



YEAR IN REVIEW

2017 / 2018



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Our Mission

“Through the enjoyment of athletics, develop positive attitudes and a health lifestyle for our children, families and community.”

LITTLE ATHLETICS VICTORIA

Membership Statistics Season 2017/2018

Eastern Metro Region		Gippsland Country Region		Northern Metro Region	
Box Hill	383	Bairnsdale	91	Coburg	302
Camberwell / Malvern	402	Casey	398	Craigieburn	141
Cockatoo	50	Corner Inlet	24	Diamond Valley	592
Collingwood	208	Cranbourne	280	Essendon	375
Croydon	202	Leongatha	172	Hume	42
Doncaster	365	Moe	110	Keilor	393
Kew	322	Orbost	19	Kilmore & Districts	80
Knox	426	Pakenham	155	Lancefield / Romsey	134
Nunawading	257	Sale	81	Present / Reservoir	162
Ringwood	286	Taralgon & District	138	Sunbury	188
Sherbrooke	152	Warragul	117	Whittlesea City	356
Yarra Ranges	168	Wonthaggi	127		
TOTAL	3,221	TOTAL	1,712	TOTAL	2,765



Northern Country Region		Southern Metro Region		Western Country Region	
Albury	175	Brighton	312	Apollo Bay	0
Alpine	44	Caulfield	316	Ararat	41
Barooga	145	Chelsea	212	Ballarat	261
Benalla	97	Dandenong	76	Bar-rook	22
Bendigo	361	Frankston	381	Beaufort & District	65
Corowa	0	Mentone	296	Camperdown	76
Echuca / Moama	108	Moorabbin	188	Casterton	60
Howlong	38	Mornington	288	Charlton	0
Kyabram	87	Oakleigh	103	Cohuna	70
Kyneton & District	104	Sandringham	400	Colac	81
Lavington / Jindera	88	Seaford	137	Dimboola	0
Mansfield	114	Southern Peninsula	119	Edenhope	25
Mt Beauty	36	Springvale	169	Hamilton	36
Murrindindi	77	Waverley	244	Horsham	106
Nathalia	120	Westernport	88	Kerang	26
Rochester	75	TOTAL	3,329	Maryborough	143
Rutherglen	27	Western Metro Region		Portland	58
Seymour	167			Stawell	43
Shepparton	152	Altona	155	Swan Hill	60
Wangaratta	276	Bacchus Marsh	207	Warrnambool	179
Wodonga	275	Brimbank	168	TOTAL	1,352
Yarrawonga / Mulwala	64	Corio	237		
TOTAL	2,630	Geelong	775		
		Gisborne	152		
		Melton City	161		
		South Melbourne & District	224		
		Werribee	341		
		Williamstown	313		
		Woodend	72		
		TOTAL	2,805		

ASSOCIATION TEAM

Chief Executive Officer	Anthony McIntosh
GM: Competition & Education	Shane Bertrand
Finance, Governance & Risk	Julie Green
Business Assurance & Special Projects	Graham Lucas
E Commerce & Technology	Kim John
Competition & Events	Michael Masseni
Communications & Marketing	Lachlan Rayner
Centre Development	Debbie Baskin
Membership Development & Liaison	Taylah Perry (commenced June 2017)
Joint Officials Training / Accreditation	Andrea Hallet (to December 2017)
Reception	Sian Mezzatesta (to February 2018)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Colin Segota
Vice President	Sherrie Boulter
Director - Finance	James van Beek
Director	Paul Bray
Director	Michael Wallace
Director	Steven Coulson
Director	Ross McIlveen
Director	Amanda Booth
Director	Tracey May

LIFE GOVERNORS

1974	Trevor Billingham (dec)	1983	Bill Field	1992	Ian Fisher	2003	Dave DaFonte (dec)
1975	Alan Triscot	1983	Peter Taylor (dec)	1992	Wes Heywood	2003	Beth Girdwood
1977	Max McLennan (dec)	1984	Maureen O'Callaghan	1992	Margaret Robertson (dec)	2004	Jeff Hawkins
1977	George Nevitt (dec)	1984	Randall Robinson	1993	Irene Harris	2005	Gwen Timmins
1979	Alan Brumley (dec)	1984	John Treanor (dec)	1994	Ray Canning	2005	Peter Frenken
1979	Jim Jamieson (dec)	1985	Peter Bailey	1994	Gordon Major	2007	Christine Doubleday
1979	Jim Mason (dec)	1985	Don Blyth	1995	John Doherty (dec)	2007	Robert Zuber
1979	Bruce Seeley	1985	Norm Esh	1995	Meggsie Harvey	2009	Neville Harris
1979	Norm Walsh (dec)	1985	Alan Johnson	1995	Peter Jones (dec)	2009	Fred Wilmshurst
1980	Pat Harris	1985	Andrew Osborne	1995	Ian Sparkes	2009	Judy Wilmshurst
1980	Mal Hastie	1985	Bruce Reynolds	1996	Judy Jones	2010	Ian Brown
1980	Keith Maughan	1985	Bill Toohey	1997	Campbell Cain	2010	Graham Lucas
1980	Mary McLennan (dec)	1985	Ken Wyles (dec)	1997	Golda Cain	2011	Marion Sparkes
1980	John Spicer	1986	Charles Gorman	1997	Malcolm Francis	2012	Steve Cowburn
1980	Bill Vincent (dec)	1986	Eric Wenckowski	1998	Ian Thompson	2013	Carol Timmins
1981	Ron Brown (dec)	1988	Bernadette Barnett (dec)	1999	Allen Carey	2014	Margaret Carty
1981	Noel Deller	1988	Peter Hendy	1999	Tammy Fry	2014	Andrew Stirling
1981	Gordon Murphy (dec)	1991	Lawrie Barnett	1999	Pam Mulholland	2014	Rosalie Wilson
1982	Bert Edwards (dec)	1991	Tim Berriman (dec)	1999	Shirley Scherger (dec)	2015	Debbie Baskin
1982	Wes Osborne (dec)	1991	John Guerra	2000	Don Baker	2015	Shaz Cairns
1982	Lockie Purton	1991	David Tracy	2000	Robyn Van Lieshout	2016	Steven Lopes
1982	Jim Stewart	1992	Lois Daffy (dec)	2002	Noel Rasti	2016	Gordon Loughnan
1983	Les Armstrong	1992	Keith O'Donohue (dec)	2002	Merle McBean	2017	David Green
1983	Margaret Caldecoat (dec)	1992	John Ellem	2002	Sylvia Cook		

