

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

**Yeovil Athletics Arena
Wednesday 8 June 2011**

All eligible schools were notified after Easter with entries due by half-term. The Championships Committee of 5 then met on Tuesday 31 May to prepare the event, and final details were sent to all competing schools on Thursday 2 June. We continue to make every attempt to enable schools to submit their entries simply and efficiently, and we seem to be making some headway in regard to the following aspects:

1. **ENTRIES MAY BE SUBMITTED BY SCHOOLS ONLY** – Neither parents nor coaches attempted to enter athletes this year. We appear to have solved this problem.
2. **ENSURE ATHLETES ARE ENTERED IN A MAXIMUM OF 2 EVENTS ONLY** – Only one school made errors in this area. We are making pleasing progress with this problem.
3. **USE ONLY THE OFFICIAL, COLOUR-CODED ENTRY FORMS** – Only one school ignored this instruction. We are making pleasing progress with this problem.
4. **ENSURE THE OFFICIALS' FORM IS RETURNED WITH THE ENTRY FORMS** – Only one school failed to comply with this fundamental condition of entry.
5. **INCLUDE ALL ENTRY FEES WITH ENTRY FORMS** – Two schools failed to include entry fees with entries but the money arrived by the day of the meeting.
6. **DO NOT LEAVE THE SUBMISSION OF ENTRY FORMS TO YOUR FINANCE DEPARTMENT** – No entries had to be refused this year.

HOWEVER – Two additional points will need to be emphasised in 2012:

a) **No substitutes are permitted.** We adopted compassion after one school had arrived at the track with a number of substitutes but 'incorrect' names on field cards and their poor standards of performance showed that theirs were not legitimate entries and fostered a feeling of 'one rule for one, another rule for another' on the part of at least one other school.

b) **No guests are permitted.** The parents of two athletes requested guest entries for their children when their schools had entered the pupils for 'wrong' events. Having been 'bitten' earlier in the meeting I became 'shy' and, with compassion spent, these requests were refused. Unfortunately this almost certainly resulted in one of the athletes missing a County Champion badge.

Despite storms and blustery conditions on the day, the tremendous enthusiasm of the athletes and tireless efforts on the part of our group of loyal Somerset County AA officials combined to make the event a thoroughly enjoyable occasion, notwithstanding the problems highlighted. An injury to Freddie Gummer (Wells Cathedral School) involving paramedics, an ambulance and a trip to hospital during the Under-13 Boys' High Jump was dealt with efficiently and professionally by Sally Higman – Freddie had recovered fully by 8.00pm when I telephoned his parents.

Entries were received from 28 schools (compared to 25 in 2006, 21 in 2007, 26 in 2008 and 2009 and 29 in 2010) and numbers of event entries compared well previous years, showing a significant increase on 2010.

Entries were as follows by age group:

Under-13 Girls – 104 (115 in 2006, 88 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 137 in 2009, 106 in 2010)

Under-13 Boys – 115 (116 in 2006, 92 in 2007, 135 in 2008, 113 in 2009, 101 in 2010)

Under-14 Girls – 156 (159 in 2006, 142 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 183 in 2009, 145 in 2010)

Under-14 Boys – 171 (174 in 2006, 137 in 2007, 159 in 2008, 173 in 2009, 140 in 2010)

Total entries – 546 (564 in 2006, 459 in 2007, 548 in 2008, 606 in 2009, 492 in 2010)

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

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

Under-14 Boys' 100m: Elliot Scott (Danesfield Middle School) – 11.96.

Under-14 Boys' 200m: Elliot Scott (Danesfield Middle School) – 24.20.

Results were sent to all competing schools on Friday 17 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

Looking back briefly at last year's report I mentioned how efficient this event is, from my viewpoint, with photo-finish, EDM, field event result slips and the organisational skills of Georgia. Without skating over these very vital elements and the huge contribution of the many officials, this year's championships was very much 'the same again'.

Good weather always means that the atmosphere can be relaxed allowing athletes to focus on their performances. Consequently 31 of the 48 boys' events saw performances equal to or above county standard whilst the comparative figure for the girls was 24 from 42. This means 61% of the events saw athletes automatically selected for the South-west championships.

