



**SOUTH AFRICA
ATHLETICS REPORT,
2005.**

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Abstract

This study was conducted in South Africa between the months of August and mid-November 2005. The accompanying report was generated during my exploration of Athletic governing structures, the development of talent, the economic impact of athletes, the major obstacles facing athletics and the interaction of Athletics and Education within the country. I relied on feedback from one hundred and fifteen questionnaires, sixty three face to face interviews and on my own observations to form opinions and make the following main recommendations: there should be a nationally coordinated and locally implemented athletic development plan, the government should reconsider its decision to stop compulsory Physical Education in schools, Athletics South Africa should work to improve its image and open communication channels with athletes, Athletics South Africa's rule 4.2 should be changed to allow foreign athletes to win team prizes and there should be more safeguards to protect the interests of local athletes. This study concludes that though South African Athletics has achieved an impressive nationwide club structure, urgent steps need to be taken to ensure a brighter, better financed and more inclusive future for the sport.

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I wish to thank all my respondents in South Africa whose feedback and insight form the bulk of this report. I am very grateful for their generous contribution to my study even though, for the sake of brevity, I am unable to mention all of them by name. A complete list of interviewees is attached in the appendices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every year, the Thomas J Watson Foundation awards fifty fellowships to graduating seniors from select colleges in the United States. The fellows pursue a year of independent exploration in a field of their choice, and are responsible for the design, execution and when possible, application of their study. In choosing to study the “Socioeconomic Impact of African Runners”, I found a perfect merger of my three passions: Africa, Running and Economics. A larger, underlying objective for my study is to gain experiential knowledge of different parts of Africa, and use such knowledge in the exploration of avenues for African Unity.

After considering factors such as the depth of running talent and culture, strategic positions of countries in the African union, my desire to visit different regions in Africa, my obligations as a Thomas J Watson fellow, the feasibility and safety of travel, I decided to base my study in the countries of South Africa, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana and Morocco.

I spent the first three and half months of my fellowship (August to mid-November, 2005) in South Africa. I visited Western, Eastern, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Mpumalanga Provinces to explore the structure and effectiveness of athletics governing bodies, the interaction between athletics and education, the athletic development effort locally and nationally, the effect of athletics on national pride and the economic impact of the athletes on their communities. It was a pleasure to be a part of South African athletics while conducting my study in the different provinces, and I hope that through this report, I can make a positive contribution to an already vibrant culture of athletics in the country.

All the opinions, judgments and any possible errors in this report are those of the author alone, and do not represent the views of the Watson Foundation, its directors or any of its staff.

2. GOALS AND METHOD OF STUDY

The following objectives formed the basis of my study in South Africa:

1. To gain a general understanding of the structure of athletics in the country.
2. To observe the interaction of Athletics and Education.
3. To identify some of the main challenges facing athletes and athletic development countrywide.
4. To discover the role and effectiveness of Provincial and National Athletic Federations.
5. To make informed, fair and pragmatic recommendations for improvement of athletics in South Africa.

To achieve the stated objectives, I relied on questionnaires, face to face interviews and my own observations during interactions with club members and visits to running events. This report is based on feedback from sixty three interviews, one hundred and fifteen questionnaires and my observations during a three and a half month stay in South Africa. While conducting my study in the country, I visited six provinces, observed two national championship events and participated in the Soweto marathon as well as numerous local running events.

3. FINDINGS

A) Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

Note: The questionnaire responses are analyzed in sections corresponding to those found in the runner questionnaire (appendix 6.1).

i) **SECTION A: General Characteristics of the Respondent group**

One hundred and fifteen respondents in South Africa completed and returned the study questionnaire. The respondents included teachers, engineers, students, attorneys, Sports Scientists among others. The average age of respondents was 32.7. The youngest respondent was 13 years old while the oldest was 70. Sixty percent of the respondents were from the Western Province.

ii) **SECTION B: Gender and Running Attributes of Respondents**

Table 3.11: SECTION B responses (Majority responses indicated in bold)

Question	Sub-section	% respondents
B1. Gender	Male	75
	Female	25
B2. How would you classify yourself as a runner?	Elite	11
	Competitive	51
	Social	30
B3. How long have you been running?	Occasional	2
	Over 15 years	17
	10-15 years	15
	5-10 years	23
	1-5 years	33

	Under 1 year	10
B4. How much income do you gain from running?	Over US \$ 10,000	1
	\$ 1,000- \$10,000	3
	Below \$ 1000	27
	None	67
B5. Which of the following is the main reason why You run? (Please select only one)	To keep healthy and fit	54
	To raise income	8
	To prepare for races	22
	As a social activity	6
	For Leisure	1
	Others	2
		[B5: multiple choices allowed: sum of % exceed 100]
B5. What are the other reasons why you run? (You could select more than one)	To keep healthy and fit	39
	To raise income	18
	To prepare for races	22
	As a social activity	42
	For Leisure	33
	Others	3

SECTION B Comments:

Three quarters of the respondents were male, a fact which might influence other responses such as the main reasons for running, the major personal obstacles to athletic training and whether there are equal opportunities for male and female runners in South Africa.

It is interesting that while half of the respondents classified themselves as competitive runners, a majority (54%) indicated that the main reason why they ran was to keep healthy and fit, and not to prepare for races (22%). While given the liberty of more than one choice, 42% of all respondents included the social aspect of running as one of the other reasons why they ran. These responses may be an indication that the health benefits, the social aspects and the leisure value of running are the key reasons why the sport enjoys such a large following in South Africa.

It is noteworthy that 17% of all the runners who completed the questionnaire had been running for over 15 years. Having a significant part of all respondents with such long term experience in the sport hopefully adds value to the comments made for the improvement of the sport in South Africa.

A large majority (67%) of the respondents indicated that they earn no income from running, a fact explainable by a potential bias of this sample towards the more affluent South Africans or by a general lack of financial rewards for the sport in the country. Only 8% of the respondents indicated that they run mainly to raise income.

iii) **SECTION C: Running and Education**

Table 3.12: SECTION C responses

Question	Sub-section	% respondents
C1. What is your current level of education?	Primary	3
	Secondary	36
	Tertiary	31
	Post-graduate	26
	Other	1
C2. What level of education do you hope to achieve?	Primary	0
	Secondary	5
	Tertiary	30
	Post-graduate	42
	Other	4
C3. In general, how has running contributed to your education?	Enhanced it	37
	Detracted from it	3
	Both enhanced and detracted from it	13
	No Comment	37
C3. In general, how do you feel running has contributed to education in your country?	Enhanced it	37
	Detracted from it	2
	Both enhanced and detracted from it	12
	Don't Know	41

	No Comment	3

SECTION C Comments:

More than a third (36%) of respondents had a high school education, while about 60% of them had undergone either tertiary or post-graduate education. When asked what level of education they wanted to achieve, 42% of all the respondents indicated that they wanted to reach the post-graduate level. These responses might be an indicator that, for this group of respondents, education went hand in hand with their running. Indeed, when asked how running had contributed to their education, 37% replied that the sport had enhanced their learning experience.

