



World Para Athletics and IAAF Championships

Ready, steady, go!

What will you do this summer? There is no need to rush out of London because once again the capital is hosting a major sporting event, the World Para Athletics (14-23 July) and International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Championships (4-13 August), at the London Stadium in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The competitions' organisers have recruited 4,000 volunteers from more than 15,000 applicants. Those 'runners' who have been selected have undergone a lengthy process of role allocation and training sessions to make sure that all goes smoothly.

It is the first time that Great Britain will host the event comprising all disciplines. Prior to meeting in London for this year's Championships, 16 IAAF world competitions from marathons to cross-country

and track races have been hosted in various cities across the country. This tournament, which is one of the most important athletic events in the world, will gather nearly 3,300 athletes, from more than 200 countries, to compete over 20 days.

The 700,000 tickets to attend the Championship were first sold in a ballot in August 2016 with additional releases of tickets on sale since September on a first-



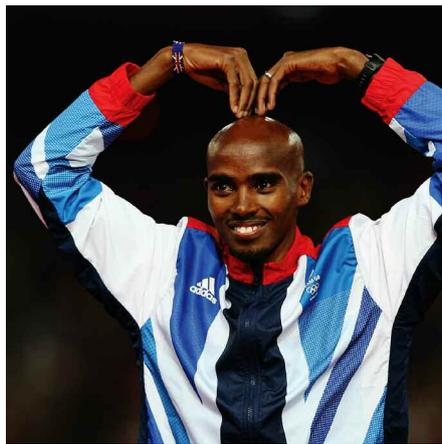
The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), headquartered in Monaco since 1993, was originally founded in Stockholm in 1912 as the International Amateur Athletic Federation aiming to standardise programmes, equipment and world record keeping as athletics grew in importance. By the early 1980s, amateurism was abandoned for professionalism, funds were made available to help athletes attain their personal best, and athletics was no longer confined to the Olympic Games. Nowadays the association governs 214 federations across the world - an incredible growth since the 17 original members in 1912 - and supervises 24 events.



According to the latest statistics, 6% of children and 16% of working adults are disabled. Of the total number of people classified as such, 18.5% played sport regularly in 2012 showing an increase of nearly 3% in six years while the number of able-bodied athletes stayed at about 39%. Athletics comes in at 5th position of the top sports practiced, after swimming (1st) and cycling (4th) so there is plenty of room for involvement. As stressed by the UK Athletics Federation, anyone can participate in athletics. **Parallel Success** is a platform detailing information on how disabled people can participate in athletics. For more information visit: www.academy.uka.org.uk/parallel-success/get-involved/



Athletic games only really started in Britain in the 19th century, despite contests in running, throwing and lifting, which had taken place across the UK since Roman times. The year 1864 saw **the first official competition between Cambridge and Oxford**. Since then there have been many athletic sport clubs who have made it to the Hall of Fame alongside the likes of Harold Abrahams and Sir Roger Bannister, who carried the colours of their universities. Athletics is increasingly finding its place in the life of the nation, from the internationally acclaimed London Marathon and its stars such as Paula Radcliffe to the Commonwealth Games, both of which rival the Olympic Games in popularity. How many of us regularly wear out our trainers? Today, should you wish to find a club near you or take part in a competition, simply visit www.britishathletics.org.uk.



The famous BBC children's programme **Blue Peter**, headed by British track star Jessica Ennis-Hill, launched a mascot design competition in mid-January 2017. Children between the ages of six and 15 were invited to submit drawings for two mascots. The winner and two runners-up received a VIP tour of the stadium and have been invited to attend the events.

come, first-served basis through the official website www.tickets.london2017athletics.com. Some may now also be found on other traditional ticket sale and resale platforms.

In line with the increasing success of the Paralympic competitions and the Olympic Games in Rio (4,316 athletes, 528 medals, 2.15 million spectators) and the 147 medals brought back home by British para-athletes, the authorities launched a ticket offer scheme for school children in Greater London in mid-January 2017. Tickets were sold at £3 per child with free access for an accompanying adult and free transportation for children. The Mayor of London viewed those 250,000 tickets sold to schools as an opportunity to support disabled athletes and provide children with an incentive to reach their goals, whatever limits they may encounter in life. The organisers have made sure to promote the 11 British competitors and a timetable of their event appearances can be found at



www.london2017athletics.com/worldparaathleticschampionships/bestofbritish Should you not be fortunate enough to have a ticket, or have already planned to be away from London in July and August, you can still stay well-informed by downloading the IAAF app. This will allow you to follow the news and results live, as well

as view photos and videos posted as the events take place. So, there is no excuse not to support those athletes who once again will show endurance and passion and give us that boost to later tie up our laces and pull on those leggings

Cécile Faure is the founder and CEO of Emois Gourmands Ltd in London, a company sourcing and importing French boutique wines and gourmet food, dedicated to the promotion of artisan products and advocate for sustainability. She may be reached at mscecilefaure@gmail.com and through www.emoisgourmands.com