

UKA Athlete Affiliation – Questions & Answers

Q. What is 'affiliation' and what does it mean to MAC members?

A. Our **club** is **affiliated to England Athletics** and through them, **uk:athletics**.¹

In the past, that (or equivalent) affiliation has been all that is required for our members to compete in events under UKA jurisdiction as affiliated or **attached** competitors. From April 2007 things have changed.

Q. So what's changed?

A. In common with other national bodies, **England Athletics** have introduced **Athlete Affiliation**. This means that each athlete over 11 now has to be individually affiliated **to compete in events under UKA jurisdiction as an affiliated or attached competitor**.

Q. What does athlete affiliation cost and what will I get?

A. The cost for 2008 is **£5**.

For that you will get a licence to compete bearing a unique affiliation number and valid for one year from 1 April 2008.

Q. Do I need to affiliate?

A. That really depends on what you intend to do.

If you intend to compete in events open only to UKA affiliated athletes, then of course **you must affiliate** in order to be able to do so. Most Track & Field meets and a few Cross Country events are open only to UKA affiliated athletes.

Most road races are however open to non-affiliated runners.

Q. What Cross Country events?

A. One can safely assume that National & Regional championships are or will be in the very near future, open only to affiliated athletes.

At this point in time **Chiltern League** races are **open to all First Claim members of member clubs** (subject to age conditions), with Second Claim members able to run as non-scoring guests. (More about First & Second Claim later). It has been mooted that non-affiliated athletes may be liable to pay an unaffiliated surcharge in the future, but as athletes do not pay an entry fee for Chiltern League races, it is difficult to see how a surcharge could be implemented.

¹ See document 'Affiliations & Associations' for further information on the governance of athletics in the U.K.

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Q. What about Road Races?

A. O.K. let's open this bag of worms and see what we can gather. First of all, **road races only come under UKA jurisdiction if they have permits issued by UKA governing bodies. Not all do.** Some now have permits issued by a new 'rival' organisation called ARC (The Association of Running Clubs), whilst others don't have permits at all. The latter tending to be races organised by charities and other large organisations, who take care of their own insurance and other essentials. A sample of popular local races, run between May and December 2007, revealed that 9 had UKA permits, 6 had ARC permits and 7 had no permits advertised.

For races run under UKA jurisdiction, you *should* now be an affiliated athlete in order to claim the affiliated or (as it's sometimes still referred to) the 'attached' discount.

Weird as it may seem, **for ARC permitted races, you qualify for the affiliated or 'attached' discount just by being a member of a UKA Affiliated club!**

Q. So how do I know what permit (if any) a race has?

A. Surely you don't expect it to be a simple matter of looking at the entry form, do you!

Of a reasonable sample of entry forms in our filing cabinet, we found that:

- a) Several swore allegiance to organisations that ceased to be in excess of ten years ago, or never actually existed at all!
- b) Many didn't yield any clue as to what permit, if any, applied, yet offered a discount to affiliated or attached runners.
- c) Most that have UKA jurisdiction permits don't conform to the UKA rules relating to entry forms and don't ask specifically if the entrant is affiliated as an athlete.²

² Dave Dando in his role as England Athletics South East Regional council member has requested that this be escalated to the UKA sponsored Road Running Leadership Group as a matter of priority.

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- Q. O.K. put it another way. If I DON'T affiliate, when should I claim the affiliated / attached discount?**
- A.** If an entry form specifically states that the discount applies to UKA affiliated athletes only and asks for an affiliation / licence number, then you should NOT claim the discount. In all other circumstances, it is perfectly reasonable to do so, (assuming of course that you're a fully paid-up MAC member – we'll shop you anyway if you're not!).
- Q. To summarize then, is it reasonable to say that I only need to affiliate now if I intend to compete in events open only to UKA affiliated athletes?**
- A. YES**
- Q. Then if I stick to Road Running, when will it be cost-effective for me to affiliate?**
- A.** When the time comes that the races that you do or intend to do only offer discounts to UKA affiliated entrants.
- Q. When will that be?**
- A.** Who knows? But don't hold your breath!
- Q. How do I get affiliated?**
- A.** You need to be affiliated through your First Claim club.
At MAC, Juniors (over 11) will be affiliated by default as they are expected to compete in UKA events for the club. Their affiliation fees will be factored into the membership subscription.
Seniors requiring affiliation should signify this by adding the £5 fee when paying their annual membership to the Club's Membership Secretary.

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Q. Now, as it's been mentioned in passing, what's all this First Claim, Second Claim stuff about?

A. Leaving aside all complications associated with competition eligibility, disciplines offered, Higher Competition, H.M. Services, Universities and other such diversions, it's relatively straightforward!

UKA Rules state that:

'The first Club joined by athletes will be known as their First Claim Club and will remain so until they give notice that they wish to terminate their membership of that Club'.

Any other club you join whilst continuing to be a member of your first claim club will be a 'Second Claim' club.

Although UKA Rules allow athletes to compete for their Second Claim club in certain disciplines, where the specific event rules permit, **Road Running rules are more specific and state that if a race is open to their First Claim club, entrants may not compete for any other club / team.** So, a Second Claim member of MAC who is a First Claim member of a club outside of those eligible to compete in the 5k series CAN run for MAC in the 5k series, as the races are not open to his or her First Claim club. However, that athlete CANNOT run for MAC in a race such as the Burnham Beeches Half, as that race is open to all clubs (and indeed unattached runners).

Dave Dando
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