

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

**Yeovil Athletics Arena
Wednesday 13 June 2012**

All eligible schools were notified after Easter with entries due by half-term. The Championships Committee of 5 then met on Tuesday 5 June to prepare the event, and final details were sent to all competing schools on Friday 8 June. We continue to make every attempt to enable schools to submit their entries simply and efficiently, and we appear to be making some headway in regard to most of 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 two schools made errors in this area. We are making pleasing progress with this problem.
3. **USE ONLY THE OFFICIAL, COLOUR-CODED ENTRY FORMS** – Four schools ignored this instruction, causing the organisers additional work.
4. **ENSURE THE OFFICIALS' FORM IS RETURNED WITH THE ENTRY FORMS** – Only one school failed to comply with this fundamental condition of entry. Two schools' athletes were transported by parents who were, quite reasonably, expected to officiate.
5. **INCLUDE ALL ENTRY FEES WITH ENTRY FORMS** – Three schools failed to include entry fees with entries but the money was paid on the day, or very soon after the meeting.
6. **DO NOT LEAVE THE SUBMISSION OF ENTRY FORMS TO YOUR FINANCE DEPARTMENT** – No late entries had to be refused this year.
7. **NEITHER SUBSTITUTES NOR GUESTS ARE PERMITTED** – Following embarrassing situations encountered in 2011, these points were emphasised in every communication to schools and we had no problems this year.

Weather conditions were pleasant and the customary 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. A most encouraging development this year was the recruitment of ten pupil-officials from Preston Academy and five from Westfield Academy – their assistance was much appreciated and it is hoped they enjoyed the experience of seeing the sport from a different perspective.

Entries were received from 29 schools (compared to 25 in 2006, 21 in 2007, 26 in 2008 and 2009, 29 in 2010 and 28 last year) and numbers of event entries compared quite well with most recent years.

Entries were as follows by age group:

Under-13 Girls – 111 (115 in 2006, 88 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 137 in 2009, 106 in 2010, 104 in 2011).

Under-13 Boys – 98 (116 in 2006, 92 in 2007, 135 in 2008, 113 in 2009, 101 in 2010, 115 in 2011).

Under-14 Girls – 158 (159 in 2006, 142 in 2007, 127 in 2008, 183 in 2009, 145 in 2010, 156 in 2011).

Under-14 Boys – 188 (174 in 2006, 137 in 2007, 159 in 2008, 173 in 2009, 140 in 2010, 171 in 2011).

Total entries – 555 (564 in 2006, 459 in 2007, 548 in 2008, 606 in 2009, 492 in 2010, 546 in 2011).

Unfortunately, fully-automatic timing and photo-finish were unavailable this year.

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

Under-13 Girls' 1500m: Alice Davies (Hugh Sexey Middle School) – 5-09.4.

Under-14 Girls' 800m: Amy D'Arcy (Stanchester Academy) – 2-27.9.

Under-14 Girls' Javelin: Laurie Dawkins (Taunton Preparatory School) – 32m50.

Results were sent to all competing schools on Friday 15 June, together with certificates (for the first three in each event) and County Champion badges.

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

RICHARD BOWDEN

SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Secretary

Mr. B. Baker
16 Holly Court
Frome
BA11 2SQ
Tel. 01373 464766
Mobile. 07855749543
Email. briansaa@blueyonder.co.uk



Treasurer

Mr. L. Neville
Fosse House
Burlescombe
Devon
EX16 7JH
Tel. 01823 674111
Email. LCNEVILLE@aol.com

www.somersetschoolsathletics.org.uk

Senior Track & Field Championships' Report 2012

For me this event was the re-start of the organisational chain after the national cross-country championships. We, meaning all the very familiar faces, have 'done' this championships for many years and there seemed to be a feeling of quiet, calm satisfaction from the outset as everyone carried out their responsibilities.

