

Summer Series FAQ

What prompted the change to the Summer program?

We all want to see track and field grow in New South Wales, so that more people are welcomed into our sport and our Clubs are strengthened. While the Summer program of previous years has done a good job at servicing an existing base it hasn't proved successful in growing the number of track and field athletes in NSW (in 2014/15 there were around 5,200 track and field members of ANSW – the number of members has fluctuated around this 5,000 level with few exceptions for the past 25 years).

Member feedback (including surveys of people who used to be members but who no longer are) advises us that we need to make summer competitions more accessible. This matches analysis from the Australian Sports Commission and CSIRO which says that people are looking for fun/less formal events, which don't necessarily require a large time commitment, which are closer to home and which are welcoming for people who may not have existing skills.

The strategy of the Summer Series is to seek to find a model which helps us grow track and field

What is the objective of the changed program?

Our objectives for the Summer Series are:

- Providing meaningful competition for athletes across all event groups;
- Making access to ANSW Summer Series events easier for Little Athletics members as well as for people who might want to try athletics for the first time;
- Ensuring that there is a strong inter Club competition program; and
- Building capabilities within our Member Clubs.

Isn't this new plan just the old "Split Venues" idea that we tried a few years ago?

No. Criticisms of the split venues concept were that it divided resources (staffing, officiating, technology, equipment etc) and also diluted competitive events for athletes by having the same event (eg 400m) on at two different locations at the same time. The Summer Series has been scheduled to avoid clashes between AA permit level meets (meets whereby athletes can qualify for national and International competitions). We have also introduced and/or supported several extra meets on weeknights and Sundays which will support a range of competition standards. There will still be occasions where people will have to choose one meet over another, however we believe that the extra number of meets available will result in a 'net positive' for athletes, coaches and administrators.

Many of the "club-level" meets on the new program were already happening last year. How is this new?

ANSW has 12,000 members and many of them have been unaware of the variety of opportunities to compete, including at club-run meets across Sydney and around the state. What is new is that ANSW will be increasing awareness of these opportunities where clubs

have indicated they would welcome increased attendance and participation from other NSW club athletes. NSW will be supporting promotion, planning and results-handling for some of these events to encourage more people to enjoy athletics.

Will there be a Treloar Shield and Age Pennants?

Yes. We know that a club competition motivates and enhances the experience for many athletes and club administrators, creates lasting bonds between sportspeople and supports sponsorship and funding to provide services at a club level. The format for the Treloar Shield however has changed for 2016. There will be 5 full rounds of Treloar Shield with additional Treloar Shield point scoring events to be held within other AA permit level track and field meets. Each event will be held 3 times throughout the Summer Series. Each Treloar Shield round and AA permit meet will be open seeded competition. Athlete performances will however be grouped in accordance with age group for point scoring purposes. Athletes will be scored according with their default age group unless NSW have been notified of a change in writing.

Why wouldn't we have all Treloar Shield events at SOPAC, our premier track?

SOPAC is our best venue, but it is not convenient for everyone who wants to do athletics. In the 2015/16 Summer we had 3 less pre-Christmas meets at SOPAC (due to track resurface) than the previous season yet we still had increased participation over the season before. This is partly because more meets were closer to people who otherwise won't travel to SOPAC. We understand a venue can make a difference to performances and selection for representative opportunities. Our 2016/17 Summer program still has most championships at the premier venue, SOPAC. In 2014/15 we had 8 meets at SOPAC before Christmas including Treloar Shield, State Relays and All Schools. In 2016/17 we will have 6 meets at SOPAC.

I'm a Coach – what's in it for me?

Coaches operate at a range of levels in NSW. Our new program pulls together and consolidates more information to make it easier to find a convenient event at the right level and location for more athletes. Attracting more participants to club events will also allow local coaches to build a better network of potential athletes in their area.

I'm a Club Administrator – what's in it for me?

As we involve clubs in the planning and hosting of more of the early Summer program, more clubs will have the opportunity to run meets tailored to their specific local needs or interests. Examples include the Nepean club walks meet, the Trinity jumps meet and so on. Some clubs will "give back" to their venue provider by hosting additional meets at home venues. Other clubs value the opportunity to expose new members and prospective volunteer officials to interclub competition within their own event. For continuing meets now included in the NSW Summer program, NSW will be providing some additional support in terms of promotion, planning, official/volunteer recruitment, timetabling,

software operations and results management. One of the primary objectives of the Summer program is to help build capabilities within Clubs.

