

**SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC
ASSOCIATION**

Cross Country



2017

Report & Results



Elise Thorner – 2017 Ultimate Trophy Winner

SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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2017 Cross-County Report

"Never the same..!"

With the Junior Championships taking place as usual at King's College; the County Championships again at Aldon Hill; the South-West Championships returning to Truro School and the ESAA National Championships returning to The Showground, Norwich it could be assumed that the season was easy from start to finish. But just like the courses on which our talented representatives compete nothing can be assumed!

I again took up an administrative position behind many of the championships: receiving entries for the Junior and starting the races; organising the County and marshalling on the 'back straight'; paperwork for the South-West and in the finish area; bookings and paperwork for the Nats. From the outset I must state that I simply could not accomplish the tasks I set myself if it were not for many, many helping in a vast variety of roles throughout the season.

This report, as last year's, is written at varying distances from the action but I hope does give an overview on the season.

Junior Championships –

This now established championships took place as usual at King's College with Richard at the helm of the day's organisation. The course was the same as the previous year and each group of athletes was lead around their respective course by SSAA/King's College senior athletes acting as 'hares'.

Entry numbers and consequently finishers from 20 schools were substantially higher than the previous year:

	Entries	Finishers	Schools
2016	164	156	18
2017	284	185	20
% increase	73%	18%	

It should not be thought, however, that there were a lot of dropouts during the races as a couple of schools having entered did not participate along with numerous individual athletes not competing! Whilst another school, included in the entry statistics, astonishingly turned up at the start of the afternoon completely unannounced. The information sent to all schools clearly stated that the championship was not a 'turn up on the day' event! Doubly annoying was that this school's entry fees took many months to materialise.

Putting annoyances aside the weather and conditions underfoot were ideal for the young athletes who produced exciting competition for the many spectators and other athletes to watch. There was indeed a 'buzz about the place' and I hope the young athletes will be keen to continue their participation.

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A champion's badge was presented to each individual winner as they exited the funnel; this was followed, by post, with certificates to the first six and the winning team in each age group.

The champions and finishers were:

	Individual	Finishers	Team
Year 7 Girls	Alice de Pelet (Hazlegrove)	47	King's Hall
Year 7 Boys	Dan Fisher (The Castle)	68	Hazlegrove
Year 8 Girls	Sofia Wilson (Taunton Sch)	34	Hazlegrove
Year 8 Boys	Joe Ponter (Bishop Fox's)	36	Wellington

County Championships –

The championships took place, by popular request if not demand, at what is the 'home' of SSAA Cross-Country: Aldon Hill.

Organisation was identical to previous years, eg:

- information and entry forms sent to Area secretaries early in November as the first area championships take place in early December
- contact made with officials and subsequently duties drawn up
- Ian Humphreys enlisted to receive entries and produce results
- wide search for First Aid cover
- hire of toilets
- refreshments' provider
- site visit in early January to ascertain any equestrian improvements by the owner and how they would impact upon the event
- course map updated
- simple programme produced

Early in the morning of the championships the course was laid out - essentially identical to the previous year as were the positions of the start and finish areas, administration area and car park.

Now that so many officials and helpers know the event and the venue many arrived quite early, helped put the finishing touches to the course whilst rekindling old acquaintances. (I often feel that this event attracts many officials for it is 'marked' as the start of the year where old friends meet. There is a feeling of much conviviality in the air!)

Mention must be made of, along with special thanks to, Harry Billing, an ex-SSAA representative now at agricultural college, who, not for the first time, travelled the breadth of the county to provide a 4x4 quad-bike to assist the setting out of the course and in particular its quick dismantling.

Thanks to our car park attendants many cars were parked efficiently, particularly so as parents, knowing the venue, arrive with little time to spare! One pleasing minor complication this year was the necessity to provide disabled parking. This one prior request, easily accommodated, having been seen produced similar requests during the afternoon.

During the past couple of years the number of first aid providers seems to have decreased markedly with those remaining able to charge a large fee. Through friends of associates and associates of friends contact was made with Tim O'Neill. He proved himself to be a real asset being highly visible whilst lending a hand in many areas other than medical assistance

Unfortunately refreshment purveyors were impossible to find who could simply provide a hot drink together with a small income for the event.

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The championships were again blessed with dry and sunny weather so that the many athletes and spectators could enjoy an afternoon's racing of the highest calibre.