Early on in the day I was given a photograph of the nationals' cross-country team in a surprise presentation by two senior athletes. This to me, perhaps more than anything, exemplified the family nature of the Association and its championships. Perhaps spurred on from the Merryfield event athletes began to arrive, and continued to do so, at presentation with smiles and huge satisfaction from their performances.

We were having a good championships with exceptionally high performances, the quantity of which will be outlined in later reports.

Four new records were set improving further the set of records:

Junior Boys' 400m	51.95e	E. Scott	Sedgemoor
Intermediate Boys' 100m	10.90e	R. Wells	Taunton
Intermediate Boys 4x100m Relay	45.18		Taunton
Intermediate Girls' Javelin	40.91	J. Loxton	Taunton

The results produced by Dave Cooke run to many tens of pages and are thus too copious to include in this report but the final results show that Taunton was again the most successful area winning all but the intermediate boys' trophy and sharing the junior girl's trophy.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all the many, many helpers and officials who make this large event such a success and a most important indicator for future championships.

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SOUTH-WEST SCHOOLS' AA TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Exeter Arena
Saturday 23 June 2012

Following the Somerset Schools' AA Track and Field Championships, the selection committee met at Wellington School on Sunday 17 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, 106 athletes were selected to fill a possible 130 places and this year we managed to fill 128, including a full Intermediate Girls' team. The gaps came in the Senior Girls' 400m Hurdles (yet again) and Pole Vault. There were minimal team changes during the week leading up to the Championships and only one or two adjustments on the day. 34 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 2010, with 30 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 athletes 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 again this year and hardly any had to be 'chased' for confirmation of availability on the Thursday afternoon. Of major assistance 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 last year was £105.00 from athletes in four establishments – despite clear instructions on the selection notice and reminders sent on 23 June and 6 September. This year the total outstanding is £97.50, though I am assured that the money is being sought. This aspect continues to be immensely frustrating, hence my proposal to the 2011 Annual General 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 in 2010 with 6 victories. A truly magnificent team performance in 2011 saw us equal our best-ever haul of 9 trophies, setting up the daunting sequence of 3, 6, 9. Could we complete the sequence in 2012? That would mean taking every title; a feat that proved out of reach. Nevertheless, 8 victories still represented a tremendous day's work as Somerset won: Junior Boys, Intermediate Boys, Senior Girls, Senior Boys, Overall Boys, Track Events, Field Events and Overall Champions.

Our 2012 South-West Champions are:

Junior Girls – 3rd - 49 points (Devon 65)

No Individual Champions.

Junior Boys – 1st - 99 points

400m	Elliot Scott	(West Somerset College)	51.23
800m	Sam Sommerville	(Stanchester Academy)	2-01.60
Pole Vault	Kris Caines	(Stanchester Academy)	3m 10
Shot	Matthew Trickey	(Westfield Academy)	13m 89
Hammer	Lee Nightingill	(Court Fields School)	38m 72

Intermediate Girls – 4th - 63 points (Wiltshire 98)

High Jump	Jordanna Morrish	(Millfield School)	1m 62
Discus	Katie Cross	(Queen's College)	37m 46

Intermediate Boys – 1st - 118 points

100m	Ronnie Wells	(Court Fields School)	10.61 (CBP)
3000m	Matthew Dickinson	(King Alfred's School)	9-01.02
100m Hurdles	Lukas Lakin	(Millfield School)	13.50
1500m Steeplechase	Joe Walton	(The Castle School)	4-39.43
Pole Vault	Ashley Harvey	(Preston Academy)	3m 60
Long Jump	Brendon Timewell	(Buckler's Mead Academy)	6m 25
Javelin	Charlie Granville	(King's College)	56m 76

Senior Girls – 1st - 90 points

200m	Anna Alexander-Holmes	(Millfield School)	26.59
1500m Steeplechase	Rachel Langbein	(Richard Huish College)	5-21.04
High Jump	Evie Grogan	(Richard Huish College)	1m 66
Discus	Alice Grosjean	(The Blue School)	32m 41

