
Tuyakov Prizes
Astana (KAZ)

January 25

Meeting de Paris Indoor
Paris (FRA)

Orlen Cup Łódź
Łódź (POL)

January 30

Elite Indoor Track Miramas Meeting
Miramas (FRA)

January 30-31

Perch'Xtrem
Caen (FRA)

January 31

Gorzów Jump Festival
Gorzów Wielkopolski (POL)

February 1



Meeting de L'Eure
Val-de-Reuil (FRA)

February 7

Fly Athens Indoor

Athina (GRE)

High Jump Meeting Hustopečské skákání

Hustopeče (CZE)

Perche en Or

Roubaix (FRA)

February 8

Meeting Metz Moselle Athlélor

Crédit Mutuel

Metz (FRA)

February 10

High Jump Meeting Beskyd Bar

Třinec (CZE)

February 14

Sound Invite

Winston Salem (USA)

XI. International Tournament for the Prizes of Olga Rypakova

Ust-Kamenogorsk (KAZ)

February 21

Ocean Breeze Elite

New York (USA)

February 22

All Star Perche

Clermont-Ferrand (FRA)

February 24

32nd Banskobystrická latka

Banská Bystrica (SVK)

February 25

Hvězdy v Nehvizdech

Nehvizdy (CZE)

March 6

ISTAF Indoor 2026

Uber Arena, Berlin (GER)

March 7

Perche Elite Tour

Rouen (FRA)

March 12

Mondo Classic

Uppsala (SWE)

Selected UK indoor fixtures

January 17-18

England senior and U20 indoor combined events championships

Sheffield

January 24

scottisathletics Indoor Senior/U18 Championships

Glasgow

Masters BMAF indoor pentathlon, 3000m and Open championships

Cardiff

January 31

scottisathletics EAP Indoor International

Glasgow

February 7-8

England U20, U17 and U15 Open Indoor Championships

Sheffield

Welsh Athletics Senior, U17 and Para Indoor Championships

Cardiff

February 13-15

BUCS Indoor Championships

Sheffield

February 14-15

Novuna UK Athletics Indoor Championships

Birmingham

February 21-22

Masters BMAF Indoor Championships

Lee Valley

February 22-23

Athletics Ireland National Indoor Senior Championships

Belfast

February 28

Vault Manchester

Manchester

February 28-March 1

National Indoor Championships Window

Various

March 8

Air Loughborough

Loughborough

**WHAT?**

World Athletics Indoor Championships

WHEN?

March 20-22

WHERE?

Torun, Poland

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Indoor athletics is always worth watching. With the smaller track, the bends tighter and banked, plus the crowds being closer, every element is heightened and the margin for error smaller. A large number of the world's very best turn out, too, so the action is of the highest quality and there is the chance to get some early clues as to how the outdoor season might unfold.

FIRST EDITION?

The first World Indoor Games was held in Paris in 1985 but the inaugural IAAF World Indoor Championships took place in 1987 in Indianapolis.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

In Nanjing last March, the USA topped the medals table, with



victories for Christopher Bailey (men's 400m), Claire Bryant (women's long jump), Josh Hoey (men's 800m) and Grant Holloway (men's 60m hurdles), as well as both the men's and women's 4x400m relays.

Holloway and Mondo Duplantis (pole vault), became the first men to win three consecutive world indoor titles, while Jakob Ingebrigtsen (1500m and 3000m) became the second man in history to win two individual gold medals at a single World Indoor Championships.

Amber Anning (women's 400m) and Jeremiah Azu (men's 60m, right) were Britain's gold medallists.

DID YOU KNOW?

There has been a rule change for the 400m finals at the World Indoor Championships. Rather than one race, World Athletics states it will now be a case of: "Having two sections for the World Indoor Championships 400m final, each with four athletes, with combined results [to determine the winner]."



DAY ONE - MARCH 20

MORNING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
09:05	M	60m	Hept
09:20	M	60m	Heats
09:50	M	Long Jump	Hept
10:15	W	400m	Heats
10:30	W	High Jump	Final
10:55	M	400m	Heats
11:35	W	800m	Heats
12:00	M	Shot Put	Hept
12:20	M	800m	Heats

EVENING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
17:35	W	1500m	Heats
17:35	M	High Jump	Hept
17:45	W	Shot Put	Final
18:18	M	1500m	Heats
18:35	M	Triple Jump	Final
19:05	W	400m	Semi-Final
19:25	M	60m	Semi-Final
19:50	M	400m	Semi-Final
20:22	M	60m	Final

DAY TWO - MARCH 21

MORNING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
09:05	M	60m Hurdles	Hept
09:20	M	60m Hurdles	Heats
10:05	W	60m	Heats
10:10	M	Pole Vault	Hept
10:55	X	4x400m	Final



12:08	W	800m	Semi-Final
12:15	M	High Jump	Final
12:37	M	800m	Semi-Final

EVENING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
17:35	M	Pole Vault	Final
17:40	M	400m	Final
17:50	M	1000m	Hept
18:05	W	3000m	Final
18:20	W	Triple Jump	Final

18:25	M	3000m	Final
18:50	M	60m Hurdles	Semi-Final
19:15	W	60m	Semi-Final
19:44	W	400m	Final
20:05	M	60m Hurdles	Final
20:20	W	60m	Final

DAY THREE - MARCH 22

MORNING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
09:05	W	60m Hurdles	Pent
09:20	W	Long Jump	Final
09:25	M	4x400m Relay	Heats
09:45	W	High Jump	Pent
09:00	W	4x400m Relay	Heats
10:20	M	Shot Put	Final
11:55	W	60m Hurdles	Heats
12:15	W	Shot Put	Pent

EVENING SESSION

UK Time	sex	event	round
16:40	W	Long Jump	Pent
17:05	W	Pole Vault	Final
18:02	M	Long Jump	Final
18:09	M	1500m	Final
18:20	W	60m Hurdles	Semi-Final
18:42	W	1500m	Final
18:55	M	800m	Final
20:05	W	800m	Final
20:15	W	800m	Pent
20:25	W	60m Hurdles	Final
20:38	M	4x400m Relay	Final
20:50	W	4x400m Relay	Final



ABOVE: Kimberly Garcia Leon of Peru leads the field in the women's 20km race walk at the World Championships

BELOW: Perseus Karlstrom of Sweden

Walk this way

WHAT?

World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships

WHEN?

April 12

WHERE?

Brasilia, Brazil

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

The world's best race walkers competing for both individual and team honours. Senior athletes will be battling it out over the marathon and half marathon distances, while the juniors face a 10km assignment.

FIRST EDITION?

These championships were first staged in 1961 in Lugano, Switzerland.



WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

In Antalya in 2024, Australian 16-year-old Isaac Beacroft took the men's U20 10km victory, his impressive finishing speed to clock an Oceanian U20 record of 39:56. China's Yang Xizhen also produced a strong finish to win the women's title. In the 20km events, women's

gold went to Spaniard Kimberly Garcia and Sweden's Perseus Karlstrom emerged as the men's champion. The inaugural marathon race walk mixed relay at these championships came with a win for Valentina Trapletti and Francisco Fortunato – nominated as Italy's second team.

DID YOU KNOW?

This will be the first time ever that a global race walking competition has been held in Latin America.

TIMETABLE

UK Time	sex	event
10:00	M/W	Marathon Race Walk
10:30	M	U20 10km Race Walk
11:30	W	U20 10km Race Walk
14:05	M	Half Mara Race Walk
15:50	W	Half Mara Race Walk



Relay good

WHAT?

World Athletics Relays

WHEN?

May 2-3

WHERE?

Gaborone, Botswana

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Speed and drama, with early season chances to secure titles and championships places. The top eight teams from last year's World Championships in Tokyo qualified for this event, with remaining spots to be filled between now and April 5 via top lists.

As well as World Relays titles, teams will be aiming to qualify for the Ultimate Championships in Budapest later in 2026 and next year's World Championships in Beijing.

Eight teams in each of the events will qualify for Beijing through round one on the opening day. These teams will then contest the final to compete

for World Relays titles and prize money. Another four teams in each of the six events will secure their place in Beijing through qualification round two on day two. The second day of competition will also see six teams in each of the two mixed relay events qualify for Budapest.

FIRST EDITION?

The first World Relays took place in the Bahamas in 2014.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

In Guangzhou last year, South Africa took the men's 4x100m title, while the British line-up won women's 4x100m gold and the mixed 4x100m relay honours went to Canada. In the 4x400m relays, USA broke the championship record with 3:09.54 to take the mixed win, while South Africa landed the men's title and Spain sprang a surprise with women's victory.

DID YOU KNOW?

This will be the first time that

Botswana has hosted a World Athletics Series event.

TIMETABLE

MAY 2

UK Time	sex	event	round
13:05	X	4x100m	Heats
13:30	X	4x400m	Heats
14:05	W	4x100m	Qual 1
14:30	M	4x100m	Qual 1
14:55	W	4x400m	Qual 1
15:30	M	4x400m	Qual 1

MAY 3

UK Time	sex	event	round
13:02	X	4x100m	Qual 2
13:20	X	4x400m	Qual 2
13:44	W	4x400m	Qual 2
14:08	M	4x400m	Qual 2
14:30	W	4x100m	Qual 2
14:47	M	4x100m	Qual 2
15:05	X	4x100m	Final
15:13	X	4x400m	Final
15:24	W	4x100m	Final
15:32	M	4x100m	Final
15:40	W	4x400m	Final
15:51	M	4x400m	Final

Diamond days

What's to come in this new outdoor season?

WHAT?

Wanda Diamond League 2026

WHEN?

May 8 - September 5

WHERE?

Various locations across 15 events.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Top quality competition and records. On the track, with pacemakers on hand, Diamond League events have become synonymous with rapid time trial style races that can make them very different to championship conditions. Expect increased speeds, longer throws and higher jumps.

FIRST EDITION?

Replacing the IAAF Golden League, the first Diamond League season took place in 2010.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

Three world records and two world bests were set during the 2025 series. In Eugene, Faith Kipyegon lowered her own 1500m mark to 3:48.68, while Beatrice Chebet became the first woman to run under 14 minutes for 5000m with 13:58.06. In Stockholm, Mondo Duplantis cleared 6.28m in the pole vault, while Karsten Warholm recorded 300m hurdles world bests in Xiamen (33.05) and Oslo (32.67).

A total of 12 Diamond League records were set, as well as a total of 69 national records and 20 area records, across the season.

DID YOU KNOW?

Noah Lyles' 200m win in the Diamond League Final last year saw him claim a sixth title, becoming the most successful track athlete in the series' history.

DIAMOND LEAGUE FIXTURES AND DISCIPLINES

MAY 8

DOHA Men

200m - 110m Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - High Jump - Pole Vault - Triple Jump - Javelin

Women

100m - 400m - 800m - 1500m - 5000m - 400m Hurdles - Triple Jump

MAY 16

SHANGHAI Men

100m - 800m - 3000/5000m - 110m Hurdles - 400m Hurdles - Pole Vault - Discus Throw

Women

200m - 400m - 1500m - 100m Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - Long Jump - Shot Put

MAY 23

XIAMEN Men

100m - 400m - 5000m - 110m Hurdles - 400m Hurdles - Long Jump - Shot Put

Women

200m - 1500m - 110m Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - High Jump - Discus - Javelin

MAY 31

RABAT Men

200m - 400m - 800m - 1500m - 3000m Steeplechase - Shot Put - Javelin

Women

100m - 200m - 800m - 400m Hurdles - High Jump - Pole Vault - Discus

JUNE 4

ROME Men

100m - 110m Hurdles - High Jump - Long Jump - Triple Jump - Shot Put - Javelin

Women

200m - 400m - 1500m - 5000m - 100m Hurdles - 400m Hurdles - Pole Vault

JUNE 7

STOCKHOLM Men

200m - 400m - 800m - 1500m - 3000m Steeplechase - Pole vault - Discus

Women

100m - 800m - 3000m Steeplechase - Long jump - Shot put - Discus





JUNE 10

OSLO

Men

200m - 800m - 1500m - 5000m -
400m Hurdles - Pole Vault - Triple
Jump

Women

100m - 400m - 3000m - 400m
Hurdles - Triple Jump - Shot Put -
Javelin

JUNE 26

PARIS

Men

100m - 400m - 800m - 5000m - 110m
Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - Pole
Vault

Women

400m - 800m - 1500m - 100m
Hurdles - Pole Vault - Shot Put -
Javelin

JULY 3-4

EUGENE

Men

200m - 400m - Bowerman Mile - 110m
Hurdles - Shot Put - Discus

Women

Mutola 800m - 100m - 1500m -
5000m - 100m Hurdles - 3000m
Steeplechase - Long Jump - Shot Put

JULY 10

MONACO

Men

100m - 400m - 800m -
3000m/5000m - 3000m
Steeplechase - High Jump - Long
Jump

Women

200m - 400m - 3000m/5000m -
100m Hurdles - Pole Vault - Triple
Jump - Javelin

JULY 18

LONDON

Men

100m - 400m - 800m - 1500m/1 Mile
- 110m Hurdles - 400m Hurdles - Pole
Vault

Women

200m - 400m - 800m - 3000m - High
Jump - Long Jump - Discus

AUGUST 21

LAUSANNE

Men

200m - 800m - 5000m - Pole Vault -
Long Jump - Triple Jump - Javelin

Women

200m - 800m - 100m Hurdles - 400m
Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - Pole
Vault - Javelin

AUGUST 23

SILESIA

Men

100m - 400m - 1500m - 110m
Hurdles - 400m Hurdles - 3000m
Steeplechase - High Jump - Discus

Women

100m - 400m - 1500m - 5000m - High
Jump - Long Jump - Triple Jump

AUGUST 27

ZURICH

Men

200m - 1500m - 5000m - 400m
Hurdles - Long Jump - Shot Put -
Javelin

Women

100m - 800m - 100m Hurdles - 400m
Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase - High
Jump - Pole Vault

SEPTEMBER 4 AND 5

BRUSSELS

Men

100m - 200m - 400m - 800m - 1500m
- 5000m - 110m Hurdles - 400m
Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase -
High Jump - Pole Vault - Long Jump
- Triple Jump - Shot Put - Discus -
Javelin

Women

100m - 200m - 400m - 800m - 1500m
- 5000m - 100m Hurdles - 400m
Hurdles - 3000m Steeplechase -
High Jump - Pole Vault - Long Jump
- Triple Jump - Shot Put - Discus -
Javelin

More dates for your diary: p46

World Athletics Continental Tour (Selected fixtures)

February 14

Perth Track Classic

Perth

February 21

International Track Meet

Christchurch

February 28

Sydney Track Classic

Sydney

March 13-14

Adelaide Invitational

Adelaide

March 28

Maurie Plant Meet

Melbourne

April 24

Kip Keino Classic

Nairobi

April 26

Botswana Golden Grand Prix

Gaborone

May 9

The Belfast Classic

Belfast

May 14

KPMG Prague Night of PBs

Prague

May 16

British Milers Club Grand Prix

Trafford, Manchester

May 17

Golden Grand Prix 2026

TBC (JPN)

May 29

8th Irena Szewińska Memorial

Bydgoszcz

May 30

British Milers Club

Grand Prix

Birmingham University

June 3

Paavo Nurmi Games

Turku

June 6

USATF New York Grand Prix

New York

June 13

British Milers Club Grand Prix

Loughborough

June 14

USATF LA Grand Prix

Los Angeles

June 16

65th Ostrava Golden Spike

Ostrava

June 21

FBK Games

Hengelo

June 28

2026 Boris Hanžeković

Memorial

Zagreb



July 8

Cork City Sports

Cork

July 10

Morton Games

Dublin

July 11

British Milers Club Grand Prix

Watford

July 14

Gyulai István Memorial - Hungarian

Athletics Grand Prix

Budapest

August 8

British Milers Club Grand Prix

Bury, Manchester

August 30

ISTAF 2026

Berlin

September 5

The Monument Mile Classic

Stirling

Other key dates

March 14-15

European Throwing Cup

Nicosia

April 18

BUCS 10,000m championships

Loughborough

May 2-4

BUCS track and field

championships

Venue TBC

May 23

European 10,000m Cup

La Spezia, Italy

June 13

NI & Ulster Senior

Championships

Belfast

June 20-21

Novuna UK Athletics

Championships

Birmingham

July 3-5

England Athletics U20 and Senior

Championships, U20 and Senior

Combined Events Championships

and Senior Para Championships

Venue TBC

July 10-11

English Schools' AA track and

field championships

Birmingham

July 18

SIAB International

Belfast

July 18-19

Masters BMAF track and field

championships

Venue TBC

August 29-30

scottishathletics National Senior

and U18 Championships

Aberdeen



Ready to go in Glasgow

Can this return to Scotland help save the Commonwealth Games?



ABOVE: Eilish McColgan celebrates her gold in Birmingham

WHAT?

The Commonwealth Games

WHEN?

The athletics and para athletics schedule runs from July 27-August 1

WHERE?

Scotstoun Stadium, Glasgow

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Something a little bit different from normal, and certainly far removed from the sporting extravaganza that took place in 2014 – the last time the Commonwealth Games were staged in Glasgow. Scotland's largest city stepped in with a stripped back solution this time around after

Victoria in Australia pulled out of hosting due to costs.

The athletics will play out at Scotstoun Stadium and, though much smaller than 2014 venue Hampden, it will still generate a great atmosphere. One of the most intriguing additions to the schedule is the men's and women's mile. Already a number of the best middle distance athletes have declared their desire to compete for that medal.

We should see emerging talents mixing it with established stars across the disciplines.

FIRST EDITION?

Then known as the British Empire Games, its first staging took place in

Hamilton, Canada in 1930.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

The refurbished Alexander Stadium in Birmingham raised the roof and exceeded expectations in 2022. Those Games came hot on the heels of the rescheduled world championships in Eugene and a large number of athletes competed in both as the sport bounced back from Covid. England finished second on the athletics medals table to Australia, while Jamaica's Elaine Thompson-Herah stood out with her 100m/200m sprint double.

However, arguably the most memorable moment on the track came when Scotland's Eilish

McColgan emulated her mother Liz by winning 10,000m gold (she also took 5000m silver), in a Games record of 30:48.60.

DID YOU KNOW?

This edition of the Commonwealth Games will feature 10 sports – athletics, swimming, track cycling, weightlifting, lawn bowls, judo, 3x3 basketball, gymnastics, netball and boxing.

