

SOMERSET SCHOOLS' ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION JUNIOR (UNDER-13 AND UNDER-14) CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Yeovil Athletics Arena
Tuesday 8 June 2010**

All eligible schools were notified after Easter with entries due by half-term. The Championships Committee of 5 then met on Tuesday 1 June to prepare the event, and final details were sent to all competing schools on Thursday 3 June. Although we make every attempt to enable schools to submit their entries simply and efficiently, there have been entirely avoidable problems over the past few years. Therefore, the following notes were included with the initial information:

1. **ENTRIES MAY BE SUBMITTED BY SCHOOLS ONLY** – Neither parents nor coaches attempted to enter athletes this year.
2. **ENSURE ATHLETES ARE ENTERED IN A MAXIMUM OF 2 EVENTS ONLY** – Only two schools made errors in this area.
3. **USE ONLY THE OFFICIAL, COLOUR-CODED ENTRY FORMS** – Only one school ignored this instruction.
4. **ENSURE THE OFFICIALS' FORM IS RETURNED WITH THE ENTRY FORMS** – Only one school failed to comply, though there was protracted, tedious email communication with another in relation to this fundamental condition of entry.
5. **INCLUDE ALL ENTRY FEES WITH ENTRY FORMS** – Four schools failed to include entry fees with entries but the money arrived by the day of the meeting in all but one case.
6. **DO NOT LEAVE THE SUBMISSION OF ENTRY FORMS TO YOUR FINANCE DEPARTMENT** – No entries had to be refused this year.
7. **USE ONLY THE OFFICIAL NUMBERS PROVIDED** – Schools were not notified of their athletes' numbers in the final information pack so they were forced to report to the organisers' base before their athletes could compete.

Warm weather on the day, together with our group of loyal Somerset County AA officials and the tremendous enthusiasm of the athletes combined to make the event a thoroughly enjoyable occasion.

Entries were received from 29 schools (up from 25 in 2006, 21 in 2007, 26 in 2008 and 2009) though numbers of event entries were well down on previous years (possibly due to the change of day).

Entries were as follows by age group:

Under-13 Girls – 106 (115 in 2006, 88 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 137 in 2009)

Under-13 Boys – 101 (116 in 2006, 92 in 2007, 135 in 2008, 113 in 2009)

Under-14 Girls – 145 (159 in 2006, 142 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 183 in 2009)

Under-14 Boys – 140 (174 in 2006, 137 in 2007, 159 in 2008, 173 in 2009)

Total entries – 492 (564 in 2006, 459 in 2007, 548 in 2008, 606 in 2009)

Fully-automatic timing and photo-finish were in operation thanks to David Cooke, with the images on sale to the athletes.

The general standard was encouraging in most events with four excellent Championship Best Performances:

Under-13 Boys' 200m: Elliot Scott (Danesfield Middle School) – 26.4

Under-14 Girls' Discus: Katie Cross (Queen's College) – 25m 92.

Under-14 Girls' Javelin: Josie Loxton (Queen's College) – 31m 90.

Under-14 Boys' Long Jump: James Tostevin (Preston School) – 5m 60.

Results were sent to all competing schools on Wednesday 9 June, together with certificates (for the first three in each event) and County Champion badges. I included a photo-finish image of an athlete from each school (with David Cooke's permission) wherever possible.

This meeting surely remains a valuable early experience for our youngest talent.

RICHARD BOWDEN

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Senior Track & Field Championships' Report

Most recently, as many would know, statistics from the senior championships have become quite important. To this end it is good that we should have had one of our best meetings.

As is usual entries came in from areas to Dave Cooke so that he could input into the 'master' computer to drive heat and pool allocation, photo-finish and results. Entries were stable compared to previous years with fewer events (9) being scheduled for straight finals; these being: SG steeplechase, SG and IG low hurdles, SG and SB 400m, SG 200m and SB, SG and IB sprint hurdles. On the day with athletes not competing more events became straight finals.