The champions and finishers (compared to previous year) were:

	Individual	Finishers	
Minor Girls	Daisy Pellow (Millfield Prep Sch)	46	(+2)
Junior Girls	Poppy Pellow (Millfield School)	52	(+9)
Inter Girls	Elise thorne (Millfield School)	30	(+5)
Senior Girls	Lucy Davies (Millfield School)	14	(-5)
Minor Boys	Bradley Glover (Preston School)	47	(-3)
Junior Boys	Henrik Wendin (Millfield School)	61	(+14)
Inter Boys	Henry Cowie (Millfield School)	36	(=)
Senior Boys	Ben Jones (Queens College)	25	(+2)

Most pleasing the 'nightmares' encountered during the previous year were eliminated by allowing area age group teams to be of 20 athletes. Areas were in fact allowed to enter 25 from which 20 could run (previous years being 15 from 25) but almost all area entries were simply of 20. Meaning that all who were informed they were running could compete and that no young athlete was worrying if they, as a substitute, were going to be called to run or not.

Competition in all races was fierce, with the intermediate and senior girls' races being combined. Spectators moved swiftly from one advantage point to another and thus support was seen and heard alongside most of the course.

My thanks to all who helped for without you this event simply cannot be the success it is.

A particular warm 'thank you' to those helpers who made their first visit to Aldon and who, like their predecessors, were in awe of the event and its venue.

South-West Championships –

The selection for this championship took place immediately after the county championships and was held at The Park School; many thanks to Larry for the facility.

Many previous AGM reports have stated that selection for either the South-West Championships or the National Championships was 'straightforward'. Although this is correct it should not be forgotten that any selection is arrived at from discussion and deliberation until agreement is made. Although the County

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Championships saw many young talented athletes compete to be County Champion there were some notable absentees due to other school commitments. Therefore this year there were difficult decisions surrounding the makeup of some of the county age group teams. This report is not the platform to elaborate on the subsequent difference of opinion but by mentioning it is formally recorded.

As is now customary the website was utilised fully to enable those selected to confirm their availability; as is now becoming quite common the bulk of the team confirmed immediately: some within minutes most within hours and only a few within days! Postal information was also sent to schools.

The championships were hosted by Cornwall and took place at Truro School on a course often used for school events. Although this is the furthest cross-country venue from the county boundary athletes were, as in previous years, asked to make their own travel arrangements to the event.

Cornwall, through the expertise of Paul Manning and his colleagues, do a fantastic job of not only setting up the course but also allocating school buildings and streamlining the administration for the event. Thus my role as South-West Schools Chairman was very minimal.

As in the previous year the webform replies went to Dick and he acted as senior team manager at Truro leaving me to erect the team base and be on duty in the finishing area. Those athletes in the first race just about finished before the heavens opened to biblical proportions destroying the idyllic course setting; saturating everything and everyone and making team and event organisation most difficult! By the penultimate race the skies had cleared but the damage had been done.

Hearty congratulations to all who participated, organised and spectated and a very well done to those in the county teams who achieved success.

The champions were:

	Individual	Team	Somerset Ind / Team
Minor Girls	M Luke (Cornwall)	Gloucestershire	2 nd / 2 nd
Junior Girls	A Scrivenor (Gloucestershire)	Dorset	5 th / 3 rd
Inter Girls	G Brock (Cornwall)	Devon	7 th / 3 rd
Senior Girls	K Hughes (Cornwall)	Cornwall	8 th / 2 nd
Minor Boys	F Pardy (Dorset)	Avon	3 rd / 5 th
Junior Boys	H Wendin (Somerset)	Somerset	1st / 1st
Inter Boys	F Birnie (Cornwall)	Cornwall	13 th / 6 th
Senior Boys	H Sadler (Avon)	Somerset	2 nd / 1 st

In the rain and mud in Cheltenham the scoring runners in the senior boys' team were 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 totalling the lowest team score. This year their scoring places were not quite so good but the junior boys produced 1, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13 to yield the day's lowest team score.

'New Balance' English Schools' AA Championships –

Report by Richard Bowden

"The 2017 venue was The Norfolk Showground, Norwich, and as usual, and thanks to Brian's early booking, the team hotel was to be a Premier Inn a short distance from the course - on this occasion the Norwich East Premier Inn.

Selection had taken place more than two weeks after the South-West Schools' AA Championships as the selectors met immediately following the SSAA Junior Championships on Monday 20th February. This enabled athletes to overcome any coughs, colds and minor injuries, to declare themselves fit and for some to post an improved head-to-head performance, demonstrating current form. Most runners consolidated their places in the team having competed well in Truro, but thorough consideration was given to each athlete as age group teams had to be cut from 10 at South-West level to 8 in Norwich.