With this amount of 'standard' performances the mood at presentations was always positive and this was enhanced by the use of one of our large event shelters.

Three new records were set; two of exceptional quality:

Intermediate Boys 800m	1:55.95	S. Bedford	Mendip
Intermediate Boys Pole Vault	3.70	S. Leitch	Taunton
Senior Girls Long Jump	6.00	J. Sawyers	Mendip

Sam Bedford's 800m time put him third in the UK rankings at that point in the season whilst Jazmin Sawyers' jump, although not her season's best, she is ranked second in the UK, saw her wipe a 1970 performance off the records. (Sam Leitch's season's performance should not be overlooked as he is ranked just outside the UK top 10.)

Also pleasing was the fact that only the intermediate girls' pole vault did not see a competition. (Last year 6 events were not contested.)

The final results show that the Taunton was again the most successful area winning all but the junior boys trophy.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all the many, many helpers and officials who go to make this large event such a success. It is not simply a large event but also an important stepping stone in the progressive system that sees our athletes represent the county in such a positive manner at regional and national championships.

BB
Oct '11

SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

	S	T	Y	M
JG	15	78	64	71
IG	50	107	73	96
SG	0	100	65	58
GIRLS	65	285	202	225

JB	67	100	101	71
IB	64	126	95	92
SB	19	114	89	106
BOYS	150	340	285	269

TRACK	108	279	235	223
FIELD	89	300	231	257
RELAY	18	46	21	14

OVERALL	215	625	487	494
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SOUTH-WEST SCHOOLS' AA TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Exeter Arena
Saturday 18 June 2011

Following the Somerset Schools' AA Track and Field Championships, the selection committee met at Wellington School on Sunday 12 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, 105 athletes were selected to fill a possible 130 places though in fact we filled only 127 as we were unable to field a competitor in the Intermediate Girls' Pole Vault, the Intermediate Girls' Hammer and the Senior Girls' 400m Hurdles – a disappointing situation. There were minimal team changes during the week leading up to the Championships and only one or two adjustments on the day. 30 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, 33 in 2009 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. With the team posted on the web-site immediately after selection, communication to pupils and students was considerably improved this year and hardly any had to be 'chased' for confirmation of availability on the Thursday afternoon. A major development was our email confirmation system – a method of communication which I estimate saved me at least thirty telephone calls.

We reverted to our usual system of kitting-out and the collection of money en route as I travelled on the Yeovil coach to Taunton and then changed to the Taunton coach for the remainder of the journey to Exeter. 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 in 2009 at the time of writing the report for the Annual General Meeting there was still £97.00 outstanding, despite three reminders. The figure in 2010 was £36.00 despite two reminders to the schools or colleges and a personal letter to the athletes' homes. The amount owing this year is greater than ever - £105.00 from athletes in four establishments – despite clear instructions on the selection notice and reminders sent on 23 June and 6 September. This aspect continues to be immensely frustrating, hence my proposal to this meeting – **“On the day of the Somerset Schools' AA Annual General Meeting, any monies still owed by any athlete who represented the Somerset Schools' AA during the previous year shall render all athletes from his or her school or college ineligible to participate in any Somerset Schools' AA Championships for the ensuing year”**.

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 dominated for the first few 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 7 trophies captured in 2008. After claiming only 3 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 last year with 6 victories.

Therefore, the 50% improvement we achieved this year was a truly magnificent performance (especially 'away') as we equalled our best-ever haul in winning the following 9 categories: Junior Boys, Intermediate Boys, Senior Girls, Senior Boys, Overall Girls, Overall Boys, Track Events, Field Events and Overall Champions.

Our 2011 South-West Champions are:

Junior Girls – 2nd - 54 points (Devon 56)

Discus	Katie Cross	(Queen's College)	33m 86
Javelin	Josie Loxton	(Queen's College)	34m 53

Junior Boys – 1st - 76 points

80m Hurdles	James Tostevin	(Preston School)	11.66
High Jump	Joe Cooke	(King's College)	1m 72
Hammer	Zac Welsh	(Brymore School)	34m 28
4 x 100m Relay			48.04

Intermediate Girls – 6th - 61 points (Devon 86)

3000m	Lilly Hawkins	(Stanchester School)	11-18.18
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Intermediate Boys – 1st - 101 points