With EDM again utilised in the field events completion of events was not a problem whilst on the track photo-finish proved invaluable in many situations and throughout, of course, for recording times to 1/100th second.

It is now some three years since we introduced 'first three slips' for the field events and with field officials and athletes understanding the system presentations went smoothly. Again Dick and myself met many delightful and confident athletes who valued the procedure and information given. This really is a time when Dick in particular gets to know the athletes and in many cases the parents. Good weather also meant there was never a rush. Often, unbeknown to those outside of the presentation area, we deal with diverse and detailed queries from athletes and parents and if it were not for the superb organisational ability of Georgia our task would be impossible.

The highlight of the presentations was a surprise visit by Lord Sebastian Coe and I am sure the small number of athletes who received their certificates from him will always remember that occasion.

Seven championship best performances were achieved:

Junior Boys 100m	11.34e	R. Wells	Taunton
Junior Boys 800m	2:02.73e	M. Cole	Yeovil
Junior Boys Relay	47.77e		Taunton
Junior Girls Relay	52.66e		Mendip
Inter Boys 200m (=CBP)	22.50e	J. Tele	Mendip
Inter Boys Javelin	62.65	R. Danaher	Taunton

Alongside these fine achievements were 102 county standards of which 10 were ESAA entry standard performances and 8 ESAA national standard performances. Raw figures that illustrate the strength of this year's athletes. Even more remarkably when it is understood a number of our most talented athletes did not gain entry standard on the day but made huge improvements at the south-west championships!

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One of these performances drew a quite remarkable reaction from those athletes at presentation: the message went quietly around, "Watch this, just watch him." There was then silence and all procedures came to a halt as everyone, remember that's those in the top three of their own event, watched Ronnie Wells run the 200m! For a junior boy to draw such a reaction from in the main older peers you just know he is something special. Perhaps even more so as he is a complete 'rookie' to our sport.

For a couple of years the relays have been placed in the centre of the meeting which alongside the use of EDM means the last race (SB – 3000m) becomes the only event taking place at that time. This does give the meeting a 'flat' conclusion but is vital for the swift packing up of so much equipment and administration. This along with the whole meeting structure could not be completed without the efforts of so many officials and helpers to which the Association extends its sincere gratitude.

The final results show that Taunton area was the most successful, winning 8 of the trophy categories, whilst Mendip area secured 3 trophies with one being shared.

Six events were not contested: Intermediate Girls – 3000m, 300mH, Hammer and Senior Girls – 400mH, Pole Vault, Hammer.

	S	T	Y	M
JG	70	67	44	84
IG	20	92	68	108
SG	0	95	44	62
GIRLS	90	254	156	254
JB	80	115	89	58
IB	64	135	112	101
SB	21	107	84	89
BOYS	165	357	285	248
OVERALL	255	611	441	502
TRACK	107	272	192	234
FIELD	125	297	212	225
RELAY	23	42	37	43

SOUTH-WEST SCHOOLS' AA TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Exeter Arena
Saturday 19 June 2010**

Following the Somerset Schools' AA Track and Field Championships, the selection committee met at Wellington School on Sunday 13 June to select the team for the South-West Championships. We enjoyed the customary superb hospitality and, as usual, the meeting took over six hours as is the norm when we are due to travel 'away from home' for the South-West Championships. In total, 103 athletes were selected to fill a possible 130 places (reduced from what had been the usual 140 places for many years) though in fact we filled only 124 places as in addition to the usual problem of fielding a competitor in the Intermediate Girls' Hammer, this year we were faced with no entries in five Senior Girls' events – 400m, 400m Hurdles, 1500m Steeplechase, Pole Vault and Hammer – a disappointing situation. In the subsequent few days there were several withdrawals; one or two through injury (reserves were brought in where possible) and one or two citing reasons as diverse as not wishing to tackle a relatively unfamiliar event, a family birthday, a hockey match and not wishing to travel all the way to Exeter for a small number of throws! 33 schools and colleges were represented compared with 32 in 1996, 32 in 1997, 33 in 1998, 33 in 1999, 34 in 2000, 33 in 2001, 33 in 2002, 35 in 2003, 29 in 2004, 32 in 2005, 32 in 2006, 28 in 2007, 31 in 2008 and 33 last year. The consistency of these figures serves to re-emphasise the fact that there remains a fair number of schools and colleges which fail to take part significantly at Area or County level – invariably some pupils of potential South-West standard are not afforded even the earliest opportunity to demonstrate their ability.

