



Athletes and officials and coaches at young athletes B.L.O.E.

VALUABLE ROLE

EDITORIAL NOTE:

B.L.O.E. is the the juvenile wing of B.L.E. which caters for the under-11 to under-17 age groups. Having been totally involved with the organisation since 1970 I can speak very highly for what it is doing, both from the athletic point of view and the social point of view for the youth of our country. Competitions are organised at county, regional and national level in all track and field events and cross-country, plus a limited programme of indoor events.

DANGERS

In the past, B.L.O.E. has catered for thousands of young athletes, but a very small percentage have made it into junior and senior athletics. There are many reasons for this, but one of the major reasons must be too much competition and too intensive training at an early age. It is possible with the present set up for juvenile athletes to be competing for the 52 weeks of the year. The cross-country season can go on from September to April and then the track season begins and continues until September. Of course the argument can be raised that it should be the responsibility of the clubs, parents and coaches to limit the competition and this is fine in theory but when the competitions are available then the athletes compete in them.



Young athletes B.L.O.E. Coaching Course, Gormanston, 1986

OLE OF B.L.O.E.

CLOSE SEASONS

I have advocated for a number of years that all B.L.O.E. cross-country events should be held between October and early December. There should be a break from then until the end of January with a limited programme of indoor events from then until mid-March. During that period colleges cross-country is available for those who need it.

The B.L.O.E. track season starts very early, usually in April, with most county championships in May, regional in June and national in July. After the nationals there should be a closed season at least for all athletes at national standard until October. I believe that it is this period many of them are destroyed, going to open events week after week, collecting more and more "plastic men" to adorn an already overcrowded room of dust collectors. We could learn a lot from the horse racing fraternity. A good trainer does not send a good horse out week after racing and I have yet to see a race for a young foal. The comparison may seem a little bit naive but the conclusion could have some merit.

TRIBUTE

Having said what I said I must pay tribute to all those parents, coaches, teachers, etc., who work tirelessly for the common good of our young people and I would appeal to our young athletes to appreciate the opportunities given to them. Use them well and sensibly and try to find your way into junior and senior athletics — you will need sport then just as much as sport needs you.

B.L.O.E. MATTERS

By Bro. Cuthbert Nolan, P.R.O.

Young Athletes' Coaching Course, Gormanston

1/4/'86 - 4/4/'86

On the evening of Tuesday, April 1st, 1986, the corridors of Gormanston College, Co. Meath, began to echo and re-echo to the sound of athletic feet and mingling voices of hopeful Olympians as the process of Registration got under way. Old friendships were renewed and new ones were begun.

A total of 130 young athletes of 15 to 17 years, representing every county in Ireland, and all the athletic disciplines, Sprints, Middle Distance, Jumps and Throws, had reported to avail of the expertise afforded by some of the most experienced of Irish Athletic Coaches.

At 7.00 p.m. Mr. John McDermott, B.L.O.E. Vice-chairman and Course coordinator, welcomed everyone and outlined the arrangements for the following days, which were filled out with a tight schedule of activities, lectures, swimming, table tennis and athletic films. Mr. Paddy McGovern, President of B.L.O.E., exhorted the athletes to show their appreciation to their clubs and to their coaches who do so much for them on a totally voluntary basis, to continue in the sport as administrators, even after their competition days are over, and always to aim to develop their full potential in the sport.

The weather was ideal. On Wednesday, the various groups were taken in tow by the coaches. The jumpers were taken by bus to Santry on Thursday. The disco that night was, as usual, greatly appreciated. Group sessions were interspersed by a series of lectures, viz 'The American University and Athletic Scholarships' by Philip Conway; 'The National and International Competitions available to Young Athletes' by Padraic Griffin; 'Stretching before Training and its Importance' . . . Miss O'Connor. 'Experiences of the Irish Olympic Camp 1984 in Los Angeles' . . . Lar O'Byrne . . . Our thanks to them and to the following Coaching Staff: Seán

Naughton (Hurdles), Tom Coyle (Sprints), Brian Corcoran (Sprints), Philip Conway (Throws), Joe Doonan (Middle Distance), Lar O'Byrne (Long Distance and Steeplechase), John Shields (L. Jump), Niall Sweeney (Triple Jump), Des Goff (High Jump), Liam Hennessy (Pole Vault), Paul Quinlan (Hammer), Michael Lane (Walks), John Mulcaire (Javelin).