It is interesting that when asked how running had contributed to education nationally, a majority (41%) of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of the impact of the sport on education at the national level, while a smaller proportion (37%) that said running had enhanced education in the country. One interpretation of this result is that though the respondents were clearer about the impact of running on their personal education, they were unsure of the impact of the sport on education nationally. The interaction between athletics and education nationally is an important subject that warrants further research.

iv) SECTION D: National Athletics, Foreign Athletes and Proposed Priorities

Table 3.14: SECTION D responses

Question	Sub-section	% respondents
D1. How would you characterize running as a sport in your country?	The main sport	5
	One of the main sports	58
	A minor sport	34
		[D2: absolute values]
D2. How do you feel about runners who represent your country in international meets? Please rate them on a scale of 1 (very disappointed) to 10 (extremely proud)	Average score for runners	6.41
	Median score for runners	7
	Modal score for runners	10
	Highest Score for runners	10
	Least Score for runners	1
D3. Do you know of any of your former national runners who have switched nationalities so as to represent other countries?	Yes	38
	No	59
D4. If yes, what do you think is the main reason why these runners switched nationalities?	Monetary	22
	Personal	13
	Social	5
	Don't know	23
D5. Do you think there should be more restrictions on runners who switch nationalities?	Yes	25
	No	43
	No Comment	26
		[D6: Average scores]
D6. Which of the following should be a priority for government officials in charge of running in your country/region? Please rate each option from 1 (not important) to 5 (urgent)	Develop running into a financially viable sport	3.8
	Develop running into a popular national sport	4.2
	Integrate professional running with the formal education system	3.5
	Improve coordination between different running groups and clubs	3.6
	Prepare national athletes for international events	4.4
	Raise awareness on the personal and health benefits of running	4.1
	Develop running into a financially viable sport	36
	Develop running into a popular national sport	50
	Integrate professional running with the formal education system	30
	Improve coordination between different running groups and clubs	28
	Prepare national athletes for	55

	international events	
	Raise awareness on the personal and health benefits of running	44
D7. Are there a significant number of foreign athletes who compete in local events in your country/Region?	Yes	51
	No	27
	Don't Know	16
D8. If yes, what do you think is the main impact of these athletes on running in your country/region?	Positive	65
	Negative	4
	Neither positive nor negative	11
	Don't know	20

SECTION D comments:

The largest segment (58%) of this respondent group thought that running was one of the main sports in South Africa while a significant proportion (34%) indicated that it was one of the minor sports. Though all the respondents are runners, a very small section (5%) of them thought running was the main sport in the country. This result from the questionnaires is in line with my own observations during my stay in South Africa: though running has a large following in the country, it is still eclipsed by other sports such as rugby, cricket and soccer.

The respondents had an average opinion of athletes who represented South Africa internationally (they gave the athletes an average score of 6.41 on a scale of 1 to 10). Interestingly, the most common score awarded to South African national athletes was 10, the maximum possible- 19% of all respondents gave the score of 10, indicating that they were extremely proud of the athletes.

About two thirds of the respondents were not aware of any South African athletes who have switched nationalities to represent other countries. The largest proportion (41%) of this respondent group thought that there should be no restrictions on runners who wish to switch nationalities. According to this sample of South African runners, the most

urgent issue for officials governing athletics nationally and regionally should be to prepare national athletes for international events; a close second urgent issue was to develop running into a popular national support followed by the need to raise awareness on the personal and health benefits of running. The least urgent issue for South African athletics, according to these respondents, is to integrate professional running with the education system.

Half the respondents indicated knowledge of foreign athletes who compete in local and national events. A little over two thirds of the respondents who claimed such knowledge thought that the foreign athletes have a positive impact on running within South Africa.

v) SECTION E: Obstacles to Athletics and Gender Equality in the Sport

Table 3.15: SECTION E responses

Question	Sub-section	% respondents
		[E1 and E2: multiple choices allowed: sum of % exceed 100]
E1. What are the major obstacles to your running/ Training?	Finances/Economic reasons	32
	Lack of suitable training grounds, roads, trails, etc	17
	Social/Cultural reasons, please specify	3
	Education (cannot do both school and running)	7
	Injuries/Medical reasons	23
	Others	18
	There are no major obstacles to my running/training	33
E2. Which of the following do you think are major obstacles to running/training in your country or region?	Finances/Economic reasons	59
	Lack of suitable training grounds, roads, trails, etc	29
	Social/Cultural reasons, please specify	10

	Education (cannot to both school and running)	10
	Injuries/Medical reasons	23
	Others	6
	There are no major obstacles to my running/training	12
E3. Do you think male and female runners enjoy equal opportunities for development as runners in your country/ region?	Yes	60
	No	27
	Don't Know	10

SECTION E Comments:

A third of the respondents answered that there were no major obstacles to their running or training, while another thirty two percent indicated that finances or economic reasons were a major hurdle for them. These results may be an indication that the sample was almost evenly split between those South African runners who are fairly well off economically and those who suffer economic hardships. Nearly sixty percent of all respondents chose finances or economic reasons as a major block to athletics nationally.

Sixty percent of all respondents thought there were equal opportunities for male and female runners in South Africa. Though the sample was largely male (75 %), about 80 % of all female respondents to this question also concurred that there were equal opportunities for male and female runners in the country. During my interviews with respondents in different parts of the Country, gender disparity, unlike race-related inequalities, did feature as a major issue for South African athletics.

vi) Athletes Speak: An Assortment of Quotes from Respondents

This section contains a selection of quotes from the questionnaire responses. Some sources have been omitted to protect the anonymity of respondents.

“Great sport, excellent organization, very inclusive.” Sasha Daniels, Attorney.

“South Africa's unique ultra marathon culture ... provides a wonderful opportunity for positive integration in post-apartheid era.” John Cameron-Dow, Insurance Broker.

“I think that running has the capacity to heal the wounds of the past in our society. I also believe that there should be a greater drive to encourage foreign athletes to participate in our mass participation events such as the Comrades Marathon and the Two Oceans Marathon...” Len Keating, Business Consultant.

“Easiest Sport in the world” Toy Pick, Engineer.

“There seems to be little emphasis on the health and social benefits of running in schools.” Greta Bock, Tour Operator.

“Government should have a good look at the educational policies i.e. physical education” Mark Kock, Consultant.

“There are no sponsors for the sport. More opportunities should be availed for runners. More money should be invested in the development of youngsters.” Siyabonga Nqabeni, winner of the 2005 Knysna half-marathon.

“There needs to be improvement of the economic situation of runners, and development of camps in rural areas.” Tom Lusaseni, Student.

“... our country has many talented runners and athletes, but there is not enough development to get these athletes to the levels they need to be on to compete on international levels. But saying that as a South African I am extremely proud of the males and females we have that represent our country.” Moyra Sheard, Logistics Controller.

“There should be a greater and [more] serious commitment from government to encourage our country's youth to participate in sport ... Poorer communities don't have much or if any sports

facilities. Government schools aren't encouraged to participate in sport as there isn't a serious financial [input] from Government ... the result is that you have a generation gap where sport is not that important." Leschelle Morkel, Personal Assistant.

"I think the government could do a better job in running the sport" Virginia, Student.

"I strongly oppose government officials/politicians being in charge of running or sport. I have a very negative regard for A.S.A. and the national and provincial ministry & depts. of sport. I believe club structure is very strong and positive." [source withheld]

"Official organizations that oversee the sport do not communicate enough with the athletes eg. via questionnaires. They often enforce rules seemingly to appease top organization body NOT the athletes they serve. Not enough incentives in place to attract the youth to the sport - scholarships, sponsorships, time/position incentives etc." [source withheld]

"Pro [professional] runners should have to pay if they pull out of meetings while competing for SA." Anonymous.

"Juniors should not be involved in road running. Juniors must stay on track!" Nelson Tshambo, Student.

"I have seen how success in running has been reflected in the general upliftment of some runners e.g. has assisted them in finding better employment or their running earnings have improved their financial position. Great!" Pixie Sparg, former teacher.

"I wish it could be run as professionally as soccer and rugby. This would give it respect among other sports." Mphicothi Steven Qantolo, Teacher.

"No real development at grassroots; esp in rural areas; Private sector involvement in development is poor; National Athletics body does not implement development in the rural areas" Derrick Hoshe, Production Specialist.

“Government must pay attention to all regions equally” Lubabalo Jusayi, Student.

“People of all races should be treated as equal and judged on performance. Officials should be punctual and starting times should change; road races, esp championships should start earlier- atleast 630 a.m.” Gerda-Marie Theron, Student.

“The Selection of athletes to represent the country should be based on performance, not status.” Lusanda Gquka, Student.