Senior Boys – 1st - 114 points

400m	Sam Bedford	(Millfield School)	48.41 (CBP)
400m Hurdles	Oliver Pilton	(Yeovil College)	56.52
2000m Steeplechase	Blair Brown	(Queen's College)	5-54.77 (CBP)
Shot	Aaron Athersuch	(Yeovil College)	12m 73
Javelin	Robin Danaher	(King's College)	65m 28 (CBP)

With 23 victories we got very close to the 24 event wins from 2010, surpassed the encouraging 2007 and 2011 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 30 male colleagues and 17 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 Adrian Palmer (Junior Boys), Charlotte Fisher and Caroline Lewis (Intermediate Girls), Les Neville, Norm Ridgway and Stuart Richards (Intermediate Boys), Hayley Mortimer (Senior Girls) and Gary Jennings and Jason Allen (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 6 and 7 July 2012**

After a number of tremendous performance at South-West level, including 23 event wins (24 in 2010, 20 in 2011) and four Championship Best Performances (a repeat of 2010 and 2011) 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. In 2011 we debated 53 athletes across 69 events with the same number this year considered in 59 events. The usual meticulous selection process was carried out at Wellington School where we enjoyed superb hospitality, as always.

There were no withdrawals after selection this year so we travelled to Gateshead with a full team of 25. Transport arrangements ran smoothly, with Berry's Coaches, as usual, the pick-up points being Taunton and Dunball. Four parents joined us on the team coach and only three athletes travelled independently and met the team in Gateshead.

Accommodation was at Durham University (Collingwood College), which proved satisfactory and comfortable (despite a power-cut during breakfast on the Friday, severe rainstorms in the Gateshead area and rumours of the possible cancellation of the Championships!) Our packed lunches were again provided by King's College and Queen's College and were far superior (and better value) than those offered by the organisers.

Statistically, our 2011 team was the second-strongest we had ever selected (the strongest had been the 2010 group) but as we had under-performed to such a shocking degree at the same venue in 2011 we were determined to improve this year, albeit with over a third of the team made up of Juniors. Any fears we might have had concerning nerves affecting these inexperienced athletes were entirely without foundation as they performed magnificently, contributing massively to a record team score. With over half the team achieving a Personal Best on the biggest stage, morale was sky-high throughout the week-end. With a relatively huge number of National Standard performers and top-8 finishers, backed up by a 'solid' group of National Entry Standard contributors, the comparable figures in the table below are incredibly impressive.

Our overall performance is analysed below:

	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Personal Bests	12	9	10	12	3	12	8	8	6	9	7	3	4	10	7	14
Entry Standard	11	9	9	6	7	6	8	6	6	7	7	7	6	7	9	9
Nat Standard	6	6	8	6	2	8	3	5	4	7	8	9	8	12	4	14
Top-8 Places	12	12	12	13	7	11	9	11	11	12	13	15	16	15	9	18
Scorers	19	16	17	15	11	17	12	14	12	14	16	18	17	19	14	23
Total Score	75	85	78	87	44	68	40	78	57	83	98	98	85.5	106.5	55	125
Trophies	SG	SG	-	SB	-	JB	-	SG	-	JB	IG	IB	-	IB	-	JB
		SB		IG		SB				SG	Ov	SG		SG		IB
														Ov		Ov

The team scores and positions for each age group were:

Junior Boys	1	42 points	
Intermediate Boys	1	24 points	
Senior Boys	3	24 points	(winning total = 33 - Gloucestershire)
Junior Girls	8	9 points	(winning total = 23 - Warwickshire)
Intermediate Girls	7	11 points	(winning total = 39.5 - Wiltshire)
Senior Girls	5=	15 points	(winning total = 21 - Shropshire)
Aggregate Total	1	125 points	

At this point last year I could only describe a dismal picture of the overall team performance, seeking 'positives' from a few individual athletes. What a difference a year makes! In addition to a superb team display which secured three trophies, we achieved three eighth places, one seventh place, three sixth places, three fifth places (including the Intermediate Boys' 4 x 100m Relay team), three fourth places, one bronze, one silver and four gold medals.