JULY 27

MORNING SESSION 10:00-13:30

sex	event	round
W	High Jump	Qualifying A & B
M	400m Hurdles	Round 1
M	Long Jump	Qualifying A
M	100m	Round 1
M	T37/38 100m	Round 1
M	Long Jump	Qualifying B
M	110m Hurdles	Round 1
W	Hammer	Qualifying
W	100m	Round 1
W	T37/38 100m	Round 1

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 21:45

sex	event	round
W	F55-57 Shot Put	Final
M	High Jump	Final
W	800m	Round 1
W	T37/38 100m	Final
M	Hammer	Final
W	10,000m	Final
M	3000m Steeplechase	Final
M	T20 1500m	Final
M	T37/38 100m	Final
M	110m Hurdles	Final

JULY 28

MORNING SESSION 10:00 - 12:45

Sex	Event	Round
W	100m Hurdles	Heptathlon
W	Discus	Qualifying
W	400m	Round 1
W	High Jump	Heptathlon
M	800m	Round 1
W	Shot Put	Qualifying A & B
M	400m	Round 1

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 21:45

Sex	Event	Round
W	Shot Put	Heptathlon
W	High Jump	Final
M	100m	Semi-final
M	T20 Long Jump	Final
W	100m	Semi-final
W	Hammer	Final

M	10,000m	Final
W	200m	Heptathlon
M	100m	Final
W	100m	Final

JULY 29

MORNING SESSION 10:00 - 13:30

Sex	Event	Round
W	Long Jump	Heptathlon
W	200m	Round 1
M	Shot Put	Qualifying A & B
M	One Mile	Round 1
M	200m	Round 1
W	Triple Jump	Qualifying A & B
W	Javelin	Heptathlon
M	T11/12 100m	Round 1
W	400m Hurdles	Round 1
M	T45-47 100m	Round 1

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 21:45

Sex	Event	Round
W	F42-44/61-64	Discus Final
M	400m Hurdles	Semi-final
W	800m	Semi-final
M	Long Jump	Final
W	T53/54 1500m	Final
W	Shot Put	Final
M	T45-47 100m	Final
M	F42-44/61-64 Discus	Final
W	800m	Heptathlon
W	3000m Steeplechase	Final

JULY 30

MORNING SESSION 10:00 - 13:30

Sex	Event	Round
M	100m	Decathlon
M	Pole Vault	Qualifying A & B
M	Long Jump	Decathlon
M	Javelin	Qualifying
W	100m Hurdles	Round 1
W	One Mile	Round 1
M	Triple Jump	Qualifying A & B
W	T45-47 100m	Round 1
M	Shot Put	Decathlon
W	400m	Semi-final
M	400m	Semi-final

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 21:45

Sex	Event	Round
M	Shot Put	Final
M	200m	Semi-final
M	High Jump	Decathlon
W	Triple Jump	Final
W	T45-47 100m	Final
W	100m Hurdles	Final
W	200m	Semi-final
W	Discus	Final
M	800m	Semi-final
M	400m	Decathlon

W	5000m	Final
M	T11/12 100m	Final

JULY 31

MORNING SESSION 10:00 - 14:30

Sex	Event	Round
M	110m Hurdles	Decathlon
W	Long Jump	Qualifying A
M	Discus	Decathlon
X	Mixed 4x400m Relay	Heats
W	Long Jump	Qualifying B
W	T37/38 200m	Round 1
M	Discus	Qualifying
W	T53/54 400m	Round 1
M	Pole Vault	Decathlon

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 22:00

Sex	Event	Round
M	Javelin	Decathlon
M	10,000m Race Walk	Final
W	Pole Vault	Final
W	T37/38 Long Jump	Final
M	Javelin	Final
W	800m	Final
M	1500m	Decathlon
W	400m Hurdles	Final
M	400m Hurdles	Final
M	200m	Final
W	200m	Final

AUGUST 1

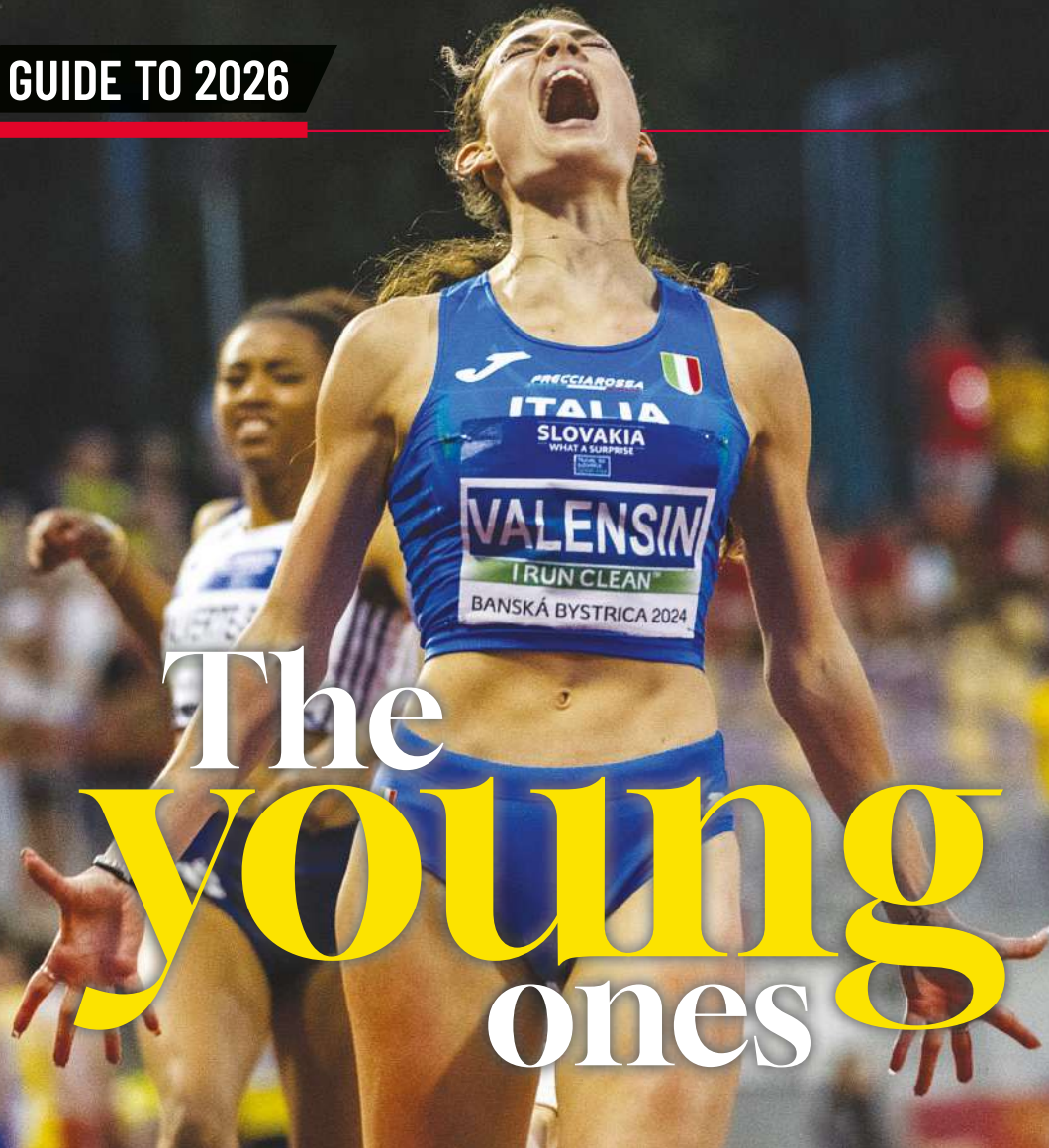
MORNING SESSION 10:00 - 14:00

Sex	Event	Round
M	F55-57 Shot Put	Final
M	Triple Jump	Final
M	T53/54 1500m	Final
W	10,000m Race Walk	Final
M	Discus	Final
M	400m	Final
W	400m	Final
W	4x100m Relay	Round 1
M	4x100m Relay	Round 1
W	T37/38 200m	Final

EVENING SESSION 18:30 - 22:00

Sex	Event	Round
M	Pole Vault	Final
W	Long Jump	Final
W	Javelin	Final
M	800m	Final
M	5000m	Final
M	4x100m Relay	Final
W	4x100m Relay	Final
W	T53/54 400m	Final
M	One Mile	Final
X	Mixed 4x400m Relay	Final
W	One Mile	Final

**subject to change*



The young ones

The championships that will provide a potential glimpse into the future

WHAT?

European Athletics
Under-18 Championships

WHEN?

July 16-19

WHERE?

Rieti, Italy

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Fierce competition in the Italian summer heat, with athletes aiming for their first major prize or using these championships as preparation for the World U20 Championships.

FIRST EDITION?

Tbilisi, Georgia, hosted the inaugural event in 2016.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

In the Slovakian city of Banská Bystrica two years ago, Italy finished on top of the medals table with

seven gold medals. With wins in the 200m (with a championship best of 23.09) and medley relay, Italian Elisa Valensin was the only athlete to finish with two medals.

Other highlights included a European U18 best from home athlete Laura Frlickova in the 100m hurdles (12.86) on her way to gold, while Czech Michal Rada's 49.42 saw him become the first European to break 50 seconds in the U18 400m hurdles. His twin sister, Nina Radova, won the women's race.

DID YOU KNOW?

Great Britain finished fourth in the medals table two years ago, with gold medals coming from Lyla Belshaw (women's 1500m), Matthew McKenna (men's 800m) and Katie Pye (women's 3000m).

More information at:
european-athletics.com



ABOVE & RIGHT: Elisa Valensin and Matthew McKenna were gold medallists in Slovakia two years ago

WHAT?

World Athletics Under-20 Championships

WHEN?

August 5-9

WHERE?

Hayward Field, Eugene

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

The next generation of athletes to provide some clues as to who to watch out for in future. The World U20 Championships have provided a springboard for a host of major names to make a name for themselves down the years and there are a number of athletes who will be in the thick of the action who have already competed at the Olympics and senior world championships.

FIRST EDITION?

The first IAAF World Junior Championships were staged in Athens back in 1986.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

The Peruvian city of Lima were hosts in 2024, with USA finishing top of the medals table thanks to a gold medal count of eight.

South Africa's Bayanda Walaza – part of the Olympic silver medal winning 4x100m line-up in Paris that summer – won men's 100m and 200m gold, beating Australian star Gout Gout into second place in the latter. Czech Tomas Mikael Järvinen broke

the championship record for the decathlon with 8425 points.

There were championship records for Ethiopia in the women's 5000m thanks to Medina Eisa (14:39.71) and the women's 3000m steeplechase thanks to Sembo Almayew (9:12.71).

DID YOU KNOW?

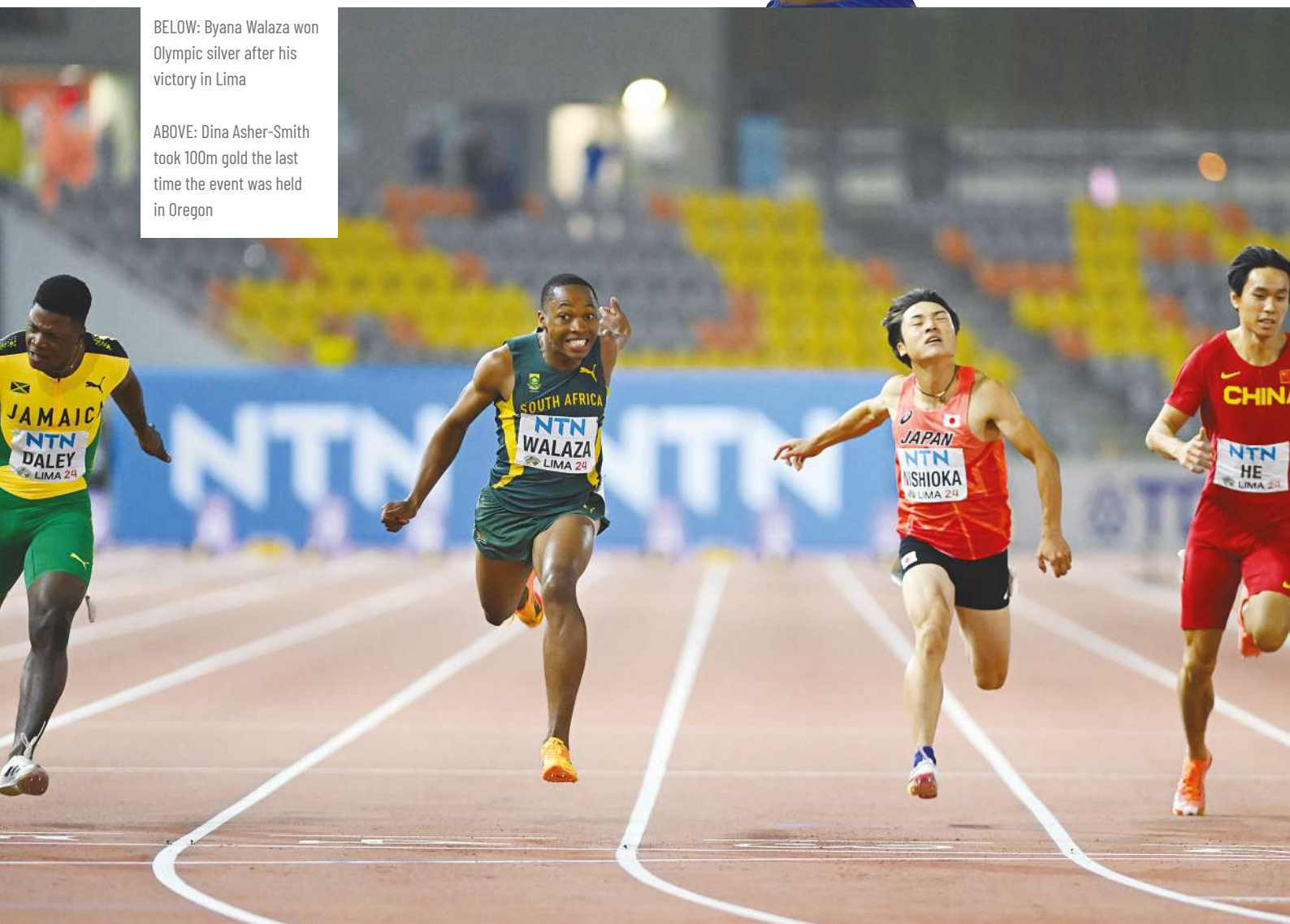
The World Under-20 Championships were last staged at Hayward Field in 2014, where the now senior British record-holders Dina Asher-Smith and Morgan Lake won 100m and high jump gold respectively.

More information at: worldathletics.org



BELOW: Byana Walaza won Olympic silver after his victory in Lima

ABOVE: Dina Asher-Smith took 100m gold the last time the event was held in Oregon





A continental celebration

Birmingham braced for brilliance as the European Championships arrive in Britain for the first time ever

WHAT?

European Athletics Championships

WHEN?

August 10-16

WHERE?

Alexander Stadium, Birmingham

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Big crowds, star names and top quality competition. The British public tends to come out in force for the big occasions and, with strong medal contenders across a number of events, the host nation could do very well indeed.

FIRST EDITION?

The inaugural European Championships were staged in Turin in 1934.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

At the Stadio Olimpico in Rome in 2024, hosts Italy enjoyed their best ever performance at a European Championships and finished top of the medals table with 11 golds. Their return of 24 medals was, in fact, the best ever from a host nation in the history of the championships.

Among the many home highlights were Leonardo Fabbri and Gianmarco Tamberi breaking the championship records in the shot

put and high jump respectively, Nadia Battocletti's 5000m and 10,000m double, Lamont Marcell Jacobs retaining his 100m title and helping his nation to 4x100m victory, as well as Yeman Crippa winning half marathon gold and leading Italy to the team title in that event.

Sandra Elkasevic of Croatia became the first athlete in championship history to win seven gold medals with her discus win, while Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen completed his third 1500m/5000m double.

British sprinter Dina Asher-Smith took her European gold medal tally to six, in the women's 100m and 4x100m relay.

DID YOU KNOW?

The first edition of the event was only open to men. For the second staging, in 1938, the men's events took place in Paris on September 3-5 while the women's events were in Vienna on September 17-18.

AUGUST 10

MORNING SESSION (10.30AM)

sex	event	round
W	Shot Put	Qualifying
M	Hammer	Qualifying A
M	800m	Round 1
W	100m	Round 1
M	Long Jump	Qualifying
M	400m	Round 1
M	Hammer	Qualifying B
W	400m Hurdles	Round 1
M	Shot Put	Qualifying

EVENING SESSION (7PM)

sex	event	round
W	Shot Put	Final
W	Hammer	Qualifying A
W	100m Hurdles	Round 1
W	Triple Jump	Qualifying
W	100m	Semi-Final
M	Shot Put	Final
W	Hammer	Qualifying B
M	5000m	Final
W	3000m Steeplechase	Round 1
X	4x400m Relay	Final
W	100m	Final

AUGUST 11

MORNING SESSION (10.30AM)

sex	event	round
M	High Jump	Qualifying
M	Discus	Qualifying A
W	400m Hurdles	Semi-Final
M	100m	Round 1
M	110m Hurdles	Round 1
M	Discus	Qualifying B
W	800m	Round 1
M	400m Hurdles	Round 1

EVENING SESSION (7PM)

sex	event	round
W	Pole Vault	Qualifying
M	Hammer	Final
W	5000m	Final
W	100m Hurdles	Semi-Final
M	Long Jump	Final
M	100m	Semi-Final
M	400m	Semi-Final
W	100m Hurdles	Final
M	100m	Final

AUGUST 12

MORNING SESSION (10.30AM)

sex	event	round
M	100m	Decathlon
W	Discus	Qualifying A
W	400m	Round 1
M	Long Jump	Decathlon
W	200m	Round 1
W	Discus	Qualifying B
M	800m	Semi-Final
M	Shot Put	Decathlon
M	400m hurdles	Semi-Final

EVENING SESSION (7PM)

sex	event	round
M	High Jump	Decathlon
M	110m Hurdles	Semi-Final
W	Hammer	Final
M	Triple Jump	Qualifying
W	200m	Semi-Final
M	400m	Final
W	400m Hurdles	Final
M	400m	Decathlon
M	110m Hurdles	Final

AUGUST 13

MORNING SESSION (10.30AM)

sex	event	round
M	110m Hurdles	Decathlon
W	High Jump	Qualifying
M	200m	Round 1
M	Discus Group A	Decathlon
W	800m	Semi-Final
M	Discus Group B	Decathlon
W	400m	Semi-Final
M	Pole Vault Group A	Decathlon
M	Javelin	Qualifying A
M	Pole Vault Group B	Decathlon
M	Javelin	Qualifying B

EVENING SESSION (6.30PM)

sex	event	round
M	Javelin Group A	Decathlon
M	Javelin Group B	Decathlon
W	Triple Jump	Final
W	Pole Vault	Final
M	200m	Semi-Final
W	3000m Steeplechase	Final
M	Discus	Final
M	1500m	Decathlon
M	800m	Final
W	200m	Final

AUGUST 14

MORNING SESSION (10.30AM)

sex	event	round
W	100m Hurdles	Heptathlon
W	Javelin	Qualifying A
M	Pole Vault	Qualifying
M	4x400m Relay	Round 1

W	High Jump	Heptathlon
W	4x400m Relay	Round 1
W	Javelin	Qualifying B
M	1500m	Round 1

EVENING SESSION (7.00PM)

sex	event	round
W	Shot Put	Heptathlon
W	10,000m	Final
M	High Jump	Final
W	Discus	Final
M	400m Hurdles	Final
W	200m	Heptathlon
M	200m	Final
W	800m	Final

AUGUST 15

MORNING SESSION

sex	event	round
W	Half Marathon Race Walk	Final
M	Half Marathon Race Walk	Final
W	Marathon Race Walk	Final
M	Marathon Race Walk	Final
W	Long Jump	Heptathlon
W	Long Jump	Qualifying
W	Javelin	Heptathlon
M	3000m Steeplechase	Round 1
W	1500m	Round 1
W	4x100m Relay	Round 1
M	4x100m Relay	Round 1

EVENING SESSION (7PM)

sex	event	round
W	800m	Heptathlon
M	Javelin	Final
W	High Jump	Final
W	400m	Final
M	Triple Jump	Final
M	10,000m	Final
M	1500m	Final
M	4x100m Relay	Final
W	4x100m Relay	Final

AUGUST 16

MORNING SESSION

sex	event	round
W	Marathon	Final
M	Marathon	Final

EVENING SESSION (7PM)

sex	event	round
W	Javelin	Final
M	Pole Vault	Final
W	Long Jump	Final
X	4x100m Mixed Relay	Final
M	3000m Steeplechase	Final
W	1500m	Final
W	4x400m Relay	Final
M	4x400m Relay	Final

*subject to change

Share the spotlight

Follow in the footsteps of the elite at this summer's European Championships with the Unity 5K and 1K fun run in Birmingham

A

new way to enjoy athletics at the largest event in the sport this year has just been announced. The European Athletics Championships

Birmingham 2026 team have launched two mass participation events taking place during championship week, giving more people the chance to be a part of the atmosphere.