Schools and colleges with selected athletes were notified on the Sunday evening by email and on the Monday or Tuesday by letter. Most communication to pupils and students was reasonable this year, though inevitably a few had to be 'chased' for confirmation of availability on the Thursday afternoon (and even on the Friday).

Although the transportation of all the kit was made a great deal easier when I drove a mini-bus to Exeter, this meant that all administration and 'kitting-out' had to be done at the team base in the stadium. Payments were collected wherever possible, however, on both coaches by Julie Harrison (from Taunton) and Stuart Richards (from Yeovil). A number of athletes travelled independently and whilst this does not cause problems with the collection of numbers and the borrowing or purchasing of kit, as these later-arrivals have not been part of a 'captive audience', they are often the athletes whose fees remain unpaid after the meeting. In 2008 the last payment arrived in mid-September, beating the 2007 performance by three weeks, but last year we achieved a new 'personal worst' as at the time of writing the report for the Annual General Meeting there was still £97.00 outstanding, despite three reminders. The figure this year is £36.00 despite two reminders to the schools or colleges and a personal letter to the athletes' homes. This aspect continues to be immensely frustrating – though we must bear in mind we are dealing with large numbers of athletes from a variety of establishments.

Having won 8 of the 12 trophies in 1997, 4 in 1998 and 9 in 1999, I reported in 2006 that the twenty-first century had yet to be as fruitful. Devon are invariably formidable opponents and have dominated in recent years. 2000 saw us claim 2 titles, with 3 in 2001, 2 in 2002, 2 in 2003 and the same number in 2004. Sadly, 2005 saw us slump to just a single piece of silverware, the Overall Boys' shield. We recovered a little in 2006 with 3 victories but even the most optimistic amongst us could not have predicted the wonderful team performance we were to witness on home soil in 2007 when we took 9 of the 12 titles. That was always going to be a hard act to follow (especially in Devon), nevertheless, we found ourselves returning to Exeter in 2009 bearing the seven trophies captured in 2008, made up of the following victories: Senior Girls, Senior Boys, Overall Boys, Overall Track Events, Overall Field Events, Relays and Overall Champions. After claiming only three items of silverware in 2009 it was hoped that we were not heading for another slump but our fears were dispelled when we doubled that haul this year with victories in the following categories: Junior Boys (shared with Dorset), Intermediate Boys, Senior Boys, Overall Boys, Field Events and Overall Champions.

Our 2010 South-West Champions are:

Junior Girls – 3rd - 54 points (Devon 64)

Junior Boys – 1st = - 91 points

100m	Ronnie Wells	(Court Fields)	11.7
200m	Ronnie Wells	(Court Fields)	23.4
800m	Matthew Cole	(Westfield)	2-04.9
Shot	Shaun Okojie	(Millfield)	13m 82
Javelin	Charlie Granville	(King's College)	47m 41

Intermediate Girls – 3rd – 80 points (Avon 93)

200m	Zara Gabbidon	(Wadham)	25.6
High Jump	Evie Grogan	(Kingsmead)	1m 70
Discus	Alice Grosjean	(Wells Blue)	34m 07

Intermediate Boys – 1st – 114 points

800m	Sam Bedford	(Millfield)	1-57.7
400m Hurdles	Thom Fowler	(Wellington)	57.5
1500m Steeplechase	Blair Brown	(Queen's College)	4-22.0 (CBP)
Triple Jump	Jimi Tele	(Millfield)	14m 48 (CBP)
Shot	Hayden Tyler	(King's College)	13m 85
Javelin	Robin Danaher	(King's College)	61m 59 (CBP)