B) OTHER COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

i) Evolution of Athletics in South Africa

It is no small change that all athletes in South Africa, regardless of their color, can now represent and bring fame to their country at International events. During the apartheid era, non-white runners could not be members of the national team, and at best, they could only aspire to be in the provincial squads. The country’s fight and triumph over apartheid and its limitations has broadened the horizons for all South Africans, and the possibility of representing the country internationally provides an added incentive for budding athletes. Ability, not complexion, is now the chief determinant of how far any athlete in South Africa can go, and that is a valuable and hard won change for the country’s athletics.

The evolution of Athletics has had a close relation with the political process in the country. During the apartheid era, there were three main bodies governing athletics, and athletes of different races ran under separate umbrella bodies. The different governing bodies organized competitions that were mostly segregated by race, except at the

provincial level where all athletes competed against each other. With the change of government in 1994, all the three athletic governing groups were brought together under Athletics South Africa, which now has overall control of athletics countrywide. The political process of transformation has also impacted athletics, with athletic structures from the national level down to the club level facing significant pressure to include previously marginalized groups within their management structures. Within the provincial athletics unions, there has been a visible change of management from mostly white to more diverse management teams. The integration of athletics in the country has not been without friction, and a number of valuable resource people and financial sponsors have been lost in the process.

On an operational level, athletics, especially road running, remains mostly unchanged in the last fifteen years or so. There are still roughly the same events, organized by the same clubs, except that ASA has been increasingly involved in organizing important events such as the Soweto marathon. A large majority of clubs in the country are still to be found in the richer, mostly white neighborhoods, and there are few vibrant clubs in the previously marginalized communities.

The average age of competitors in the major running events such as the Two Oceans marathon is on the rise. Given that the Two Oceans marathon is one of the events for which a majority of runners in the country train, the rising trend in the average age of participants may be an indication that fewer and fewer youngsters are getting involved in long distance running, or worse, that running, in general, is losing the interest of younger South Africans. There is need for more investigation to identify the cause and

implications of the rising average age of participants in this premier running event in the country.

ii) Athletics South Africa (ASA)

Athletics South Africa (ASA) is charged with the challenging job of steering athletics nationally, and to some extent, it executes this mandate to an acceptable standard. However, it has an image issue amongst a number of runners and other stakeholders in athletics within South Africa. The negative image of ASA stems from its reliance on decrees rather than dialogue to effect its decisions, its less than professional handling of some running events in the past and poor communication channels. It is fair to say that in some provinces in the country, the national athletics body is more feared than respected.

Within South Africa, ASA has absolute legal control of all athletic events while clubs do almost all the work of event organization and development. Even if the clubs feel that certain ASA decisions are not favorable to them, they have no recourse except to accept these decisions. Clubs or event organizers who decline to oblige with ASA decisions face punitive measures that are practically paralyzing. Clubs, even though they are the atomic structure of athletics in South Africa, cannot successfully challenge any decisions of ASA, be they negative or positive.

iii) Role of Athletics in South Africa

Athletics in South Africa builds character in its participants, especially the youth. A number of respondents in this study, who are successful both on and out of track,

indicated that the sport helped them develop traits such as self-discipline that contributed to their personal growth. For a lot of younger athletes, especially those in difficult environments, the discipline that the sport requires keeps them away from negative habits such as substance abuse that affects their peers. Running is also a natural stress reliever, and it is invaluable for youngsters and others in stressful living environments.

Athletics plays an important social and integration role within South African communities. The clubs host events such as time trials, organized group runs, dinners and other events that allow members to build and enhance their social connections. An important aspect of this socialization is the integration of different racial groups through social networks formed during club events. The social networks formed in the clubs are then expanded at local, regional and national events when participants from diverse socio-economic backgrounds meet and compete. The national running events such as the Two Oceans and the Comrades marathon are an especially important avenue for social and racial integration, a role they played even in during the difficult apartheid era.

iv) Clubs

South Africa has an impressively well developed club structure that ensures numerous well organized running events countrywide. It is no mean achievement for South African athletics that, every weekend, one can access a well organized running event in almost all regions of the country. The clubs are also the main agent of athletic development within the provinces, and they fulfill several other functions including providing a healthy lifestyle option for community members, raising funds for charitable causes and promoting the integration of the diverse communities.

This well developed club structure, unfortunately, does not equitably serve all segments of the South African population. Most of the better organized running clubs are based in the richer, mostly white neighborhoods, while, in almost all provinces, the Townships and other poorer areas have very few if any functional clubs. The running events also show a similar pattern: a lot of the events, since they are organized by the richer clubs, are usually based in richer neighborhoods or venues that are practically out of reach for a majority of the rural or Township dwellers. This is an ironic situation since a majority of South African top runners are from the Townships and the rural areas - one would think that the existing club structure would have extended a little more to serve these talent bases.

Three factors could partially explain the lack of functional clubs in the Townships and other poorer areas of South Africa: a scarcity of financial resources in these neighborhoods, the absence of competent management for the poorer clubs and significant competition from the more established clubs for the top running talent. These three factors intertwine to form a formidable obstacle for all interested in developing more Township clubs: because the Township clubs have little or no money, they cannot keep their top athletes who are attracted by the better incentives offered by richer clubs, and when the poorer clubs lose their top talent, they find even harder to keep their sponsors who want advertisement value for their money; when the sponsors pull off, the Township clubs cannot be successful enough to attract or keep talented personnel within their ranks, and when the talented personnel pull off, the clubs fail and become another example of why it is so hard to establish clubs in the poorer areas. To break this vicious cycle, there needs to be concerted effort by the national and provincial athletics bodies to

support budding clubs in the Township areas; unfortunately, this effort is lacking in most of the provinces.

Some of the richer, more established clubs have support schemes for the runners from the poorer areas. These schemes include performance incentives, transport to running events, payment of race entry fees, monthly retainers for the top performers and procurement of running shoes and gear. Since the richer clubs are usually better managed, they also do a better job of keeping their athletes informed of running events. It is no surprise the top athletes from the Township areas would rather run for these clubs than for their local clubs.

There are examples of successful elite Township clubs, a notable one being Liberty Nike club of Eastern Province. This club is composed of mostly Township dwellers and it is locally managed. The big task for development officers regionally and nationally would be create more Liberty Nikes while expanding their membership to include all members of the community, not just the elite runners.

v) Development

For the sake of my study in South Africa, I took development to mean *the identification, support and exposure of talent in athletes of all ages, and the promotion of athletics as a sport for all*. Specifically, I was interested in what South Africa does to identify and nurture talent in all regions of the country, how accessible running is to all segments of the South African population and the effectiveness of national, provincial and local structures as agents of athletic development.

The bulk of development work in the country is done by clubs. The clubs provide incentives, coaching, running gear, transportation, entry fees to running events and the social support needed to nurture talent in athletes of varying ages. Clubs countrywide have varying development objectives including: support for elite athletes, nurturing of the up and coming runners, organizing popular running events that act as development channels and promoting athletics as a sport for all. Clubs encounter numerous challenges in their development efforts, the most significant ones being a scarcity of financial resources, a lack of competent personnel, insufficient support from provincial athletic unions and inadequate facilities.

Schools offer a tremendous yet challenging opportunity for development of South Africa's younger athletes. In terms of national reach, schools are better than clubs and could provide a very effective channel to promote athletics and identify talent across all regions of South Africa. The biggest obstacle to those interested in utilizing schools for development would be insufficient numbers of passionate and skilled educators that could drive such an effort. It is also no help that the government removed the required Physical Education period in public schools, and that it no longer does annual training for PE teachers. A third issue for schools' athletic development would be a lack of facilities, especially in schools within the poorer areas. However, it is promising that in Provinces such as the Eastern Province, where there is collaboration between the provincial Athletics Union, the provincial government authorities and the few passionate educators, there is significant athletic development that goes on in schools.