The morning of Sunday August 16, the final day of the championships, will see the elite men's and women's marathons unfolding on the streets of the city centre, where world class runners will compete for continental honours.

Following the completion of the marathon, the route will be opened to the public in the Unity 5K – a 5km loop of the city centre that will follow in the footsteps of the elite race. The event is open to anyone aged nine and up and will see participants crossing the very same finish line as the marathon winners earlier that morning.

Alongside the Unity 5K, a 1K fun run for anyone over the age of three aims to inspire the next generation of athletics stars and encourage more local young people and families to get involved and have fun exercising. The Unity 1K will be free to enter for anyone aged 12 and under to ensure that as many youngsters as possible are given the opportunity to be a part of the event.

With Great Britain & Northern Ireland aiming to extend their status as the most successful nation in European Athletics Championships history, the Unity 5K and 1K events give the public their own chance to



share the spotlight – turning the final Sunday into a city-wide running festival and letting everyone have their own medal moment.

"The Unity 5K is all about joy, togetherness and celebrating this incredible event with the people who make the West Midlands what it is," said Jack Buckner, CEO of UK Athletics and former European 5000m champion.

"How often do you get to run on a European Championship course? This is your moment. Whether you're running, jogging or taking it all in with friends and family, it's going to be an experience you'll never forget."

Councillor Sharon Thompson, Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "Hosting a world-class event like this is a huge honour, and the addition of the Unity 5K and 1K on the final day makes it even more exciting.

ABOVE: You can cross the same finish line just hours after some of the best runners in the world at the Unity 5k



Entries are open now. For more information



The Unity 5k gives a unique opportunity for runners to witness elite sport and then experience the race for themselves

These events give our residents the unique opportunity to not just witness elite sport but experience the race for themselves, right here on the streets of Birmingham. It is a fantastic opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to get active, celebrate our city and be part of something truly inspiring.”

Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: “Our region has a proud history of producing world-class talent, including

West Brom’s golden girl Dame Denise Lewis, ‘Darlaston Dart’ Mark Lewis-Francis, Coventry’s world record-breaker David Moorcroft and today’s sprint sensation from Wolverhampton, Matt Hudson-Smith. The Unity run is a moment for our communities to shine, whether you’re chasing the dream of becoming our next sports star or simply looking for the motivation to live a more active, healthier life.” **AW**

visit **birmingham2026.com** now!



Back to Budapest

Hungary plays to host to World Athletics' new venture

W

ith the Covid pandemic-induced reshuffling of the sporting calendar now

a thing of the past, 2026 will be the first summer since 2020 not to feature either an Olympic Games or outdoor world championships. With that in mind, World Athletics are staging an event designed to “fill the void” and keep eyes on the sport for as long as possible this year.

The aim of the Ultimate Championships is to bring the season to a spectacular close and find the “best of the best”, with Olympic, world and Diamond League champions doing battle in

national colours over three quick-fire sessions of sporting entertainment at the National Athletics Centre in Budapest, scene of the hugely successful 2023 edition of the world championships.

“By embracing innovation and breaking away from traditional models, we are looking to reach a broader audience, particularly younger fans, and elevate the entire sport,” said World Athletics chief executive Jon Ridgeon. “There will be a strong focus on television audiences, with an aim to reach the biggest global audience possible. We also want to enhance the viewing experience, both at home and in the stadium, so we are looking at what new competition innovations can

be introduced, all of which will be thoroughly tested in advance. We truly believe this will be a game changer for our entire sport.”

WHAT?

World Athletics Ultimate Championships

WHEN?

September 11-13

WHERE?

Budapest, Hungary

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

The first staging of a completely new event, designed to engage new fans and move the sport on. For some athletes this will fall after a

busy championships season with the Commonwealth Games and European Championships, while for others it will be their highest profile meeting of the summer.

ARE ALL TRACK AND FIELD EVENTS INVOLVED?

No. On the track, athletes will compete in the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 100m and 110m hurdles, 400m hurdles, as well as Mixed 4x100m and 4x400m relays. Field events contested will be high jump, pole vault, long jump, triple jump (women only), javelin, and hammer (men only).

WHO IS INVOLVED?

A number of star names have already been announced given their qualification by virtue of winning either Olympic gold at Paris 2024 or the world title in Tokyo 2025. There are further ways for athletes to qualify, either by winning the 2026 Brussels Diamond League Final or due to their position on the world rankings during the ranking period that began on September 2 last year and closes on September 1, 2026.

DID YOU KNOW?

The prize pot for the Ultimate

Championships is \$10 million, meaning winners will earn \$150,000 each.

SEPTEMBER 11

19:00 - 22:00 LOCAL TIME

18:00 - 21:00 UK TIME

sex	event	round
X	4x100m Relay	Final
M	Hammer	Final
M	400m Hurdles	Semi-final
W	High Jump	Final
W	400m Hurdles	Semi-final
W	100m Hurdles	Semi-final
M	110m hurdles	Semi-final
M	5000m	Final
M	Pole Vault	Final
W	Long Jump	Final
W	800m	Semi-final
W	100m Hurdles	Final
M	110m Hurdles	Final
X	4x400m Relay	Final

SEPTEMBER 12

18:00 - 21:00 LOCAL TIME

17:00 - 20:00 UK TIME

sex	event	round
W	400m Hurdles	Final
W	Javelin	Final
M	400m hurdles	Final
M	800m	Semi-final
W	Pole Vault	Final
W	400m	Semi-final
W	100m	Semi-final
M	100m	Semi-final

W	1500m	Final
M	Long Jump	Final
M	400m	Semi-final
W	800m	Final
W	100m	Final
M	100m	Final

SEPTEMBER 13

18:00 - 21:00 LOCAL TIME

17:00 - 20:00 UK TIME

sex	event	round
W	400m	Final
M	Javelin	Final
M	200m	Semi-final
M	800m	Final
W	200m	Semi-final
M	High Jump	Final
W	Triple Jump	Final
W	5000m	Final
M	400m	Final
M	1500m	Final
M	200m	Final
W	200m	Final

**subject to change*

PHOTO BY LONDON MARATHON EVENTS



The long road ahead

The important dates for the marathon and half marathon action unfolding in 2026

Key road racing dates for 2026

ABBOTT WORLD MARATHON MAJORS

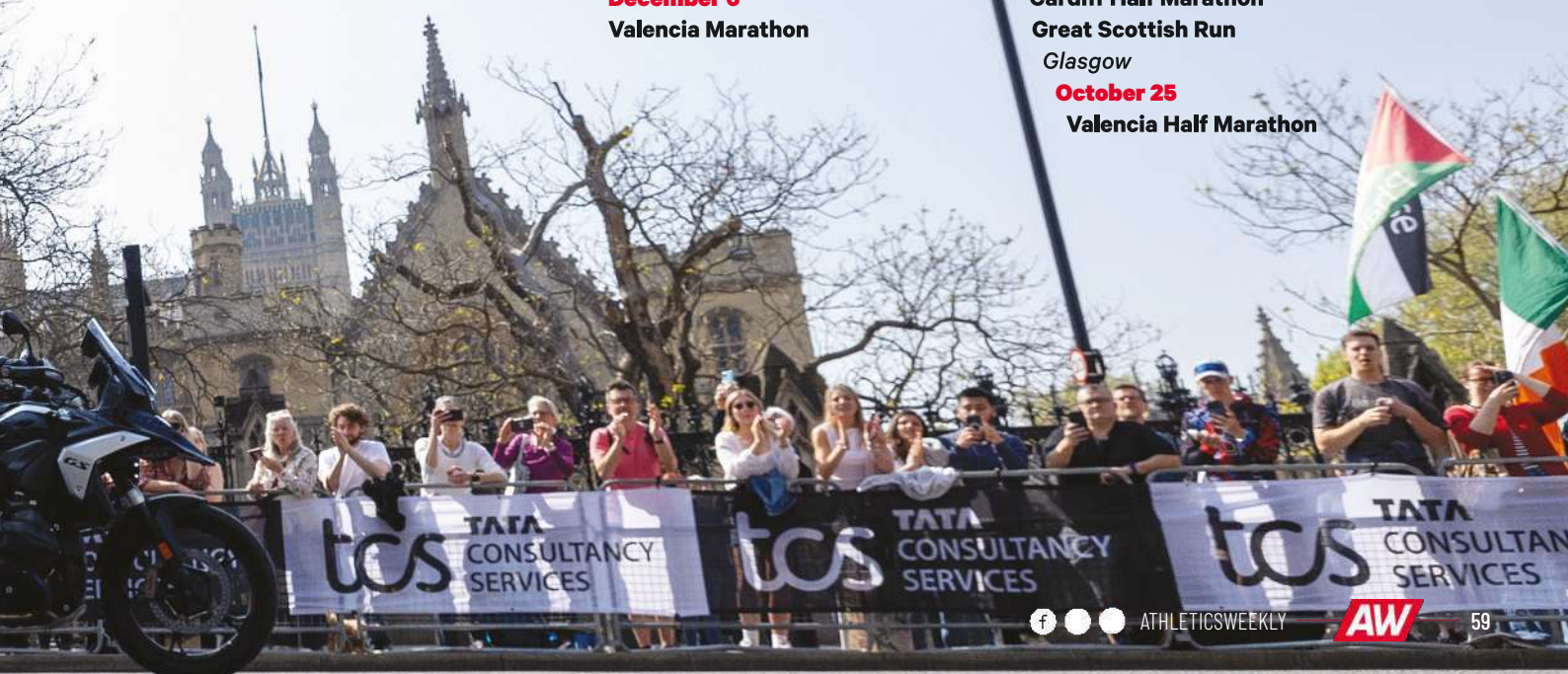
March 1
Tokyo Marathon
April 20
Boston Marathon
April 26
London Marathon
May 24
Cape Town Marathon
August 30
Sydney Marathon
September 27
Berlin Marathon
October 11
Chicago Marathon
November 1
New York City Marathon

OTHER KEY MARATHON DATES

January 11
Houston Marathon
January 16
Ooredoo Doha Marathon
February 1
Dubai Marathon
March 15
Rome Marathon
Barcelona Marathon
April 12
Paris Marathon
Rotterdam Marathon
April 19
Manchester Marathon
May 24
Edinburgh Marathon
October 18
Amsterdam Marathon
October 25
Frankfurt Marathon
December 6
Valencia Marathon

KEY HALF MARATHON DATES

January 11
Houston Half Marathon
February 14
RAK Half Marathon
March 8
Lisbon Half Marathon
Paris Half Marathon
March 15
NYC Half Marathon
March 28
Prague Half Marathon
March 29
Berlin Half Marathon
May 31
Great Manchester Run
September 13
Great North Run
Newcastle/Gateshead
September 20
Copenhagen Half Marathon
October 4
Cardiff Half Marathon
Great Scottish Run
Glasgow
October 25
Valencia Half Marathon



RIGHT: Diribe Welteji won the 2023 mile race

BELOW: Hobbs Kessler won the men's mile

And don't forget...

This year will see the staging of the first-ever World Treadmill Championships, held over 5km, with ordinary athletes able to test themselves against elite runners at thousands of qualifying events during the first part of 2026 before a grand final at a yet-to-be-announced venue in the latter part of the year.

WHAT?

World Athletics Road Running Championships

WHEN?

September 19-20

WHERE?

Copenhagen

TIMETABLE (TIMES TBC)

SEPTEMBER 19

Men's and Women's Mile

Men's and Women's 5km

SEPTEMBER 20

Men's and Women's Half Marathon

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Fierce road races over the Mile, the 5km and the half marathon distances.

FIRST EDITION?

The World Road Running Championships, which brought together the three distances, made their debut in Riga in 2023.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

Kenya swept all of the podium places in the men's and women's half



marathon races. Peres Jepchirchir won her third world title over the distance, while Sabastian Sawe – winner of the London and Boston marathons in 2025 – led home the men.

Beatrice Chebet added to the Kenyan success by winning the women's 5km title, while Ethiopia's Hagos Gebrhiwet won his first senior global title by winning the men's 5km.

The Mile races proved to be highly memorable, with Ethiopia's Diribe Welteji kicking away from Faith Kipyegon to win in a world record of 4:20.98, while American Hobbs Kessler broke the men's world record with 3:56.13 to hold off Britain's Callum Elson.

DID YOU KNOW?

There will also be mass participation road races over each of the distances.

LYNX EDM – THE LATEST ESSENTIAL FOR OFFICIALS



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WHY OFFICIALS SHOULD BE USING EDM IN 2028

Electronic Distance Measurement (EDM) has had many officials and event organisers talking. With the state-of-the-art technology involved, it's not hard to see why.

Over the past 20 years, EDM has undergone significant development, transitioning from an elite system to being used in club and county level competitions nationwide. One tool that has been internationally recognised for its innovative advancements in distance measurement is the Lynx EDM.

Based on simple geometry, the Lynx EDM calculates the distance thrown or jumped, using triangulation from the unit to the toe-board, throwing line, or take-off board. By investing in this

forward-thinking software, distance measurement will become a breeze for many years to come.

THE FIELDLYNX SYSTEM

What are the benefits?

The Lynx Meet Management system offers comprehensive results organisation and can be used in standalone items (such as an EDM) for accurate throws results to a full event management, including photo-finish, display screens and wind-speed records.

Once you have the Field-Lynx software for the EDM geodimeter, it is smooth and straightforward to "bolt on" additional electronics such as displays, wind meters and results management.



LYNX EDM FEATURES

Lynx exceeds expectations time and time again, both in terms of

use and accuracy:

Accurate: Accurate to $\pm 2\text{mm}$ & ± 2 angular seconds – Exceeds World Athletic standards

Quick: 15-minute equipment set-up

Simple to Use: One-touch measurement in Metric and Imperial units

Powerful: Links to any compatible displays, databases, and software on the network

Portable: Rechargeable batteries with up to 60 hours on a single charge

SAVE THOUSANDS WHILE YOU STILL CAN...

For a limited time, you can purchase a Lynx EDM complete with tripod & FieldLynx software from Neuff for only £4000*. This will ultimately represent a saving of £2350 or 33 per cent on the standard price. It comes with full instructions for use and a 12-month warranty.

**plus VAT and delivery*

FOR MORE INFO, SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT **NEUFF.CO.UK**



Head for the hills

Key trail, mountain and ultra fixtures for the coming year

January 11

Winter Spine race
Edale

January 22-24

January Arc of Attrition by UTMB
Cornwall

March 22

British Short Trail Championships,
Forest of Dean Trail Half Marathon

April 11

Run Through Lake District Running
Festival Keswick, 53km. inc.
Mid-Distance British Trail- Running
championship and Senior
Trail-Running Home International.
UK Trail trial for European Off-Road
Running Championships (EORRC)

May 1

Senior and U20 EORCC
UK Uphill Trials
Keswick

May 3

Senior and U20 EORCC UK
Up and Down Trials inc. senior
Inter-Counties Mountain Running
Championships
Sedbergh

May 15-17

Ultra Trail Snowdonia

June 13-14

British Long Distance Trail
Championships, South Downs Way
100 Mile.
Winchester

June 14

Junior British Inter-Counties Hill
and Fell Championships,
Edale

Comrades Marathon
(RSA)

June 20

40th West Highland Way Race
Milngavie

June 26-28

World Masters Mountain Running Championships
Janské Lázně (CZE)

June 27

Western States 100
California (USA)

Snowdon Twilight Race, Senior Home International mountain running
Llanberis

July 11

British Short Fell Championships
Pen y Fan, Wales

July 18

Snowdon International Hill race

July 24-26

Lakeland 50/100

August 24-30

UTMB Series Finals
Chamonix (FRA)

September 10-13

European Masters Off-Road Running Championships
Râșnov (ROM)

September 12

British Long Fell Championships
Old Crown Round, Lake District

British Junior Mountain Running Championships inc. Junior Home Countries International
Newcastle (NI)

September 18-20

Skyrunning World Championships
La Gomera (ESP)

October 17

FRA Relays
Course TBC

WMRA Mountain Running World Cup 2026

April 19

São Brás Cross, up & down
(POR)

April 25-26

Uphill and up & down *(CHN)*

May 7-9

Transvulcania, uphill and long-distance *(ESP)*

June 19-21

Broken Arrow, uphill and long-distance *(USA)*

July 5

Grossglockner Mountain Run, up & down *(AUT)*

July 18-19

Vauban Mountain Trail, uphill and up & down *(FRA)*

August 8

Sierre-Zinal, long distance
(SUI)

September 5-6

Vertical Nasego and Trofeo Nasego, uphill and long-distance *(ITA)*

September 19

Maraton Trzech Jezior, long-distance final *(POL)*

October 10-11

Défi des Couleurs, uphill and up & down finals *(CAN)*

**Golden Trail schedule yet to be announced at time of publication*

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES



Clementine Geoffray

WHAT?

European Athletics Off-Road Running Championships

WHEN?

June 5-7

WHERE?

Kamnik/Ljubljana in Slovenia

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Expert organisation from the team that hosted the 2010 World Mountain Running Championships and 2017 European Mountain Running Championships, with some of Europe's finest battling it out over classic mountain and long distance trail events in the spectacular Kamnik-Savinja Alps.

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)
JUNE 5
UPHILL RACES

09:00 U20 men (3.8km)

09:30 U20 women (3.8km)

09:30 Senior men (8.9km)

10:00 Senior women (8.9km)

JUNE 6
TRAIL RACES

08:00 Senior women & men (52km)

JUNE 7
UP AND DOWN RACES

08:00 U20 men (5.7km)

08:45 U20 women (5.7km)

09:30 Senior men (13.1km)

11:15 Senior women (13.1km)

FIRST EDITION?

El Paso in Spain hosted the first staging in 2022.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME?