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

My first year as President has certainly been an interesting one and has passed very quickly. During that time the board, and the team in the LAVic office have faced into a number of challenges that have certainly ensured that it will be a year that won't be easily forgotten.

At the 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM), a number of constitutional motions were passed by the members in attendance that allowed the Board to better align us with the VicSport Good Governance Framework and simultaneously structure and equip itself better to achieve the best outcomes for Little Athletics now and in the future. In terms of what's transpired on this front I'm pleased to provide the following update:

New Directors

Post the 2017 AGM three new directors joined the Little Athletics Victoria (LAVic) Board in February 2018. Tracey May & Amanda Booth were appointed as Independent Directors and Ross McIlveen was appointed into an existing, vacant Board position. Tracey is an accomplished human resources practitioner with professional experience with the health, tertiary education, sports and professional consulting industries and Amanda is a marketing professional having run her own agency for many years. The appointments Tracey and Amanda were a direct result of the changes made to the LAVic Constitution at the 2017 AGM. Ross McIlveen has been involved in Little Athletics for a number of years as is actively involved with Camperdown Little Athletics Centre and also supports the Western Country Region. Ross will provide valuable insights into the Board particularly to the issues faced by our country centres & Regions. Please join me in welcoming Tracey, Amanda and Ross to the LAVic Board.

LAVic Governance Framework

In September 2017, the LAVic Board engaged Anthony Bowd (Manager Strategic Projects) from VicSport to undertake a review of the following governance aspects:

- The LAV Board policies and procedures.
- Completion of a LAVic Board Skills Audit.
- Review of the LAV Regional governance structure.

The skills audit was completed late last year and was used as input in the recruitment of the two new independent Directors whilst over the past four months the Board has implemented a revised governance structure & framework that aligns to the best practice model advocated by VicSport. For an overview, see the 'Board Governance Activities' section below.

Region Governance Review

In terms of the Region Governance Review, representatives from all Region Executives were engaged and provided with the opportunity to provide input and feedback on a wide variety of issues. The review has now been completed and a final report identifying eleven (11) key issues and associated recommendations was tabled at the May 2018 LAVic Board meeting. The Board welcomes the opportunity to constructively address the identified issues, which will assist the progress as a community sport by impacting directly and positively on Regions Committees, Centres and the Association as a whole. The next steps in terms of the Region Governance Review will be the establishment of a Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Board, Region Committees, Centres and the LAVic Office. Stay tuned for further developments in this space.

Age Group Change

There is no doubt that most significant challenge faced by the association in many years was the age group change whereby the date used to determine an athlete's age group was adjusted from 30 September to 31 December. The initial constitutional motion to adjust the age group determination date was defeated at the 2017 AGM and left LAVic in the precarious position whereby we could not affiliate with Little Athletics Australia. The Board has always recognised and acknowledged that this was an emotive issue for many parents and centres however our position to support this motion was one that was based on what was best for the association from a long term, and not a short term perspective. The motion to amend the age group determination date was ultimately passed at the Special General Meeting in December 2017 and this change will come into effect for the start of the 2018/2019 season.

One Sport

This is a topic that has been floating in the background since it was first raised several years ago however over the coming twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months we are expecting to see more developments in this space. Across Australia we have seen a number of One Sport initiatives undertaken with various degrees of success as there has not been an agreed overarching approach to what One Sport, or what-ever it is ultimately called, means from a whole of sport perspective. In April 2018, however the first step to address this was taken when the Boards of Athletics Australia (AA) and Little Athletics Australia (LAA) met specifically to discuss One Sport and as a result of this meeting, a joint working party has been formed to start looking into this key issue.

Closer to home, apart from sharing the same physical workspace at Athletics House, there is already a level of co-operation that exists between the LAVic and Athletics Victoria (AV) operational teams and over the coming months the respective LAVic & AV Boards will commence exploring further opportunities to leverage off our respective skills and experience to deliver improved product and services to our respective members. To keep the communication channels open on this front, a member of the LAVic Board is attending the AV Board meetings in an observer capacity and this is reciprocated on the LAVic front with an AV Board member also attending the LAVic Board meetings in the same capacity. In addition, a joint LAVic / AV Board meeting will be held in late August 2018 once the Board compositions have been finalised post the respective AGMs.

