CHAIRMAN”S REPORT 2017.

It has been a most eventful year and I really do not want to go over all the old ground with the move away from Peases West. Despite trying a variety of different tacts it was clear that the new owners Crook Community Leisure did not want Crook AC to be part of their set up going forward. Good luck to them and now since October we find ourselves at Shildon.

Clearly the facilities are a lot superior and we have been made to feel very welcome.

Last year due to the saga we had at Crook we could not run the annual Clive Golledge Relays. I received a number of enquires from clubs wanting to know when the event was due to take place. Sadly at Crook after experiments in the early years it did run like clockwork and if the event is going to be run again this year then we will be having to start from scratch. If we are going to try and resurrect then we will need a team to pull everything together with a course to be designed and also a venue for the presentations.

The club is blessed with a number of hard working people behind the scenes and it not just those that are on the committee. Organising events is part and parcel of this club and please try and support as many of these as you can.

The President’s Ball was another huge success last year and special thanks to Simon Fell and Geoff Hewitson for organising this. There is a proposal for this to take place again in May again, a great night but we need a minimum number ideally 60 for this to be economically viable.

Now we are in our new home we can start to plan and try and grow the club in the coming year. We will dicuss the membership fees separately but since October a charge of £2 per session has been levied. The club is not struggling financially but a small number of members seem to abuse not only the £2 fee but also payment to various events the club enters them for. I understand there are still fees to be paid for the NE XC held in December. At this stage I will not name names but you know who you are and it is not fair on everyone else in the club. Equally if you put your name down to run in the relays it is expected that you pay for your entry if for whatever reason you drop out otherwise for relays it will be case of just entering a set number of teams and then if more people turn up on the day some maybe disappointed. I do not think anyone wants this to happen.

With the help of Wayne Brown the club has managed to obtain funding to tune of £1000 to cover the additional expenses of Shildon. Thanks go to Geoff Hewitson who was largely responsible for putting the application together.

The club had a disappointing season in the XC as far as the men were concerned and clearly as a club we are lacking real depth in this department. I do not want to say anymore on this at present however the club has had some success with both the women and the juniors and it is fair to say that these numbers continue to grow.

After the unfortunate incident last season with a dis qualification at Durridge Bay and the various comments made on Facebook we moved to a closed club page. This is still causing problems and it is becoming tiresome with members objecting to some of the posts. One recently which started off about engaging and bringing more into the club then started to get personel. Please please think before you put a post and make comments. I have seen some clubs having real problems with this and it just result’s in in fighting. Something we do not want.

This year see the resignation of both our club captains who have done a fantastic job in promoting the club and also their work behind the scenes. Rob did take over the reins of Crook Ed which everyone associated with the club believes that this is not only a good read but gives the club a lot of publicity. I am pleased to say that Crook Ed will continue under a new editor more on this later however it does not run itself so please send any articles you have as it needs input from everyone not just a few.

Craig Downs did a fantastic job until 2107 promoting the club in the Northern Echo, Twitter feeds and putting the club forward for a number of awards. You will see that these have ceased which is a shame and I am sure the added publicity would attract some new members.

It will be interesting to see how many members do not renew for 2018 but we cannot look back and hopefully we can attract a few new members. I know the juniors have a healthy number and we are seeing the first signs of some of these starting to come through and a small number are starting to train with the seniors on a Tuesday evening.

With numerous injuries last year we did not retain our trophy as the leading club in the NEMA Track and Field at Monkton which was disappointing. However the signs do look good for 2108 as it appears that we have converted a few new recruits. I am sure that with the improved facilities at Shildon we have the opportunity to practice our skills before the season commences. Both Jayne and Geoff will welcome any new recruits and its helping the club as every point counts so strength in depth is important.

There was positive feedback from everyone who want across to Wolsingham School when we first had the difficulties at Crook. They made the club extremely welcome and helped the club out. We devised a scenic club handicap course and there is a groundswell of opinion that we should use the same course for the Summer handicap.

After a straw poll of venue for the Winter handicap the vote was for this to continue at Crook and sadly we have seen the numbers tail off. I do believe this requires a re think and I get the hold with Crook but we have to move on and look at the wider picture. How many who actually wanted Crook to continue have actually turned up for the handicap.

The presentation evening will take place at Bishop Auckland Football Club on the 11th Feb. Please support this and remember the votes are by members of the club other than the captains and presidents awards. Not everyone can win a trophy and should your name not appear on the shortlist or if you do not win a trophy please do not take it personally. Again this evening does not appear by magic on the night a lot of hard work goes in behind the scenes.

Bill Ford represented the club at the London Marathon in 2107 and the 2018 nomination of which the club only received 1 place was drawn at the Xmas Dinner and out of the envelope Chloe Batson received the club place. Again I have heard mutterings about the draw and anyone who was at the Xmas Dinner knows it was drawn fairly. I know Chloe is currently having injury problems however once she received the nomination the London organisers were informed and it now out of the club’s hands. This is nothing to do with the club and if someone wants to defer then it is up to them. It has happened in the past and it will happen again in the future.

I have said in previous years that I do not want to single anyone out for the work they do on behalf of the club. Any suggestions and help is greatly appreciated it is your club and I keep on saying it does not run itself so step forward. Try organising an event or putting on transport to a race rather say what is the club doing about this or that. To flourish we need your help. The committee does not meet that often through out the year as its split into a number of sections and these seem to work well.

One example is the juniors who have their own committee under the stewardship of Colin Everson.

2108 promises to be a year to look forward to and not look back at where we have been in the last few years with the fiasco over the ownership of Peases West. Let’s us all pull together and promote the club as a friendly club that welcomes all abilities.

GRAHAM LAVERICK
JANUARY 2018.