It is ironic and a loss that there isn't a nationally coordinated and locally implemented development plan for South Africa's Townships and rural areas. The

Townships and rural areas warrant a serious athletic development effort because they are home to a majority of South Africans, they produce the cream of the Country's talent and they present the biggest potential for South African Athletics. Currently, the development effort in these areas is left to individual provinces, most of whom decry the lack of personnel or financial resources needed to execute their objectives. Some of the provinces lack dedicated development officers and comprehensive development plans, which results in little or no development at all within their domains. It is good that athletic development be decentralized to the provinces and eventually to the local municipalities, but that is no reason for a lack of harmonization, coordination and evaluation starting from the national level to the club level.

Currently, the most widespread approach to development in the rural areas and in the Townships is to get top runners from these poorer areas to run for richer, more established clubs in the urban centers and in the suburbs. This approach, while better than nothing at all, has a major inadequacy: it hopes to develop athletes in isolation from the community, and in some cases it leads to friction between the athletes and their immediate neighborhoods. There seldom is the inclusion of parents in the club development initiatives, and the athletes do not get the parental support they need to perform optimally. Also, when thinking of development in the Townships and the rural areas, most clubs think in terms of what they can give to the poor athletes, and not what they can do to promote running in the economically disadvantaged areas.

There is a tendency amongst clubs to focus on *giving* to the athletes, especially the poorer ones, as a way of developing athletics locally. This approach creates a sense of entitlement in some of the athletes, and when they clubs can no longer continue giving,

the athletes quit the clubs or stop running all together. Promoting running as a sport for enjoyment, character building and a healthy lifestyle stands a better chance of producing athletes who stay in the sport for longer and work to the spread the benefits of the sport. There are some clubs like the Varsity Old Boys (VOB) club in Western Province who have scrapped incentive schemes for athletes and concentrate on helping poorer runners whenever they are in need, but in this case, there is no sense of entitlement to such benefits. VOB also provides free coaching in the economically less endowed areas to promote running within these areas. The club enjoys good loyalty from its members in the poorer areas.

Running is not yet a sport that is accessible to all in South Africa. In fact, it remains beyond reach for a majority of South Africans who dwell in the townships and in the rural areas. It is true that running is one of the cheapest sports, and absence of facilities or coaches should not necessarily make it inaccessible; however, the economic circumstances of many South Africans make basic inputs such as shoes and good nutrition unattainable luxuries. The social aspect of running, driven by functional running clubs and well organized running events, is also not accessible to Township and rural dwellers. The economic inequality in South Africa, mostly attributable to the difficult history of apartheid, offers a significant albeit incomplete explanation why running, especially its social aspects, still remains inaccessible to many poor South Africans.

vi) Sponsorships

Corporate sponsorship for clubs and other athletic bodies in South Africa is far from adequate. Businesses seek the best value for their money, and the clubs offer few

competitive advertising and other value-generating options to warrant large financial investments. Club events, except the major ones like the Two Oceans and the Comrades marathon, attract little if any media attention and consequently, have little advertisement value. Moreover, most road running events are usually not spectator friendly: they are held early on weekend mornings and on roads that give little opportunity for viewing. And if a sponsor is willing to dig into their social responsibility budgets and not seek much advertisement value, they still are discouraged by a lack of competent personnel in a large number of clubs, inadequate feedback and the absence of measurable results to justify their continued support.

There are a few clubs and athletic bodies in South Africa that enjoy sufficient and sustained corporate financial support. Expectedly, all these clubs and institutions have one thing in common: competent management. The managers in these athletic bodies are keenly aware of the importance of satisfying both their athletes and sponsors, and they seek to give advertisement value to their sponsors while spending most of the sponsor's money on their athletes. Examples of such clubs and institutions include MacSteel Maestros program based in Cape Town, Liberty Nike club of Eastern Province, Harmony Gold club of Eastern Province and the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Athletics Union which has managed to secure renewed government support to supplement private sponsorships.

Clubs and Provincial Athletic Unions have few alternative options for financial backing if not from private businesses. The government is one of these alternatives, though the success story of government sponsorships varies greatly from province to province. Charitable organizations like the Lotto also make contributions to local club

initiatives, supplementing the meager financial inflows that clubs get from membership fees and other levies.

vii) Athletics and Education

Physical Education, and consequently athletics, does not get sufficient emphasis within the South African Education system. This could be attributed to a lack of facilities, scarcity of teachers with PE qualifications, laziness or disinterest on the part of some educators and the decision of the government to remove the required PE period from the public school curriculum. Additionally, the principle of having one qualified PE instructor per school is not invariably respected across the country.

There is significant variation across Provinces and within individual schools when considering the integration of athletics and education. Some provinces like the Eastern Province are lucky to have a few dedicated educators who keep athletics alive within the challenging and often changing education system. On the contrary, other provinces like the Western Province are witnessing a generally diminishing interest in athletics within the schools. Richer schools, most of them white, have better facilities and more money to put into sports, and as a result, have more active athletic programs. Most of the poorer schools, especially the township ones, have generally lower levels of involvement in sports or athletics because, in addition to the other factors hurting athletics in all schools, they lack facilities and financial resources to invest in athletic programs for students.

The variation in athletic involvement of schools has a historical tinge. In the past, the apartheid government did not build or plan for sporting facilities within the non-white schools, while it constructed these facilities in the white 'Model C' schools. Moreover,

during the apartheid period (and to some extent presently), different racial groups were generally involved in different sporting activities. The blacks mostly played soccer, English whites played cricket and Afrikaners played Rugby. Interestingly, athletics usually pulled together the varying races, with running events attracting people across the racial lines. Still, the prevailing attitude was that each of the three major sports of soccer, cricket and rugby were “the sport” for their relevant racial group. This attitude still pervades the thinking of some of the current policy makers, so much so that when thinking about ‘sports facilities’ for a township school, they would think of a soccer field and not a track or rugby field. The lack of sporting facilities, or planning for such facilities, continues to have a spill over effect from the apartheid era, hindering the ability to Township schools to include athletics within their educational curriculum.

It is very challenging to combine competitive running and education within South Africa. Most of the top runners nationally and within the provinces find it difficult to go on past high school education, whilst continuing their careers as competitive runners. There is some involvement of tertiary institutions in athletics, but there isn’t a visible and nationally coordinated system of competitions or recognition of athletes within the tertiary academic institutions of South Africa. Though there are all-rounded students who excel both in sports and in class, there is a general trend that excellent students seldom get involved in sports and few of the best athletes pursue tertiary level education. It is noteworthy that this situation is not specific to South Africa.

viii) Media Coverage

Media coverage for Athletics in South Africa is favorable but inadequate. The inadequacy of coverage is mostly due to a lack of timely delivery of content for publication by clubs and athletic event organizers. A number of respondents who have heard positive experiences with the media indicated that when they provided articles, photographs and other content to appropriate media houses in good time, they usually received the desired publicity. A growing opportunity for publicity for clubs and running events is local and national radio - clubs and provinces should make the most of this advertising channel. In Eastern Province, some of the clubs are already utilizing radio channels to advertise their events, promote their sponsors and announce race results. The two major running events in South Africa, the Two Oceans and the Comrades marathon, enjoy favorable and adequate print, television and radio media coverage.

Athletics faces stiff competition for media space from other sports such as soccer, rugby and cricket. The team sports have a larger fan base, are more spectator-friendly and have greater financial resources than running, thus, they receive a much larger share of national media space.

Running events in South Africa have such a diversity of goals and a large following that they would readily provide newsworthy items for even the most prestigious of media outlets. What is lacking within clubs and the provincial athletics structure are dedicated personnel who can prepare and submit such news items to the media for publicity. A lot of the clubs are not proactive in seeking media support, and usually wait for the media houses to send journalists to cover the running events. A number of clubs regularly send in results from races and time trials to the media, but this

information, unlike articles, is interesting only to those who are involved with the running events in some way.

ix) Track and Field

Track and Field is under serious threat in South Africa. The sport faces the following intertwined obstacles that present a formidable challenge to its development: meager and diminishing sponsorships, inadequate or poorly managed facilities and a lack of sufficient coaches. Currently, a lot of the athletic development effort, spearheaded by clubs, focuses on road running and pays little attention to track and field. The unfavorably biased attention given to Track and Field by clubs is partly because Track and Field requires more facilities and greater technical expertise from coaches.