Senior Girls – 2nd - 88 points (Devon 104)

100m	Kitty Eleyae	(Millfield)	12.5
1500m	Catherine Blew	(Richard Huish College)	4-29.2 (CBP)
3000m	Lizzie Hart	(Strode College)	10-46.0
High Jump	Alex Macleod	(Millfield)	1m 63
Long Jump	Kitty Eleyae	(Millfield)	5m 78

Senior Boys – 1st – 104 points

100m	James Lelliott	(Millfield)	11.1
3000m	Charlie Maclean	(King's College)	8-42.7
Long Jump	James Lelliott	(Millfield)	7m 05
Triple Jump	Jordan Webb	(King's College)	13m 09
Javelin	Ben Thompson	(West Somerset)	47.20

24 event wins represented four more than the encouraging 2007 figure of 20 and easily bettered our 'normal' performance of around 17 in 2001, 2004 and 2006, and our 19 from 2008.

None of these performances would have been possible without the excellent work of a dedicated, loyal group of team managers (in mid-April I had invited 22 male colleagues and 13 ladies to work with our teams at South-West and National level). On duty in Exeter were Julie Harrison (Junior Girls), Richard Llewellyn-Eaton and Jason Allen (Junior Boys), Charlotte Fisher (Intermediate Girls), Norm Ridgway and, making his debut, Adrian Palmer, (Intermediate Boys), Stuart Richards (Senior Girls) and Gary Jennings (Senior Boys). All the athletes would wish to thank them most sincerely, I am sure.

A large number of our officials were on duty, together with presentation, scoring and announcing teams, and we can be proud of the contribution made by Somerset personnel (whether home or away) to ensure the smooth running of what is a huge meeting.

RICHARD BOWDEN

The team scores and positions for each age group were:

Junior Boys	3	24 points	(winning total – 31 - Norfolk)
Intermediate Boys	1	29 points	
Senior Boys	5=	16 points	(winning total – 28 - Gloucestershire)
Junior Girls	5	13.5 points	(winning total – 27 - Cumbria)
Intermediate Girls	16	2 points	(winning total – 27 - Lincolnshire)
Senior Girls	1	22 points	
Aggregate Total	1	106.5 points	

Unprecedented trophy success was obviously the result of the massive talent within the group, and team spirit was quickly generated when Somerset athletes could see team mates finish in top-eight positions, frequently on the medal rostrum. In addition to one eighth place, four seventh places, a fifth place and two fourth places, silver medals were achieved by Ronnie Wells (Court Fields) in the Junior Boys' 100m (missing gold by 0.01), Blair Brown in the Intermediate Boys' 1500m Steeplechase (it took a Championship Best Performance to beat him) and Kitty Eleyae in the Senior Girls' Long Jump. Gold went to Jimi Tele (Millfield) in the Intermediate Boys' Triple Jump, Robin Danaher (King's College) in the Intermediate Boys' Javelin, Charlie Maclean (King's College) in the Senior Boys' 2000m Steeplechase and Izzy Jeffs (Taunton School) in the Senior Girls' Javelin with a tremendous Championship Best Performance. Their results earned England vests for Jimi Tele, Blair Brown and Robin Danaher in the SIAB International in Glasgow and doubtless went some way to securing Izzy Jeffs her selection for the England team in the Commonwealth Games.

I must conclude this report with a tribute to the work carried out throughout the week-end on the part of the Team Managers. I certainly feel that all the athletes would agree that they were prepared as thoroughly as possible, particularly in the final lead-up to competition. Having taken 7 team managers to Gateshead in 2006 (rather than our stipulated 5), 8 to Birmingham in 2007, 8 to Gateshead in 2008 and 7 to Sheffield last year, we took 'only' 6 to Birmingham this year. This is not to suggest that the fewer managers in an organisation the more successful to is likely to be (as may be the case in aspects of professional life) and the loyalty maintained by this group must be viewed as an outstanding feature of our Association.

RICHARD BOWDEN