LAVic Office Team and Current Board

There are a number of people I'd like to thank. Firstly to our team in the office led by Anthony McIntosh our current CEO. To Anthony, Shane, Julie, Michael, Kim, Graham, Lachlan, Taylah and Debbie – thank you all for the commitment and passion that you bring on a day in day out basis – without your dedication we would not be providing our members with the high quality of products and services that are being provided. Finally to our current Board, thank all of you for your ongoing support and guidance over the past twelve months as

we navigated our way through a number of interesting challenges. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with all of you in the coming year as we work towards improving Little Athletics for Victorian families.

Our Centres and Volunteers.

Our Centres and volunteers, whether they be parents of current athletes, or as quite a number of our officials are, parents of past athletes – are what I see as our front line resources that make our association tick. To the centre committee members who organise and run the weekly competitions and to the volunteers / officials who officiate at these events – thank you. Our Centres play an important part in our communities as they provide a valuable opportunity for athletes and their families to enjoy athletics and live the motto of our association of "Family, Fun and Fitness.

Finally, it would be remiss of me to not thank Steve Ryan who stepped down as President at the 2017 AGM. Although Steve is no longer on the Board he, his wife Leanne and son Paul, continue to support the association by volunteering at Region & State Events, in fact if you go to State Relays this year, wander over to Takeover Zone 2 and you'll see "Team Ryan" in operation. Steve – on behalf of the association, thank you for your efforts and contributions at a Board level and we look forward to seeing Team Ryan at forthcoming Region and State events.

Well that's it from me for this year – I hope that you all enjoyed the 2017/2018 season and I'm looking forward to what promises to be an exciting, future shaping twelve months.

Colin Segota
President

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Little Athletics competes for the hearts, minds and spare time of young Victorians, against many other active and passive sport and recreation options. And today, there are many more options available to children than in decades past. This includes most country kids, who in many instances are as well connected as their city cousins. New challengers are emerging all the time driven to expose market niches ignored, neglected, or not seen by traditional sport and recreation. While the world of electronic gaming and social media is despised by many for facilitating passive lifestyles, the facts are that it is here to stay. Social media and online gaming have done amazingly well to rapidly foster virtual communities connecting people globally. There's something for all traditional businesses to learn from this, including sport and recreation. Could and should athletics facilitate a global network of kids inspired to take up the sport for life using this powerful technology? While the mega-sporting agencies – FIFA, NBA, motor sports etc. have long understood the power of gaming in driving interest (in the hope this will convert to participation) in their respective sports, they have the advantage of having incredible levels of resources to invest in such projects. What they don't have, however, is the advantage that Little Athletics has, of providing fundamental motor skills to their participants to help them run, jump & throw.

The State Government of Victoria deserves commendation for its drive to increase female participation and innovation in the Victorian sport and recreation offering. Its policy settings, in part, reflect a broad community belief that sports need to continually evolve to reflect the tastes of the communities they seek to serve. Proof that these settings are working are found in the exploding growth of female participation in sports that have traditionally been male dominated, such as soccer, AFL and cricket. While great for the community broadly, this places great pressure on playing field resources, and Councils are already looking to re-purpose under-utilised playing fields. In anticipating this challenge, Little Athletics are looking to engage a broader spectrum of the community, particularly with initiatives with the disability and the migrant sectors. To that end, the engagement of Paralympian Richard Colman as a Multi-Class Ambassador, and the focus on growth of multi-class participation and competition offering of Championship events for multi-class competitors, better engage with the disability community.

LAVic also commenced its trials of the 'Community Kids Athletics' program (the project was previously known as 'Fast Track') in partnership with Athletics Australia. The project,

funded by VicHealth, is working with refugee kids with disability from Special Schools in Melbourne's south-east. In these instances, it's exciting to see how adaptable and transformative athletics can be for these largely inactive groups.

In December at the State Relay Championships, LAVic launched its publication, 'A Sporting Phenomenon – The Story of Little Athletics in Victoria'. It's a 140 page celebration and account of the history of Little Athletics Victoria. Entertainingly written, the images are exceptional, the Championship results archive extensive, and the competition uniforms of all 159 affiliated Centres (since 1964) fascinating. It's a landmark achievement for the Association after ticking over 50 years in operation, and largely brought to fruition through the efforts of Life Governor, Debbie Baskin and Past President, Steve Ryan. We are lucky to be custodians of the sport when coinciding with milestone events like this.

LAVic's role in the national governance of the sport continues to grow, with multiple Board members and staff involved in various projects and working groups, such as drafting the new LAA Strategic Plan, implementing the national On Track Trial, a national review of the Little Athletics in Primary Schools (LAPS) program, to name some. LAVic well and truly pulls its weight in this regard. 17/18 saw the tri-partite sponsorship locked down with national supermarket giant Coles, Athletics Australia and LAA.

It is the sheer volume of numbers of competitive athletes LAVic and its interstate associates bring to the table that hold the key to the future of the sport, and the attraction of blue riband sponsors like Coles. LAVic, Centres, athletes and families can expect to continue to benefit from Coles' highly proactive approach to investing in Little Athletics, and we acknowledge and thank them for their contribution.

