**Duncan Masons response as a coach and physiotherapist (Salford Harriers)**

I think the big thing for me is the time on the feet.

A good male athlete will be running xc at 3:20 per km which would be 33mins for a 10k race.

A female athlete of the same standard would be running 4:00 per km so 32mins for 8k roughly equivalent time of exercises.

If you move your way down both fields the same percentages would be distributed so this is an equivalent test.

It’s a long way for u20s to step up and a lot are lost to the sport at this time although factors like alcohol and going out play a part too.

I also feel personally the junior races are getting a bit too long.

At English schools which is the pinnacle of competition for the athletes- what we are training for.

U18 girls race 4km

U18 boys race 7-8km

U16 girls 4k

U16 boys 5-6km

U14 boys 4k

U14 girls 3k

League races are much longer that these distances so not helpful. So our u17s rarely race as it’s too long.

Our u17 girls are northern champions and our u17 boys would have been if they’d got their full team out. So if it’s too long for them it’s probably too long for everyone!

Just my opinion.

The longer races encourage parents and coaches to push the kids into harder training and too much mileage to cope  - they go stale and get injured. I prefer them to be running faster

Again my opinion but seems to hold out with our success with u17/20 recently