

## Worcester Athletic Club – “scratch” and handicap scoring schemes for the 2024 WAC open meetings

### Rationale - handicap

We have developed a handicap scheme based on a set of track and field scoring tables. Essentially this gives us a way of measuring an athlete's performance relative to their PB, or if we want their recent best performance, whilst at the same time allowing us to compare across events. Our intention is to give every athlete a chance of winning the handicap prize, regardless of their UK/Power of Ten ranking or event.

### Rationale – “scratch” scoring

We use the same scoring tables to compare athlete performances across events. The intention here is to award a single prize across all events but where there is a fair chance of winning regardless of event or age group.

### Basic scheme - handicap

- We have developed, using physical principles, a set of scoring tables that operate across all events. These scoring tables are used to give us a points score for any given performance. The scoring scheme awards 1260 points for the world all-time 10<sup>th</sup> rank, down to zero points for a defined set of minimum performance levels.
- We set a scratch score of 1200 points. This is roughly the world all-time top 100 rank. This means if you were at this very high ranking level you would have a handicap of zero – in golfing terms a scratch golfer.
- An athlete's handicap is the difference in scores between 1200 and the points scored for the athlete's current best performance. You can get a different handicap for each event. Example:
  - o A male athlete has a current 800m best of 2:00.0.
  - o This scores 893 points on the tables.
  - o The athlete's handicap for 800m is  $1200 - 893 = 307$
- Scoring in the event: an athlete's performance is converted to points and this score is added to the athlete's handicap to give their final net score. Example continued:
  - o The male athlete above runs 1:59.5 (so a new current best) in the meeting.
  - o This scores 901 points.
  - o Athlete's final net score is  $901 + 307 = 1208$  points.

### Details - handicap

- Athletes in the U17, U20, U23, Senior and Masters age groups are eligible for the handicap based prize. We recognise this does not include the younger athletes but our main aim is to provide something that runs across the track and field season and can be used to provide a “competition” that operates across the summer – but only at the moment across the Worcester Open meetings.
- An athlete may compete in one or more open meetings and, subject to UKA rules for U17 and U20 athletes, in as many events as they are able. Their single best net score will count.
- To qualify for a handicap in an event an athlete needs at least three bona fide performances in that event dating from 1 January 2023. The performances need to be non-trivial (i.e. not just something an athlete did to get a point in a league match for example). This allows us to determine a reasonable current best performance.
- If an athlete has at least three qualifying performances prior to their attendance at the open meetings then the best of these performance will be used to determine the handicap.

- If an athlete competes in the first open meeting and then improves their best performance prior to the second meeting, the athlete will keep their initial handicap. In effect we treat the three open meetings as a single event for handicap purposes. If however an athlete only reaches the three qualifying performances after the open meetings have started then they may establish a handicap for subsequent meetings but the handicap will not be back-dated.
- If an athlete does not have sufficient performances to establish a handicap they are still scored – but will be scored off scratch, i.e. their handicap will default to zero until it is established.
- So as not to reward younger athletes (mostly the U17 age group here as that is the youngest one for which we are offering a handicap based competition) for simply growing, we apply an age modification to any 2023 performance used to calculate a handicap. These modification values have been determined by looking at performances by age in Power of Ten and calculating an expected performance improvement by age.
- Similarly for Masters athletes we recognise the ageing process and a reverse modification is applied to any 2023 Master's performance based on masters age based performance data.

#### “Scratch” prize scheme

Our intention is to compare performances across events and across age groups. Using the physical model noted above, and the world all-time ranking lists for U18, U20, senior and masters, we derive a set of scoring tables by age group. As with the handicap scheme an athlete may compete in one or more open meetings and, subject to UKA rules for U17 and U20 athletes, in as many events as they are able. Their single best scratch score will count.