Another legacy of LAVic's affiliation with LAA, albeit on a much more challenging scale, is the implementation of the age group changes. Having not changed the date of age group determination since Little Athletics commenced in 1964, the Board of LAA made the decision to change the date from 30 September to 31 December at the October 2016 Conference. The issue was and remains very divisive for the sport. We, along with 400 Centres and 75,000 athletes across the other States, head into 18/19 with a lot of work ahead of us to win back good faith of our Membership.

LAVic's 17/18 membership reached 17,814 – the lowest in many years. It's a sobering message for a proud sport. Add to that, all State Associations memberships were down on the previous years. It's a challenge for which we must meet head on. It's a challenge for all levels of the sport: the Association must lead the way and ensure fundamentals, such as governance, investment in marketing and promotion, and support resources are in place so our product is attractive to our current and future members; our Regions need to be clearly purposed and resourced to assist with the delivery of key activities such as competition and Centre support; our Centres need to provide great athletics experiences for members and families, and be present and visible within their communities. A team effort is required from the lot of us so our kids are happy admit that spending time at their Little Aths Centre carries much bigger bragging rights than spending time on X-Box.

In closing, many thanks are in order. I'd like to acknowledge the support of our major partners – sponsors, services and products – with thanks. Thanks also to the many dedicated Centre committee individuals that keep our weekly programs running. You put up with all sorts of logistical and behavioural challenges, inconveniences and frustrations, for no payment. I'd like to acknowledge the thousands of parent volunteers that help run weekly Centre competitions as well. Our sport demands a lot of you and you give willingly to the cause. Thanks to the individuals occupying roles on Region committees who not only take on additional responsibilities over their Centre duties, but take on the leadership dimension as well. Your dedication doesn't go unnoticed. Thanks to the Board members who step into leadership roles and preside over a very complex, time consuming not-for-profit organisation. Lastly, thanks to the LAVic team – a highly passionate group of athletics tragics with the interests of the sport at heart and the burning desire to see it succeed.

As we formally bring 17/18 to a close, I wish all every success for the 18/19 season and a wonderful set of experiences to go with it.

Anthony McIntosh
Chief Executive Officer



OPERATIONS REPORT

Communications and Marketing

Little Athletics Victoria has continued to develop its communications and marketing strategies with an aim to better inform and raise the levels of engagement with and between Little Athletics' key stakeholders, in particular, athletes and families, Centres and Regions, and the communities we operate within.

One of LAVic's new channels introduced in 2017-18 season was the 'ourCentre' Facebook group, created for use by Centre committee members to communicate with one another. It's hoped that in time, ourCentre will be a major informational communications asset for Centres wishing to search for solutions, share their learnings and keep up to date with what's going on across LAVic's 99 affiliated Centres.

Marketing

After analysis of Little Athletics Victoria's mainstream media campaigns (mostly via regional television networks) in recent years, the Association changed direction and funded a digital marketing campaign. Alesia Sports – a digital media agency – were engaged to deliver a wide ranging and expansive digital media campaign with an aim of attracting new and existing members to sign up to Little Athletics. The process involved the creation of a geographically localised Facebook campaign for every Centre focussed on a particular set of users within that area.

The campaign had two objectives: 1. to raise the profile of Little Athletics as an attractive sport and recreation activity for children; 2. to generate memberships. The campaign left millions of imprints with Facebook users across Victoria, fulfilling the first objective, while technical challenges with LAVic's web hosting service left the second objective difficult to quantify. Notwithstanding, the results of the campaign were promising, with a similar campaign to be rolled out in the lead up to the 18/19 season. Effects of Little Athletics' elevated prominence will continue to generate conversations, word of mouth marketing and recommendations throughout the broader community for months and years to come.

Social Media

LAVic continues to use its social networks as a means to connect with members and the broader athletics community. Each network has its own unique offerings and is tailored to a different segment of the Little Athletics community.

The Association saw its largest growth in the Facebook, LinkedIn

and YouTube channels. Facebook's growth occurred as a result of the pre-season membership/awareness campaign undertaken with Alesia Sports. YouTube's growth occurred as a result of the large focus on online video, with the livestreaming of our events playing a major role. LinkedIn is steadily growing, notwithstanding a lesser focus.

The growth of the LAVic Facebook following saw it become the third largest Athletics body on the network, sitting behind Athletics Australia and Athletics Victoria.

Social Network	2017	2018 (Change)
Facebook	9,220	14,598 (58.3%)
Instagram	2,512	3,306 (31.6%)
LinkedIn	31	63 (103.2%)
Twitter	802	884 (10.2%)
YouTube	497	1,356 (172.8%)

Table 1: Social Network State based on the 13th June in 2017 and 2018

Livestream

Little Athletics Victoria further invested resources into 'livestreaming' a number of our State Championships. The 2017 SUBWAY State Relay Championships were streamed for the first time, accumulating 35,000 views. The two-day State Track and Field Championships accumulated 40,000 views across both our Facebook and YouTube accounts.

Livestreaming provides a unique opportunity for LAVic to not only provide an added service for the membership, but is a powerful advertisement for the sport, bringing it out of the confines of the host stadium and broadcasting it to the world. Follower posts on the LAVic Facebook page suggested that extended family members and friends of competing athletes were watching the events live from all over the world. No other Little Athletics or senior Athletics State or National association provide this level of service.

LAVic will continue to invest in this service, with all three summer season State Championship events to be streamed in the upcoming 18/19 season.