In Annecy, France two years ago the Classic Uphill Races got proceedings underway. Britain's Joe Steward took the senior men's title from his team-mate Jacob Adkin as they helped their nation to the team title. Germany's Nina Engelhard won the women's race from Britain's

Scout Adkin (sister of Jacob), with France winning team gold. U20 individual and team honours went to Switzerland in the men's event, with Matthieu Bührer coming out on top. The then 16-year-old German Julia Ehrle won the women's title, with team victory going to France.

Engelhard also won the women's Up and Down title, while the men's race went to the wire as Swiss Roberto Delorenzi just held off Germany's Lukas Ehrle.

In the men's U20 Up and Down race, France filled the first four places, headed by gold medallist Antoine Paydebois. There was home success in the women's U20 race, too, thanks to Margot Dajoux.

France also won all three individual medals in both men's and women's trail races, as well as both team titles, over the 57.64km course. Thomas Cardin and Clementine Geoffray led the French challenge.

DID YOU KNOW?

The European Off-Road Running Championships is the successor to the European Mountain Running Championships.

CUSTOM KIT FOR YOUR CLUB



BESPOKE AND OFF-THE-SHELF PERFORMANCE CLOTHING FIT FOR CHAMPIONS

Neuff

Every club needs official competition vests, and every club needs competition and training equipment. Now you can get one with the other! Neuff has long been a trackside name with a reputation for quality. The company now brings that excellence to performance clothing, offering a range of competition and training clothing featuring performance fabrics, stylish designs and competitive pricing. What's more, Neuff's new athletics kit offer is part of their Club Fundraising Scheme, so every vest, t-shirt or hoodie earns funds for your club!

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For every item of clothing purchased, the club earns 10 per cent in store credit to spend on

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- fully sublimated print versions (e.g. for official competition vests) with low minimum order quantities (MOQ) of 10 (across multiple sizes).
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Whether you fancy a fresh new look for your club's athletics attire, or you simply have too many athletes desperately wanting their worn and torn kit replaced, this is the ideal solution while the off-season is still firmly among us!

equipment at Neuff. Purchasing just 25 standard sets of vests and shorts a year would earn your club £75, while adding 20 t-shirts would increase this to over £100. With clubs around the country feeling the squeeze on finances, purchasing club kit from Neuff can make all the difference in new equipment.

Scan here for kit options or visit neuff.co.uk/products/athletics-kit-designer



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT NEUFF'S CLUB FUNDRAISING SCHEME AND SIGN UP AT NEUFF.CO.UK/PAGES/ATHLETICS-CLUB-FUNDRAISING-SCHEME

Going green

Is it possible to head off on an athletics adventure while being kinder to the planet in the process? Yes, says **Richard Thurston**, who picks five events with strong sustainability credentials that are ripe for a visit in 2026

Amid increasing concerns about climate change and the effect of air travel on the environment, the focus on sustainable tourism continues to increase. Athletics is at the centre of these concerns. Participation in a global sport requires international travel, but it's still possible to act sustainably to reduce the environmental impact of the journey. Across Europe, people are making choices to substitute air travel for more sustainable alternatives like rail, ferry and bus.

According to the UK Government's analysis, swapping air travel for the train can reduce an individual's emissions by more than three-quarters. The train operator Eurostar claims even larger reductions.

Sustainable travel is becoming easier, too, with greater awareness of greener travel alternatives, and an increase in overnight rail services and high speed rail lines, which are making it faster to reach a long list of destinations. Rail travel takes you to the heart of a city, with no need to spend hours waiting at an airport.

A hardy core of Brits travelled by train to the 2023 World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. Across the European Union, rail travel increased nearly six per cent during 2024 – the last full year on record – driven by government policy that has stimulated environmentally friendly choices across the continent.

"There has been an upsurge in interest in

train travel, driven by two things: airport and flight fatigue, and a desire to travel more sustainably," says Mark Smith, a sustainable travel expert and founder of rail travel website *seat61.com*. "When people take the train, the journey becomes part of the holiday. It's much less stressful than airports and flights, and you get to see things on the way."

You might be thinking of heading off on your travels in the coming year so, to give you a bit of inspiration, we highlight five athletics events that will be staged across Europe in 2026 and how each event can be reached sustainably – with some fun journeys and explorations along the way.

Many of these events have introduced their own sustainability initiatives, focused on waste and water reduction, trail restoration, shared transportation and local sourcing, among other strategies, further enhancing their green credentials.

1 A Nordic adventure

A Diamond League double with optional Arctic Circle marathon.

Dates: June 7 (Stockholm, Sweden), June 10 (Oslo, Norway), June 20 (Tromsø, Norway)

Spectator experience: 5/5

Participation: 5/5



ABOVE: Stockholm's Olympic Stadium is always one of the highlights of the Diamond League circuit



PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

Challenge: 3/5

Exploration: 5/5

Length of trip: Seven days for Stockholm and Oslo. Add 12 days for the extension to the Arctic Circle

**Ratings include Midnight Sun Marathon*

The adventure starts with a Sunday evening packed full of Diamond League athletics at the 1912 Olympic Stadium in Stockholm. This 'romantic-style' stadium is modelled on medieval city walls and has retained its character through a turbulent history. It offers great views wherever you are seated. Check out the athletics records etched into the pavement outside on Lidingövägen.

Catch an archipelago tour, visit a museum and tuck into some Swedish meatballs before heading off to Oslo for a Diamond League double at the Bislett Games.

Oslo has heritage, too, with international athletics staged here since 1924 (the first Bislett Games were held in 1965) and it has proved a fertile ground for high performance, seeing no fewer than 70 world records.

After your Diamond League fix, head north through Norway to the Lofoten Islands for

delightful mountain running trails and views of peaks and ocean.

Keep going to Tromsø in the Arctic Circle for the remote Midnight Sun Marathon on midsummer weekend. There's 24-hour daylight at that time of year, which offers the unique experience of running a marathon in the sun as the clock strikes midnight.

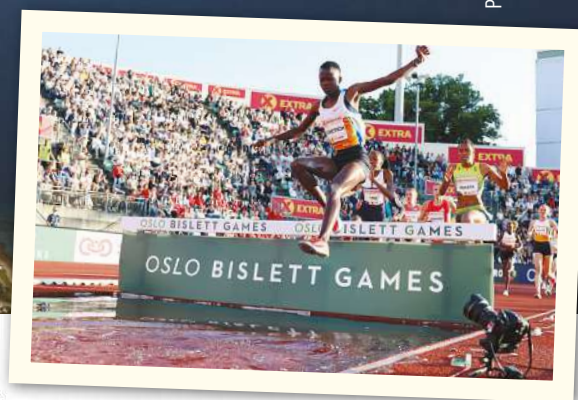
Sustainable travel: The whole journey can be done flight-free. On June 6, catch the train to Hamburg (Eurostar from London to Brussels, then change at Cologne). Book a cabin on the sleeper train from Hamburg to Stockholm to arrive fresh and ready to explore the Swedish capital on June 7.

A train will take you to Oslo direct from Stockholm, and then on to the railhead at Bodø for a boat to Lofoten. Two buses then take you to Tromsø for the marathon. For the return journey, a faster train route from Narvik will take you back to Stockholm.

More info:

diamondleague.com

msm.no



ABOVE: Tromsø is the stunning venue for the Midnight Sun Marathon, while Oslo has been the venue for 70 world records



2 Combined events in the mountains

The world's best heptathletes and decathletes compete at the Götzis HypoMeeting.
Dates: May 30-31 (Götzis, Austria)

Spectator experience: 5/5

Participation: N/A

Challenge: 1/5

Exploration: 3/5

Length of trip: Four days

This unique two-day summer Alpine festival of combined events is a must-attend fixture for heptathletes and decathletes and a delight to watch. See the world's best athletes up close as they work their way round the Mösele Stadium, tuck into some pasta in the food tent and engage the children with face painting and their own special athletics day.

Sustainable travel: Travel by Eurostar on May 29 from London to Paris, and then on to Götzis via Strasbourg (France), Basel and Zürich (Switzerland). On the return journey, leave some time to explore the pretty Vorarlberg region or cross the border to visit mountainous Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

More info: meeting-goetzis.at/en

3 The Hallowe'en Ultra

A gruelling ultra marathon to test the resilience of body and mind.

Dates: October 30-31 (near Båstad, Sweden)

Spectator experience: N/A

Participation: 5/5

Challenge: 5/5

Exploration: 3/5

Length of trip: Six days

For endurance athletes preparing their next big challenge, the Kullamannen has been described as "a monster" and "a slayer of strong men and women". This 106-mile trail race in Sweden – which is part of the UTMB World Series of endurance races – is not for the faint-hearted with a DNF rate exceeding 40 per cent. Themed on the centuries-old local legend of Kullamannen, you can expect tough weather gripping rocky shores, nature reserves and technical tracks on the Kullberg Mountain. Shorter options are available, and you can share the Hallowe'en race spirit with your children by signing them up to the Kullamannen kids race on the Friday afternoon or Saturday.

Sustainable travel: On October 28, catch the train as per the Nordic Adventure as far as Hamburg, eat dinner at one of the many restaurants in this lively Hanseatic city and rest overnight. Continue next day by train to Båstad, Sweden, changing at the Danish capital of Copenhagen, where you'll have time to explore. Listen to talks at the expo on Friday, before taking the bus to start your fearsome trail adventure.

More info: kullamannen.utmb.world

4 Sandy Atlantic parkrun

A pretty parkrun on a spectacular stretch of Atlantic beach.

ABOVE: Götzis is a must-visit for any athletics fan

RIGHT: the Dingle peninsula provides a picturesque parkrun backdrop

Dates: Any Saturday – 9.30am start (Ireland)

Spectator experience: N/A

Participation: 4/5

Challenge: 2/5

Exploration: 4/5

Length of trip: Three days

One of the most picturesque parkruns in a country dotted with amazing 5km choices. An out-and-back parkrun exclusively on Inch Beach, a pretty stretch of golden sand and dunes jutting out into an Atlantic estuary on the Dingle Peninsula on the west coast of Ireland. The hardy volunteers at Inch Beach have run events in Atlantic storms before, so come prepared for rain, shine and wind. Either way, the views out to the Atlantic and across the estuary to the Iveragh peninsula are breathtaking. Stay in the nearby Irish speaking town of Dingle for great craic.

Sustainable travel: Travel by train to Holyhead, Wales (stay overnight in Chester or Manchester if necessary) and catch the Friday morning ferry from Holyhead to Dublin Ferry Port. Then take the Irish Rail service from Dublin Heuston station to Tralee (the capital of County Kerry) and then a bus to Dingle. A bus will take you directly from Dingle to Inch Beach parkrun on the Saturday morning; on the return use the stop at Annascaul (6km), grab a lift with a friendly local or head on to lively Killarney for traditional Irish Saturday night entertainment.

More info: parkrun.ie/inchbeach

5 Trail running with the elites

European Athletics Off-Road Running Championships.

Dates: June 5-7 (Slovenia)

Spectator experience: 2/5

Participation: 5/5

Challenge: 4/5

Exploration: 3/5

Length of trip: Seven days

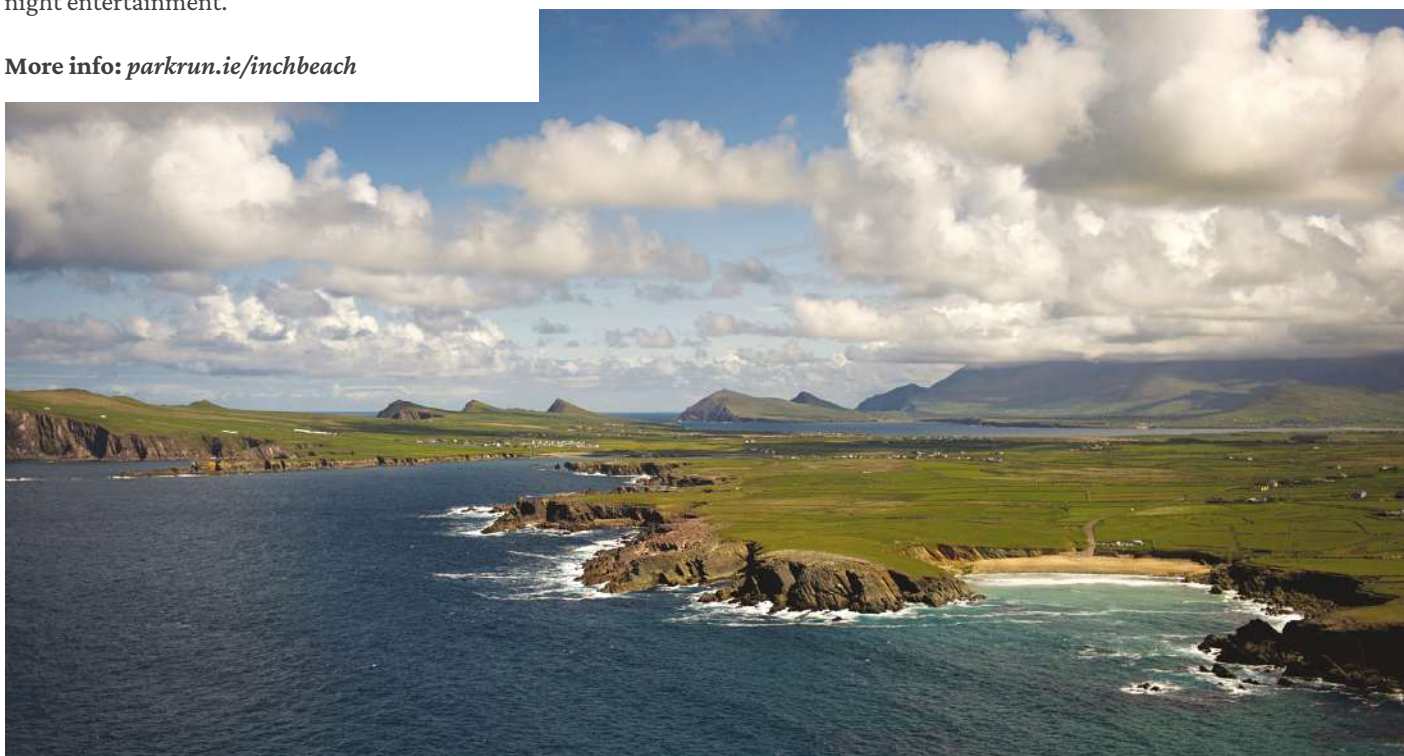
The biennial European Athletics Off-Road Running Championships – the successor to the European Mountain Running Championships – combines stunning trail and mountain running with races for both elite and recreational athletes. Open races at this third edition in Ljubljana-Kamnik are the Velika Planina uphill on June 7 (1280m of ascent) and 25km and 52km trail races on June 8. You can watch the elite athletes on all three days.

Sustainable travel: Travel by Eurostar on Wednesday June 3 from London to Munich (via Brussels) and stay overnight in this beautiful Bavarian city. The following day, catch the train from Munich to Kamnik via Salzburg and the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana. Alternatively, catch the night train from Munich to open up time to explore fascinating Ljubljana before heading to Kamnik for Thursday evening's opening ceremony.

More info: european-athletics.com 

Top tip

For all trips except Ireland, try the Global Pass from interrail.eu, selecting the number of days you require. It covers all your journeys, including getting to the Eurostar terminal in London. Some smaller additional seat reservation fees are required. For Ireland, try the Sail Rail offering from Stena Line and Irish Ferries, which offers a combined ferry and train ticket. The future of Sail Rail does however remain in doubt at the time of writing, so separate rail and ferry tickets may be required.



French lessons

After rethinking his decision to retire and refusing to give up despite repeated injuries, Guy Learmonth is using his Montpellier base for one last shot, writes **Mark Woods**

The long road to what Guy Learmonth hopes will end with a run to redemption this coming summer began not in his native Scottish Borders but across the ocean in France.

Neither did it take place on the sun-kissed south coast by the Mediterranean Sea where he has lived and trained for the last 16 months. Instead, it commenced on one of the far-flung territories which still form an integral part of his adopted nation – Gallic by design but very distinct in their outlook.

Guadeloupe, in the middle of the Caribbean, nestles almost 7000 kilometres and an eight-hour flight from Paris with a following wind. The family of Learmonth's girlfriend, Olympic 800m finalist Renelle Lamote, hail from this remote but idyllic cluster of islands.

In the wake of a track campaign where both had to navigate the choppy waters of injury, they flew long-distance last autumn to regroup and restart towards 2026.

"It's a beautiful part of the world," declares the 33-year-old, a four-time UK indoor champion over 800m. "But it became a bit of a training camp. It just kick-started things with two weeks of easy running, and then slowly progressed into just some harder stuff. So I came back to Montpellier in much better shape than I was in 2024. And, this time around, I'm not injured. Fingers crossed it stays that way."

Twice a sixth-place finisher at European Indoor Championships, Learmonth had loudly signalled his intention to take his leave from athletics when his all-in quest to finally land an Olympic debut at Paris 2024 fell well short.

He took an extended break, cheerleading as his partner finished fifth at her home Games.

There was latitude to relax and unwind but also to think deeply about whether this was really the finish line. "I felt like three months was a good amount of time for me to not make any rash decisions. But I knew after that I needed to make a change.

"Speaking to my family, they were like: 'Come back home.' I was like: 'No, I can't do it. I can't run around the streets again. If I'm going to do it, I need to make a clean slate with everything: a completely new life, new training, new set-up.'"

One more go. Splitting from his Australian-based coach Justin Rinaldi, Learmonth relocated to join Lamote in Montpellier, where he turned to her mentor Bruno Gajer to engineer a reboot. Romance bloomed further.

"It was a bit of a gamble because we hadn't been together that long and we went from just recently dating to moving in together," he laughs. "But it was the best move of my life."

There was a contrasting response from his body, though. Injury. Then another. And repeat. More misfortune than he could handle, or deserved.

"I had a hamstring tear just before the season," recounts Learmonth. "Shortly after I arrived, I tore my calf in the first few weeks of training. Then, with the same leg, I had a problem with the Achilles, which turned into tendinopathy."

The structural weakness didn't just halt his training in its tracks. "It was just on fire for months. I would struggle to walk at times." Autumn became winter

RIGHT: Guy Learmonth racing at the UK Indoor Championships in 2024 and (far right) the 2022 European Indoors

BELOW: Learmonth's partner, Renelle Lamote



PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES



“
I’d love to get back in
a British team. I don’t
want to just get the
national kit or anything.
I want to be contesting

and he was still kicking his heels. There was a rebound for six weeks then a nerve issue that pinched from his quad to his hip.

Gajer, formerly coach to Katarina Johnson-Thompson, kept him patient through yet more rehab. With the World Championships in Tokyo on the horizon and the qualification deadline looming large, there was an urgency to step back competitively on the track.

“Bruno said: ‘I know you’ve not run in a long time but we need to get you somewhere,’” recalls Learmonth. “It was a lot of cross-training. I kept myself as fit as I could. Bruno said: ‘We’re running out of time if you want to have a season.’ So we took a bit of a risk. It was very hard, the first three or four weeks, when I was really struggling with training.



“I just persevered a bit and then, just as things were starting to click, I tore my hamstring, a seven-centimetre tear. And that really was the summer wiped out.”

Again, the inclination was to call it quits, to move on and hobble away.