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The website was again used to notify individuals quickly and to indicate confirmation of availability, with selected athletes required to download the detailed information pack and ensure each school had a copy. The schools were notified of the selected team by post and asked to consider offering financial assistance. It was gratifying to note that some were most generous in their responses.

Pick-up points on Friday 17th March were King's College at 11.00am, Junction 25 of the M5 (the BP Fuel Station) at 11.20am and Junction 23 of the M5 (Dunball) at 11.40am. All team members travelled on the Berrys' double-decker coach, accompanied by 8 Team Managers with Simon Prior's inclusion in the group showing the tremendous club links enjoyed by the Association.

Registration at the Premier Inn was swift and efficient (I even caught the two members of reception staff celebrating that with a 'high-five'). The Brewer's Fayre restaurant had been set up to allow the entire team to eat together on the Friday evening, with the Junior Boys punctuating their meals with frequent visits to the toddlers' play area as some form of weird bonding ritual (to the embarrassment of the Chairman whose son was a ringleader). After several furtive trips they finally realised that we were able to track their antics on CCTV.

The meal was followed by the Team Meeting during which we were able to celebrate the recent achievements of a previous team member. That athlete's record at ESAA Cross-Country Championships had been: 2012 - JB 143, 2013 - IB 75, 2014 - IB 63, 2015 - SB 34, 2016 - SB 18. That meant he had been in a similar Team Meeting just a year earlier but having finished 3rd in the previous Saturday's Inter-Counties Championships he had been selected to represent the Great Britain Under-20 team in the IAAF World Cross-Country Championships in Uganda. The athlete in question was Luke Prior and it was appropriate that his father, Simon, was present as the whole team signed a Good Luck card. The card was delivered personally by one of the Great Britain Team Coaches, Charlotte Fisher, who was also part of our outstanding management group in Norwich.

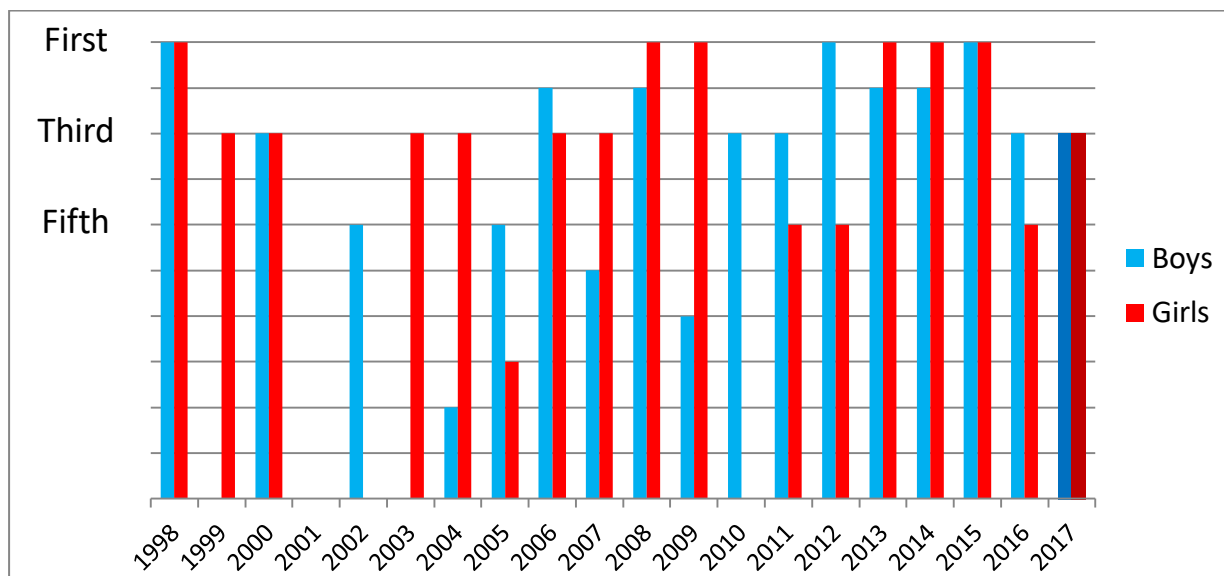
Jason Allen took the traditional team photographs on the Saturday morning before departure for the course and these were subsequently placed on the website for athletes, parents, teachers and coaches to download.