100m	Ronnie Wells	(Court Fields School)	10.78 (CBP in heat) 10.87 in final
200m	Ronnie Wells	(Court Fields School)	22.36
800m	Sam Bedford	(Millfield School)	2-03.84
Pole Vault	Sam Leitch	(The Castle School)	3m 90
Discus	Grant McConnell	(Millfield School)	45m 56

Senior Girls – 1st - 111 points

1500m Steeplechase	Aoife Thorogood	(The Blue School)	5-19.02 (CBP)
High Jump	Jazmin Sawyers	(Millfield School)	1m 72
Pole Vault	Olivia Minter	(Sexey's School)	2m 00
Long Jump	Jazmin Sawyers	(Millfield School)	6m 12 (CBP)
Discus	Alice Grosjean	(The Blue School)	36m 26

Senior Boys – 1st - 95 points

Long Jump	James Lelliott	(Millfield School)	7m 22 (CBP)
Triple Jump	Jordan Webb	(King's College)	13m 64

Although we could not get close to the 24 event wins from 2010, we matched the encouraging 2007 figure of 20 and 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 16 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), debutants Caroline Lewis and Hayley Mortimer (Intermediate Girls), Norm Ridgway and Adrian Palmer, (Intermediate Boys), Charlotte Fisher (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

AVIVA E.S.A.A. TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Gateshead International Stadium
Friday and Saturday 1 and 2 July 2011**

After a number of tremendous performance at South-West level, including 20 event wins (24 in 2010) and four Championship Best Performances (a repeat of 2010) we certainly had every reason to be optimistic as we set about selecting the best 25 athletes for the ESAA Championships, having been so successful in Birmingham in 2010 following a similar South-West showing.

61 athletes at or around the required standard were considered in 65 events in 2004, whereas in 2005 we found ourselves considering 'only' 39 across 48 events. The 2006 'cast' consisted of 39 athletes once again, across 45 events, but our strength in depth was reflected in 2007 when we considered 51 athletes over 59 events. In 2008 41 athletes were under the spotlight across 49 events and in 2009 the figures increased to 54 athletes over 66 events. Although the 2010 numbers were considerably smaller (47 athletes in 49 events) the quality was never in doubt, the results in Birmingham bearing that out. This year we debated 53 athletes across 69 events as the usual meticulous selection process was carried out at Wellington School where we enjoyed superb hospitality, as always.

There was one withdrawal (through Great Britain representation at the World Youth Championships in Lille) after the team had been submitted but the reserve (in a different age group and event) had no hesitation in accepting the chance to compete, despite the fact that the National Entry Standard had not been achieved. When another selected athlete was forced to withdraw through injury shortly before the Championships, a suitable reserve could not be found in that event so we travelled to Gateshead with only 24 athletes.

Transport arrangements ran smoothly with Berry's Coaches, as usual, with pick-up points at Taunton and Dunball, and only one athlete travelled independently and met the team in Gateshead. No athlete had access to a personal car during the Championships this year.

Accommodation was Lindisfarne and Hadrian Halls, Northumbria University, which proved satisfactory and comfortable. ESAA were not arranging food at the stadium due to the excessive waste in past years so our packed lunches were provided by King's College and Queen's College and were far superior (and better value) than some we have received in past years.

Statistically, our 2011 team was the second-strongest we had ever selected (the strongest being the 2010 group) but the numbers below indicate that we under-performed to a shocking degree. We have steadily increased the number of National Standard performers and top-8 finishers in recent but that trend was arrested sharply this year and although the proportion of National Entry Standard performances was encouraging, the number of scorers was simply insufficient to get anywhere the silverware, and a bitter disappointment, given the strength of the selected team.

