

2009 TRACK AND FIELD ROUNDUP

This year has been another good year for the club where we maintained our league status in all the major leagues we competed in and won for the first time the Wessex Young Athletes League. In our first season back in the National Junior League we performed well reaching the promotion play-off final, and in the Senior Women we reached the British Athletic League final coming a creditable 3rd place. More details of how we performed in each league are set out below.

British Athletics League

An eighth place finish at Bournemouth and a sixth place finish at Abingdon did not bode well for the final BAL fixture as far away as Derby. Lying in 7th place in the league table Team Southampton faced relegation for the first time since 2006 if they couldn't finish ahead of both Bournemouth and Medway in the final match. A great team effort meant the weakened team, with just one jumper and two throwers managed to clinch a 4th place and avoid relegation.

UK Women's League

Team Southampton finished 6th in the UK Women's League this year compared to 3rd and 4th in 2008 and 2007 respectively. The season started very strongly with a 2nd place finish at Cardiff but the distances involved getting to the next fixtures in Lee Valley and Scotland meant our team was weakened and we could only manage 6th and 7th place.

The most significant achievement of our Women's team this year however was making the BAL cup final in early August and achieving a creditable 3rd place finish, just 2 points away from first.

Southern Men's League

In 2008 Team Southampton were agonisingly close to promotion and 2009 proved no different. Going into the final match at Basingstoke we sat in 2nd spot in the league table and a victory would ensure promotion, but all did not go to plan. Despite some very strong individual performances in the sprints and throws we were just outclassed on the day and only managed 3rd, meaning yet again we must wait another year to escape from division 3 west.

Southern Women's League

This is the third year Team Southampton are taking part in the 'Seniors Only' first division of the Southern Women's League and the first time we haven't won the division, finishing 4th in 2009, just 4.5 event points behind third. It was a yoyo year for our Southern Women, they won in Kingston (twice) and Luton before capping it off with a second place in their home fixture; if it wasn't for our disappointing result in Bromley back in May the leader board would have undoubtedly looked different at the end of the season.

Next year our Women will be looking to bounce back to their regular top spot and regain their crown from Portsmouth.

National Young Athletes League

Going into the 5th match in Croydon there was talk of Team Southampton potentially reaching the plate final, something narrowly missed out on in 2008 by just one match point. History repeated itself in 2009 as the club finished 7th in the table yet again just one match point outside of contesting the plate final, though this was higher than in 2008 when the club finished 8th (both years out of 16 clubs). A home fixture to begin with ensured we were off to a strong start, beaten only by eventual league victors Windsor and we then built on this achievement in Bromley where we finished first by just half a point. This contrasts strongly with our 2008 performance at Bromley where we finished last, 170 points adrift of the victors. Unfortunately in our final 3 matches we were outclassed by very strong London teams managing two 3rds and a 2nd, though it should be stressed we are competing in arguably the strongest NYAL division in the country, the Southern Premier, and hopefully we will continue our march up the table next year.

Wessex League

Team Southampton finished top of the Wessex League! Last year we narrowly lost out to the Isle of Wight but this year we even managed to comfortably beat the IOW on their home soil! Only once was the margin of victory in any match less than 100 points, and every other time it was more than 150 points! The atmosphere at each of the matches was more exciting than ever and the club will be looking to build on its impressive achievements in 2010.

National Junior League

Team Southampton performed exceedingly well in their first year back in the NJAL, so well in fact that they even qualified for the promotion match in late August where they finished 5th out of 8. Only once throughout the year did they finish lower than 2nd place at any league match and even managed to beat league winners Brighton & Hove at Bournemouth.

Cross Country Round-up

In the Hampshire league so far this season we have fielded some strong teams across the various different age groups, with most noticeable successes in the U13 girls and the U17 Women's races where we are currently leading the team competitions after 3 races and Katie Hickson is individual leader in the U17 Women's event. In the U15 boys we are also a close second in the Team event.

Club awards

In an excellent season for the club the individual performances and contributions of a number of the clubs athletes was simply outstanding and the club decided to present a record number of athletes with awards.

For those not able to attend the AGM where the awards were presented, here is a summary of the winners and their achievements.

Outstanding Athlete Award

Sian Scott - 3rd World Championships Trials, also heavy scorer in UKWL/ Cup

Louise Webb - 3rd in European Junior Championships; 1st English Schools; new UK senior and junior record in 1500m Steeplechase; ranked 1st in the UK U20 3k S.C

Freya Jones - 1st England Athletics Championships; 1st English Schools; 1st in her Junior International debut; 49.66m throw ranks no.4 in the Seniors in UK - NB Freya has only recently turned 16, and has another year in the U17 age- group

Jenny Beckingham - 3rd England Athletics National Championships; 4th English Schools; ranked no.6 in Great Britain; top points scorer in NYAL.

Richard Humby - 1st England Athletics National Championships; 1st Southern Championships; 1st Inter- Counties; ranked No.5 in the UK; reliable Club athlete.

Emma Cowell - 2nd England Athletics National Championships; 4th English Schools; ranked No.8 in UK. Prolific scorer in NYAL (Emma has another year in the age- group).

Emily Jenkinson - 3rd English Schools 800m; Southern Champion. Very high points scorer in League competitions.

Poppy Barker - 2nd England Athletics National Championships; ranked No.2 in UK; 9th in English Schools, significant points scorer in NYAL.

Sophie Merritt - Ranked No.1 U13 in discus in the UK, also No.5 for javelin and shot performances with all achieved when still at Primary School!

Bethany Woodward - 1st UK School Games at both 100 and 200 metres. Recently successful in gaining World Class Development lottery support towards 2012.

Daniel Avery - prolific points scorer in throws events in McCains UK Young Athletes League. Ranked No.6 in the UK at Hammer; 40th at Discus. 6th in England Schools hammer.

Karla Drew - Top scorer SWL; multi- event contribution to UKWL; also travels from West Country to represent the Club. England Multi- Events International in 2009.

Outstanding Contribution Award

Dudley Mason - 7th England Athletics Champs; Ranked in top 10 in UK; 3rd England Schools semi final; Top points scorer in NYAL

Alexander Allen - at Millfield School, travels from home in Somerset to NYAL matches, invariably scoring very significantly. Ranked No.6 in UK for 1000m; No.18 for 800m.

Emily Varcoe - has competed in all League matches in 2009, achieving very high points totals in throws. Stood in at late notice for relay teams in 2009, to cover injured colleagues.

Dawn Campbell - So much quiet, efficient work in support of Athletics meetings, scoring, portakabin and much else. A true team player!

Darryn Campbell - Consistent points scorer and senior men's team member, hugely efficient and effective website manager, scorer and contributor to the club in many ways.