



# COACHING JOURNEY

*Coach Sid Sinfield*

Like most youngsters I had a general introduction to athletics at school but my personal sporting activity wasn't as an athlete. It was as a canoeist. It was through this sport that I entered coaching and have ever since made it my life's work. I first qualified as a canoe coach in 1988 and have worked fulltime in this sport ever since. Fascinated by the coaching process and always eager to learn more I worked through both practical and theoretic awards linked to paddlesports coaching and coaching more generally. After so many years working as a coach I have managed to achieve British Canoeing's highest coaching awards in a number of different disciplines as well as an M.Prof in Elite Performance and an M.Sc in Performance coaching. I now work within British Canoeing's Olympic and Paralympic programmes as a performance coach developer. So a wealth of coaching knowledge and experience but not in athletics!



My involvement with athletics came when my youngest daughter announced that she wanted to be an athlete after running in a race through school. As she was aged only 9, I set about finding her a local club. As with most parents in this situation I dropped her off at the track, hung around whilst she took part and then drove home. I did likewise at the numerous competition she attended. It was during these drives to and from the club and post competitions that I tried utilising some of my sport psychology and coaching experience helping her to develop a suitable positive approach to both training and competition. Framing everything as a learning experience. I graduated from hanging around in the car park to hanging around on the track alongside her coach. I've never been good at just watching! My daughter was and is keen to be a multi-event athlete and the club seemed to have a lack of coaches focussed on Jumps and Jumping. So I thought to myself, why not try to transfer some of my coaching knowledge into this area. Ostensibly to support her but equally, if I'm going to be hanging around at the track I could look to support any other athletes interested in developing their jumping skills too. So that what I've been trying to do. I started to work my way through the UK Athletics awards as well as reading and watching as much as I can to improve my technical knowledge of the different jumping events. Thankfully, lots of my observational skills have transferred and hopefully so have some of my coaching skills. I know from my day job that I love coaching and seeing people learn and progress. Now I'm setting about the challenge of being an effective 'jumps' coach. Looking to transfer some of what I have learnt over the years into my 'new' sport.