

Athletic Achievement for 2019/20

In a normal year Southampton Athletic Club would celebrate its athletes and volunteers at the annual awards evening. The Club's athletic year ending in autumn 2020 was far from normal. Despite the challenges of the year, the missed competitions, with creative solutions to coaching and training through the year, the club has an impressive list of Athletic Achievements.

The information here was sourced from 'The Power of 10 Website' and directly from the coaches; it does not claim to be a complete list of achievements but highlights a few.

The 2019/20 Season before March 2020 started well with the following athlete achievements:

- **Mahamed Mahamed** Winning both the BUCS Cross Country Championships in February 2020 and the CAU Inter County Championships (inc. British Athletics Cross Country Challenge) In March 2020
- **Laura Brenton** won an England Vest for road running and finished 17th at the 3k Armagh International Road Races
- **Zakariya Mahamed** won the English National Cross Country for U20M and came 15th in the Senior International Cross Country in Spain winning his first England Vest
- Five Athletes from SAC represented Hampshire in the U15W English Schools Cross Country in Liverpool, **Iszy Hinkley, Annie Mann, Katie Youp, Robyn Fossa** and **Lucy Philips**. Robyn and Annie both qualified for the Schools International which unfortunately did not take place.
- **Freya Jones** (coach David Callaway) British Champion in Javelin Throw in September 2020
- **Thomas Hockley** winning silver in the England Athletics U17 indoor 400m Championships in February 2020
- **Amy Wall** won the England Athletics U15 indoor Long Jump Championships in February 2020
- **Jack Higgins** winning bronze in the England Athletics U20 indoor 400m Championships
- **Adam Jones** gaining the qualifying standard and competing in the British Indoor Championships in February finishing 7th
- **Tracy Bezance:** British Masters Indoors W55 Champion 400m and 200m
- **Mark Collins :** British Masters Indoors M45 Silver 200m and Bronze 60m

All of the coaches and athletes worked hard and the desire to continue was more than evident when the track was opened to us late summer. Despite a lack of competitions the club has much to be proud of, below are some highlights from a few training groups:

Training with Pete Haynes:

Ben Brown.

1st Hampshire Cross Country League
2nd Hampshire Schools' Cross Country
12th South of England Cross Country Championships
18th English National Cross Country
10k at St Albans 10k road race puts Ben top of the all-time list for u15 athletes

Ted Wright

1st Hampshire Schools' Cross Country
2nd South of England Schools' Inter Counties Cross Country
4th Hampshire Cross Country League

Zakariya Mahamed

1st English National Cross Country u20 men.
1st Hampshire Cross Country League
15th International Cross Country- Elgoibah, Spain gaining his first senior England Vest
18th Cross Country, Belgium as senior men.

Sarah Merritt

1st baby girl delivered, Ellie, with Husband Pete
7th Hampshire Cross Country League
Made the Hampshire senior ladies team for the British Cross Country.

Training with Rod Lock:

I would like to add that all of the Rod Squad have managed to keep training and are maintaining their enthusiasm.

In a very difficult year **Laura Brenton** got an England vest for road running and raced in Armagh. Sadly was in line to get possible 2nd road vest but you know what happened!

Jonny Roberts was in the form of his life and in February placed 7th at Chichester in a time of 30.00 which he was certain to better with planned races in March. The Saturday after he won the Hampshire League cross country. Both he and **Matt Revier** managed to run Milton Keynes 5k in June with Jonny running 14.35 (pb) and Matt 14.55 on a windy day and twisty course.

Both were capable of running much faster on the track but clearly were unable to do so.

Matt Ridsen who in 2018 was V35 5k champ continued to improve with both 5k and 10k pbs run at Goodwood. Clearly for someone who is now nearly 37 to continue to improve is exceptional.

Training with Tim and Katy Odell:

12 athletes achieved PB's in 2020, which considering restricted training and limited competition, is fantastic for them to see improvement to build on and keep motivated/training in an age group notorious for dropping out.

6 of those athletes achieved PB's in their one and only comp of the season - Southampton Open (with not so favourable winds for some).

