

SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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I am reminded as I start to write these reports of Steve Ladd's remarks at the last AGM regarding the commitment of those of us who work throughout the year for the furtherance of the many, many athletes who compete under the umbrella of SSAA. A glance at the diary shows that for many days and weeks we had meetings and championships in very close proximity when we hosted not only our normal championships but also the southwest championships, not to mention the combined events championships that run alongside track and field! How do we do it?

Junior Track and Field Report 2004

The usual format of organisation took place with a meeting at Sexey's School to allocate names to numbers and finalise details. This year, due it is felt to the development coaching, the number of schools entering the championships increased. However, the number of schools entering competitors in all (4) age groups declined drastically – from 78% down to 42% on the previous year! Could this be due to less teacher participation but more parental instigation?

The meeting ran smoothly with many motivated young athletes aspiring to do their best. Three championship best performances were set all in the under 13 boys:

75m hurdles	11.7	L Webber	Minehead Middle
400m	61.2	L Webber	Minehead Middle
Long Jump	4.93	M Fisher	Millfield Prep.

My thanks to Dick for his enthusiasm and administration towards this event.

Senior Track and Field Report 2004

The weekend after the junior championships and with a planning meeting squashed into the busy week the senior championships were held in glorious weather with many more athletes participating than in previous years, particularly in the junior age groups. It was felt, without question, that this was directly due to the development coaching programme that had taken place throughout the year. Consequently there was a full programme of events with many heats scheduled. Unfortunately on the day a few athletes did not turn up and some heats were run as straight finals. Nonetheless the championships were marked by a large number of good performances. Three championship best performances were set or equalled:

IB 200m	22.5	T. Sandeman	Mendip	
IG 300m Hurdles	45.1	E Bonnett	Mendip	
SG 200m	25.2	N Hutchings	Mendip	=CBP

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This year the relay events took place in the middle of the programme. This meant that all teams could run their fastest athletes as 'morning' athletes and 'afternoon' athletes were all present. As a result the relays were closely fought and well supported by the other athletes.

Taunton were overall champions.

	S	T	M	Y
JG	45	67	82	42
IG	30	123	73	43
SG		61	66	70
Girls	75	251	221	155
JB	97.5	82.5	73	69
IB	110	131	94	48
SB	23	122	105	93
Boys	230.5	335.5	272	210
Overall	305.5	586.5	493	365
Track	124	298	254	157
Field	171.5	259.5	205	190
Relay	10	29	34	18

The next day selection took place for the southwest championships to be held at Yeovil. As is usually the case the selection process was long but above all thorough and a strong team, it was felt, was selected to represent the county on home soil.

Southwest Track and Field Administration Report.

(I will leave the report of the team's success to Dick.)

Following our selection meeting I started to receive entries for the southwest championships. Unfortunately I waited and waited for the Cornish entries, which did not materialise in time for the planning meeting! But through frantic phone calls I did manage to ascertain the number of Cornish entries in the track events and thus at the planning meeting we could finalise heats and finals for all events. From this I sent programme details to county secretaries. Between this meeting and the championships there was little administration for county teams remained as selected and on the day very few changes took place.

At our own county championships I, and I know Dick, was impressed by the conduct and camaraderie of the athletes. This was continued at the southwest championships and if there is one over-riding message to team managers and county secretaries it is a heart felt 'thank you' and 'congratulations' for the way your athletes represented themselves and yourselves.

Seven championship best performances were set which is a mark of the level of competition throughout the afternoon.

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Congratulations to:

JG 800m	2.12.5	J Harvey	Devon
IG 300m hurdles	44.1	E Bonnett	Somerset
IG Pole Vault	2.40	J Kaye	Dorset
IG Hammer	28.90	L Seabrook	Gloucs
IG Triple Jump	11.56	C Linskill	Devon
JB 800m	1.53.5	J Brewer	Gloucs (breaking own record)
SB Long Jump	7.14	S Small	Dorset

Scoring chart attached.

However, the meeting was marred by what can be best described as an astonishing occurrence:

At the planning meeting it was decided that given the number of entries (12 named plus two from Cornwall) the junior girls 800m should be run as one race starting from the curved line. Discussion centred around the difficulty for these young athletes to run a heat followed by a final and starting in lanes with athletes doubling or starting from the curve.

Prior to the race itself the athletes were spoken to by the track referee and the starter outlining the need for caution leading into the bend. At the start lane one was left empty.

However, after the warnings and cautions the group of runners made a 'dive' for the inside lane immediately after the gun. Consequently a Gloucester athlete fell, apparently falling upon the curb. The race continued and first aid was called.

First aid was given at the trackside for grazing and then the athlete was taken back to the first aid base and checked over for further injury and concussion. After a few minutes she returned to her team.

After returning home she visited her doctor where it was found she had sustained a fractured collarbone in the fall!

A letter has been received from the family. Its contents, which apportion no blame, will be discussed at the SW AGM.

However, the repercussions of the incident will almost certainly mean that 800m races will contain a maximum of 8 runners and thus the format will be heats to finals!

My thanks to everyone who helped make this an enjoyable and successful championships.

BB