Will there be enough opportunities for qualification for national and International competitions?

National and International qualifying performances can be achieved at any ANSW meet that has an Athletics Australia (AA) permit. In 2016 there will be no fewer than 25 meets prior to Christmas that will have AA permit status. To compare, there were 13 meets during this same timeframe in 2015.

How does this proposed Summer Series encourage new members to join my club?

All summer series meets (except state relays and club champs) will be open to non-members to participate. Non-members will pay a higher entry fee than members to enter a competition. A non-member may only compete in one Treloar Shield round. Non-member details will be added to the ANSW database and communications will be sent directly to them to encourage joining a club.

Within the summer series there are a number of grass root level track and field competitions. These more relaxed/casual competitions may be more appealing to first time participants. There are also a number of alternate competition offerings with more of an emphasis on fun which may hold more appeal to the general community. These alternative events include Beachletics, Bowral Mile, Grass Games and Hangover Handicap Cross Country.

What assistance will ANSW provide in promoting events that my Club is hosting?

- Promote via weekly electronic newsletter (eAthlete) to ANSW members and LANSW members
- Create an event page on the ANSW website
- Promote via social media (Facebook, Twitter etc)
- Contact local school sports coordinators and sports and recreational groups/organisations to encourage attendance to events in their area
- Include in the event on the official summer series calendar
- Feature articles published on the ANSW homepage in the lead up to events

If non-members can compete in the Summer Series why would they join a Club?

The event entry fee for Club members is cheaper. Entry to championship events such as State Relays and Club Champs are exclusive to club members. There is also a restriction that a non-member may only compete in one Treloar Shield round. Clubs offer a number of benefits to join including access to training facilities, coaching and development and a social network. Further details will be provided in due course, however the full ANSW membership offering for this year will include benefits such as the ability to attend events throughout the year in both summer and winter, access to championship events, free access to RunNSW events (including the Sydney10 and Sydney Half Marathon), as well as some exciting

initiatives in social media. ANSW is confident that the membership proposition for 2016/17 will be the strongest it has ever been.

What officials will be attending these events – will ANSW supply all of these?

Meets that have AA permit status must have a minimum number of qualified officials in particular roles. ANSW will recruit and allocate officials to these positions. Host clubs are expected to supplement the qualified officials with volunteers to assist in the conduct of the meet. ANSW will work closely with host clubs to ensure official and volunteer requirements are met. Volunteers will be encouraged to attain basic 'Level 1' qualifications through a simple 30 minute online exam. For competitions that do not have AA permit status ANSW will assist in the provision of officials to attend and support these Club events.

At which competitions can I achieve a qualifying performance?

Whether an athlete's performance is eligible for a record or qualifying for a National or International competition depends on the status of the event. An Athletics Australia Permit meet is sanctioned by Athletics Australia. Performances achieved at these meets can be used for International qualifiers (for any meet where the IAAF is the governing body) and for National record applications.

An Athletics NSW Permit meet allows athletes to qualify for Junior and Senior Nationals. The ratification of performance is not as stringent for National Championship qualification and therefore more leniencies are afforded to athletes (as performances do not need to be justified to the IAAF).

All NSW Championship events have an AA permit status. Other competitions hosted by ANSW or local Clubs may also attain an AA permit status. Within the event information for each event in the Summer Series, the permit level will be clearly stated. In 2016 there will be no fewer than 25 meets prior to Christmas that will have AA permit status.

If clubs are hosting competitions instead of ANSW, will the standard of the competitions decline?

The ANSW competition department will be heavily involved in the planning and delivery of meets that have AA permit status. There will be uniformity in rules for these meets and minimum standards in terms of facilities, certified equipment and officiating will be enforced. Moreover, most of the Clubs hosting AA permit meets (and the individuals within those Clubs) are experienced and capable of delivering quality competitions and have worked closely with ANSW to deliver Treloar Shield and state championship level competitions. ANSW has also released a guide to hosting track and field competitions to assist host clubs. Building the capabilities of our Clubs to offer as high a standard of competition as an ANSW hosted event may in some cases take time, however building the capabilities of our Member Clubs is one of the key objectives for ANSW.

For non-AA permit meets, the emphasis will not be on trying to offer the same product as a Treloar Shield meet. Rather, these meets will be aimed at encouraging participation in athletics, building local athletics communities, raising the profile of Member Clubs and having FUN!