

South West Schools Combined Events Championships

The South West Schools Combined Events Championships, brilliantly organized by Dick Bowden and Brian Baker together with all their officials, proved to be the most successful ever for Avon Schools eventers.

Pride of place goes to the Junior Girls team of Rosa Ford (Gordano), Ruby Donaldson (Nailsea), Sophie Jones and Emily Jones (both Bath HS) who took the competition by storm winning the team title and therefore qualifying for the National event in Bedford in September. Each had their own highlight with Rosa jumping a superb pb in the Long Jump with 5m08. Ruby surprised herself with a magnificent High Jump pb of 1m59. Sophie had a great Hurdles and Shot whilst sister Emily ran a pb in the 800m of 2m40, completely demolishing the opposition.

The Inter Girls team of Tamara Jackson (Colstons), Myalee Osola (Colstons), Lily Bailey (Mangotsfield) and Alice Wilson (Kingswood) were involved in a high quality competition which ended with the four recording the 8th highest points total ever in the South West. The team finished 2nd to Somerset who recorded the 2nd highest ever score a remarkable competition.

Myalee set the tone with a swift and superb pb in the Hurdles of 11.8, followed by Tamara in the shot of over 9m. Alice strong throughout the 7 events with Hurdles and Shot her highlights. Lily was great in the 200m recording 17.03 also high jumped 1m53.

The 800m was a tense affair with Lily kicking at 200m to outsprint her teammates with all finishing strongly. The team affectionately called "the family" supported each other right till the end. Finishing 5th, 6th, 7th and 11th hope are high that once scores are looked at places may be booked for Bedford.

The Senior Girls of Stephanie Brooks (SGS), Phoebe Gooch (Gordano) and Thema Hendricks-Osborne (Colstons Girls) also finished 2nd, with Stephanie in 3rd place qualifying by right for Bedford. Phoebe and Thema are also expected to qualify each performing with credit and many pbs. Phoebe's High Jump of 1m47 her highlight and Themas Shot Put of 9m plus her highlight.

The weekend began with the Junior Boys team of Conor Hewitt (Gordano), Peter Critten (St.Gregorys), Ollie Thistlewood (Sidcot) and Noah Parry (Oldfield) finishing a good 3rd in the team competition.

Again many pbs were achieved with highlights being Noah Parrys Hurdles, Ollies High Jump of 1m50, and Peters 800m which exceeded his expectations. Noah had only come into the team at 8 o'clock the night before when Ethan Canning (SMRT) had to withdraw due to school quarantine)

Conor lying in 5th place before the 800m produced a 20sec.pb to move up to 3rd place so securing his place at the National finals in Bedford. A superb effort. Noah secured a fine 7th place with Peter 12th and Ollie 13th.

Finally Liam Hillier's effort in the Senior Boys Decathlon was extraordinary, with a wonderful 3m50 Pole Vault and new pb in the 1500m as well as strong performances in the other 8 events .What an effort, rewarded with a 3rd place and another guaranteed spot in the Bedford finals.

So as this report is being written Avon Schools have 9athletes (with another 2 or 3 possibilities), qualifying for the ESAA National Champs in Bedford by far its highest total.

Team Managers Susan Jones, Dave Turner and coaches Julie Alexander and Ken Holmes exhausted yet ecstatic praised the athletes and their parents for a wonderful weekend.

It was remarkable to see athletes bonding into teams supporting each other and showing admirable individual qualities which brought great credit to all concerned.

Full Results attached in the Excel spreadsheet.

DGT/SBJ June 27th 2021.