Lamote had been struggling too but made it – just – to Japan. She arrived without the race sharpness to progress beyond the semi-finals, however. Learmonth crammed in a couple of races to reactivate his Power of 10. Then both retreated to the sunshine to lick their wounds and take stock.

Now, knockbacks permitting, Learmonth goes again. For what he is more assured in calling a final year. The intention is to open up on native soil at this month’s EAP meeting in Glasgow and then evaluate whether the World Indoor Championships in Torun in March is a viable target.

The signs, cautiously, feel positive so far. “We’ve changed a lot of the training around,” he says. “Bruno has made some big changes to the whole flow of the week. I’m in a good place. And it’s just how we manage it moving forward.”

Few would begrudge him a valedictory final fling at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. To take the applause and bow out with grace. Even now, his competitive streak is too strong to simply aim to show up.

“I’d love to get back in a British team as well,” he underlines. “I don’t want to just get the national kit or anything. I want to be contesting for every team.”

The journey back to the start has had juddering bumps and bends which have left Learmonth dizzy. All he asks for is a clean sprint down the home straight. “I really went through everything, all the emotions and all the highs and lows,” he adds. “I’m utterly at peace with everything, all the stuff on the track. But there’s a lot of unfinished business, and I really hope I can achieve something good.” **AW**

The bigger picture

After mental health struggles contributed to his premature retirement from top level athletics, former Olympic hurdler Jack Green talks to **Ben Bloom** about how he is now using his experiences to help others excel

Jack Green is in his car heading north to Loughborough. Departure was delayed slightly by his daughter's lunchtime nap

over-running following a morning trip to Whipsnade Zoo, but he still has plenty of time before his evening's engagement as a keynote speaker to the latest cohort on the British Athletics Futures Programme.

The 34-year-old has done plenty of this kind of thing. Since giving his first keynote speech exactly a decade ago, he estimates that he has delivered talks to more than 500 organisations. Usually, the clients are big businesses or corporations, so it is nice to have a rare chance to speak to the people who he considers his own; those hoping to follow in his all-too-briefly trodden footsteps.

Public speaking is a common assignment for retired sportspeople, offering those who reached the pinnacle of their field the chance to earn some money for sharing the wisdom they learned along the way. The reason Green has done so many is that he is better at it than most; he has a lot more to say.

During his running career, he made two Olympic 400m hurdles semi-finals and two World Championships semi-finals. He also won world and European 4x400m medals, missing out on the Olympic relay podium by just one spot when finishing fourth at London

2012. But he contested his final competitive race – at the 2018 European Championships – aged just 26, before ultimately deciding to call time on professional running.

"In the end, you can look at my career as a bit of a failure," he admits. "I'm okay with that, because I also achieved a lot. But, overall, it is a shame. I definitely, physically, had the capabilities of achieving more. But that didn't happen. So I had a very short career in the end.

"It's quite sad, really, but I'm content enough with it. It's one of the things I had to be to make the decision to retire. But there was a lot that wasn't achieved. There was definitely more there."

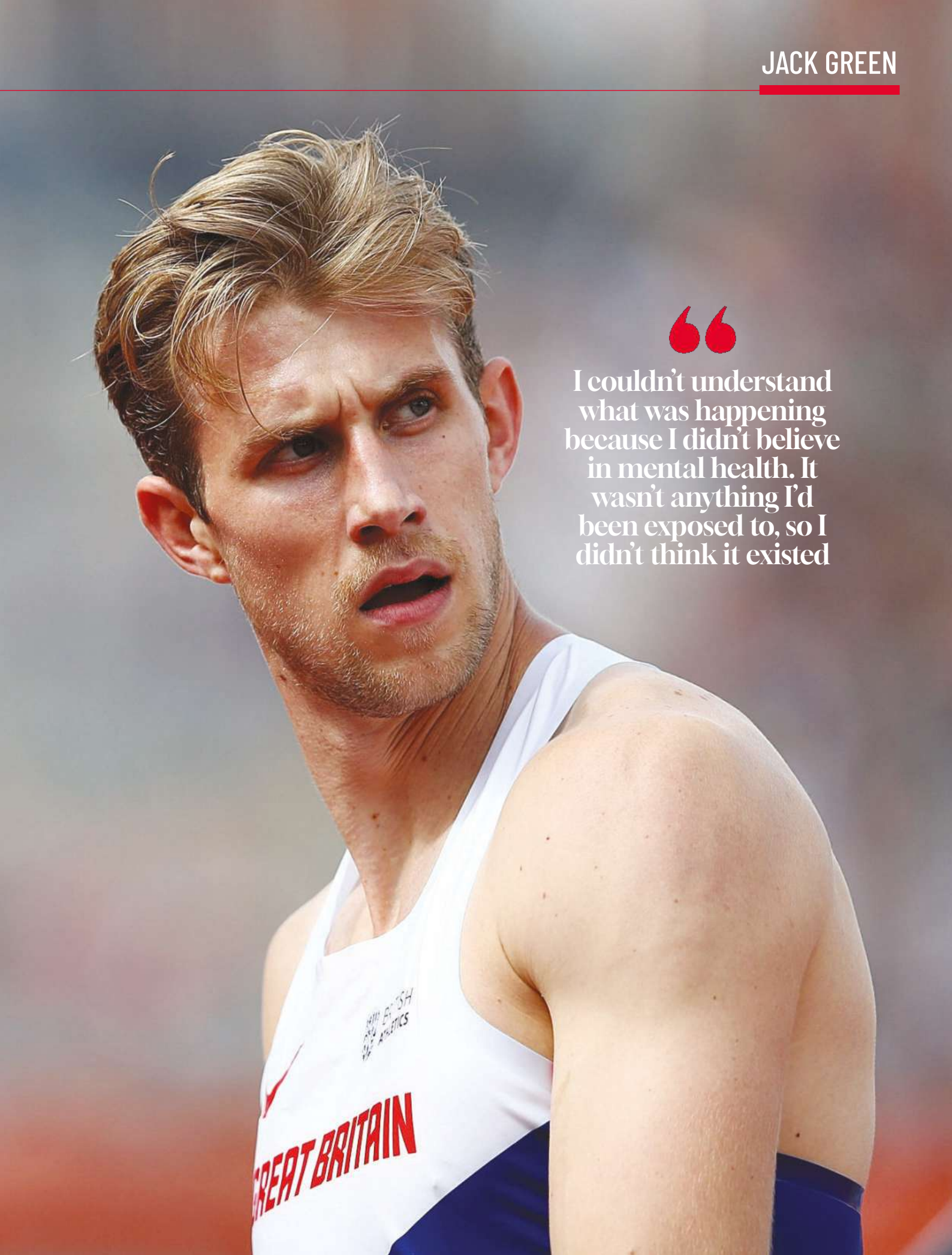
Physical ability was nothing Green lacked, making his first two global semi-finals by the age of 20. It was something else that went awry and brought about the premature end. The winter after falling at a hurdle at those London Olympics, his mental health deteriorated to the extent that he "didn't want to live" any more.

"I couldn't finish training sessions but, quite frankly, running wasn't particularly a priority at that point," he says. "But I couldn't understand what was happening because I didn't believe in mental health. It wasn't anything I'd been exposed to, so I didn't think it existed. I thought it was for people who needed an excuse to not be successful. It wasn't until I started to race in 2013 that I essentially broke down."

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

“

I couldn't understand what was happening because I didn't believe in mental health. It wasn't anything I'd been exposed to, so I didn't think it existed





Barely able to complete a race (he finished just two of the five 400m hurdles competitions he attempted in 2013), Green was diagnosed with depression and anxiety disorder, prompting him to step away from athletics. Given that involved relinquishing both British Athletics funding and his Nike contract, it was a brave decision for such a young man to take.

“I didn’t know if it would be a day, a month, a year or forever,” he recalls. “I gave up everything, as well as damage to my reputation. It was a big decision, but I just didn’t want to run. I couldn’t keep on doing the same thing over and over again, and expect myself to be better.

“The idea was to have a break, learn more

about myself and then make a decision from there. But in reality, and with the benefit of hindsight, I just ran away from the pressure and expectation, so started to feel a bit better because no one expected anything of me. I just ran away from the things I was struggling with. Then I returned to the sport because it’s all I knew I could do.”

Having not competed for the best part of 20 months, he quickly picked up where he left off in 2015, routinely making international teams over the following few years despite his mental health worsening again.

“At that point, after coming back into the sport, I became something of a mental health advocate, but I still definitely struggled with

ABOVE: Lina Nielsen is now being coached by Jack Green, after the British 400m hurdles champion approached him for help



My relationship with Lina is a partnership. We’ll never do anything without her understanding of why we are doing it

accepting the stigma around it," he says. "Also, I became quite successful again quite quickly, which leant into me not learning. In hindsight, I didn't learn anything about myself. I just fell back into the same routine and same habits."

The initial plan in late 2018 was to take another sabbatical and return for the Tokyo Olympics. But, when his therapist asked why he wanted to give running another go, Green "couldn't come up with one reason". Instead, he decided to retire. At an age when many runners are yet to even reach their peak, he stepped away for good.

With bills to pay, he used his steadily acquired mental health expertise to gain employment in a number of corporate roles, notably as global wellbeing lead at BBC Studios. In addition to his keynote speaking, he also embarked on a coaching career, working across football, rugby and cricket, as well as guiding Italy's multiple Olympic sprinter Gloria Hooper.

Having stepped back from coaching three years ago, he recently made the decision to return to athletics in October after mentoring a number of elite hurdlers rekindled his appetite.

"I was spending a lot of time on the phone supporting athletes and coaches, and I could see how much more fulfilled and happier I was," he says. "The big question was how I could make it my full-time gig because it's what I do best and what I think I'm best at."

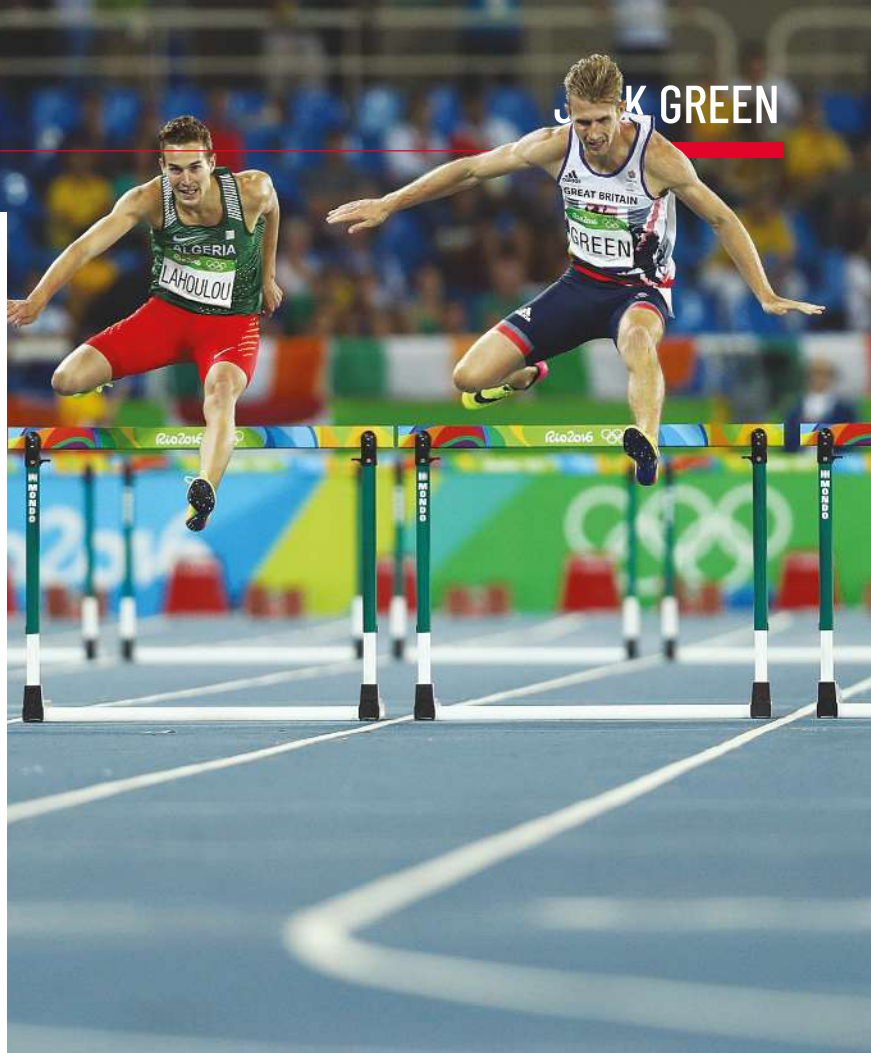
The intention was to create a development group of promising young athletes and build from there, until British 400m hurdles champion Lina Nielsen reached out and asked if he was available to coach her. For the past few months, the pair have been based together at Lee Valley in east London, with Green harbouring hopes that this year can be the springboard to bigger things.

"If you have a world-class athlete like Lina Nielsen come and approach you, you don't say no," says Green. "I made her very aware of my shortcomings: my lack of experience, my age, my family commitments, work commitments. This was as big a decision for her as for me. We've both gone into it with eyes wide open."

"I pitched what I can do for her, and how I view the bigger picture. My relationship with Lina is a partnership. We'll never do anything without her understanding of why we are doing it. That's important to me."

"The longer-term plan is to create a hub for the best 400m hurdlers in the world to come and work with our group. I just need to get it right with Lina."

His coaching approach is intimately guided



by his own experiences. Do not expect his duties to be confined to a stopwatch.

"I'm very big on looking at the bigger picture," he explains. "Relationships are so important to me. Where I specialise, compared to other coaches, is in how people think, and supporting them on that. The emotional side of it, and factoring it into performance."

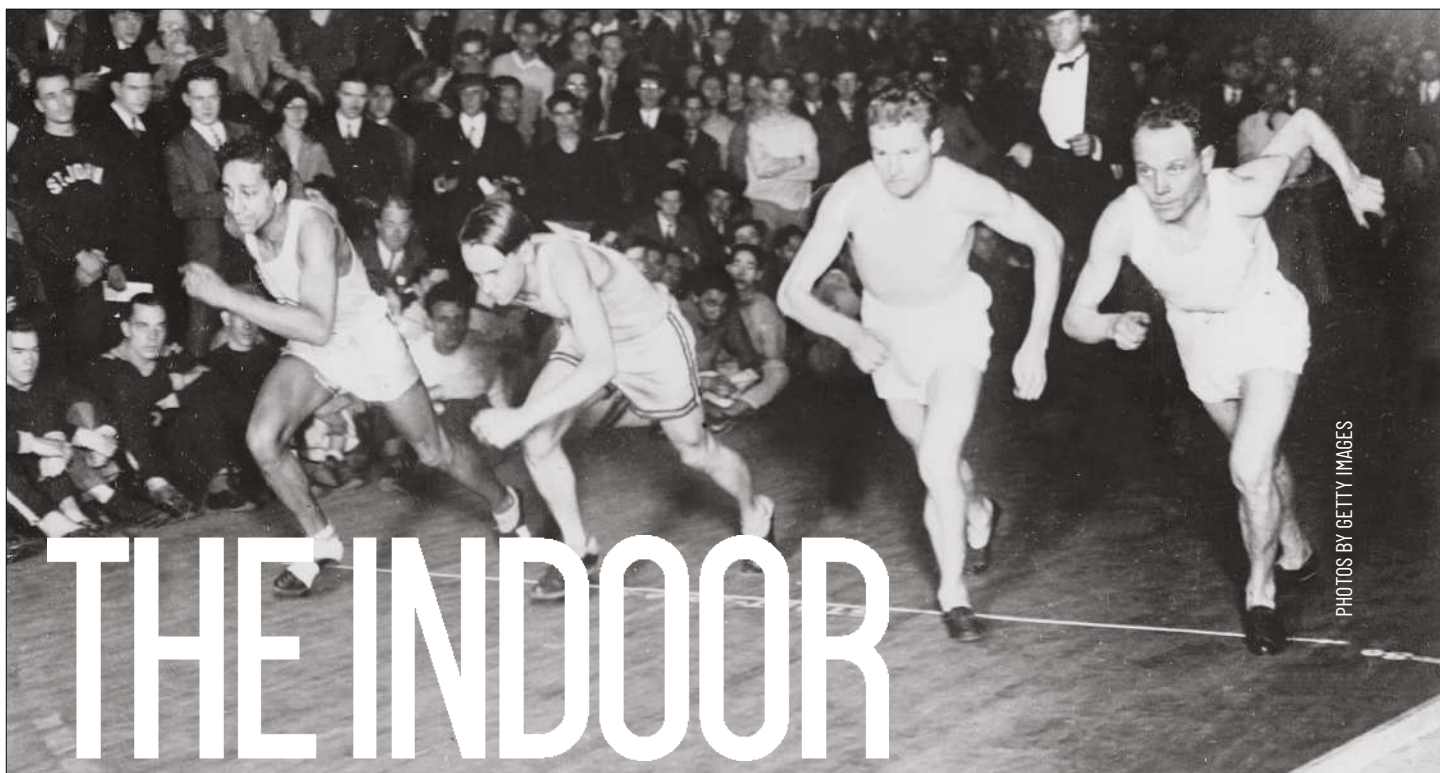
"You're a human being for 24 hours a day and an athlete for just a few of those, so why are we not focusing on the bigger picture? If you're struggling financially, struggling with relationships, with family, or otherwise, outside of the sport, it's going to affect your performance. It's actually really simple stuff. I know about people's families, I know what's happening in their lives, I ask those questions and we build those relationships."

"At the same time, I am incredibly harsh. But I know when to push and when not to. I just look at the bigger picture in a way that coaches don't typically see as their responsibility."

It all begs the question of what his own running career might have looked like if athlete Green had benefited from present-day coach Green in his corner.

"I wouldn't have retired at 28 if I had me around," he states, firmly. "I didn't have a bad career, but if I were coaching myself now I would be expecting a lot more achievements. We could have got more from that person." **AW**

ABOVE: Green competing at the Rio Olympics in 2016



PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

THE INDOOR EVOLUTION

Dave Holmes charts the journey of indoor events from seasonal curiosity to a major sporting phenomenon

The first recorded indoor athletics event is said to have taken place under a vast marquee in India around 324 BC, organised by two of Alexander the Great's generals. Soldiers were tested as they navigated confined spaces requiring endurance and skill. Such early contests suggest that the fascination with indoor competition stretches back more than two millennia, long before the formal arenas of today existed.

In the modern era, the first documented indoor athletics meeting was held at Lambeth Baths in London on January 17, 1859. There, William Priestly won a £22 wager and a gold pin by clearing 500 hurdles set ten yards apart in under 30 minutes. In the United States, the New York Athletic Club staged its first indoor championships on November 11, 1868, following an earlier experiment in Cincinnati in 1861, the year Abraham Lincoln was elected. Organisers in New York had to scour the city for tarpaulins, which were "stitched together and stretched over the gaping wound in the roof". Even so, some

2000 spectators, many wrapped in fur, gathered in the gas-lit Empire Ice Skating Rink while a 42-piece orchestra played a Bellini overture.

