Athletics Canterbury | Community Update

October / November 2026

Kia ora Athletics Canterbury whānau,

There is plenty to celebrate across our athletics community, from national relay success to growing junior participation. Here are the key updates from the recent board meeting as we move into the summer season.

Celebrating our winter season

Congratulations to Christchurch Avon on its first Senior Women's title at the National Road Relay Championships in Halcombe, and to Whippets on reclaiming the Senior Men's title. Canterbury teams also secured further podium finishes in senior and junior grades.

Closer to home, 52 teams competed in the Canterbury Road Relay, compared with 22 in 2025. Our junior passport programme involved 308 under-16 athletes, with 73 taking part in seven or more events and 18 completing all ten. Christchurch Avon won the senior Winter Club of the Year trophy, while Port Hills won the junior trophy. Congratulations to those two clubs.

Thank you to the clubs, officials, coaches, volunteers and families who made the winter programme possible.

Growing our athletics community

The September registration report recorded 1,130 members, compared with 1,021 in September 2025. Membership among children aged 7–14 stood at 611, compared with 506 a year earlier.

Development work is helping build the next generation of athletes and coaches. Four recent CAD coaching courses attracted 52 participants, most of them new coaches. Teacher professional development sessions also reached 50 new teachers from 18 schools, strengthening links between school athletics and our clubs.

Summer opportunities and inclusion

The October report outlined plans for Youth Development Squad sessions, including strength and conditioning using the Indoor Throws Centre gym equipment. Athletics 4 All and All Abilities Athletics were being promoted for Term 4, with over 40 participants registered at the time of reporting.

Club visits and school athletics days remain important opportunities to help more young people find their way into athletics.

Looking ahead: Takahe 2 Akaroa and ITM

The return of Takahe 2 Akaroa was announced at the National Road Relay Championships and received an enthusiastic response. The General Manager's report says Canterbury will host the event for two consecutive years, with planning underway for October 2027.

The 2027 International Track Meet is also taking shape, with a stellar lineup of athletes from around the world being involved. It currently has the making of being the best athletics lineup in New Zealand for decades. The final field remains subject to confirmation.

A proposed investment in safer facilities

A hammer cage fundraising plan was presented for Board consideration, with a target of $100,000 by 30 September 2027. The proposal aims to support athlete safety, improve facilities and strengthen our ability to host events.

The proposed funding mix brings together an Athletics Canterbury contribution, grant funding, and donations from community supporters and partner organisations. Purchase and installation would proceed only once sufficient funding and approvals are secured. The board confirmed adoption of the plan, so this is an early update prior to the fundraising launch.

Thank you for being part of Athletics Canterbury. We look forward to seeing our community enjoying the summer season.

See you trackside!

Ian Thomas

General Manager

Jo O'Sullivan

Chair