It is urgent that the downturn of Track and Field is reversed. The sport offers a fitting development option for younger athletes who may be too young for road running, and it provides a much needed variety that could attract more patronage to athletics in South Africa.

x) Foreign Athletes

There is a significant number of foreign runners who compete in running events in South Africa. These foreign runners come from countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and a few Western countries. Overall, the foreign runners increase the level of competition within South Africa, thus improving the sport in the long run. However, these foreign runners also get prize monies that would otherwise go to South African runners, creating some resentment from local runners. ASA has a rule 4.2 that prohibits

foreign athletes from winning team prizes in events held in the country. The aim of this rule is to reserve some of the cash prizes for local runners who would be less likely to win the place prizes when competing against the foreign athletes. Some big running events in the country also pay appearance fees to elite foreign athletes, a perk that is not invariably extended to elite local runners.

xi) Politics and Athletics

Athletics has been a part of South African politics from the days of apartheid to date. During the struggle against apartheid, sports was an important avenue for resistance against the racially prejudiced regime: SOCOS, the sporting federation that represented marginalized groups, adopted the motto “No normal sports in an abnormal country” to successfully lobby for the exclusion of South Africa from major international events like the Olympics. Additionally, SOCOS organized its own events, separate from those organized by the establishment, to provide an opportunity for non-white athletes to practice their sport. Non-white athletes who participated in competitions or teams that were considered pro-government were labeled as “sell-outs” and ostracized by their local communities. With the official end of apartheid in 1994, the new government sought to bring the two main sporting camps, the white and the non-white, under a single ministry of Sports. Athletics then became the domain of Athletics South Africa, with the new political dispensation keen to effect its agenda of transformation within Athletics, just like in all other spheres of life in South Africa.

Transformation remains a key word in South African athletics. A positive concept, it seeks to realize a representative and equitable sharing of power and resources

amongst all South Africans. The implementation of transformation in a post-apartheid South Africa, with the history of racially skewed imbalances and tensions, is a tricky task. Within Athletics, implementing transformation has not been without friction, and a number of valuable resource people and financiers have been lost in the process. The immediate result of transformation has been the evolution of National and Provincial athletic management bodies from a mostly white to a more diverse set of officials. However, the most desirable end of transformation in athletics, which is to make the sport accessible to all South Africans, especially those in poor and previously marginalized communities, remains elusive and somewhat obscured by the desire to share power within the bodies that govern athletics.

An important question for all managers of athletics in South Africa is to what extent political influence remains a positive thing for the sport, now and in the future. Has having a more diverse set of officials within the national and provincial athletic bodies become more important than real development work in the Townships and the rural areas? And when assembling people to oversee sports nationally, regionally or at the club level, do we first worry about their ability to do the job at hand or are we more concerned about how well they fit into a politically palatable portrait of officials? And is incompetence, even a little bit of it, to be tolerated so as to maintain the diverse composition of the management of athletics at all levels? Within South African Athletics, these are questions whose answers have significant implications.

xii) Culture and Athletics

Some athletes in South Africa experience conflicts between their athletic lifestyles and the demands of culture. For female athletes in some tribes such as the Xhosa, being thin or lean, which comes with athletic training, does not necessarily augur well with cultural perceptions of feminine beauty. More recently, being thin has also come to be associated with the dreaded disease of AIDS, and athletes who are thin because of their training may be suspected of being HIV positive. For the male athletes, initiation through circumcision, which is normally done during the December holidays, necessitates a break from regular athletic training since the initiates in some communities forgo food from sunrise to sunset. Additionally, initiates must take time to physically recover from circumcision. It is also inconvenient for the athlete-initiates that December is also the time for a major school tournament in some provinces.

xiii) Role and Representation of Athletes

South Africa's national athletes, both current and retired, have a passion for their sport and would want to get involved in its development countrywide. However, a number of them are put off by what they consider as petty politicking by administrators. Some of the athletes who responded to this study indicated their awareness that being a good athlete does not automatically make one a good administrator of athletics, and they were more interested in making changes on the ground rather than vie for top administrative posts. It was the opinion of some of the national athletes I interviewed that politics is more of a hindrance than a help to athletics.

Athletes do not have a direct representation in the top athletics governing body in the country, Athletics South Africa. Their representation is through clubs who are then

represented by provincial athletic unions who deliberate national athletics issues. The club to province to ASA structure is not bad, but it does not allow for alternative paths of communication in case of a breakdown in the formal chain. For instance, an athlete who has a problem with his club or provincial union cannot approach ASA directly to express their discontent. If they did, they would be referred back to the province. Worse still, if an athlete has an issue with ASA, they have no way to express their views without risking victimization.

C) RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) Athletics South Africa**
 - ◆ To successfully carry out its national mandate of steering and developing athletics, ASA needs a wide range of powers. However, the application of such powers is just as important as their possession, and ASA should be careful to not only earn the fear but also the respect of all stakeholders in South African athletics.
 - ◆ ASA should leave the organization of athletic events to clubs and provinces, except for national championships and other important development runs that have no designated clubs as organizers. The national athletics body should also have a policy of not interfering in the organization of running events in the country, unless the organizers ask for their help or are incompetent in executing their task. Such a policy would reassure clubs that the events they build and invest in over time will primarily

remain under their control, unless they desire the help of ASA or encounter operational problems.

- ◆ It is difficult to combine strategic oversight of athletics in a country as large as South Africa with the involvement in routine organization of multiple athletic events. Therefore, ASA should focus on providing overall direction of athletics in the country, conducting research, coordinating a countrywide athletics development effort and divest away from the organization running events, with the temporary exception of national championship and selection meets. In the long-run, ASA should also leave the task of organizing national championship and selection meets to private event organizers, and concentrate on formulating selection criteria, seeking sponsors and working with provinces to stimulate overall athletic development, especially in rural areas and Townships.

ii) Development

- ◆ Provinces countrywide should emulate and improve on the effort Eastern Province makes to encourage athletics in schools through the cooperation of the Athletics Union, the provincial department of sports and educators. It is also worthwhile for ASA to think of how to leverage the national reach of schools to identify, support and promote talent in younger athletes.
- ◆ It is urgent that ASA crafts a nationally coordinated and locally implemented plan for athletic development in the Townships and in the rural areas. A key part of such a plan would be the introduction of new Township clubs as well as the strengthening of

existing ones. Another pillar of such a plan should be to promote the staging of running events in the Townships and rural areas to promote running within these areas.

- ◆ Performance incentives schemes for athletes are not a negative thing, but athletes should be encouraged and expected to give back to their local communities. One way athletes could give back to the communities would be to organize local running events. Clubs could implement community service awards for athletes who are actively involved in their local communities, especially those who promote athletics locally.
- ◆ ASA should leverage the expertise of institutions such as the Sports Institute of South Africa to train better coaches that would be spread to provinces countrywide to promote local athletic development.
- ◆ More fun running in the Townships: The John Gilmour Model

Running should be promoted as a fun activity in the townships and the rural areas. Here is a promising model, originally proposed by Mr. John Gilmour of the LEAP School of Math and Science in Cape Town, and refined through subsequent interviews I had in South Africa:

- At the core of the plan is a group of five or so dedicated local community members, preferably mothers. This group would be given financial resources to put up prizes for fun runs in the townships. These runs, preferably 5km or less, would be kept simple but regular, may be twice a month.
- Local authorities and schools would be brought on board to provide traffic control and to avail stadiums or school fields from which the runs would start and end.
- The goal of the runs would be fun, and competition would not be the focus. Organizing for drinks, snacks or entertainment at the end of these events would help draw younger and larger crowds to the events.