Chelsea, in 1863, also stakes a claim as a birthplace of indoor athletics, boasting a "capacious building" with a 100-yard sprint track and a 220-yard circular track. Observers noted that "a very little practice enables the pedestrian to get round them with the greatest ease and comfort to himself".

In 1877, Edward Weston and Daniel O'Leary drew crowds to Islington Agricultural Hall for a 24-hour walking race, each man staking £500. O'Leary won in front of 70,000 spectators. Weston, the "Father of Pedestrianism", went on to complete 1000 miles in 400 hours and 1500 miles in 625 hours, much of it indoors.

Ultra-distance walking and running, popular outdoors, soon moved indoors across Europe and the United States. Six-day races were staged multiple times a year, often with bands, dancing and prizes worth hundreds of thousands in today's terms. Competitors endured tight tracks, smoky arenas, and unusual diets of beef, raw eggs, eel pie and stale beer.

ABOVE: Paavo Nurmi (far right) competes over 3000 yards at Brooklyn College in New York

The sport became hugely popular in the 1920s, thanks in part to stars like the Flying Finn, Paavo Nurmi. Between January and April 1925, he raced indoors across the United States and Canada, competing in 45 events and breaking more than 30 world and US indoor records.

Poland became the first European country to hold a national indoor athletics championship in 1933, establishing a model for continental competition. On April 6, 1935, the first women's Amateur Athletic Association indoor meeting was staged at Wembley in London, marking a significant milestone in the development of opportunities for female athletes.

In Great Britain, indoor championships were staged annually from 1935 to 1939, cementing the sport's growing profile. These early competitions showcased not only elite athletic performance but also the spectacle of indoor arenas, drawing large crowds and helping to transform indoor athletics from a seasonal curiosity into a major sporting phenomenon.

From the 1960s, indoor athletics became increasingly popular across Europe and beyond, particularly in countries with harsh winters where outdoor training was difficult. Indoor facilities offered athletes consistent and controlled conditions, a major advantage for sprinters and those competing in technical events. Around the same period, the sport's popularity in the United States began to spread to the West Coast, expanding its national reach.

It was not until the 1970s that the sport truly gained global momentum, however. Places like RAF Cosford, just north of Wolverhampton, and the London Indoor Arena emerged as prominent venues for competitions, attracting athletes and spectators alike and helping to establish indoor athletics as a regular feature of the sporting calendar. These venues hosted a range of events, from sprints and hurdles to jumps and throws, creating a template for indoor competitions across the UK and elsewhere.

Between 1986 and 2013, indoor athletics developed into the version that we recognise today. Tracks became standardised at 200m, with synthetic surfaces replacing wood, while the IAAF World Indoor Championships – launched in 1985 and held biennially thereafter – brought sustained international attention. By the early 2010s, the championships regularly showcased global stars



such as distance runner Bernard Lagat and pole vaulter Jennifer Suhr, while television and the internet allowed fans worldwide to follow indoor athletics like never before.

The World Indoor Championships shifted to even-numbered years in 2004, with Budapest producing six world records in the first edition under the new schedule. Throughout the 2000s, Europe remained the main host region, with the exception of Doha in 2010. Istanbul 2012 set a new benchmark, drawing a record 171 nations to Ataköy Arena.

Birmingham 2018 provided more memorable moments, with Christian Coleman breaking the 60m championships record and the Polish men's 4x400m relay team setting a world record. After a four-year Covid-enforced hiatus, the championships resumed in 2022, coming to Belgrade for the first time and featuring three world indoor records, with local favourite Ivana Vuleta successfully defending her long jump title before a partisan crowd.

Looking ahead, World Athletics has supported a "short track" concept, allowing oval tracks just 200m in circumference to be set up outdoors or in temporary city venues. Performances on these tracks would still count for official records and rankings. Explaining the change in 2023, World Athletics President Seb Coe said: "This change is designed to remove an unintentional barrier to competition innovation, by offering organisers the chance to explore solutions and opportunities which the current rules may discourage." The move promises to open new possibilities for staging indoor athletics in more flexible and creative settings. **AW**

David A. Holmes (PhD, UNSW) is a historian who specialises in the history and politics of athletics. Email: drathletics776@gmail.com

ABOVE: Perdita Felicien wins the women's 60m hurdles at World Indoor Championships in Budapest in 2004



AT THE FIRST DOCUMENTED INDOOR ATHLETICS MEETING, IN LONDON, WILLIAM PRIESTLY WON A £22 WAGER AND A GOLD PIN BY CLEARING 500 HURDLES SET 10 YARDS APART IN UNDER 30 MINUTES

HOW THEY TRAIN

EMILY NEWNHAM

AGE: 21 **COACH:** NICK DAKIN

Katy Barden speaks to the European under-23 champion whose increased focus on the psychology of sport is producing big results

In this fast-paced digital world, there's still a lot to be said for the humble notebook. World high jump champion and Olympic silver medallist Nicola Olyslagers is particularly well-known for her post-jump ritual which involves noting down technical advice, motivational quotes and personal reflections.

European under-23 400m hurdles champion Emily Newnham has adopted a similar practice. The 21-year-old recorded a personal best and championships record of 54.08 to win gold in Bergen in July. She told *AW* at the time that her victory was the product of two years of rebuilding – including working with a sports psychologist on techniques to help tackle her nerves and expectations – after an agonising fourth place at the European Under-20 Championships in 2023.

While the process of documenting notes has proved to be effective over the last 12 months, her success, ironically, brought with it a new set of emotions to contend with.

“Everything I wanted to achieve, I achieved, so it was really weird to reach those goals and to think: ‘Oh, I did that!’,” she says. “They were things that I’d thought about for so long and all of a sudden I was ticking them off one by one, so it was really overwhelming to start with.

“During the Europeans I’d written memos in my notebook and when I looked at them they really resonated with me, but when I went to the British Champs two weeks later and reopened the notebook that didn’t happen – the quotes just didn’t give me the same buzz.

“I had a bit of a weird period between the Europeans [under-23s] and Worlds because of that. My training was up and down and I had to reframe my mindset; my goal

at the Europeans was to win, but that wasn’t the case with the Worlds. The idea of success was different, so it was working out what success would look like in Tokyo, and what would make me feel successful. In the end I bought a brand new notebook and wrote new memos to support that goal.”

Newnham, who is coached by Nick Dakin, represented Great Britain and Northern Ireland at the European Athletics Indoor Championships (winning 4x400m silver and mixed 4x400m bronze), World Athletics Relays, European Team Championships (where she won mixed 4x400m bronze), European Under-23 Championships (winning 4x400m gold in addition to the 400m hurdles individual title) and World Athletics Championships in 2025; not bad for an athlete who was previously apprehensive about standing on a start line. In the process she lowered her personal best from 56.85 to 54.08.

“I think my biggest learning from this year is to have belief in myself and to know how important that is,” she says. “To walk away from this year knowing that I can stand on these start lines, that I deserve to be there and that I can be competitive, that’s a big thing for me. I never imagined a world where I’d be at these events, let alone that I could actually be competitive in the future.

“It’s also understanding that the way I feel is completely normal and that thoughts aren’t facts; for example, just because I think something, it doesn’t mean that it’s going to happen. Knowing that thoughts are fleeting – that I can think something and let it go – that’s had a massive impact.

“I’ve always said that sport is 90 per cent mental and 10 per cent physical, but now I’ve experienced that myself and I can see the results. That’s why I’ve gone so heavy on the psychology. I’m obviously doing everything I can out on the track, but it’s pointless if I don’t believe I should be there.” **AW**



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES



A TYPICAL TRAINING WEEK (CURRENTLY)

Newnham – whose training partners include international team-mate Poppy Malik – is in her final year at Loughborough College studying sports coaching. She trains between Loughborough, Birmingham (Alexander Stadium) and Nuneaton. “A lot of our focus is on the gym right now because we need to build my strength up,” she says of her current training block.

“I really didn’t like the gym before. If you’d told me that I could get all my strength from running I’d have much preferred that, but my strength and conditioning coach Nick Card has absolutely changed my mindset and I enjoy doing the sessions now.”

In addition to scheduled gym days, Newnham does core and bodyweight work (“prehab stuff”) at various points throughout the week.

- ◆ Monday: (am) technical session at the Alexander Stadium (indoor track): “We start with hurdle walkovers then progress to anything hurdle-based (such as four or five strides and drills),” she explains. “It’s actually my least favourite day of the week – I find it so tedious because I just want to run!”; (pm) gym at Loughborough
- ◆ Tuesday: (am) lactic tolerance session - longer reps with shorter recoveries. For example, 300m-3min recovery-300m-10min recovery-300m-3min recovery-300m
- ◆ Wednesday: (am) gym
- ◆ Thursday: (am) endurance/aerobic session currently on grass in Loughborough such as 90sec-90sec-75sec-75sec-45sec-45sec off equal recovery
- ◆ Friday: (am) gym
- ◆ Saturday: (am) endurance/aerobic session or speed/fartlek session (grass) increasing from around 20 minutes of total running at the start of the winter to around 35 minutes of total running (by end of winter block)
- ◆ Sunday: rest day

Favourite session: “In summer it’s always my hurdles session. For example, starts to hurdle five, that’s just a nice session, but in winter it’s anything over 250m-300m. One of my favourites is a tempo-based session like 5x300m (off 3min). Once you get into a rhythm and you’re flowing it just feels nice.”

Least favourite session: “Three-minute surge runs; when I see that on my programme I want to cry! We jog for three minutes and Nick will shout, ‘Pick it up!’ The pick-ups range from five to 20 seconds of sprinting, so it’s just the unknown of how long you’re going to be sprinting for.”

“I’m learning
so much.
My philosophy is
constantly evolving”

LAURA WEIGHTMAN



COACHING

CONVERSATIONS

Katy Barden talks to the two-time Olympian about embarking on a coaching career after competing at the sharp end of middle-distance running

Two-time Olympian Laura Weightman – a multiple medallist over 1500m and 5000m at the European Championships and Commonwealth Games – retired from competition in September 2023 after a challenging few years dealing with injuries, surgery and extensive rehabilitation.

A sport and exercise science graduate from Leeds Beckett University, the 34-year-old now works as an endurance coach within the Leeds Talent Hub and as a junior athletics co-ordinator (managing a Leeds Beckett-based athletics programme for children aged 8-16 years), in addition to supporting athletes on England Athletics' Youth Talent Programme and Great Britain and Northern Ireland teams on training camps and at championships.

A member of UK Coaching's Women in High Performance Coaching Programme, Weightman currently coaches athletes including Olympic 1500m silver medallist Laura Muir and Great Britain and Northern Ireland age-group internationals Sam Mills (track and cross country) and Isla Paterson (mountain running).

She also applies her passion for sport and people through her work as a performance lifestyle advisor, supporting athletes to balance their sporting ambitions with education and life beyond sport.

How did you first get into coaching?

I was still living at home [in Alnwick] at the time and Alnwick Harriers started up a junior section.

I did my first qualification focused on coaching children in athletics before I went to university. I think that's what sparked my interest in the qualification process.

I did my coaching assistant qualification through On Camp with Kelly [a mentoring and education initiative for junior middle-distance athletes established by Kelly Holmes] around 2010 and I went on to get my full coaching licence a few years later. I was just interested in helping people and I was interested in the sport itself. As a full-time athlete it was a real privilege to have the time and space in my week to do that, and I felt that it was really important to set myself up for the opportunity to go into coaching.

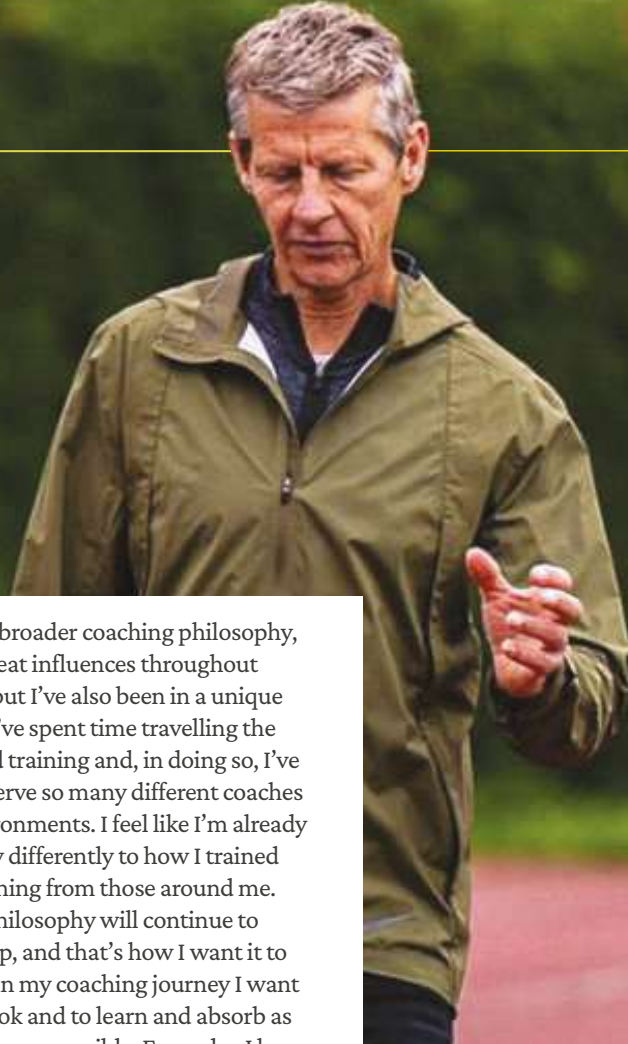
Once I gained my qualifications I started helping a few of my friends at university who'd asked for a bit of advice and guidance. I kept it at club level at that point because I was training and competing myself so I wasn't always around.

In the latter part of my career I got an opportunity to coach with England Athletics' Youth Talent Programme which I really, really enjoyed. Alongside that, I did my performance lifestyle qualification which gave me additional insight and knowledge and contributed to a more holistic approach to coaching. Those experiences were really valuable when I transitioned from athlete to coach.

Had you always planned to move into coaching once you retired?

Throughout my career I was always someone who naturally wanted to help others. Even when I was training and competing myself I'd find myself

PHOTO BY CHRIS COOPER



ABOVE: Laura Weightman was coached by Steve Cram

having conversations with other athletes and wanting to help and support them if they asked questions on training camps or at races.

I never imagined myself not being involved in athletics or sport after I retired, although I didn't know exactly what that role would be. I prepared myself by following the things that I was passionate about, doing my performance lifestyle qualification, doing my degree in sport science, doing my coaching qualifications. I wanted to give myself a platform of experiences that would allow me to step into something that I was interested in.

How would you describe your coaching philosophy?

At this stage I'm learning so much every day that my philosophy is constantly evolving. The most important thing for me is to put the person first before the athlete, and I'll always want to help the individuals I'm working with, no matter who they are and what their aspirations and goals are. I like to spend time with people and have conversations, so it's not just about athletics, it's more of a holistic approach to life and coaching.

In terms of my broader coaching philosophy, I've had some great influences throughout my own career, but I've also been in a unique position where I've spent time travelling the world racing and training and, in doing so, I've been able to observe so many different coaches in different environments. I feel like I'm already coaching slightly differently to how I trained because I'm learning from those around me.

My coaching philosophy will continue to grow and develop, and that's how I want it to be. At this stage in my coaching journey I want to be an open book and to learn and absorb as much information as possible. Every day I have different conversations with different people across a variety of sports and I'm really enjoying the opportunity to connect and develop broadly as a coach and then applying that into my own coaching day to day. I'm just really excited to keep learning.

Who has been your greatest coaching influence?

I'm so lucky to have had two coaches throughout my career, my Morpeth Harriers club coach Mike Bateman and Steve Cram. Mike taught me so much. He set me off on the road to become an athlete and taught me about working together in a fun club environment. I'd spend Monday night with my friends running around a housing estate doing relays – the session would be hidden in the relays, so that taught me about how training can be fun and how all abilities can work together.

And I've been so fortunate to work with Steve and to learn from what he did throughout his career and how he applied that to working with me. We both learned so much from that process – for example how, as a female athlete, I couldn't just replicate exactly what he did as a male athlete – and that's something I've now applied to my coaching.

I also look and reflect on the impact of my wider team in Leeds. My sports psychologist had a significant impact on my career at the time but also now as a coach in terms of how I frame things. I see that as a really valuable asset

BELOW: Isla Paterson is an exciting young athlete being coached by Weightman



PHOTO BY BOBBY GAVIN

in my coaching toolbox. Andy Henderson (head of athletics at Leeds Beckett and head coach of Leeds Talent Hub) and Andi Drake (Leeds Talent Hub manager) have also been a huge support and have enabled me to grow and develop as a coach within the Talent Hub environment.

Every coach and every person in your support team brings a different strength and skillset. I worked with a predominantly male team throughout my career but I had a female physio [Alison Rose]. Working with Alison was really important for me because she gave me some of the support I needed around certain things that maybe others couldn't. It's important for athletes to feel like they have the right support from the right people when they need it.

You coach a range of athletes with varying levels of experience, how do you bring everyone together?

It's been such an interesting process. Obviously Laura [Muir] is a former team-mate and she's one of the best in the world, while Isla [Paterson] – 15th overall and first Brit (U20) at the 2025 World Mountain and Trail Running Championships – is a young student who is still quite a raw talent. They're very different, but they're still people before athletes so it was important for me to understand what they needed from me. With Isla in particular it was just getting to know her.

Isla and Laura have spent some time together, which has given them an opportunity to connect; they might not do track sessions together, but they'll warm up together and do drills and strides. Isla can learn from Laura and there are other people around for Laura to train with too, so it creates a really nice atmosphere of friendship and shared learning.

We can all connect and work together in different ways and I think creating those sorts of environments – where it doesn't matter who you are, what you've achieved or what stage of the sport you're at – can benefit everyone.

How have your own experiences as an athlete benefited you as a coach?

I feel so lucky that I had the career that I had, but I also feel lucky that I had the experiences that I did and I apply those experiences to my coaching every single day. While I understand the highs that athletes are going through I very much understand the lows too, and that really helps when you're having hard conversations with athletes when things haven't gone quite to plan.

It might be the empathy or the reassurance that I've been there and they'll get through it, but that lived experience can bring a conversation to life and help athletes better understand what's going on.



There's sometimes an assumption that as a retired athlete or as a female you've been given an opportunity or an unfair advantage, but you've got to do the work

Have you faced any challenges as a young coach in the sport?

I think there's sometimes an assumption that as a retired athlete, or as a female, you've been given an opportunity or an unfair advantage, but you've got to do the work behind the scenes to be in a position to coach successfully in different environments. I feel like I've earned the opportunities I've been given because I've followed the right path and I've gained the right experiences. A good athlete won't necessarily make a good coach; it's a very different skillset.

What's the most valuable lesson you've learned in your coaching career so far?

It's been a real privilege to retire, to still be in the sport and to say work is coaching. It's challenging, it's rewarding, it's emotional, it's hard, it's all the different emotions you might experience as an athlete, but in a totally different way.

I think the most valuable lesson I've learned so far is to take a step back when things go wrong and to remind myself that I can't always control things, like when an athlete picks up an injury or a race result doesn't go quite the way we expected.