Merchandise

LAVic History book

The official launch of the LAVic publication 'A Sporting Phenomenon - The Story of Little Athletics in Victoria' took place at the 2017 State Relay Championships, on Saturday, December 16th. Enthusiastically attended by Life Governors, Board members, LAVic staff, the event was hosted by former President Steve Ryan and Life Governor Debbie Baskin, both of whom played leading roles in bringing the project to fruition. A cake, decorated in the likeness of the book, was ceremoniously cut and shared around as part of the occasion.

The book - an attractive product, filled with quality images and anecdotes, many of which were sourced from the Association archives - is currently available for purchase through the online LAVic shop or at any State event.

Apparel

LAVic have focused on reducing current merchandise stocks through promotional sales and through the operation of merchandise stores at two additional events (U6-8 Carnival and State Cross Country Relays). The online LAVic shop is now in operation, selling LAVic branded apparel including hoodies, polo shirts and shorts, and making it easier for Members to access.

LAVic State Championship t-shirts received a much needed facelift, with regards to design and the purchasing process. The ever popular t-shirts received a fresh makeover and a new look, the result being the creation of a themed 'set' for the 2017/18 season. The introduction of pre-purchased t-shirts was been hugely successful with 550 pre-purchased for the 2018 State Track and Field Championships – with all collected over the weekend-long event.

LAVic have begun preparing and designing a new street smart range of non-competition apparel with modern colours and features, due for release in the lead up to the 2018/19 season.

Membership

LAVic's 99 affiliated Centres collectively registered 17,814 members during the 17/18 financial year. This was significantly down 1,912 (9.7%) on the previous year, and well short of the forecast 19,000 athletes. While coming off an Olym-

pic season (the Rio Olympics were held in August 2016), numbers were expected to soften somewhat, however, the deficit was greater than anticipated. This trend was repeated across all States with registrations down on previous season and on forecast.

New Centres

In an exciting development, the Buninyong Little Athletics Centre was formally re-established late in the 2017/18 season, following more than 40 years in recess. Congratulations to the individuals and communities who proactively revived the existing Centre in the Western Country Region. Buninyong LAC is warmly welcomed to the fold and enters the 18/19 with all our collective best wishes. The significance of the establishment and re-establishment of new and existing Centres for LAVic and the Little Athletics movement in general shouldn't be underestimated: new committees, new families, new athletes and new thinking. All helps maintain a vigorous and growing sport.

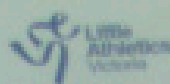
Royal Children's Hospital

The Royal Children's Hospital remains our major beneficiary of fundraising activities, as has been the case for over 40 years.

The LAVic office, Regions and Centres drove two main fundraising activities: Relaython, held on the 3rd February 2018, and the RCH Good Friday Appeal 'Kids Day Out', held on Good Friday, 30th of March 2018.

Approximately 39 Centres participated in Relaython 2018, with the object of raising money and awareness while athletes run continuous laps over a 3 hour period. Congratulations to all Centres who took part and supported such a worthy cause!

As a significant fundraiser for the Royal Children's Hospital cause, LAVic was invited to run kid's athletics activities at the Good Friday Appeal 'Kids Day Out' event at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. A team of LAVic staff, volunteers and their families facilitated 500 X 50m sprint races and presented a cheque to the value of \$41,600 to the RCH, live on Channel 7 with the support of athletes from Knox and Ringwood Little Athletics Centres following their fundraising success.



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Programs

Little Athletics in Primary Schools (LAPS)

The Little Athletics in Primary Schools (LAPS) program funded by Little Athletics Australia was facilitated by LAVic across the state. Twenty Athletic Development Officers (ADOs) visited 175 schools across terms 1-4, promoting Little Athletics and teaching fundamental movements to 18,523 students. LAVic is currently working in conjunction with other States to assess and review the current LAPS format. It is hoped for the continued expansion of the program across Regional Victoria with the recruitment of ADOs in specific growth areas and to begin focusing on the session content to ensure it aligns with the Little Athletics product offered by Centres.

Community Kids Athletics / Fast Track

LAVic, in partnership with Athletics Australia (AA) and funded by VicHealth, are trialling a new children's athletics program entitled Community Kids' Athletics (CKA). Based on the internationally proven 'IAAF Kids' Athletics' program, the fundamental purpose of CKA is to get inactive and partially inactive children more active. Children with disability and those from a multi-cultural background, in particular face significant barriers to participating in mainstream, traditional children's athletics programs. CKA aims to side-step these barriers by engaging children via the safety of a community organisation – typically a school, kindergarten, cultural or religious group, interest group or similar – as opposed to a traditional sports club.

CKA is currently in its pilot phase and has successfully facilitated programs throughout over 2018 school terms 1-3 with Special Development Schools in Melbourne's south-east. LAVic is currently pursuing a number of opportunities to promote and facilitate the CKA program in both the disability and CALD community sectors in order to get kids active and to develop a stronger pathway between these communities and Little Athletics Centres.

Centre Excellence Awards 17/18

Congratulations to the individuals and Centres recognised for their achievements for the 17/18 season, to be announced and awarded at the Centre Excellence Awards Gala, to be held on Saturday 4th August at the Novotel, Geelong.

The 17/18 season sees the introduction of a series of new Awards, to be determined by written submission. The award categories to be determined by the new process are Centre Marketing, Centre Inclusion and Centre Volunteer of the Year.