- The events would be open to all, and when possible, there should be minimal or no entry fees charged. The goal would be to provide a fun way to get a significant number of township dwellers to participate in athletic activities during the week.
 - The events should be held during the week, when schools are most likely to send “teams” to participate.
 - Prizes should not just be awarded on finishing times, but on other categories like: teams with athletes through all the age categories, family members with the fastest times, the fastest first-time participants and random prizes.
 - Local media in the townships should be used to advertise these events and highlight the results.
 - External resources that could be used to aid these events include: financial sponsors, groups such as Top Events to help in organization of the events, local authorities to provide policing and township athletes to volunteer as officials.
 - Pilot events should be held in a few Townships before the plan is rolled on to other areas. The choice of “test” township areas would depend on factors such as: availability of facilities, the existence of local athletes who could help officiate the runs, the readiness of the local authorities to support such events, the availability of 5km loops that are relatively free of traffic and the success of previous local running events.
 - To encourage participation by competitive runners, the consistent top performers at these events could be identified for key provincial meets.
- However, competition should not be the focus of these runs.

iii) Clubs

- ◆ ASA and Provincial Athletic bodies should make a coordinated and concerted effort to extend the existing club structure to the Townships and to the rural areas of South

Africa. Each province should set realistic targets for the number of Township or rural clubs that they will work to establish within a reasonable time frame. These targets should be harmonized by ASA in a national plan to promote running as a sport for all South Africans.

- ◆ The larger, richer and better managed clubs should consider setting up branches or offshoots in the township areas. These branches would be managed by the club members who live in the Township areas, and would receive managerial and some financial support from the mother clubs. This approach might work better than trying to raise new Township clubs from scratch, and it would ensure that the new clubs have the support they need to take off before they can increasingly assume more independence as they gain momentum.
- ◆ It is crucial that ASA and the Provincial Athletics unions work with the few clubs in the Townships to organize more running events in these areas. It bodes well for such an effort that the few successful running events in the Townships, an example being the Soweto Marathon, enjoy considerable local support.

iv) Athletics and Education

- ◆ The government should reconsider its decision to remove PE as a required period within the South African public school curriculum. Physical education provides an important avenue for students to explore their talents while learning values such as team work, self-discipline, leadership and sportsmanship – Physical

Education is education! The principle of having at least one trained PE instructor in all public schools should be invariably respected.

- ◆ The shortage of sporting facilities, meager funding for sporting programs and insufficient numbers of qualified PE teachers are obstacles that should be urgently addressed. However, a general lack of interest in athletics within the schools may be the most significant hindrance to the integration of athletics with education in South African schools. The relevant authorities should investigate and implement pull factors that would raise the interest of students and teachers in athletics.
- ◆ The tertiary institutions in South Africa should consider implementing athletic competitions exclusively for their students. This would stir interest in athletics within these institutions of higher learning and eventually lead to the provision of athletic scholarships to athletes who are interested in tertiary education.

v) Sponsorships

- ◆ The demand for corporate sponsorships in South Africa far exceeds its supply. Therefore, businesses can be very selective of how they spend their advertisement or social responsibility funds. It is up to the clubs and the athletic bodies to provide competitive and compelling plans of how they intend to apply sponsor funds to generate value for the sponsor while achieving their athletic development goals. To generate such plans, the clubs need competent personnel in their ranks, and it might not be a bad idea to have a designated official to deal with sponsor

issues. Such an official should either be paid or allowed to keep a small percentage of the funds they generate from sponsors.

- ◆ Since a large number of clubs lack competent personnel (a fact which makes the task of securing sponsorships almost impossible), provincial athletic unions should coordinate training for club managers on how to get and sustain corporate financial backing. The provincial unions could leverage the expertise of the few successful clubs or institutions within their domain.
- ◆ Advertising value from club events is derived from favorable media coverage and spectator friendliness. Clubs should therefore make all effort to ensure that quality news of their events get to the media in time. In sending items to local and national media outlets, clubs should keep in mind that an article, complete with pictures, appeals much more than a simple list of results. To make their events more spectator friendly, clubs should focus on pre-event advertising, choosing of running courses that keep competitors within the view of spectators and organizing for post-event entertainment to reward spectators for their audience. Of course, all this should be done while paying attention to the needs and satisfaction of athletes who compete in the events.

vi) Media Coverage

- ◆ Provincial Athletic unions should consider having a dedicated media officer to act as a link between clubs and the media. Clubs could also have members whose

specific task would be to document major club events for release to local and national media houses.

- ◆ It is not too early for ASA to consider promoting the sport through advertisement in national media channels.

vii) Politics and Athletics

- ◆ Athletics, being a part of life in South Africa, is and will necessarily be affected by the political forces in the country. It is paramount that managers of athletics in the locally and nationally keep the best interest of the sport as their prime concern; they should work with, and if necessary, resist, political forces to ensure that the benefits to athletes is maximized in any given situation.
- ◆ Transformation in Athletics should mean increasing the accessibility of the sport in Townships and other previously marginalized areas in South Africa. The diversification of athletics governing bodies is a very important part of transformation, but it should not be its sole end and neither should it overshadow the most desirable end of transformation in athletics: to ensure that all South Africans can access and enjoy the sport in all its aspects.
- ◆ Transformation, if it means the sharing of power and resources equitably amongst all South Africans, is ultimately good for the future of South Africa. But transformation requires change, and change must be managed- very well steered so that a net positive good is attained. Transformation should not mean the alienation of resourceful people based on their color; it should not mean tolerance of poor performance because one is from a previously disadvantaged background; it should not mean a war between black and white; it should definitely not mean a

superficial rearrangement of administrators without any meaningful change on the ground. It should mean inclusion, and *empowerment* of people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds in the management of athletics; it should mean a spread of the benefits of athletics to previously marginalized areas; it should mean a shift of focus from empty satisfaction of political egos to the increase of athletic opportunities for all members of the society, especially those from previously marginalized areas.

- ◆ Racial prejudice is not yet history in South Africa. Racial tensions and the racially skewed distribution of resources are still a daily part of life, and implementing transformation in athletics, like in all other spheres of life in the country, requires shrewd management, balance, clear communication and sometimes patience to ensure that athletics and athletes win in the end.

viii) Role of Athletes

- ◆ National and provincial athletic unions should leverage the experience and passion of former and current athletes to accelerate the development of athletics countrywide. The unions should keep track of the athletes and inform them of any opportunities for their participation in athletics in South Africa.
- ◆ There should Provincial and National Athletes Forum to provide an alternative way for athletes from all over the country to directly make their views known to their unions and to ASA without fear of victimization. Such forums would be composed exclusively of athletes elected by their colleagues within the different provinces.

ix) Track And Field

- ◆ ASA should revisit the issue of sponsorships for Track and Field to identify and address the reasons for diminishing financial investment in the sport.
- ◆ ASA could also work on training a reasonable number of coaches for track and field. Such coaches should be sourced from areas in the country that have a large number of athletes, especially the younger runners

x) Foreign Athletes

- ◆ Foreign athletes, especially the elite ones, are good for South African athletics. These athletes raise the level of competition, bring increased media attention and when they are well received, they promote a good image of South Africa abroad. As such, foreign athletes should be treated courteously and allowed to receive all the monies that they duly win, including team prizes. However, to encourage and promote local runners, there should be a prize category for South African runners at all major running events in the country. The amounts set aside for South African runners should be comparable to the team prizes. If this means that event organizers have to give lower amounts for team prizes, that would still be a better alternative than giving large amounts for team prizes but completely barring foreign athletes from receiving such awards. Event organizers should also not discriminate against local athletes when awarding appearance fees to elite athletes. Local athletes should have the option of lodging complaints with ASA if

they feel that they were discriminated against in the awarding of appearance fees at running events held in the country.

D) SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 4.11 : Summary of Observations and Recommendations

TOPIC	OBSERVATIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Athletics South Africa	ASA carries out its mandate to an acceptable standard. However, it has a negative image in some parts of the country and significant communication challenges.	ASA should work on improving its image hurt by poor communication channels and apparent high handedness when dealing with dissenting views. Clubs and other stakeholders should give ASA a benefit of the doubt, as the job of handling athletics in South Africa is demanding.
	It is difficult to combine strategic oversight for athletics in South Africa with routine organization of race events.	ASA should move towards strategic oversight for athletics nationally, conducting research, coordinating development and leave event organizing to clubs and professional companies.
	Clubs cannot presently legally own any of the events they organize and invest in over time. There is apprehension that these events, when they become large and popular, could be taken over by ASA without due regard to the interests of the founding clubs.	ASA should have a policy of not interfering in club organized events unless the organizers ask for ASA's help or are incompetent in executing their task. This would reassure clubs that they would remain in control of the events they work to build.
Clubs	South Africa has an impressively well developed club structure that ensures frequent, well organized running events countrywide. However, the club structure does not adequately serve Townships, rural areas and other poorer areas.	ASA should work with the provinces to extend the club structure to the Townships and to rural areas. Each province should set achievable targets on the number of Townships and rural clubs to be established in a year. Richer, more established clubs in the suburbs could consider establishing off-shoots in the township areas.
Development	Most of the athletic development is done by clubs, most of whom decry a lack of sufficient resources to implement significant development projects. A majority of provinces do not have salaried, dedicated development officers to coordinate regional development effort and marshal financial resources needed to produce results.	All provinces should consider having a salaried and dedicated development officer who would coordinate and evaluate the regional development effort. The ASA development officer would then provide overall, national coordination and channeling of any sponsor resources.
	Athletics is not yet a sport for all in South Africa.	The number and health of Township clubs

	Social running is inaccessible to most township and rural dwellers due to a lack of running events. There are very few functional Township clubs.	should be a priority for ASA and provincial Athletic Unions. The unions should work on initiating and growing local running events in the townships and rural areas.
Sponsorships	Clubs are looking for more money; sponsors are looking for more value for their money; the two don't meet. However, a few provinces and clubs have managed to secure adequate sponsorships.	Value for sponsor money comes from adequate and favorable media coverage; clubs should have designated officials to work on publicity for the clubs and the sponsors. Provincial unions should leverage regional expertise to train club personnel on attracting and retaining corporate financial support.
Media Coverage	Media coverage for Athletics nationally is favorable, but inadequate. There is variation in adequacy of coverage amongst the provinces.	Provincial Unions and Clubs should be proactive in seeking media coverage. Pictures, articles and videos speak louder and entice more than plain race results.
	Radio publicity represents an important and growing channel for publicity, especially for clubs who may not be able to afford print or TV advertisement.	Clubs should explore Radio publicity opportunities locally and nationally.
	Clubs and Provinces could do more to take advantage of the reach and influence of local and national media.	All provinces should have a designated portfolio to attend to the media; clubs should also have a member who performs a similar role at the club level.
Athletics and Education	Athletics does not get sufficient emphasis in schools, especially in the previously disadvantaged areas.	Government should consider reintroducing a required PE period in schools; annual training for PE teachers should also be reinstated.
	There is not a visible, active and coordinated athletics program within South Africa's tertiary institutions.	The institutions of higher learning in South Africa should initiate and promote well publicized competitions amongst themselves. The institutions should strongly consider offering more sports scholarships to strengthen all sports on South African campuses.
Politics and Athletics	Athletics has been a part of South African politics from the apartheid days to date; it is likely that the sport will continue to be significantly influenced by political forces in the country.	Those charged with steering athletics nationally and locally should work in the best interest of sport; political will should be welcome if it improves athletics and resisted if it leaves athletes worse off.
	Transformation, a national, positive and political agenda has had a significant impact on South African Athletics.	Transformation in athletics should ultimately mean the spread of all benefits of the sport to all areas in South Africa, especially to the Townships and other previously marginalized areas. The diversification of athletic governing bodies is a good step, but it should not overshadow nor compromise the ultimate end of making athletics a sport for all South Africans.

Foreign Athletes	A significant number of foreign athletes compete in events within South Africa. These athletes, especially the elite ones, raise the level of competition and usually bring increased and favorable media coverage for the sport.	Foreign athletes should be treated courteously and allowed to compete freely in events within South Africa.
	ASA rule 4.2 bars foreign athletes from receiving team prizes; the rule led to a recent conflict between ASA, race organizers and foreign athletes in the Great Trains Race.	Foreign athletes should be allowed to keep all the prize monies they duly win, including team prizes. However, to encourage local athletes, ASA should require that event organizers put up a prize category for South African athletes at all national running events. The money for the South African prize category should be comparable to monies offered for team prizes.
	Local event organizers sometimes pay appearance fees for foreign athletes while not extending the same facility to local, elite athletes.	ASA should work with event organizers to ensure that there is no discrimination against local athletes when awarding appearance fees.
Track and Field	Track and field is choked by a lack of facilities, insufficient coaches as well as meager and dwindling sponsorships.	ASA should formulate a national plan to resuscitate the sport; a key part of the plan would be to investigate and address the reasons for dwindling corporate support.

E) CONCLUSION

South African Athletics has made significant achievements, especially in terms of its extensive club structure and well organized running events countrywide. However, there is plenty of room for improvement: adding functional Township clubs, initiating more running events in the poorer areas, attracting more sponsors to the sport, reinstating athletics as a major sport in schools and increasing awareness on the health benefits of running are but a few ways in which Athletics could be improved countrywide. There is also a considerable amount of untapped talent within the country, thus the urgent need for a nationally coordinated and local implemented development effort. If the relevant

stakeholders in South African athletics make a serious effort to implement some of the recommendations in this report, the future is very bright for South African Athletics.

I submit that it is nearly impossible to grasp all the complexities of athletics in a country as big as South Africa within three months, and I present my findings and recommendations not as facts set on stone, but rather as insightful comments that I hope will help build a stronger, more inclusive culture of Athletics in the country.

It was an absolute pleasure to be a part of South African athletics for the period I was in the country, and I wish all South African athletes a brilliant time ahead. I will be back to run in South Africa some time in the future- the running culture in the country is indeed impressive and unique.

F) APPENDICES

6.1 Runner Questionnaire

OMONDI KASIDHI THOMAS J WATSON FELLOWSHIP 2005

RUNNER QUESTIONNAIRE:

• SECTION A (OPTIONAL- please fill as many as you wish to)

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Nationality:
4. Province/Region of origin:
5. Profession:

• SECTION B

1. Gender Male Female
2. How would you classify yourself as a runner
 Elite Competitive Social Occasional
3. For how long have you been running?
 Over 15 yrs 10-15 yrs 5-10yrs 1-5 yrs under 1 yr
4. How much income do you gain from running annually?
 Over \$ 15,000 \$ 5,000- \$15,000 p Below \$ 5000 None
5. Which of the following is the MAIN reason why you run? Please select only one.
 To keep healthy and fit
 To raise income
 To prepare for races/major running events
 As a social activity
 For leisure
 Other: _____
6. What are the other reasons why you run? You could select more than one.
 To keep healthy and fit
 To raise income
 To prepare for races/major running events
 As a social activity
 For leisure
 Other _____

• SECTION C

1. What is your current level of education?
 Primary

- Secondary
- Tertiary (college, university, technical school)
- Post-graduate
- Other: _____

2. What level of education do you hope to achieve?

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary (college, university, technical school)
- Post-graduate
- N/A
- Other: _____

3. In general, how has running contributed to your education?

- Enhanced it
- Detracted from it
- Both enhanced and detracted from it
- No comment
- N/A

4. In general, how do you feel running has contributed to education in your country?

- Enhanced it
- Detracted from it
- Both enhanced and detracted from it
- Don't know
- Other comments: _____

SECTION D

1. How would you characterize running as a sport in your country?

- The main sport
- One of the main sports
- A minor sport

2. How do you feel about runners who represent your country in international meets? Please rate them on a scale of 1 (very disappointed) to 10 (extremely proud)

Runners score:

3. Do you know of any of your former national runners who have switched nationalities so as to represent other countries?