One performance certainly epitomised everything we asked of our runners in terms of trying to gain every possible point and striving to chase down a few more competitors on the final run-in. As the Junior Boys' first reserve, Toby Watson (The Blue School) came into the team quite late but proved to be the hero in our winning the Lockhurst Lane Trophy for the team (outside the top-3) with the 8th best finisher. The scoring team of 6 finished 6th out of 45 counties with positions 36, 38, 51, 88, 101 and 118 (with our 7th finisher on 174) so their score of 432 points was a tremendous achievement in itself but Toby's gutsy run meant that he beat the 8th Devon athlete by 2 seconds (14:09 to 14:11) and by just 4 points (186 to 190). That 4-point difference meant we beat our neighbours to the trophy.



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Full results appeared on the website immediately after the Championships and those showed that all 6 age groups competed well enough to ensure our Boys' and Girls' teams each finished 3rd in terms of their aggregate scores against the other 12 'C' Group counties, meaning that every athlete in our group earned a certificate for their efforts."



- In 2017 ESAA reorganised County groups; there are 13 counties in 'C' Group
- 2001 championships did not take place due to foot-and-mouth restrictions

Finally a huge 'Thank You' to those team managers who worked for the athletes and the Association during the season:

Richard Bowden
Richard Llewellyn-Eaton
Adrian Palmer
Jason Allen
Simon Prior
Phil Cobb
Brian Baker

Katie Cobb
Jo Pike
Pixie Cobb
Lucy Macalister
Lucy Leonard
Charlotte Fisher

Finance –

I repeat a statement from last year: *'Only those close to the financial ramifications of a SSAA season will fully appreciate the projections that take place to make, in my case, the cross-county season breakeven: meaning not a loss for the Association and not excessive fees from athletes.'*

This year I can report that my season's account showed a profit of £8.24 within a turnover in excess of £13500!! A failure by that amount (0.06%) and two-thirds of last season's failure.

(The season's account within the full treasurer's report may be different as other small credits or debits may have been included into these accounts.)

Brian Baker

2017 Cross-Country Statistics

Minor Boys				
Name	School	County	SW	
Jake Fisher	Hazlegrove	2	3	
Daniel Fisher	The Castle	3	10	
Bradley Glover	Preston	1	15	
Mark Eavis	Taunton Preparatory	4	29	
Max Earp	King's Hall	5	46	
Oliver Lorenz	Hazlegrove	8	49	
Finlay Landon	Danesfield	7	54	
Josh Moore	Hazlegrove	14	56	
Eddie Griffin	Robert Blake	11	58	
James Bradley	Queen's College	10	59	
Gabriel Billington	Bishop Fox's	6	dns	
Woody Walker	All Hallows	9	dns	
Felix Ruffey	Millfield Preparatory	12		
Nathan Radford	Hugh Sexseys	13		
Charlie Liddle	Brymore	15		
Henry Hawkins	King's Hall	16		
	SW		5th	
	C' Group		3rd	
Junior Boys				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Oscar Lee	The Castle	2	6	36
Henrik Wendin	Millfield School	1	1	38
Joe Ponter	Bishop Fox's	4	9	51
Sam Cobb	King's College	5	12	88
Tom Heal	Kingsmead	6	13	101
Sam Ponter	Bishop Fox's	3	7	118
William Aitken	Millfield School	10	29	174
Toby Watson	The Blue School	9	34	186
Arthur Green	All Hallows	8	20	
Charlie Cook	Crispin	7	50	
Archie Tyler	Stanchester	11		
Fred Fisher	Hazlegrove	12		
Nick Hobbs	Downside	13		
Max Watson	Heathfield	14		
Matthew Quarterman	Huish Episcopi	15		
Jarvis Lumb	Wellington	16		
	SW		1st	2nd
	National			6th
	C' Group		1st	1st
Intermediate Boys				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Henry Cowie	Millfield School	1	13	164
Dylan Dukes	The Blue School	2	25	178
Luke Macpherson	Huish Episcopi	dns	33	256
Lucca Carmignani	Millfield School	7	dnf	285
Will Jarman	Brymore	10	54	307
Ollie Thorne	Millfield School	6	dns	309
Ollie Haines-Francis	Millfield School	4	52	323
Alex Flack	Ansford	3	51	dnf
Alex Male	Taunton School	11	55	
Charlie MacNeice	Queen's College	5	60	
Chris Ellis	Ansford	8	64	
Matthew Howard	Wells Cathedral	dns	dns	
Lewis Pocock	Courtfields	9		
Jack Thompson	Brymore	12		
George Mathew	Downside	13		
Sam Tull	Brymore	14		
Ryu Perry	Brymore	15		
	SW		6th	7th
	National			43rd
	C' Group		3rd	10th
Senior Boys				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Ben Jones	Queen's College	1	dns	47
Oscar Coggins	Millfield School	3	4	79
Oliver Dickinson	King Alfred's	dns	2	103
Theobald Mathew	Downside	dnf	7	112
Jonathan Birkett	Downside	4	12	133
Ben Lloyd	Yeovil College	6	15	147
Alvaro Perez-Maura	Downside	7	19	170
Robbie Brown	Millfield School	2	dns	202
Ben Tull	Richard Huish	8	24	
Luke Fieldhouse	Wellington	9	33	
George Mallinson	Wellington	12	35	
Finn Barnes	Millfield School	5	44	
Oscar Rogers	Richard Huish	10		
Henry Crow	Millfield School	11		
Bradley Seager	Huish Episcopi	13		
Matt Keogan	Queen's College	14		
Tim Baker	Wadham	15		
	SW		1st	1st
	National			13th
	C' Group		1st	2nd