Codi Atkinson - 100m 12.99; 200m 27.00

Jessica Heads - 100m 13.89; 200m 29.35

Lucy Davis - 100m 13.49 (-3.4w); 200m 28.00

Zian Matthias - 100m 13.62; 200m 28.11

Thomas Hockley - 200m 23.41

Robert Hockley - 300m 41.73

Joe Bass ran 26.2 for the 200m in 2019, and ended 2020 with 24.49. In his first ever run at 400m achieved 55.60. He has shown a new level to his training since joining us in March and look forward to seeing him compete in 2021.

James Mitchell joined group in April having achieved a PB from 2019 of 27.6. Improved this to 25.28. He also tried the 400m in 2020 running 3 races in 2 months he managed a PB of 57.20 from a 58.77 starting point. The trajectory he's showing in training we're looking forward to seeing what he can achieve in the coming T&F season.

Alexander Burchill alex is the longest serving member of the group and achieved a PB in the 400m (62.07) from 62.82 achieved in 2016. Her long standing 200m PB was also broken from 28.0 (achieved in 2015) to 27.76. A great platform to move forward from. She will be missed when she moves to her new job in Cambridgeshire later in the year.

Thomas Hockley was accepted onto the Youth Talent Programme (YTP). Providing him (and coach) with insightful knowledge in nutrition, psychology, media, & training (if we get any face to face sessions) on a pathway to possible international level athletics.

Lockdown training with Jon Tilt & Richard Millar:

Sometimes it's hard to find them, but there have been some silver linings from the clouds of 2020.

Constantly changing group size regulations and closed facilities have been a challenge, but also a real opportunity for Rich and Jon to up their game, trying out new sessions and environments.

Most of the year's training has been done off the track, on grass fields, forest tracks, sand dunes and pebble beaches! That variety has definitely provided a different training stimulus for the group and breaking the usual routine has been fun!

Early in the year **Jack Higgins** won a Bronze medal at the England Athletics U20 indoor 400m Championships and this set the tone for the group.

With competition opportunities limited to a small window in September, the group were able to peak for the Southampton Open. **Richard Thorburn** ran his first sub 2 minute 800m, **Ciarran Dunnion** dipped under 50 for the 400 and Liam Higgins sliced 1.5 seconds off his best quarter mile.

Calum Gregson wasn't able to hurdle this year, but his strength and endurance has come on leaps and bounds, as have his media skills. He's 'Quietly confident' that 2021 will be a great year.

Alice Burch showed her versatility, running a 3.24 Marathon in Dubai in January, then setting a new PB for the 800m in September.

Sian Read, Olivia Reavey, Izzy Bennett, Grace Aslin and Kaytlin Roberts all trained hard and improved this year, stepping up well in the open meets.

The masters in the group continued to inspire, with all of them looking to international competition as soon as possible.

Ultra runner, and now budding track athlete, **Rob Shenton**, is making a remarkable recovery from breaking his neck in a cycling accident back in August. His courage and determination have brought him back from the brink and is now able to jog short distances. Rob is planning to be back on the track this year and regardless of how fast he runs, that will be a remarkable achievement.

Training with Debbie and Dave Callaway:

In a very difficult year, with all outdoor age-group championship competition cancelled, the Southampton AC junior throwers had limited opportunities, but produced some great performances to achieve multiple PB's and impressive National rankings, which has provided the motivation to keep up their training through the challenging winter months, hopefully in preparation for a successful summer season in 2021. Notable achievements were from:

Freya Jones (Newham and Essex Beagles, coach David Callaway) British Champion in Javelin Throw in September 2020

Joshua Douglas UK U20 discus ranking - 1st;

Anna Merritt UK U20 hammer ranking - 3rd & discus - 11th;

Brad Jenvey UK U20 javelin ranking - 4th;

Jessica Bennett UK U20 hammer ranking - 11th;

Elizabeth Adamson UK U20 discus ranking - 10th;

Olivia Austin UK U17 discus ranking - 4th;

Gracie Jenvey UK U17 hammer ranking - 8th;

Jasmine Larsen UK U17 javelin ranking - 7th;

Travis Scottow UK U15 shot ranking - 2nd & discus - 4th;

Jacob Axtell UK U15 javelin ranking - 4th.