These categories were deliberately chosen as they reflect areas of extra significance for the future viability, success and vigour of the Association. It is hoped that these categories become hotly contested in future years as Centres vie to share their stories and celebrate marketing activities that generate excitement and membership, engagement activities that embrace the diversity within our communities, and the extraordinary deeds of our volunteers.

EDUCATION REPORT

Athlete Education

The primary aim of our athlete education programs is to assist our athletes in developing motor skills within the track and field environment. Our events and programs range from those targeting the most basic skills for our youngest athletes up to those targeting more complex athlete skills for our older athletes. This is the foundation upon which Little Athletics can continue to provide skill development for our competitive members.

On Track Program

The On Track program is a resource for Centres & Schools in providing a fundamental motor skills development program, coaching resource and modified competition model for our younger athletes.

The program is offered through an Interactive PDF format which has proved very successful with both Centres and Schools taking up the program. The advantage of the Interactive PDF is the portability and functionality that allows users to present the program without excessive resources. The Interactive PDF is provided to every Centres as an ongoing resource. The program is split into 5 Levels, with Level 1-2 being the main focus for the U6-U8 age groups. Levels 3-5 are building upon the skills learnt at L1-2 and focus more on the athletics skills. The Welcome Guide is the introduction to the program and provides the overview of the program, skills tables, what the model program look like along with tips on how to deliver On Track in an effective and sustainable manner.

Little Athletics Australia – National Product Review

During late 2016 and 2017 Little Athletics Australia (LAA) with the assistance of Gemba, reviewed the product offerings for the entire age groups registered with Little Athletics and compared it to the other Junior sports that we compete alongside. The focus was to review the athlete pathway throughout their entire Little Athletics journey and what was offered as the standard product. The results highlighted the differences that athletes can experience from State to State and even Centre to Centre. The need to provide a platform of skill development was recognised as a priority. The first section of the pathway was the U6-U8 age group and how this age group is being educated in the skills of Little Athletics.

The On Track program as offered in Victoria was identified as the leading program in this area and was chosen by LAA to be trialled across Australia. A working party was set up to design and implement these trials, with the aim to provide feedback prior to implementation. The trials are commencing in September & October 2018 across all States and Territories, including Northern Territory, which has just affiliated with LAA looks like they will

be participating. There are 5 Centres in each Association who have been selected due to their size, location and structure to provide a large variation in their results. This has been a massive undertaking to train up the facilitators in each Association. John McCall, the Victorian On Track State Co-ordinator, has been appointed by LAA to lead this project and provide the actual training. John has travelled to most States and conducted workshops or presented at AGMs and forums. Details on the next stages will be made available following the trials later this year.

U6-U8 State Skills Carnival

This initiative, commenced in December 2014, combines skill development and modified competition for our youngest athletes. Just over 300 athletes attended the Carnival at Doncaster in February 2018, following the postponement due to bad weather in early December 2017. The focus of this event is to provide education to the athletes and parents on the importance of skills development for athletes in this age bracket in a fun and inclusive environment. The day is supported by many coaches, athlete demonstrators and Starters who assist with the modified competitions. The highlight once the athletics has finished are the carnival rides, face painting and food outlets, this combination proves to be a winner every year.

Skills Clinics

The U9-U10 Skills clinic was in high demand this season, with the clinic filling in less than a day. 102 spots were available and the demand was so great that once we could organise the coaches and venue, we added a second clinic; which subsequently filled in just over 2 hours. Another 102 athletes from across the State attended, these clinics were conducted in the first and second week of the September school holidays. These clinics focus on athletic skills development in the basics of Run, Jump and Throw, as the fundamentals of all events conducted in Little Athletics.

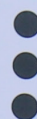
The U11 Skills clinics conducted over 2 days on the first weekend of the September school holidays is highly regarded as one of our most important clinics. 147 athletes attended the clinic from across the State at both Nunawading and Doncaster venues. Athletes are shown the correct technique in all ten U11 events, and parents have the rare opportunity come out onto the track and listen to the coaching to gain further insights into the events. Participants are also given details on further athlete pathways for JDS and beyond. An important presentation to both the athletes and parents is conducted by Emma Poynton, Podiatrist, who provides information on correct footwear for the athletes, with their runners and spikes. Details on the causes of injuries, including knee and heel pain, which occurs frequently with athletes in this age group who are starting their peak growth phase is also provided.



Instagram



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The U9-U16 Race Walking clinic was conducted late October with 45 athletes attending, which is our largest attended clinic so far. The coaches, including an international athlete and coach provided valuable information to the athletes on technique, training methods, strength and flexibility.

Junior Development Squad - JDS

JDS is our major education program for our athletes in the U12-U16 age groups. It involves six training sessions from October to August each season, with optional involvement in the JDS Camp and the Athletics Victoria (AV) Junior Track & Field Championships. During the 2017-2018 season, JDS had 314 members who met the qualifying standards.

A new addition to the JDS program was Biometric testing at JDS Day 6. This proved a highly successful event, in which all athletes were tested for their speed, power, strength, agility and endurance. All athletes received an individualised report on their results, with the older athletes receiving a comparison to state averages. The results of this season will be compared next year and beyond to provide athletes and the parents with an ongoing assessment.