- Yes
- No

4. If yes, what do you think is the main reason why these runners switched nationalities?

- Monetary
- Personal
- Social
- Don't know

5. Do you think there should be more restrictions on runners who switch nationalities?

- Yes
- No
- No comment

6. Which of the following should be a priority for government officials in charge of running in your country/region? Please rate each option from 1 (not important) to 5 (urgent).

a. Develop running into a financially viable sport

- b. Develop running into a popular national sport
- c. Integrate professional running with the formal education system
- d. Improve coordination between different running groups and clubs
- e. Prepare national athletes for international events
- f. Raise awareness on the personal and health benefits of running

7. Are there a significant number of foreign athletes who compete in local events in your country/region?

- Yes No Don't know

8. If yes, what do you think is the main impact of these runners on running in your country/region?

- Positive Negative Nether positive nor negative Don't know

• SECTION E

1. What are the MAJOR obstacles to your running/training?

- Finances/economic reasons
- Lack of suitable training grounds, trails, roads etc
- Social/Cultural reasons, please specify _____
- Education (cannot do both school and running)
- Injuries/medical reasons
- Others: _____
- There are no major obstacles to my running/training

2. Which of the following do you think are MAJOR obstacles to running/training in your country or region?

- Finances/economic reasons
- Lack of suitable training grounds, trails, roads etc
- Social/Cultural reasons, please specify _____
- Education (cannot do both school and running)
- Government/Official organizations that oversee the sport
- Others: _____
- There are no major obstacles to running/training in my country/region

3. Do you think male and female runners enjoy equal opportunities for development as runners in your country/region?

- Yes No Don't know

4. If you have any other comments on running in your country/region, or on your personal experience with the sport, please add them here.

Other Comments: _____

Thank you for completing the runners' questionnaire. Please e-mail it to kasidhi@yahoo.com or send it to:

6.2 Supplement to Runner Questionnaire

OMONDI KASIDHI THOMAS J WATSON FELLOWSHIP 2005

SUPPLEMENT TO RUNNER QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

- 6. Name:
- 7. National titles held: _____
- 8. Provincial/regional titles: _____
- 9. International titles: _____

SECTION B

- 1. Are you involved in any community initiatives? Yes No
- 2. If yes, please elaborate: _____

- 3. How do you compare economically with other people in your immediate community?
 Richest 10% Richest 20% Middle 50% Poorest 20% Poorest 10%
- 4. Approximately, how much of your income is directly or indirectly attributable to running?
 100% 80% 50% 30% 10% None
- 5. On Average, how many hours do you spend every week on running and running related activities?
- 6. How would you characterize running as an income-generating activity?
 Very rewarding
 Fairly rewarding
 Not rewarding
- 7. If you were to begin all over again, would you choose running as profession?
 Yes No
- 8. Do you think running and runners are given adequate and fair media coverage?
 Yes No
- 9. What is your biggest satisfaction as a runner? _____
- 10. And what is your biggest disappointment? _____
- 11. What is your proudest moment as a runner? _____
- 12. What recommendations could you make to those who wish to improve the sport in your country/region? Feel free to use the back of this page for additional comments.

Thank you for your time!

6.3 List of Interviewees

1. Prof. Tim Noaxe, Director, Sports Science Institute of South Africa.
2. Mr. Kevin Lodge, Proprietor, Top Events.
3. Mr. Wile Davids, former Western Province Development Officer.
4. Mr. Patrick Cox, Chairman, Mr. Price Celtic Harriers Club.
5. Mr. Pierre Collete, Chairman, Pinelands Athletic Club.
6. Mr. Mayekiso, Western Province Athlete.
7. Mr. Siyabonga Nkabeni, winner of the 2005 Knysna Half Marathon.
8. Ms. Elana Meyer, three time Olympian and holder of five South African Women running records.
9. Ms. Kathy Mc Quaide, Vice Chairman, Mr. Price Celtic Harriers.
10. Mr. Anton Roux, Captain, Mr. Price Celtic Harriers Club.
11. Mr. Rodger Arendse, member, Mr. Price Celtic Harriers club.
12. Ms. Gill Taylor, National Manager of the MACSTEEL MAESTROS Program.
13. Mr. Peter Taylor, member of Mr. Price Celtic Harriers club.
14. Mr. Sean Mc Coy, former Chairman of Varsity Old Boys club.
15. Mr. Warren Petersen, Chairman of Mr. Price Western Province club.
16. Mr. Nicholas Rupanga, member of Mr. Price Celtic Harriers Club.
17. Mr. Eric Chirchir, member of Mr. Price Celtic Harriers club.
18. Mr. Chris Goldschmidt, founder member of Cape Runners Against Gravity (CRAIG).
19. “Whitie”, former member of Langa Cricket Club.
20. Mr. Lebohang Thipa, WP athlete.
21. Mr. Steve Qantolo, teacher at Nolungile Primary School, Site C.
22. Mr. Ndoda Mciteka, Sports master, Nolungile Primary School.
23. Mr. Christopher Meyer, Principal, Delft South Primary School.
24. Rev. William Legolie, Pastor, Vinton Anderson A.M.E. Church.
25. Mr. Doug Brown, former track and field coach, Pinelands.
26. Mr. Nelson Tshambo, WP provincial team athlete.
27. Mr. John Khanelinga, SSISA.
28. Mr. John Gilmour, head of LEAP school of Math and Science, Cape Town.
29. Mr. George Stubbs, Biokinestist, SSISA.
30. Mr. Thandaluntu Magqaza, Captain, WP Cross Country team, 2005.
31. Mr. Lubababulo Mqhele, member WP athletic team, 2005.
32. Ms. Zandile Mciza, Dietician, SSISA.
33. Mrs. Nancy Will, member of Pinelands Athletics Club.
34. Mr. Wesley Scot, New Balance South Africa.
35. Mr. Mahkosonke Fika, Runner in the South Africa national team.
36. Mr. Nkosino Xolo Sonqibido, WP athletics team, 2005.
37. Ms. Tozama Avril, member of Mr. Price Celtic Harriers Club.
38. Mr. Wilson Baartman, Property and Planning Dept., City of Cape Town.
39. Mr. Tom Lusaseni, WP team, junior athlete.
40. Mr. Alex Mtongana, WP athlete.
41. Mr. Alek Riddle, former manager, Max Africa Development Camp.
42. Mr. Allan Taylor, Chairman, PE Print Athletics Club.

43. Mr. Derrick Hoshe, Chairman, Harmony Gold Athletics Club, Eastern Province.
44. Ms. Eado Suka, Department of Sports and Culture, Eastern Province.
45. Mrs. Irene Van Eeden, acting manager, Eastern Province Athletics Union.
46. Mr. Jan Eeden, Harmony Gold Athletics Club.
47. Ms. Liandre Newton, Eastern Province athlete.
48. Mr. Mike Mbambani, Manager, Liberty Nike Athletics Club.
49. Mr. Monde Tyaliti, Department of Sports and Culture, Eastern Province.
50. Mr. Petros Buyeli, Chairman, Continental Athletics Club, Eastern Province.
51. Mr. Robin Clider, Eastern Province.
52. Mr. Sithembile Mpako, Chairman, Rise Athletics Club, Eastern Province.
53. Mr. Zuko Sinuka, Continental Athletics Club, Eastern Province.
54. Mr. Dapo, Masakane Primary School
55. Ms. Mqalo, Masakane Primary School
56. Mr. Le Roux, Coach, Oakdale High School
57. Mr. Mboxela, Dept. of Sports, Eastern Province
58. Mr. Dave Molatelo, Development Officer, Athletics South Africa.
59. Mrs. Joyce Smith, Manager, KwaZulu-Natal Athletics Union.
60. Mr. Aleck Skhosana, President, KwaZulu-Natal Athletics Union.
61. Mr. Walter Vilakazi, General Manager, Athletics Gauteng North.
62. Mr. Steve Rautenbach, IAAF level 1 lecturer, Gauteng Province.
63. Mr. Ben Makola, Chairman, Mpumalanga Athletics Union.