



SOUTHAMPTON ATHLETICS CLUB MATCH REPORT

SUNDAY 29 MAY – MOUNTBATTEN CENTRE, PORTSMOUTH

The National Junior League season started well for Southampton AC at the end of April at Bournemouth with a good result putting the team in second place behind Brighton. There were quite a few gaps in the team that day due to illness, exams and injury, and it was a much larger and more confident team that travelled to Portsmouth on Sunday 29th May to contest the second match of the Itchen Division of the NJAL league.

The typical English summer weather of grey skies, low temperatures and strong winds did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the team which produced some great performances with maximum points scored in many of the events.

The track started off well with A and B string wins in both the men's' and ladies' 400mH, Laura Seaman running a personal best time of 73.5. This success was to be repeated later in the day in the 110H with Sean Adams winning the race in a PB time of 15.2 and Daniel Miller, filling in the event at the last minute, winning the B string in a PB time of 21.5. For the women, Megan Fry made it a double, adding a win in the 100mH to her victory in the 400mH.

Southampton's sprinters always seem to perform consistently and this match was no exception. Calum Bressington equalled his personal best time of 11.5 to come third in the 100m A race, whilst team mate Will Hodgetts matched this performance with a new PB of 11.5 to win the B race. Will also went on to win the B 200m and in the 400m Aaron Bennett and Aaron Dunne were both placed 3rd in their races. For the women, Suzie Collins came second in the A race and there was a PB of 13.6 for Becky Kidson in the B race, whilst in the 200m Jo Bottell ran a season's best of 26.9 to win the B race. Once again there were maximum points in the women's 40m as both Jenny Beckingham and Hannah Musker, who came third in the 200m, won their races.

The wind was always going to be a problem for the longer races but Mhairi-Clair Stewart and Daena Bennett made it a double A and B win in the 800m, repeating their previous success at Bournemouth in the 1500m. Not to be outdone Jenny Beckingham and Laura Seaman produced a similar result in the 1500m despite Jenny having already won the 400m race and Issie Kidson battled both with an achilles problem and the wind to come second in the 3k.

The men fared equally well in the longer distances, with Aaron Bennett and Martin Campbell producing a double A and B win in the 800m and Paul Warn coming 5th in the A race of the 1500m despite having run the 3k in a season's best time of 11.14.9 only an hour before. Sadly we had no takers for the 2k steeplechase again.

There were some good all round performances in the field events, with many of the track athletes competing in these events, particularly the throws, due to the absence of some of our regulars. This resulted in a string of PB performances for Daniel Miller in the triple jump and shot, Aaron Dunne, Jenny Beckingham and Jo Bottell in the shot, and Mhairi-Clair Stewart and Paul Warn in the discus. U17 Samantha McCann made her debut in the NJAL, coming 5th in the javelin competition which

struggled with a strong headwind, recording a best throw of 26.03m. The men's long jump was a closely fought competition with Calum Bressington jumping just below his PB and narrowly missing out on first place by just 1cm. B competitor Will Hodgetts jumped a PB of 5.04m to come second in the B string and in the ladies' triple jump Jo Bottell came third in the A string with a jump of 9.33m, just beating team mate Vicky Vinter who, with a jump of 9.21m won the B string.

After extremely gusty conditions in the first match at Bournemouth which resulted in both pole vaulters failing to record a successful clearance, there was a marked return to form with a PB for U17 Luke Hodgetts of 4.15m to win the competition, and a height of 3.80 for Richard Humby to take the B string.

The match finished on a high note with wins in the men's' 4 x 100 relay, 4 x 400 relay and the women's' 4 x 400 relay, with the women taking second place in the 4 x 100.

The end result was an impressive victory for Southampton AC as the team took first place in the match with a score of 520 points, over 130 points ahead of second placed Chichester. Our next match is Sunday 10 July, again at the Mountbatten Centre, Portsmouth.