

## The 2017 UK Hammer Season

The 2017 Reunion marked a momentous year for UK hammer throwing. The many highlights include:

For the first time ever Britain had top eight finalists in both the men's and women's hammer at a senior global tournament. Nick Miller's sixth place is the best men's result in global senior hammer throwing since Malcolm Nokes won bronze at the 1924 Olympics, and Nick had thirteen competitions over 75 metres this season. Sophie Hitchon, though disappointed with her seventh place, remains a true world class performer with seven competitions over 70 metres in 2017. Nick and Sophie, both coached by Tore Gustafsson, contributed 18 points towards GBR's score in the European Athletics Championship Super League in Lille.

In the younger age groups Taylor Campbell (4<sup>th</sup> in the European U23s) and Jake Norris (6<sup>th</sup> in the European Juniors) both set personal best throws and are top ten world class in their age groups. Both the men's and women's hammer showed an unprecedented depth of performances this year, giving opportunities to build up the senior and U23 standards even more in future. To that end, the Hammer Circle, in conjunction with England Athletics and donations, supported the participation of nine U20 athletes in a competition in Leiria, Portugal in July.

In 2017 the women's U20 age group showed very close and competitive standards, with the best ever depth of results, and there were big throws in U17/U15 lists (men and women). There was also a women's U13 record for Lily Murray at 47.10

At the IAAF World Championships, it was great to see the enthusiasm of the crowd for the hammer events as maintaining the event's profile is important at this time of constant change in athletics. The Hammer Circle was pleased to see hammer throwing included in the Birmingham Diamond League (though the event remains excluded from the main competitions) and Jake Norris's formidable throwing encouraged the organisers of the English Schools Championship to put his final on in the main arena, rather than outside.

The Hammer Circle works closely with England Athletics and UK Athletics on rules and health and safety issues, and on competition opportunities