

As I come to the end of my year as the Hampshire County Athletics President I can reflect on my tenure;

Buckingham Palace Garden Party, visit to 10 Downing Street, tea with the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire were three things that, thankfully, didn't happen.

Instead work (of the paid kind) and family commitments restricted my role to presentations at the three County Championships – the cold of the Multi Events, the wind of the Track & Field and the mud of the Cross Country (more than most due to an unfortunate slip).

It was at these that I realised the real value of the role; young, older and the more mature athletes clearly do enjoy receiving their medals properly, presented not by Janet Smith but the President of the HCAA. Yes some feigned reluctance and had to nominally be dragged to the presentation area but few failed to turn up.

For the athletes' own sakes I avoided as many of the photos as I could but it was clear and heartening to see how much pleasure they gained from the attention drawn from mounting the podium and being awarded their medals.

There were problems during the year – Pam Rogers was particularly naughty and un-cooperative, however I eventually resorted to pliers to ensure her name badge stopped falling off the Presidential chain.

My personal thanks go to my predecessor – Carol Quinn – for the help and advice she gave me.

I am delighted that the Presidential role will remain in the Starting family. Terry Moffat is a very worthy recipient having been involved in athletics for many years, firstly as an athlete and latterly as a highly respected Official.

Good luck Terry – my only advice is to do as you are told at the Track & Field Champs and you may survive the two days!

Janet Smith