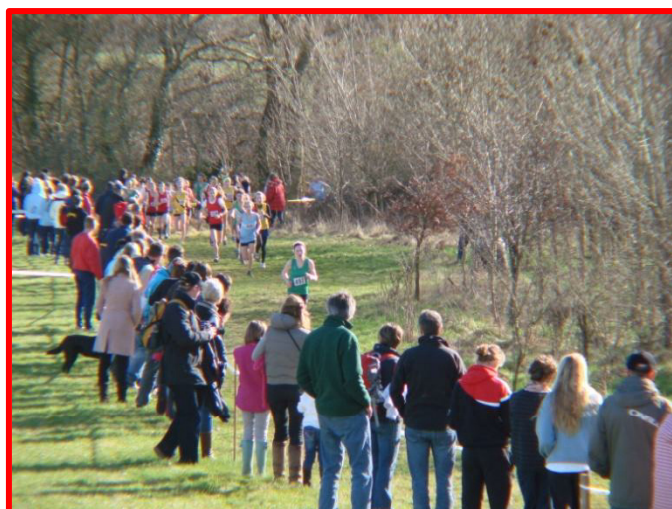


SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



Cross Country Report and Results 2011



SOMERSET SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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2011 Cross-Country Report

The 2011 season was a complicated, successful and above all enjoyable (and on two occasions, frustrating) catalogue of events. With the national championships being held in 2012 thoughts towards this event were always in our minds during all championships.

The basic organisation of the season does not change but each year detailed planning has to be implemented to ensure success, in addition the south-west championships were staged, as a rehearsal for 2012, requiring additional attention and execution.

Junior Championships.

As is now tradition these were held at King's College. Recent building development at the school meant that the usual course had a new start and finish area which worked extremely well. Many spectators were also evident, possibly as the weather was dry, becoming chillier as the afternoon progressed.

21 teams took part across the four age groups with 12 schools in total giving a total of 125 finishers. This was slightly down on the previous year.

The winners were:

	Individual Champion	Team Champion
Under 13 girls	Imogen Keeling (King's Hall)	Taunton Prep School
Under 13 boys	Ben Jones (Queen's)	Queen's College
Under 14 girls	Laura Rider (Millfield Prep)	Millfield Prep School
Under 14 boys	Calum Eley (Millfield Prep)	Millfield Prep School

The under 13 girls' team champion was decided by the position of the teams' last scoring athlete – showing that cross-country is truly a team sport.

Of note is that both the u14 winners from 2010 represented the county at u15 level this year.

Thanks must be expressed to Richard Llewellyn-Eaton who 'appears' just before the start and confirms that everything is ready! Thanks must also go to his now regular band of helpers including the 'hares' to lead the novice runners around the course.

I must though conclude with a concern - two schools simply turned up on the day! Paperwork is sent to all schools in good time before the closure of entry date. (As is customary, but not necessary, a couple of days grace is often given.) So why, oh why, do some staff not follow and abide by the simply instructions? It would seem that they do not understand/appreciate the work that has to be completed behind the scenes for any event to be successful.

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Senior Championships.

This year's event took place on Millfield School's expansive and undulating "Butleigh Fields". From the outset I must pay tribute to the work completed during the previous day by the Millfield ground staff who had set the course up magnificently. I arrived early on the morning of the championships as overnight there had been (almost) gale force winds that lingered into the day. However, I should not have feared for all stakes and tape marking the course were firmly in position and remained so for the duration of the event.

Months before the day of the championships I had held productive meetings with Jason Allen to establish and walk the course. He in turn had relayed this to the ground staff and as I have indicated above all went well.

The course circled a large mounded area (two rugby pitches), which gave superb spectator viewing for the vast majority of the course, as well as tracking uphill to the furthest reaches of the playing field beyond the golf range.

At the finish a marquee (Taunton AC) was erected and furnished by tables and chairs from the hockey pavilion to enable the vast amount of administration to be completed whilst the results computer was in the pavilion itself.

Entries were slightly lower than the previous year as were the total number of finishers. As with the previous year the senior girls' race was amalgamated with the intermediate girls with the former having the bare minimum entry to select a team for future events.

Primary Results:	Individual Champion	Team Champion	Finishers
Minor Girls	Lucy Baldwin (Mendip)	Yeovil	37
Minor Boys	Patrick Free (Taunton)	Taunton	40
Junior Girls	Holly Brown (Taunton)	Mendip	44
Junior Boys	Oliver Fox (Taunton)	Taunton	36
Intermediate Girls	Emily Smith (Mendip)	Mendip	22
Intermediate Boys	Isaac Taschimowitz (Mendip)	Mendip	36
Senior Girls	Lizzie Hart (Mendip)	Mendip	9
Senior Boys	Fred Whitaker (Mendip)	Yeovil	22

Within the finish marquee athletes were met, presentations made, information taken and the new online system of selection confirmation was explained.

Thanks must be extended to Jason Allen, the Millfield ground staff, Millfield security, Ian Humphreys (computer results) team managers, the large number of officials / helpers and the numerous spectators who all contributed to make the afternoon so pleasurable.

South-West Championships.

The report on these championships is in two parts, the event from:

- i) a Somerset team perspective
- ii) the organising county.

The Somerset Team.

Selection for the team to represent the county at NAS Merryfield the following weekend took place immediately after the championships. A small number of athletes were not available due to prior important commitments or injury and two were found to be too young! Thus selection was not without difficulty but nonetheless straightforward. It was decided to select eight senior girls and as with the previous year allow them to decide if they wanted to compete.

