

Gwent League Proposals for Linking Senior Women's and Men's Distances

Each club should consider these options and then will be asked to submit 2 votes per club. These may be cast for 2 different options or 2 votes for the same option.

Once a preferred proposal out of 1) to 4) is established, clubs will be asked in a second vote to confirm that this proposal should replace the Status Quo.

1) The Scottish Method

Men and women run the same distances (in separate races) but at the start of season races are shorter (**around 5k**) and gradually increase for both genders through the season (to **around 10k**). This could help to increase participation as new runners would feel more confident in tackling the shorter distances so it would be a good bridge from parkrun. It also provides variety across the season, caters for all athletes and helps to build fitness through the season.

2) Meeting in the Middle

Men and women race in separate races but for the same distance of **around 8km** (this will vary slightly depending on courses and weather conditions). This option would be easy to manage and allow for complete equality. Along with this, there could be an added 'Vets' race at a shorter distance if needed.

3) One Long and One Short Race

Men and women race together and can choose between the shorter course (**around 6km**) and the longer course (**around 10km**). This option provides great opportunities for athletes training for different distances and could really help to increase participation. It also makes it easier for junior athletes to transition to the senior races.

4) Equal Length of Time

Men and women run in separate races over distances designed to give the middle finisher in each race a time of approximately 38 minutes. Initially, distances of **around 9km for men** and **7.7km for women** are suggested, subsequently adjusted in the light of experience and the nature of the course. This option provides an equal racing experience for men and women in a sport often subject to foul weather.

Where distances are quoted, course organisers would of course have a margin (+/- 10%) to arrange for convenient loops.

The Status Quo

At the moment, the distance of any race (regardless of age group or gender) is set (after due notice) by member clubs at the League AGM. There is no automatic link between race distances in different categories.

If the status quo is maintained, there is nothing to prevent a future proposal to change the distance of the women's (or any other) race. We do need to conform to the 2010 Equality Act (equal opportunity regardless of age and gender), which does allow event organisers to take into account average physical characteristics, and to aim to increase participation (as when the current women's distance was set). This can be handled within the status quo.