It's just taking a moment to pause and reflect and not to be too hard on myself. We can't control every little thing that happens and that's okay. Inevitably mistakes will be made and things won't always go well, but that all becomes part of the learning process. I'm constantly learning every single day and I think that's the most important thing for me, to keep learning and never stop. **AW**

ABOVE: Weightman wants to continue to grow and develop as a coach

RUN FREE

How the Wahoo KICKR RUN brings the road indoors

From world 5000m champion Cole Hocker and Olympic 5000m champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen to British record-holders George Mills and Eilish McColgan through to ultra runners Jim Walmsley and Tom Evans, many of the world's top runners seem to be training regularly on a treadmill these days.

The boom in popularity of treadmill running was also demonstrated recently when World Athletics announced the inaugural World Treadmill Championships in 2026, which means "unknown runners" can have a Rocky Balboa-style shot at the title by taking on the top athletes over 5km.

So what better time to get into treadmill running? And what better machine to do it on than the Wahoo KICKR RUN? Wahoo made their name by producing state-of-the-art indoor cycling turbo trainers and their move into the running world might have a similar impact.

At a cost of £5999.99, the KICKR RUN is not for people looking for a budget treadmill. Instead, it is a top-of-the-range machine that has already been described as a "game changer" by some reviewers.

Hocker, the Olympic 1500m gold medallist and Olympic 5000m champion, says: "Some of my first impressions of the KICKR RUN were how natural it felt, which is something I've not had on another treadmill before. I'd describe the KICKR RUN to someone who has never run on it before as the closest thing you can get to outdoor running without going outside."

Its big feature is a 'RunFree' mode that takes the meaning of the word 'smart' to a new level because it adjusts its speed automatically based on your position on the belt. In other

words, you do not even have to touch the controls.

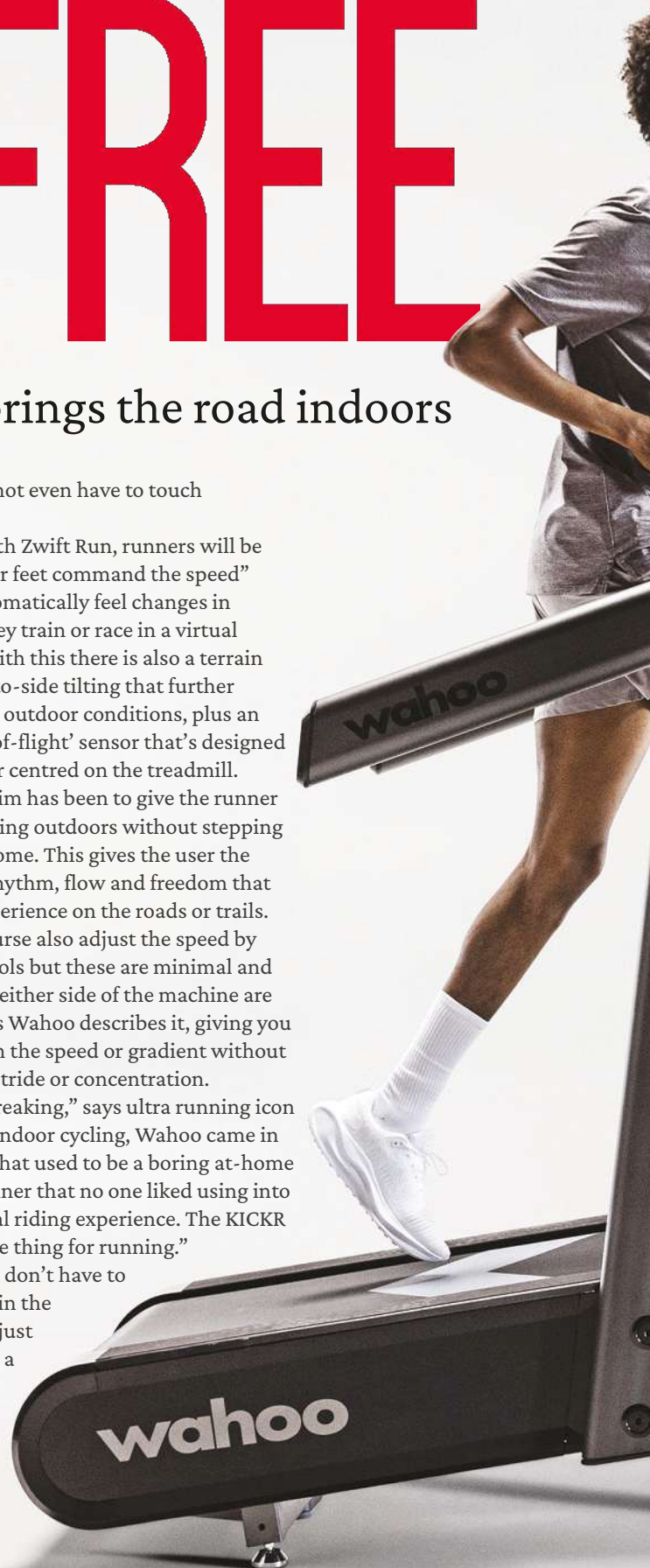
Combined with Zwift Run, runners will be able to "let their feet command the speed" as well as "automatically feel changes in gradient" as they train or race in a virtual world. Along with this there is also a terrain mode for side-to-side tilting that further mimics natural outdoor conditions, plus an in-built 'time-of-flight' sensor that's designed to keep the user centred on the treadmill.

All in all the aim has been to give the runner the feel of running outdoors without stepping outside their home. This gives the user the same natural rhythm, flow and freedom that they would experience on the roads or trails.

You can of course also adjust the speed by using the controls but these are minimal and the paddles on either side of the machine are "nudgeable", as Wahoo describes it, giving you great control on the speed or gradient without breaking your stride or concentration.

"It's groundbreaking," says ultra running icon Walmsley. "In indoor cycling, Wahoo came in and changed what used to be a boring at-home indoor bike trainer that no one liked using into an actual virtual riding experience. The KICKR RUN is the same thing for running."

He adds: "You don't have to get your finger in the right spot. You just give the paddle a little tap."



STAND-OUT FEATURES OF THE KICKR RUN...

Run free: The immersive RunFree Mode allows you to run naturally – the treadmill adjusts to match your pace without interaction. With a maximum speed of 4:00/mile, sprints, intervals and tempo runs are suitable for the fastest runners out there.

Dynamic movement: The responsive surface, grade simulation and lateral tilt of the treadmill emulates ascents, descents and outdoor surfaces to challenge and engage the same muscles as running outside.

Safe and secure: KICKR RUN offers several features to make sure you and those around you are safe at all times. When in RunFree Mode, a unique time-of-flight sensor keeps you safely positioned on the treadmill as your pace varies, with no manual input required. RunFree Pace Limit allows users to control their run by setting a max speed while using RunFree Mode.

Strong and silent: KICKR RUN's professional-grade construction absorbs impact and dampens noise, delivering a quiet, grounded ride that feels solid with every stride. Whether you're pushing the pace early, late or in shared spaces, you can focus on your run without drawing attention to it.

Intuitive design: The clean console



and accessible control paddles minimise the need to interact with the treadmill during your workout so you can focus on running.

Connected running: Compatible with leading apps such as Wahoo, Zwift, Kinomap, Humango and Peloton, KICKR RUN delivers a connected running experience with metrics that matter: ground contact time, vertical oscillation, cadence. It is a treadmill that has been designed very much with third-party apps in mind.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WAHOOFITNESS.COM

DOES THE SHOE FIT?

One of the most important aspects of choosing running footwear is making sure it's right for you. Gait analysis is a key part of being able to do that but is the process outdated? **Paul Freary** finds out more

If you've ever shopped for running shoes, you'll know the routine: you step on a treadmill, jog a few steps, someone films your feet and then comes the diagnosis. "You're over-pronating a bit – let's try you in a stability shoe."

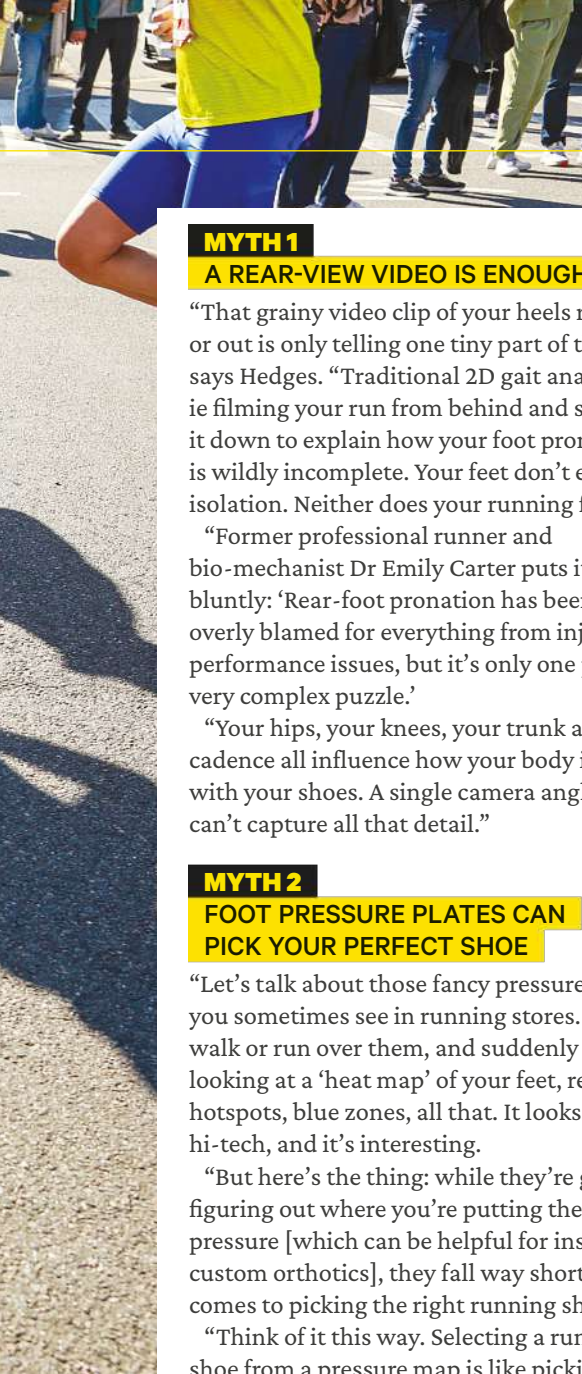
As we know, though, everyone's running gait is different and ultimately choosing a shoe that's wrong for you can have damaging effects. With that in mind, I spoke with Jonathan Hedges of RunRight 3D to find out how best to use data and science when finding your next pair of footwear – and bust a few myths around the process of gait analysis.

"Though it feels scientific and highly personalised, in-store gait analysis can be subjective, with its foundation dating back to the 80s when manufacturers started producing stability and support shoes," says Hedges.

"Tools like 2D cameras and pressure mats are outdated and often misleading. Professor Benno Nigg argues that the Pronation Control paradigm should be abandoned [due to the lack of supporting evidence]. This could make sense, as we are seeing similar injury rates to those of 30 years ago!

"Let's unpack traditional gait analysis and look at why cutting-edge 3D systems are changing the game, delivering faster, smarter and far more accurate insights into how you run."

ABOVE: Every runner is different, so it's vital that they make sure they have the correct running shoes



MYTH 1

A REAR-VIEW VIDEO IS ENOUGH

"That grainy video clip of your heels rolling in or out is only telling one tiny part of the story," says Hedges. "Traditional 2D gait analysis, ie filming your run from behind and slowing it down to explain how your foot pronates, is wildly incomplete. Your feet don't exist in isolation. Neither does your running form."

"Former professional runner and bio-mechanist Dr Emily Carter puts it bluntly: 'Rear-foot pronation has been overly blamed for everything from injuries to performance issues, but it's only one piece in a very complex puzzle.'

"Your hips, your knees, your trunk and your cadence all influence how your body interacts with your shoes. A single camera angle simply can't capture all that detail."

MYTH 2

FOOT PRESSURE PLATES CAN PICK YOUR PERFECT SHOE

"Let's talk about those fancy pressure plates you sometimes see in running stores. You walk or run over them, and suddenly you're looking at a 'heat map' of your feet, red hotspots, blue zones, all that. It looks super hi-tech, and it's interesting."

"But here's the thing: while they're great for figuring out where you're putting the most pressure [which can be helpful for insoles or custom orthotics], they fall way short when it comes to picking the right running shoe."

"Think of it this way. Selecting a running shoe from a pressure map is like picking a sports car based on its tyre marks. You see the outcome, not how it was made. Pressure plates can't show how much braking or propulsive forces you generate, or what your knees and hips are doing with each stride."

"They also cannot calculate how balanced your centre of mass is during your run. If you're choosing a shoe to run further, faster, or pain-free, you need to understand what other parts of your body are doing, not just pressure underfoot. Shoes should support your entire movement, not just the part that hits the ground."

MYTH 3

ONE SHORT JOG IS ENOUGH

"You're asked to hop on a treadmill, jog for 20 seconds, then choose between stability or neutral shoes. Quick, yes, but flawed. Your gait changes with speed, fatigue and even the shoe itself. You move differently in a warm-up versus a 5km race, and kilometre one looks

nothing like kilometre 18 in a marathon. Shoe testing should reflect real running conditions, not a brief jog. To truly find the right shoe, warm up in it, then run at your target pace for at least three minutes to let your movement pathway habituate to the shoe you are testing, then analyse."

MYTH 4

3D FOOT SCANNERS CAN DO IT ALL

"Those sleek 3D foot scanners in running stores are fun; they map your arches, measure your width and label your foot type but they only capture your foot standing still."

"Running is dynamic – your arches compress, toes splay, knees absorb impact and hips rotate. None of that shows up on a static scan."

"So, while 3D scans are helpful for insoles or general fit, they fall short for picking the right running shoe, because shoes need to work with your moving foot, not just your resting one. Real movement needs real-time analysis. Only then can your shoes truly match your stride."

MYTH 5

COMFORT IS KEY

"If you've hung around physios or biomechanics experts, you've probably heard of the 'Comfort Filter'. Introduced by Professor Benno Nigg in 2015, the idea is simple: the shoes that feel best are the ones your body subconsciously selects to reduce stress and, therefore, injury."

"And the science backs it up. Studies show that comfortable shoes improve efficiency, reduce perceived effort and even lower injury rates when runners choose by feel rather than foot type. But here's the catch: comfort is personal and sometimes misleading."

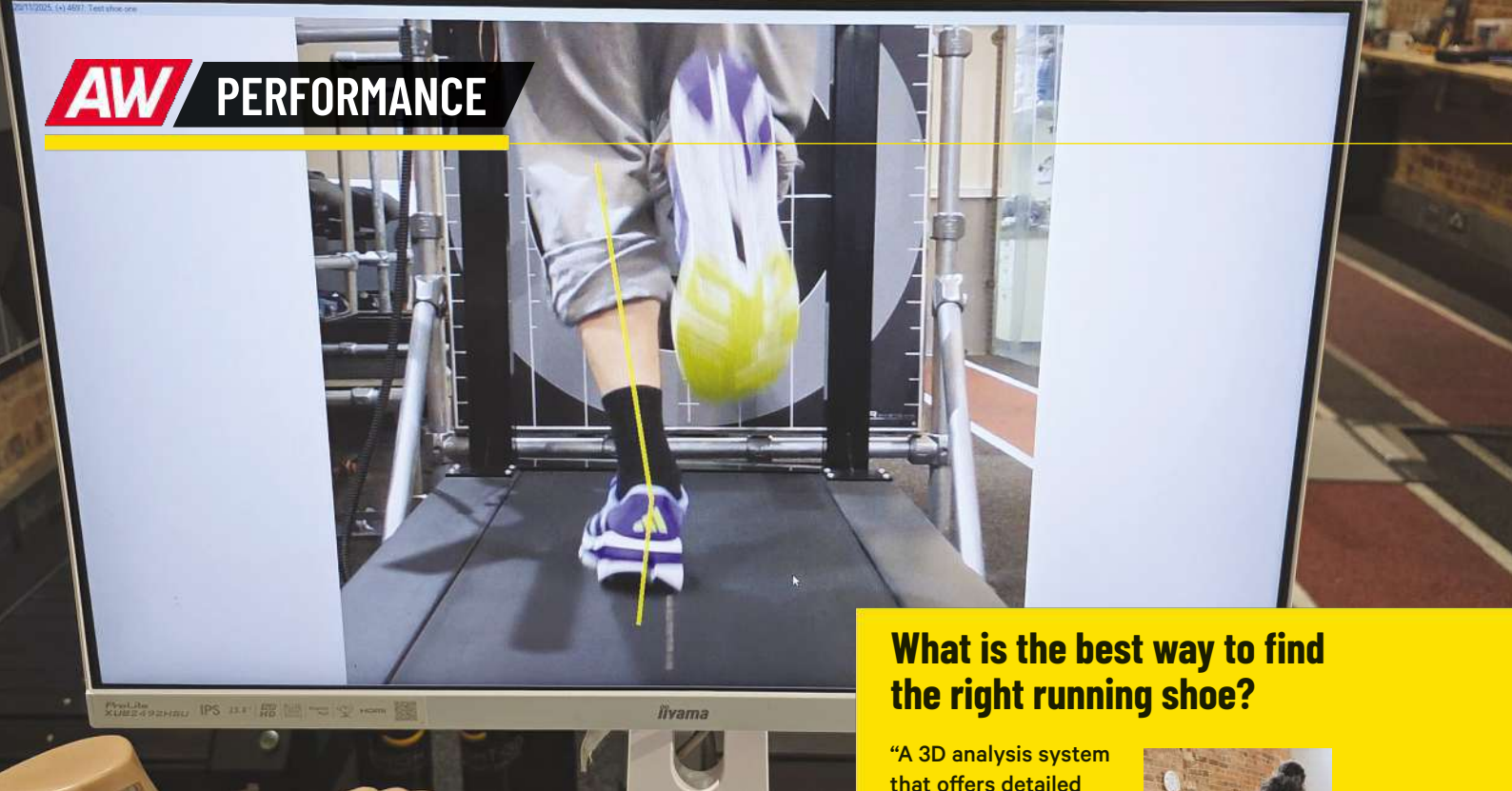
"A super-soft shoe may feel great at first but quietly overload your Achilles or knees over time. Newer runners might not yet have the sensory 'tuning' to sense those subtle loads. Some brands have cottoned on to this, and 'out of the box comfort' is a real thing."

"So while comfort is one of the best starting points, it's not the whole story. Your shoe needs to feel good and support your biomechanics over miles. The bottom line is that comfort matters, but comfort with context is what keeps you injury-free."

MYTH 6

AI POSE SYSTEMS CAN FULLY ANALYSE YOUR RUNNING FORM

"We're deep into the era of AI, so it's no surprise that running stores are now using AI-based pose detection."



ABOVE: it's recommended to go further than relying on a one-dimensional view of your gait

"You step in front of a few cameras, take a short jog and suddenly you're surrounded by digital lines, angles and boxes. It's slick, efficient and feels like something straight out of The Matrix.

"However, most of these systems are still stuck in 2D. Yes, AI pose tools can measure joint angles, catch asymmetries and count your reps but they're still limited by what a single camera – or, at best, two – can capture.