The followign observer coaches were present: Margaret Cadogan, Skibbereen; Geraldine Campion, Slieveardagh; Jeremiah Looney, Blarney/Iniscarra; Paddy Farrell, St. L. O'T.; Michael O'Brien, Dungarvan; D. McCloskey, Oakleaf, Derry.

Members of the National Executive of BLOE present were: Mrs. A. Peppard, Mr. T. Darcy, Mr. B. Battersby, and Bro. Cuthbert. We wish to thank the catering and management staff of Gormanston

College for the many facilities afforded our athletes.

On Friday afternoon a happy band of Irish boys and girls said "Good-bye" and paid their tributes to the eventful day. A quote from one: "This course to me is one of the best in Ireland for young people of any age. The coaches and officials are all very friendly and they will help you in whatever way they can. The price of the course is very cheap, which will mean that a lot of people can afford to come and join in the fun. It lets us meet new friends. I don't think there is anything needed to improve the course."

Who needs to import coaches with such fine reaction to our own?

All in all, Gormanston Easter Week 1986 will rank as one of the most successful courses ever organised by B.L.O.E.

Extraordinary General Meeting

Laois County Board B.L.E./B.L.O.E. must surely rank as the experts at playing host to the National Bodies, what with Congress '85, National Marathon '86, E.G.M. B.L.O.E. '86 and the coming Annual General Meeting of B.L.O.E. in September '86. Let me congratulate them on their efficiency.

On Saturday, April 19th, 1986, Portlaoise was the venue of the B.L.O.E. E.G.M. to give final voice to the findings of the Review Body which was set up in 1985 to assess athletic progress and to make recommendations for the future. The final stage was reached in the form of 29 motions, of which 8 were passed, 11 withdrawn, 3 out of order, 6 lost and 1 was not put.

Of the total possible number of 197 delegates, 69 attended representing Counties Kilkenny (6), Laois (7), Meath (3), Wexford (1), Carlow (1), Kildare (5), Wicklow (3), Kerry (1), Tipperary (14), Cork (3), Dublin (7), Roscommon (4), Mayo (1), Cavan (1), Leinster (2), Munster (2) and the National Executive (8).

The motions that were passed come into force in 1987 season.

Passed (numbers according to E.G.M. Syllabus):

1. That a National Administrator be appointed to develop judging (National Executive).
9. That B.L.O.E. seek to improve representation on B.L.E. Committees. (Kerry).
10. That an Insurance Officer be appointed, whose function will be to ensure that all units and activities of the Organisation are adequately insured and this Officer shall be empowered to make recommendations to the National Executive of A.G.M. (Kerry).
12. That Regional Secretaries meet once a year preferably before the A.G.M. (National Executive).
22. That when athletes are being selected for the Young Athletes Course in Gormanston, more attention should be given to performances in Cross Country (National Executive).
24. That B.L.O.E. continue to develop Indoor competition in the period January to March. (National Executive).
25. That Indoor National Championships be extended. (National Executive).
28. That Individual competition at National level for the U/11 and U/12 age groups be dispensed with and be replaced by team competition (National Executive).

No doubt many of the motions that were withdrawn at this Extraordinary General Meeting of B.L.O.E. will get a further airing some time in the future when the wisdom inherent in them is seen to relate to the complete spectrum of athletic accomplishment.

Beidh lá eile ag an bPaorach le cúnamh Dé.



Gormanston B.L.O.E. young athletes course "Enjoying the Interval".



B.L.O.E. young athletes,