This season we added some nutrition advice to the program to build upon the sport science available to the athletes to assist with their preparation and recovery strategies. We were extremely grateful to have Georgie Buckley and current Australian record holder for the 1500mts in Linden Hall present to the JDS athletes and parents on several occasions. Georgie who has recently graduated, is a former JDS member herself, being a middle distance athlete, she was able to provide relevant information to the athletes and relate case studies to Little Athletics.

The JDS Camp conducted in January 2018 over 4 days, continues to be a highlight for many athletes. This year 84 members attended, staying at the historic Ormond College – Melbourne University, training sessions were spread between Coburg and Melbourne Uni. In addition to normal track and field training, sessions were also conducted in strength and conditioning, stretching, pool recovery and Pilates, as well as the popular social program. The famous Teams competition in which 8 teams compete for the highly sought after title, was moved from the last morning to the first night and conducted as a twilight. This new format served as a great team bonding exercise, in which the athletes could continue this social interaction for the next 3 days. This format will be continued next year.

Australian Little Athletics Championships (ALAC)

ALAC was conducted on the Gold Coast in April 2018, just 2 weeks after the conclusion of the Commonwealth Games. The venue was Runaway Bay, which has its design merits from the AIS in Canberra. The accommodation was onsite, just a 2 minute walk to the track and along with 4 other State Teams staying onsite, provided

an athlete's village feel to the entire event. Between the accommodation and the track was the swimming pool and ice baths, the athletes used these facilities for recovery sessions throughout the ALAC. Directly in front of the Lodges were 3 beach volleyball courts, the athletes from all States very quickly organised State vs. State beach volleyball events, so this proved to a great way for the athletes to socialise. The Victorian team performed extremely well, with many great results, PB's and performances that are consistent with the concept of a Teams event. The Victorian Team finished 3rd for the U15 Multi-Event Teams Championship and 2nd in the U13 Teams Championship, as well as 2nd in the Handicap Trophy. The athletes are well supported by the Team Management who throughout the months of January to April is committed to providing a wonderful experience for the athletes and their parents.

Little Athletics Australia National U15 Camp

The National camp is conducted at the AIS in Canberra. The focus of the camp is at the high performance level for U15 athletes who are looking at the next steps in their athlete pathway into Athletics Australia (AA) development squads and National Teams. LAA ranks all athletes nationally following their performances at the State Track & Field and State Multi-Event Championships in their U14 year. LAA then selects the top 100 athletes in Australia to attend the camp across all events. Victoria had 22 athletes selected in 2017. The athletes spent 4 days training and participating in workshops conducted by leading Australian coaches and current international athletes in the world class facilities of the AIS.

Coaching Education

The primary aim of our coaching education programs is to enable parents, teachers and other volunteers to assist children to perform basic track and field skills.

Introduction to Coaching Course (ITCC)

Though not an accredited coach training course, the ITCC was developed by the Australian Track & Field Coaches Association (AT&FCA), in conjunction with Little Athletics Australia, to provide practical guidance in the delivery of the basic models of track and field events for primary school age athletes. The ITCC is vital to the ongoing success of coaching in Centres, introducing volunteers to the basic ideas of coaching. During season 2017-2018, 175 participants attended 12 courses spread throughout Metro and Regional Victoria. Victoria has just over 25% of the entire participation numbers Australia wide for the ITCC; this is a great achievement, something that we plan to continue to grow to provide the opportunities for our athletes to learn the correct skill techniques.

On Track Workshops

An important part of On Track program is the training of new presenters. John McCall, the LAVic State On Track Co-ordinator, continues to provide outstanding training sessions, combining his knowledge of the program with his skills as a primary school PE teacher. The ability to effectively deliver the content of the program is as important as the content itself.

There were 4 State workshops conducted in the 2017-2018 season with 53 participants attending. One of the largest participation groups is the older athletes in the 15-18 age bracket. These athletes are an extremely valuable resource that Centres can use to assist in the delivery of skill development to the athletes in the U6-U8 age groups. Along with the workshops, John McCall conducted several Centre visits and provided advice to Centres either with their implementation or continuation of their On Track program.

Race Walking Judging Seminar

In conjunction with the Race Walking Coaching clinic, a Judges seminar has been held at the same time, which provides an opportunity for the parents to be trained as Race Walking judges. Again this season, this has proved popular and a necessary education resource as many judges at Centre level, also assist with coaching the athletes. There were 18 parents who attended the Judging seminar, who then participated as judges of a modified competition during the Coaching clinic. This combination of theory and practice assists parents in becoming better judges.

Coach of the Year

To help recognise the efforts that coaches play in developing our athletes, LAVic has two annual coaching awards. The Coach of the Year award recognises effort displayed at all levels of the coaching operations of LAVic, while the Bryan Neighbour Centre Coach award recognises the efforts of coaches who mainly concentrate on Centre coaching.

The winner of the Coach of the Year:

Season 2016-2017 was Mike Donato – Knox.

The winner of the Bryan Neighbour Centre Coach Award:

Season 2016-2017 was Fran Attard – Knox.

The winners of the awards for season 2017-2018 will be announced at the Gala Dinner at Conference 2018.

The Bryan Neighbour Memorial Coaching Development Fund

This scholarship fund was established to assist in developing

young coaches involved in the operations of LAVic with their education costs, coaching membership costs, travel and equipment costs, and to provide mentoring opportunities. The fund recognises the invaluable work that Bryan Neighbour undertook across his life to develop coaches at all levels. In season 2017-2018, Lachlan Freestone and Bianca Hansen were the recipients of the Bryan Neighbour Memorial Coaching Development Fund. Both Lachlan and Bianca have become intrinsically involved in our skills clinics and JDS programs.

