

## **Gwent League Fixture 1**

***Proposal – to incorporate the first British Athletics cross challenge event (Cardiff cross challenge) within the first fixture at Llandaff Fields, Cardiff.***

The Cardiff Cross Challenge is part of the UK wide British cross challenge series, a series developed by UK Athletics to improve the overall standard of cross country running in the UK. The Cardiff event has been part of the series since its inception in 1997. It is widely regarded as one of the best cross country events in Britain.

UK Athletics are now requesting that the fixture moves to October from its current position in January. This would mean the Cardiff event 'kicking off' the cross challenge series, and hopefully attracting many of the best domestic runners to the event.

With this in mind, we are keen to avoid a clash or to add to the fixture congestion at the start of the winter. With this in mind, we would like to explore the possibility of hosting a Gwent league fixture within the Cardiff Cross Challenge event with both bodies jointly promoting the event.

As part of the partnership, the Cardiff Cross Challenge will ensure that the following is in place;

- Communicate with all clubs and Gwent League officers on the full details of the event
- Ensure that all officials and marshals are in place for the event, while also covering all costs of the officials at the event, including a packed lunch during the event.
- Cover all costs associated with the delivery of the event
- Provide spaces in the VIP area for officers and key guests of the Gwent League
- To promote the remaining 4 Gwent League fixtures via the Welsh Athletics website
- To provide assistance with attracting officials for remaining Gwent League fixtures
- Welsh Athletics to provide an officials course free of charge to Gwent League clubs in an effort to attract more endurance officials to the sport.
- To provide an online entry portal for all entries (Gwent League & Cardiff Cross Challenge)
- To issue numbers (cost covered by Cardiff Cross Challenge) to all clubs/participants for all races.
- To have the Gwent League logo on the Cardiff Cross Challenge website and documentation
- To process all results and provide the Gwent League with full verified results within 24 hours of the fixture
- Gwent League representative to sit on the organising committee (if desired)

## Finances

- All expenditure to be covered by the event organiser (Cardiff cross challenge).
- Host fee of £500 to be paid directly to the Gwent League from the event organisers (Cardiff cross challenge).
- The £450 grant from the Gwent league to the event organiser would not be required to the event organiser.
- All race entry fees to be paid to the main event organisers to offset expenditure
- Cost of entry fees for Gwent League to be set by the Gwent League as decided in the annual general meeting

- Additional entry fee for non-Gwent league athletes (cross challenge entries) of £8 snr race, £6 junior races
- The Gwent league competition provider fee of £50 (payable to Welsh Athletics) is to be waived
- Full event accounts to be disclosed to the Gwent League in post event debrief (if requested)

### Summary

- ✓ The merging of the Gwent League and the Cardiff Cross Challenge in one event will ensure that Wales' premier Cross Country event is combined with the biggest league races in Wales & the South West. This would follow the precedent already set by the Chiltern Leagues/Milton Keynes Cross Challenge and the Mid Lancs and Liverpool & District leagues within the Liverpool cross challenge.
- ✓ The athletes would benefit from additional competition from athletes from all over the UK coming to compete in South Wales and be a fantastic start to the season. The focus would be on delivering the best possible cross country experience for all athletes.
- ✓ The Gwent League would be given additional coverage via the British Athletics website and Athletics Weekly who annually cover the event (normally front cover), raising the profile of the league in the process.
- ✓ It is in everyone's interest to ensure that our officials are given the best level of support, the combined event would ensure that this is the case. It is also in everyone's benefit that we attract more endurance officials into the sport – the joint event would hopefully be the catalyst to attracting more endurance officials to cross country (through the free endurance course offered as part of the agreement).
- ✓ Costs of staging events are increasing and clubs are more reluctant than ever before to host a fixture (evident with the last 2 fixtures of 2016 being confirmed very late in the season). This potential partnership guarantees the promotion of a fixture and carries no financial burden to the Gwent League, removing all risk associated with hosting a fixture.
- ✓ An opportunity to try new technology for the league (online registration, barcode system timing, improved results system).

I sincerely hope the committee agree that this partnership approach will benefit the sport as a whole, and would be very much in the best interest of the athletes.

James Williams

Welsh Athletics

Graham Finlayson

Cardiff Cross Challenge