



UK Athletics – Registered Firearms Dealers
Athletics Welfare, PO Box 332,
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Starters - Newsletter No 3 (September 2010)

I hope this latest newsletter finds you in good health and you had a good summer season and are looking forward to the coming indoor season.

Imitation handguns

This issue has still to be resolved and the much awaited review has not yet been finalised. UKA Chief Executive Niels de Vos authorised the purchase of 65 replacement handguns as a quick fix to replace some of the BBM Olympic 380's handed in to the police. They went out to starters across the country early in the track season. We are hoping to be able to acquire a substantial number of similar guns in the next few months so that we can start to assist schools in their replacement programme.

Grandmother jailed over pistol

A grandmother has been jailed for five years for possessing a "family heirloom" World War II pistol. She admitted illegal possession of the firearm, an offence with a minimum five-year jail term under Scots law.

Cochrane told the High Court in Edinburgh that she had never contemplated she might be committing a crime by keeping the gun or that she might need to get a licence for the weapon.

Defence solicitor advocate Jack Brown argued that the circumstances surrounding the case were exceptional and that it would be "draconian, unjust and disproportionate" to jail the grandmother-of-six.

However, Judge Lady Smith said: "I am not satisfied that a reasonable explanation has been put forward for not handing this gun into the authorities throughout the 29-year period she says she has had it in her possession."

The judge said she was unable to find herself satisfied that this was one of the rare cases in which exceptional circumstances existed.

She said: "The result is I have no alternative but to sentence Mrs Cochrane to a period of five years."

She said she believed it was a real gun, but had no ammunition for it.

Cochrane admitted having the 7.65 millimetre Browning self-loading pistol at her home without a firearms certificate and possessing the prohibited weapon without the authority of the Secretary of State or Scottish ministers.

What relevance has this to athletics starters? – Read on

Some starters fail to realise just how draconian the penalties are if you step out of line with firearms legislation. I have heard an unsubstantiated rumour of a starter asking a friend who does not hold a firearms certificate to transport his guns to a venue by car because he was flying to the event and taking the guns on an aircraft was too much trouble. If this were to be true and the police found the 'friend' with the guns then for Grandmother jailed over pistol you can read **Athletics Official jailed over pistol**.

UKA are looking at the purchase of two new handguns to hold in stock which under the dealership can be taken to venues and used by a starter who has been unable to bring his own guns to the venue due to problems with travel.

Transfer of ownership

UKA in consultation with Greater Manchester Police have recently issued a transfer of ownership form which also contains some guidance. The document can be found on the UKA website by following the link <http://www.uka.org.uk/competitions/officials/starters-information/>

UKA False Start Rule

We have now had a season of outdoor athletics under the new start rule. UKA via Cherry Alexander (Head of Competitions) have asked me to record their thanks for the way starters have managed the change in a common sense way, which has prevented a lot of negativity around the change. Alan Bell on the Technical Committee says that an analysis of meetings generally shows that there have been no major issues and athletes appreciate the attitude adopted by starters. Well done to all.

UKA guns at Stadiums

UKA have placed an imitation handgun at Scotstoun, Gateshead, Sportcity, Birmingham, Bedford, Loughborough and Cardiff stadiums for use by teachers and starters.

Contacts

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch with Paul or me. My email address is dbrown@uka.org.uk Pauls email is paulwilliamyates@hotmail.com

Circulation

Please feel free to print off this newsletter and pass it on to any other UKA starters you have contact with and who are not on my email directory.

David Brown CBE