Our overall performance is analysed below:

	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
Personal Bests	5	12	9	10	12	3	12	8	8	6	9	7	3	4	10	7
Entry Standard	11	11	9	9	6	7	6	8	6	6	7	7	7	6	7	9
Nat Standard	2	6	6	8	6	2	8	3	5	4	7	8	9	8	12	4
Top-8 Places	12	12	12	12	13	7	11	9	11	11	12	13	15	16	15	9
Scorers	15	19	16	17	15	11	17	12	14	12	14	16	18	17	19	14
Total Score	59	75	85	78	87	44	68	40	78	57	83	98	98	85.5	106.5	55
Trophies	-	SG	SG	-	SB	-	JB	-	SG	-	JB	IG	IB	-	IB	-
			SB		IG		SB				SG	Ov	SG		SG	Ov

The team scores and positions for each age group were:

Junior Boys	11=	1 point	(winning total – 25 - Warwickshire)
Intermediate Boys	11	5 points	(winning total – 24 Cambridgshire)
Senior Boys	3=	16 points	(winning total – 38 - Dorset)
Junior Girls	4	17 points	(winning total – 23 - Wiltshire)
Intermediate Girls		No score	(winning total – 29 - Oxfordshire)
Senior Girls	5=	16 points	(winning total – 25.5 – Dorset)
Aggregate Total	11	55 points	(winning total – 106 – Oxfordshire)

Although I have painted a dismal picture of the overall team performance, a number of individual athletes competed admirably. We achieved two eighth places, one seventh place, a fifth place and two fourth places. Bronze Medals were won by two Queen's College Junior Girls; Katie Cross in the Discus and Josie Loxton in the Javelin. Finally, James Lelliott brought a glittering Somerset Schools' AA career to a fitting end with a wonderful victory in the Senior Boys' Long Jump.

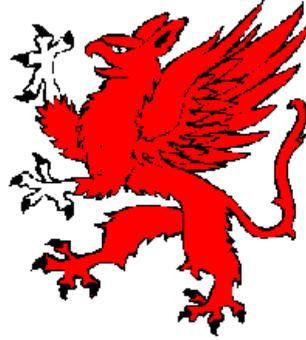
I must conclude this report with a tribute to the work carried out throughout the week-end on the part of the Team Managers. I certainly feel that all the athletes would agree that they were prepared as thoroughly as possible, particularly in the final lead-up to competition. Having taken 7 team managers to Gateshead in 2006 (rather than our stipulated 5), 8 to Birmingham in 2007, 8 to Gateshead in 2008 and 7 to Sheffield in 2009, we took 'only' 6 to Birmingham last year but were up to 7 in Gateshead with Jane Yandell and Rhys Llewellyn-Eaton joining the staff for the first time. The loyalty, reliability and sheer determination maintained by this group must surely be viewed as an outstanding feature of our Association.

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Middle Schools' Championship Report

Things throughout the track and field season could have been so much worse!!

We were lucky with all our championships to have good weather with only the very short occasional drizzle making us look skyward to see if the now, normal summer thunder storm was going to hit! The middle schools' championships were no different for the second year we had a fine day.

An arson attack on the announcer's hut at the Yeovil Arena before the season started meant that all meetings had to be organised in a different way. The council hired a mobile announcer's 'caravan' for each meeting and when photo-finish was in operation Dave made an 'office' at the back of the grandstand. The caravan was positioned mid-way along the home straight meaning liaison with the finish, and the photo-finish, was 'stretched' at times. However, the sound equipment itself was superb and the usual announcements carried to all corners of the arena (and beyond!). With the middle schools championships taking place just after the ESAA Championships I had to announce, in Bill's absence, and other officials were also absent.

From an organisational viewpoint the meeting ran very smoothly partly because two schools could not compete due to prior commitments. Such a disappointment for the athletes within those schools especially as the championships are well established (35 years) and information is sent early to schools.

Schools are responsible for a field event, consequently with two missing it was all hands to work and I am most grateful to Richard Llewellyn-Eaton who was merely 'passing by' but stepped in and did the track marshalling. He will be pleased, and embarrassed, to hear I received very positive feedback regarding the way in which races were organised and his attitude towards the young athletes.

So from what could have been a difficult day all went home feeling happy.

Particularly happy would have been:

- Elliot Scott (Danesfield) for his record performance of 24.4 in the u14 boys 200m , adding to his superb record the previous year in the u13 boys 200m.
- The Danesfield boys' teams, and
- The Fairlands girls' teams who won the age group team championships

Finally at the end of this track and field report I will take the opportunity to thank all the officials and helpers who work so enthusiastically and tirelessly at our meetings, enabling so many students within the county to not only succeed but also enjoy their athletics.