"That means they're not seeing the full complexity of how you move, especially when you're running at real speed, with load and in three-dimensional space.

"Running is a 3D sport. Your pelvis rotates. Your trunk leans. Your knees drift. Your foot lands, rolls and reacts. It all happens in motion, not just front to back or side to side.

"A static camera view, even with AI attached, just can't pick up the full symphony of movement that's happening, especially when angles shift across planes.

"To make things trickier, AI systems often struggle with fast-paced gait, poor lighting or non-standard body shapes. It's cool tech and it's perfect for strength training analysis or quick postural checks but, for running shoes, it doesn't dig deep enough.

"Choosing the right shoe means understanding how your entire body moves, not just how your joints look from one angle. To truly match a shoe to your stride, you need nuanced 3D motion data, gathered at speed, in context.

"As runners, we're not just dots and lines on a screen. We're kinetic stories in motion and the tools that help us should be smart enough to see the whole story, not just the flat version." **AW**

What is the best way to find the right running shoe?

"A 3D analysis system that offers detailed insights into your performance in a specific running shoe is unmatched in value," says Hedges. "Platforms designed explicitly for footwear evaluation, such as MotionMetrix and RUNRIGHT-3D, analyse your data and highlight critical metrics related to performance, efficiency and injury prevention.



"Each shoe you test is displayed side-by-side within the software, allowing direct comparison of models and facilitating truly data-driven decisions rather than relying on subjective impressions or generic algorithms. The difference is unmistakable: identify which midsole works best for you, which sole shape promotes optimal foot roll and which shoe enables more efficient braking.

"While these systems are revolutionary, it's still essential to start with an overview of your current running routines, injury history, shoe choices and plans. Next, examine your foot shape, arch height and length to gather enough information to narrow down to three or four pairs of shoes, then exclude those you find uncomfortable. Following that, perform a 3D analysis at your chosen speed, review the data and select the option that best fits your needs. Nothing compares to the comprehensive insights provided by 3D analysis."

Find out more at runright-3d.com

Flutter
INTERNATIONAL
**HOSPICE
HALF
MARATHON**

ULTRAMANN

DISCOVER YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE ON THE ISLE OF MAN

FLUTTER INTERNATIONAL HOSPICE HALF MARATHON MARCH 22 ULTRAMANN 2026 JUNE 27

If you're looking to add something new to your 2026 race calendar, the Isle of Man is fast becoming one of the most exciting running destinations close to home. Just a short flight or ferry from the UK, the Island offers fast roads, breathtaking trails and a growing reputation for well-organised, high-quality running events.

Following its successful debut in 2025, the Flutter International Hospice Half Marathon returns in March 2026. Last year, the course – a flat, single-loop route through the quiet lanes of the Northern Plain – delivered everything a runner would want from a PB-friendly race which is UKA accredited and certified to Power of 10, with full electronic timing. Local runner Ollie Lockley set the benchmark in 65:22 – proof of the speed on offer.

If you're looking for a different type of running challenge, new for 2026 is the UltraMann, a spectacular 50-mile ultra marathon tracing the Island's rugged and scenic coastal footpath. From sweeping clifftops to remote bays and wildlife-rich trails, it's a demanding but unforgettable challenge for experienced trail runners. The race finishes



**Enter the
Flutter
International
Hospice Half
Marathon here**



**Enter the
UltraMann
2026 here**



on the Douglas quayside, offering a memorable backdrop for your final push to the line.

Both events are delivered by Hospice Isle of Man in partnership with Manx Harriers, combining expert race management, extensive volunteer support and the Island's welcoming running community. Every entry helps raise vital funds for Hospice Isle of Man, supporting patients and families across the Island.

Getting there is easy: flights operate from Manchester, Liverpool, London (Gatwick, Heathrow and City), Birmingham, Edinburgh and Dublin, while ferries run from Liverpool, Heysham, Belfast and Dublin. You can be on the Island in as little as 30 minutes.

If you're ready to try a new race in a stunning location that feels like being overseas but is close to home, the Isle of Man is well worth the trip. **AW**

NEW YEAR NEW SHOES

Paul Freary looks
at the latest
models from the
top brands for
the start of 2026



DIADORA

diadora.com

Perfect for everyday miles, the Cellula 2 features a deeper ANIMA midsole cushioning foam, which increases cushioning, feels more responsive and proves to be

CELLULA

£150

incredibly stable for such a high stacked model.

It really is surprising, with a super-plush ride that soaks up the miles. The upper is also well-made and wraps the foot

beautifully for a great fit and all-around high-performance running experience. With this model leading their charge into the new year, it's time to give Diadora a try.





PUMA

puma.com

MAGMAX NITRO 2

£170

Maxing out the cushioning and revising the nitrogen-injected midsole, Puma's second-generation maximal cushioned model returns with an improved feel and a more responsive push-off.

One of the most cushioned models on the market, the MagMax 2 manages to feel light and well-balanced, making its considerable bulk disappear with a super smooth heel-to-toe ride.

Lighter than the previous model and with an improved mesh upper with a stretch-like fit, this is an all-round improvement, rounded off with the great Puma Grip outsole. This is a great daily trainer that simply soaks up the miles and, if it's anything like its predecessor, should prove very durable, too.



NEW BALANCE

newbalance.com

1080V15

£170

There's a change of direction here, with the 15th version of the brand's premium neutral cushioned model. It's out with the Fresh Foam X cushioning and in with the new INFINION foam.

The CM-EVA-based midsole is replaced with a nitrogen-infused TPU-based material, and we get the same deep stack,

just with a much more responsive and almost bouncy feel. For me, it makes the 1080 much more competitive in the highly cushioned and responsive daily trainer category. The upper remains plush and padded around the foot, complementing the sumptuous feel and making this a great update.



BROOKS

brooksrunning.com

ADRENALINE GTS 25

£145

One of the most popular stability running shoes on the market has been given a top-to-bottom makeover for the new year. The Adrenaline has seen improvements in the upper fit and feel, as well as the all-important cushioning and support. The upper is a new double-jacquard mesh construction, creating a soft, sock-like feel around the foot, while the supportive GuideRails are now moulded

in one piece as part of the midsole cushioning.

That cushioning is ramped up by 3mm in the forefoot and 1mm in the heel and, although it might not sound much, it elevates the feel of the shoe, giving it a smoother and incredibly plush feel. That sensation transforms the cushioning and makes the shoe softer, while maintaining the great support.



ASICS

GEL NIMBUS

asics.com

£180

The long-time cushioning king returns in its 28th iteration. Now lighter than the previous version, there have been updates to the upper featuring an improved, engineered knit construction with a soft, stretch-like fit that hugs the foot.

Cushioning comes from the FF Blast+ foam midsole at 42mm deep, so it soaks up every stride and ensures a super-smooth yet energetic ride that's perfect for daily miles at any pace.

The Nimbus feels even more premium in every aspect, from fit to feel and running performance, making it a versatile option for those seeking a neutral cushioned trainer.

ALTRA

FWD VIA 2

altrarunning.eu/uk

£155

With an all-new midsole and updated upper, the new FWD Via2 offers maximum levels of cushioning and a lighter, more efficient, ride.

The Altra EGO P35 midsole is lighter, softer and more responsive than the previous model. It keeps the 4mm heel drop but certainly feels a touch livelier and more willing to pick up the pace.

Although a neutral model, the shoe does have higher side walls to its midsole, which cup the heel and help give it a stable feel. The shoe features the familiar Altra "foot-shaped" last, so there's plenty of space in the toe box to allow the feet to spread naturally, as well as being great for those with broader feet. Overall, it's a great improvement over the previous model and feels plush, welcoming and enjoyable to run in.



ADIDAS

ADIZERO EVO SL

adidas.co.uk

£130

With a full-length midsole of Litestrike Pro foam taken from the brand's top-tier road racing shoes, the Evo SL is a lightweight performance model without carbon rods or plates. This helps keep the shoe at a much more affordable price point while maintaining a lively and responsive feel. The upper is simple and well-fitting, echoing the model's fast-paced style, and helping to make it one of the best non-carbon race shoes on the market right now.



TECH TO HELP YOUR TRAINING

WAHOO

uk.wahoofitness.com

Perhaps the most advanced treadmill on the market, the Kickr offers running freedom from your home. With an innovative RunFree mode, it will adjust to match your running pace – speeding up and slowing down as you do – hands-free!

This creates an immersive running experience, while the ability to climb up to 15 per cent and descend to minus three per cent makes for a run that can match the terrain you'll encounter on race day. Add to this a trail running mode, which will tilt the running deck by up to five per cent laterally, and the Kickr

KICKR TREADMILL

£5999.99

provides an involving and more natural experience that goes way beyond conventional treadmills.

Speed work is no problem either, with a four-minute mile pace top speed. The large running deck also means striding out at pace is a comfortable and worry-free experience.

Linking with the Wahoo app or a range of other external programs allows you to create hands-free workouts and take on running routes from major global events without leaving your home.



COROS

coros.com

PACE 4

£229

Lighter, brighter and with more staying power, the latest version of this popular running watch from Coros sees improvements in every department.

It now weighs just 32g, so won't slow you down, yet the battery life is capable of up to 19 days of use and can recharge in under two hours. A new heart rate sensor gives even more reliable data, and dual frequency GPS gives pinpoint location tracking.

The AMOLED display is crystal clear and easy to read when on the move, and the new phone app allows you to deep-dive into all your training and recovery metrics post-run. And, when it comes to recovery, the Pace now monitors sleep stages, recovery time and heart rate variability for in-depth health and wellness monitoring.



A LAP WITH...

GEORGE COUTTIE

Jasmine Collett talks to a British middle-distance talent who has bounced back from injury and made an impressive start to the winter



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

While much of the British distance running contingent were out in Portugal for the European Cross Country Championships last month, George Couttie took a different route. Instead of making what would have been his first appearance at the event as an under-23, the Harrogate athlete stayed in the United States, where he is based, and produced one of the standout early indoor performances of the winter.

The American collegiate indoor season gets underway significantly earlier than it does in the UK, and Couttie's first race of the winter came at the BU Season Opener at Boston University in early December.

Competing over 3000m, the Virginia Tech student who trains alongside Cole Hocker ran 7:36.74 – a time that placed him fifth on the UK all-time list. The performance came a year on from his silver medal in the under-20 race at the European Cross and served as an early marker of his progress as he develops within the NCAA system.

"I wanted to run around that sort of time, maybe even a bit faster," says Couttie. "I'd had another good cross-country season and just felt ready."

The race itself was controlled throughout, with Couttie closing strongly and finding himself in a photo finish with America's Colin Sahlman (7:36.71) who was awarded the victory.

"Knowing you can open your season like that, it makes you feel like there's more to come," says Couttie. "I hadn't really looked at the all-time list so I didn't know what other people had run. I was pretty surprised when I found out where it put me."

The names around Couttie on that list underline the quality of the run. Mo Farah sits one place ahead in fourth with 7:34.47, with Sam Atkin (7:31.97) third, Josh Kerr

(7:30.14) second and George Mills (7:27.92) topping that particular chart.

Couttie's Boston performance also represented a sharp contrast to much of his 2025 outdoor season, which was heavily disrupted by injury. A stress reaction in his shin, picked up after adapting to training on a banked indoor track, forced him into a prolonged period of cross-training and cost him the bulk of the NCAA outdoor campaign.

Despite that setback, the 20-year-old returned in time to make the 1500m final at the UK Championships and finished sixth.

"I was happy with it in the end," he says. "But, like most athletes, I always want to do better. I felt like I could have been on the podium, even though I knew I wasn't in the shape I wanted to be in."

His indoor opener came off the back of another solid cross-country season in the United States. Couttie finished 10th at the NCAA Championships, a result he felt was particularly encouraging given the depth of the field.

For now, though, his focus remains firmly on the shorter track distances. "Maybe when I'm older I'll look at the 10km," he says. "But for the next few years it'll be 1500m, 3000m and 5000m."

His decision not to compete at the European Cross this winter was a practical one. Given that it fell a week later than usual and clashed with key NCAA races, he and his coach opted to prioritise qualification and performance in the US.

That approach has already been rewarded. Couttie has now been selected to represent Great Britain in the mixed relay at the World Cross Country Championships, marking his first senior international selection. He will join Adam Fogg, India Weir and Alex Millard for the relay in Tallahassee, Florida on January 10.

Central to his development has been the NCAA environment itself. "I love the team aspect of it," says the Ben Thomas-coached athlete. "I've never really had a proper team around me. You've got people to train with every single day, and it's just a pretty cool thing."

With his indoor season already underway long before most UK athletes have even opened theirs, George Couttie has made an early statement, and there may be more to follow. **AW**



If you could choose one person to train/compete with, past or present, who would it be and why?

I'd have to say Mo Farah. He was a massive inspiration and the person that I always watched growing up. When I was getting into athletics, he was the guy that would win all the medals.



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PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

400m final folly?

I can see the argument for World Athletics changing the 400m final at the world indoors from one race into two heats, but I don't really think it's the answer. It's true that, on an indoor track, having an inside lane draw puts an athlete at a huge disadvantage, plus there are so few overtaking opportunities over a 400m race, but this idea totally changes the personality of the event.

The medals being decided by the fastest times over the two "heats" turns it into a time trial and rather dilutes the element of championships racing. You could have the possibility of someone winning one of the races but still coming away without a medal and I can't quite see the logic in that. To me it devalues the discipline and the occasion.

Peter Bridlington

TNT trouble

I think the news that TNT, and not the BBC, will be broadcasting the Commonwealth Games really is bad news. Part of the power of events like this is the opportunity to take lesser known sports to the masses and you can only really do that through free-to-air coverage.

A TNT subscription is £30.99 per month, a price that some simply won't be able to afford. You might also ask some cricket fans if they feel they have had value for money from the TNT coverage of the Ashes!

I know this is a smaller scale version of the Commonwealths this year and that sometimes money has to be a priority. However, this development really makes it feel like Glasgow 2026 will be on the back foot right from the start.

Emma Gibson

Jumping for joy

Thank goodness that World Athletics have decided to rethink their plans to replace the board in the horizontal jumps with a take-off "zone". I'm all for looking at new ways to help athletics evolve but it was clear right from the very start that those in the thick of the action, ie the athletes, did not like it one bit.

In fairness to the governing body, they should be given credit for at least giving the idea a try and being proactive but it always seemed to me that the biggest issue came from the athletes not having been properly consulted about the move in the first place – or them feeling like they hadn't been given a say.

That World Athletics have listened on this occasion will come as a relief to many.

David Chartery

WHAT'S ON



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

JANUARY 10

- 46th World Athletics Cross Country Championships
Tallahassee, Florida
worldathletics.org

JANUARY 10-11

- Loughborough Indoor Open
lboro.ac.uk/sport
- Northern Senior, U20 & U17 Indoor Championships
Sheffield
northernathletics.co.uk
- SEAA Indoor U13/U15/U17 Track & Field Championships
Lee Valley
seaa.org.uk
- USATF International Invitational Race Walk & National Race Walk Marathon Championships
Santee, California
usatf.org

JANUARY 11

- 4J scottishathletics National Indoor Open
Glasgow
scottishathletics.org.uk
- Chevron Houston Marathon
chevronhoustonmarathon.com

JANUARY 14

- Track & Field Live
Abbotstown, Dublin
athleticsireland.ie

JANUARY 16

- Doha Marathon by Ooredoo
dohamarathonoooredoo.com

JANUARY 17-18

- England Athletics U20 / Senior Combined Events, including RW and BMC and Para Championships
Sheffield
englandathletics.org
- Irish Indoor Combined Events Championships
Abbotstown, Dublin
athleticsireland.ie

JANUARY 18

- BMC Sheffield Indoor Grand Prix
britishmilersclub.com
- Manchester Indoor Open meeting
saleharriersmanchester.com
- Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon
hkmarathon.com
- Tata Mumbai Marathon
tatamumbaimarathon.procam.in

JANUARY 23

- Loughborough Jump and Throw and Loughborough FLIGHT night
lboro.ac.uk

JANUARY 24

- New Balance Indoor Grand Prix
Boston
nbindoorgrandprix.com
- 4J scottishathletics National Indoor Senior/U18 Championships
Glasgow
scottishathletics.org.uk
- scottishathletics EAP Indoor International, Glasgow
scottishathletics.org.uk
- SEAA Indoor U20/Senior Track & Field Champs, Lee Valley
seaa.org.uk

JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1

- Loughborough Indoor Open
lboro.ac.uk

FEBRUARY 1

- Millrose Games, New York
millrosegames.org
- British Masters 10km Champs
Goodwood Motor Circuit
bmaf.org.uk British Masters 10km Champs
- Dubai Marathon
dubaimarathon.org

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FROM THE **AW** ARCHIVE

Stepping back in time 50 years for some marathon wisdom from Ron Hill

This time 50 years ago, athletes across the world were readying themselves for what the Olympic year might bring. Among their number was marathon runner Ron Hill, the focus of an in-depth interview in the *Athletics Weekly* issue of January 10, 1976.

Hill passed away in 2021 at the age of 82 but was remembered not just as an innovator through his Ronhill clothing brand but also for the astonishing running streak which saw him run every day for 52 years and 39 days – between 1964 and 2017.

There was considerable athletics success, too. After a less than auspicious start to his international career, he won marathon gold at the 1969 European Championships and 1970 Commonwealth Games, the same year in which he also won the Boston Marathon.

In Edinburgh his time of 2:09:28 was then the second-fastest marathon in history, as well as being a British and European record.

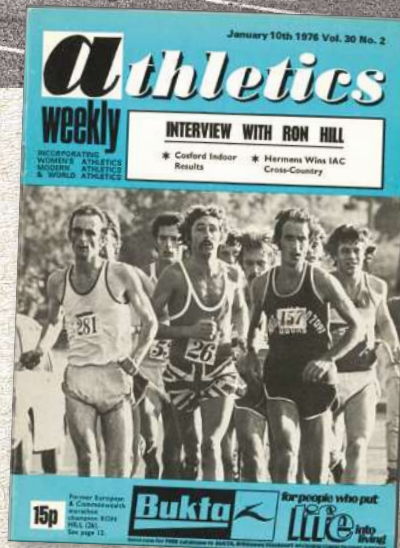
In the 1976 feature, Jon Wigley spoke to Hill about a range of topics – from training to his favourite marathon courses and his Olympic prospects for Montreal, where he eventually came fourth.

Asked if he evolved a plan for each marathon, or had a general philosophy for all marathons, Hill replied: “No, I just go into a race with an open mind. The number of plan possibilities are more or less infinite. One thing about the marathon is that you don't meet the other



runners all that often so, every time you go out, each competitor becomes an unknown quantity to a certain extent. But you normally consider the top ten runners – you know who they are and that's about it. You run the race with an open mind, try and stay near the front, you don't go with them if it's too hot or you're not feeling too efficient.

“It's difficult to cover the whole spectrum of tactics. You could go on forever talking about what you should do and shouldn't do. You've got to be intelligent enough to go into the race knowing what you're capable of, assess how you're doing on the day, decide when it would be best to make



a break for home or whether you can make it all the way home at that kind of pace. There's 100 things you could talk about!” **AW**

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