

2018 HAMMER CIRCLE REUNION REPORT

By Ian Tempest, Secretary, Hammer Circle.

The 2018 Hammer Circle Reunion took place on 13-14 October at the Costello Stadium track in Hull. Over a hundred throwers, family, coaches, officials and enthusiasts attended the event. The Hammer Circle is a special association with great talents - athletes and coaches - and a very long history which we continue to celebrate - alongside a commitment to the future as well. The Hammer Circle works closely with England Athletics and UK Athletics on rules and health and safety issues, and on competition opportunities.

The Reunion was an opportunity to commemorate the achievements of the past season, and featured its customary mix of competitions, coaching and presentations.

A big thanks to all who took part in the Reunion, including Gold Coast Commonwealth medallists Nick Miller and Mark Dry, and special thanks to Diane and Dave Smith, the much-appreciated officials, the stadium staff at Costello Stadium and everyone who helped in the clubhouse with catering, tee-shirt sales and a myriad of other tasks.

The Dennis Cullum lecture was given by Hugh Cameron, the AAA U20 champion in 1964 and now an orthopaedic surgeon and Professor in Toronto. Hugh was "reunited" with hammer throwing for the first time since the 1960s!

A further "reunion" took place with the recovery after more than 40 years of the long-lost Partizan Trophy, one of the original Hammer Circle trophies from the inaugural 1953 Reunion. Beautiful engraved versions were presented to Nick Miller and Jake Norris (via Jake's coach and family) for their historic 80m achievements in 2018, with Paul Dickenson being awarded the Partizan Trophy itself.

Other presentations included discussions on safety issues. The Hammer Circle has been working with UKA to improve the safety of the event for a considerable period but with enduring concerns in 2018, proposals for modifications to cages and throwing areas, with particular emphasis on extending the safe zones around cages, will be considered in the next few weeks.

There was a full programme of competitions for athletes from teenagers to M70 Masters with some outstanding marks by U15 Lily Murray (50m hammer throw and 18.47 in the weight throw – a record for the Reunion in the U15 age group). U17 Kenneth Ikeji threw 69.06 with the 5K hammer and 23.25 in the weight throw.

The Hammer Circle was delighted with the continuing support of the British Athletics Supporters Club (BASC) for the Reunion. They sponsored money prize awards for the first three in the men's and women's U17 age group categories over the weekend. These awards, presented by Philp Andrew from BASC, were in addition to the Hammer Circle's usual trophies.

Members of the British Athletics Supporters Club have long supported UK hammer throwers at home and abroad in all the major championships. The current support comes as part of the Club's programme of supporting grass roots athletics, especially young and up-and-coming athletes.

All best wishes to athletes, coaches, parents and other supporters for the forthcoming season and a productive winter's training.

The 2019 Reunion will take place in Hull on 12-13 October.

Here is the "Wanted" Photo!