Bernie Curtin Memorial Trophy

This was the second season that we presented the Bernie Curtin Memorial Trophy to the U15 State Multi-Event winners. Bernie Curtin was a huge figure in our sport and this recognition provides us with an ongoing celebration of his achievements. We were extremely grateful to have Mary Curtin, along with two of Bernie's adult children at Casey Fields this year to present the winners of the U15 State Multi-Events with the Bernie Curtin Memorial Trophy.

Sport & Recreation Victoria – Supporting Victorian Sport & Recreation

During 2016 LAVic were successful in applying for a 3 year grant through Sport and Recreation Victoria under the program of supporting Victorian Sport. The 3 strategic initiatives of the application focussed on the following:

- U6-U8 Skills development
- Inclusive programs and policies: including development of Multi-Class athletics and an accessibility action plan, with a club health check resource
- Women in Sport: High performance coaching opportunities.

The funding received from the grant has assisted LAVic in delivering these key programs and initiatives. The following are a direct result from the SVRV grant.

- Final development and release of the On Track Interactive PDF for Levels 3-5
- Workshop delivery in Regional areas
- Creation of a Multi-Class skills clinic
- Inclusion of Multi-Class athletics into the State Championships
- Opportunities to attend Inclusion conferences and forums

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- Opportunities to attend Inclusion conferences and forums
- Appointment of Richard Colman OAM – Dual Paralympic Gold medallist as the LAVic Ambassador for Multi-Class athletics
- Women in Sport- Coaching scholarship
- Funding opportunities for coaching programs for female coaches

Throughout the remainder of 2018 and into 2019, these initiatives will be further developed and implemented for the benefit of our athletes, volunteers and coaches.

Thanks

The programs and events summarised above do not happen without the dedication and commitment of a group of hard working coaches and volunteers. Their contribution is greatly appreciated.

While there have been many changes to the Governance structure at LAVic with committees, the role of the Education committee, Development Working Party, Race Walking Working Party, Starters Working Party, ALAC Team Management and JDS coaches continually proves to be an invaluable resource that provides the mechanism for which we can deliver such outstanding programs.



COMPETITION REPORT

Season 2017-18 has been a strong participation year from a Region and State competition perspective with an increase in all event entry numbers over the 2016-17 season except for the State Track & Field Championships. State Relay Championship team entries were up 9% (to 2666); entries for the State Multi-Event Championship were up 15% (to 822); entries for the State Track and Field Championships were down 3% (to 3313, from 3411); State Cross Country Championship entries were up 5% (to 1104). Pleasingly, the inaugural LAVic Cross Country Relay event surpassed the record number of entries received for any Road Relay event (211).

It is encouraging to see that although the total member base of LAVic is down, more of our members are participating in association events.

Cross Country Relays

An inaugural event held at the former State Cross Country Championship venue, Cruden Farm, Langwarrin. Athletes participated in a three person team over a course distance shorter than their week to week event.

Seeing more teams entered for this event than any of our Road Relay events previously hosted, is an encouraging sign that tells us this is one to put back on the calendar for future seasons. Adding another LAVic event and centre based award to the winter season bodes well for increased participation for the LAVic cross country season as a whole.



Multi-Class

Last season athletes with a disability participated at the 2017 State Track & Field Championships in their own invitational event. This season has been another step forward with 31 Multi-Class athletes competing for medals at our State Championships for the very first time. For the season ahead we aim to continue to build to capacity of Centres to assist athletes of all abilities and grow the participation opportunities.

Stawell Gift

LAVic in partnership with the Stawell Athletic Club, were able to offer 189 Little Athletes and their families, the opportunity to compete in the world famous Stawell Easter Gift carnival. Our 400m event was the feature event for Little Athletics being part of the Channel 7 telecast.

Thanks to our sponsoring partners, Telstra Stores, and to our hosts, the Stawell Athletic Club, for availing this opportunity to our athletes and families.

This season a number of Centres have been running innovative teams based competitions. Bayside Centres have been sharing venues for their older athletes to compete together in a short, sharp teams based competition they call 'The Circuit'. We've also seen other Centres running 'Nitro-Style' teams competitions amongst themselves which have been well received by members and the athletics community. We hope to see more innovative program and competition ideas in the season ahead.

LAVic Region and State Championship dates and venues season 2017/18

Event	Month	Venues
Region Relays	Nov 2017	Various venues across Victoria
State Relays	Dec 2017	Lakeside Stadium - Albert Park
State Multi-Event	Jan 2018	Casey Fields, Cranbourne
Region Track & Field Championships	Feb 2018	Various venues across Victoria
State Track & Field Championships	Mar 2018	Lakeside Stadium - Albert Park
Cross Country Relays	Jun 2018	Cruden Farm, Langwarrin
Region Cross Country	Jun 2018	Various venues across Victoria
State Road Relays	Jul 2018	Sandown Racecourse, Springvale
State Cross Country	Jul 2018	Lake Dewar, Myrniong

The LAVic Competition team recognises the work of all Region Organising Committees, LAVic officials and volunteers. Thanks to those committed individuals for hosting and assisting in the success of the various Region & State events.