Luckhurst Lane Trophy



Boys' Teams - Overall Third

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Minor Girls				
Name	School	County	SW	
Daisy Pellow	Millfield Preparatory	1	2	
India Porter	King Alfred's	2	13	
Hannah Blundy	Preston	3	15	
Bali Chapman	The Blue School	4	26	
Alice De Pelet	Hazlegrove	5	18	
Macey Barrett	Taunton Preparatory	6	24	
Hannah Carter	Hugh Sexeys	7	28	
Mia French	Huish Episcopi	8	61	
Jemima Rundell	King's Hall	9	49	
Pippa Drummond	Queen's College	10	62	
Raffy Nisser	Wells Cathedral School	11		
Frances Jameson	Wellington	12		
Mia Noad	King Alfred's	13		
Ailani Braine-Clarke	Taunton Preparatory	14		
Tilly Fisher	Kingsmead	15		
Emilia Lumb	Wellington	16		
	SW		2nd	
	C' Group		2nd	
Junior Girls				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Lizzy Ingram	Ansford	6	5	40
Holly Bigger	Huish Episcopi	2	31	41
Connie Hickman	Queen's College	dnf	41	76
Anya Evans	Hazlegrove	5	dns	145
Poppy Pellow	Millfield Senior	1	11	163
Kai Snell	Hazlegrove	7	56	265
Lara Chapple	King's Hall	10	33	276
Sophia Wilson	Taunton Preparatory	3	6	285
Abbie White	The Park	4	7	
Olivia Earthy	King Alfred's	dns	48	
Jo Keogan	Queen's College	8	51	
Kitty Chapple	Millfield School	9	dns	
Charlotte Brown	Kingsmead	11		
Grace Ashurst	Hugh Sexeys	12		
Jessica Hudson	Crispin	13		
Anya Snowball	King Alfred's	14		
	SW		3rd	3rd
	National			20th
	C' Group		3rd	5th
Intermediate Girls				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Elise Thorner	Millfield School	1	7	18
Millie Wills	Millfield School	dns	13	85
Eloise O'Shaunessey	Millfield School	4	14	125
Sophie Hamilton	King's School	dns	18	169
Cecily Turner	Millfield School	2	dnf	182
Sophie Jones	Queen's College	3	16	214
Imogen Rogers	Holyrood	6	44	234
Ella Leonard	Wellington	dns	39	300
Khumo Karas	Millfield School	5	50	
Sophie Bray	Taunton School	dns	dns	
Kirsten Hill	Queen's College	7		
Mila Stieg	Downside	8		
Starla Haines	Courtfields	9		
Andrea Gilbert	Kingsmead	10		
Rebecca Brown	Queen's College	11		
Emily Spiller	Wellington	12		
	SW		3rd	3rd
	National			17th
	C' Group		2nd	3rd
Senior Girls				
Name	School	County	SW	ESAA
Caitlin Carnegie	Strode College	2	11	129
Lucy Baldwin	Downside	7	23	158
Lucy Davies	Millfield School	1	8	177
Jess Brown	Queen's College	6	29	189
Amy D'Arcy	Strode College	5	24	191
Katie Lloyd	Strode College	4	dnf	193
Amelia Vance	Queen's College	3	15	209
Ruby Lowsley-Williams	King's School	11	37	242
Megan Chiffers	Strode College	9	45	
Lucy Pittard	Strode College	8	52	
Millie Nielson	Millfield School	10	dns	
Alice Davies	Kings of Wessex	dns	dns	
Issy Strachwitz-Hamilton	TOO OLD	12		
Morgan Davy	Richard Huish	13		
Hannah Graham	Huish Episcopi	14		
	SW		2nd	5th
	National			27th
	C' Group		1st	6th



Girls' Teams - Overall Third