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 6 to Birmingham in 2010 but were up to 7 in Gateshead last year. The Treasurer returned as one of our 6 in 2012 (and has cited that as the key reason for our wonderful change of fortune!) and we welcomed Caroline Lewis on her 'debut' at national level for Somerset. The care, loyalty, reliability and attention to detail maintained by this group must surely be viewed as an outstanding feature of our Association.

RICHARD BOWDEN

SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Secretary

Mr. B. Baker
16 Holly Court
Frome
BA11 2SQ
Tel. 01373 464766
Mobile. 07855749543
Email. brianssaa@blueyonder.co.uk



Treasurer

Mr. L. Neville
Fosse House
Burlescombe
Devon
EX16 7JH
Tel. 01823 674111
Email. LCNEVILLE@aol.com

www.somersetschoolsathletics.org.uk

Middle Schools Championships 2012

“What a great disappointment not all middle schools were in attendance!” For the second year in succession the full complement of nine schools was not seen. This year three were absent meaning about 150 young athletes missed out on an experience many would never forget and a valuable stepping stone to higher level track and field.

Consequently great strain was put upon the organisation for, although there were fewer competitors, the same number of officials is needed to run, in particular, the field events. Thankfully the very strong camaraderie within SSAA and at the track through YOAC members meant that extra people were on hand to offer their help. Without these, one of whom is still a middle schools’ record holder, the event would have been impossible to complete on time. Grateful thanks also to Sally and Nick Higman for, again, giving us their valuable assistance prior to undertaking very high level positions in the Olympic Stadium.

Having cast some gloom upon the afternoon the events were completed in very good spirits with keen competition throughout. Numerous athletes came to me in the announcer’s box asking for their times - all left positively having performed better than previously. My hope is always that this competition will bring the very best out of our future sports stars.

One championship best performance was seen from Alice Davies (Hugh Sexey) in the u14 girls 1500 metres with a time of 5:13.7. Although this is the statistic that will go down in the records Alice is under 13 and ranked 8th in the country. Hopefully next year Alice will break her own record with another scintillating performance.

Team champions were shared by three schools:

U13 Girls champion team – Fairlands beating Hugh Sexey by one point!
U 14 Girls champion team – Danesfield beating Oakfield by two points!
U 13 Boys champion team – Hugh Sexey
U14 Boys champion team – Fairlands beating Danesfield by one point!

Keen competition, indeed!

Report for the Somerset Schools' A.G.M. 2012

E.S.A.A. Schools' Track and Field Cup 2012

County round

Entries this year were back to the 2010 level (thirty-three teams from thirteen schools) and so it was decided to use two venues for the county round (see appendix A for details of venues for each of the three rounds). The situation will be reviewed again once entries have been submitted in February. Both events were contested keenly, see appendix B for results.

Regional final

Six Somerset teams (one more than last year) qualified for the Regional 'A' Final at Millfield, organised by Rob Furlong and Gary Jennings.

Millfield (IB & IG)
Millfield Prep (JB & JG)
Queen's College (JB & IG)

One Somerset team qualified for the Regional 'B' Final at Exeter Arena, Exeter, organised by Liam Trivett.

Queen's College (JG)

See appendix B for results.

National final

Two Somerset teams qualified for the National Final.

Queen's College (IG)
Millfield (IG)

Queen's College finished a well placed 4th and Millfield 2nd, narrowly losing the title they had held for the previous two years.

See appendix B for results.

My sincere thanks go to all organisers, school staff, coaches and pupils for their hard work and effort to ensure everything, once again, ran smoothly.

Rob Furlong - County Cup Secretary.