That evening I managed to put onto the new SSAA website a list of those selected, along with reserves. On the same web page I had put a confirmation of availability email facility. This worked

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far better than I had anticipated for we could have had a team 'up and running' by Tuesday. The amount of work normally associated with team confirmation was simply not seen; only two athletes had to be chased to know their intentions. This meant that I could concentrate on the organisation of the event itself and set up the group of team managers as many regular team managers were working as event organisers.

With the championships on home soil athletes were asked to make their own way to NAS Merryfield and to my knowledge all did without concerns. Two event shelters were erected, as part of the whole course construction, for the team to meet and these worked well. One small problem, highlighting the diverse tasks undertaken by, and emphasising the need for a large number of, team managers was the complete absence of anyone to collect finishing discs at the end of the first couple of races. However, this was a small blip in what was a successful day for the entire team. As is now usual there was much support for the team from family and friends.

NAS Merryfield is an expansive venue with good spectator facilities consequently the team's success may not have been known until presentations or even the posting of results on the website.

Primary Results:	Individual Champion	Team Champion	SSAA best (Team)
Minor Girls	Lucy Baldwin (Som)	Avon	Lucy Baldwin 1st (4)
Minor Boys	Harrison Yarwood (Dor)	Somerset	Patrick Free 2 nd (1)
Junior Girls	Isobel Glaisher (Dor)	Cornwall	Holly Brown 3 rd (4)
Junior Boys	Oliver Fox (Som)	Devon	Oliver Fox 1st (3)
Intermediate Girls	Isobel Steele (Corn)	Cornwall	Emily Smith 4 th (4)
Intermediate Boys	Hobie Martin (Corn)	Wiltshire	Matt Dickenson 10 th (2)
Senior Girls	Abigail Jones (Dor)	Avon	Lizzie Hart 8 th (2)
Senior Boys	Aaron Phelps (Glos)	Gloucestershire	George Harris 19 th (5)

Thanks must go to the large group of team managers who stepped in to fill the gaps especially Dick, prised away from track and field and combined events, who collected and logged all the incoming money.

South-West Championships Organisation

A couple of years before the championships the association had decided upon, submitted proposals for and subsequently awarded the 2012 ESAA Championships. From the outset we wanted to host a 'dummy championships' and were allowed, through the South-West Schools AA, to host these championships out of rota.

It was my intention to put in place all the essential building blocks for 2012 and thus:

- many meetings were held with navy personnel before securing the booking of the airfield via officers in Dartmouth
- the course was walked, measured and inspected in conjunction with the local farmer
- maps produced
- infrastructure tendered for and eventually hired: toilets, public address, marquee, first aid, refreshments, retailers
- course equipment sourced and in some cases made
- lead officials, officials, course stewards and car park attendants engaged
- programme printer and advertisers approached

And more specific to this event:

- programme drawn up
- trophies and medals purchased; certificates printed
- results service enlisted
- information sent to counties and entries received

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On the day before the championships the infra-structure arrived and seven hard workers, myself included, set out the course. It was at this time that we had a surprise - the arrival of a pack of hounds! These were followed much later by the horsemen who had lost the pack and, it has subsequently been established, rode on parts of the airfield they should not have! As a result part of the cross-country course did have hoof prints.

As NAS Merryfield is a fully working airbase much debate had taken place at the SWSch AGM as to the time of the first race and the relative time at which teams could enter the airfield. Clear instructions were sent to all counties and also posted on the SSAA website stating that entry to NAS Merryfield could not be until 11.30. Car park attendants were instructed to arrive in ample time before this but I certainly did not expect the first car to arrive at 9.10!!

Fortunately the bulk of the vehicles started to arrive just after 11 am. Parking was clearly designated with team coaches adjacent to the start area whilst cars passed through a single file system so that a charge could be collected and programmes given. The furthest car would have been parked 200m from the start.

The first race was at 1.30 and at about 1.25 Richard and myself bumped into each other, shook hands and exclaimed "we've done it!"

Throughout the afternoon all that we had put in place seemed to have worked well, eg.

- team bases were set on high ground overlooking the start area
- stakes and tape were correctly positioned to allow for an uninterrupted course with good spectator advantage points
- the finish area had ample officials allowing results to be sent quickly to the announcer
- the public address system reached to start and finish areas and presentations were made in front giving good access to spectators
- refreshments and retail were easily accessible
- the exit from car parks, and in particular coach parks, was swift
- the sun shone throughout
- the course was fair but demanding – a "nationals' course"

To be honest a couple of things did not:

- hand washing facilities were under used
- boys urinals were wrongly positioned
- drinking water was not used.

With the eight races completed teams departed, contractors packed up and the course was taken down, in fact parts before the last race! I went home, put the results on the SSAA website and started to receive many congratulatory messages and some giving ideas for 2012:

Just a note to thank you for all your hard work before and at the weekend and also thank you to all the other volunteers who made the day such a success. The South West cross country was brilliantly organised and in my experience went off without a hitch. From parking to returning home everything was well spread out and well sign posted. All areas were within easy distance and the course was well laid out. The course was a tough but good one and I think it will be perfect for the nationals next year. Once again many thanks for a most enjoyable day.

Thanks for all your e-mails. What a terrific event it was! Besides the smoothness of the operation there was a lovely atmosphere...really competitive but nothing nasty between the athletes and all the officials were on good form as well!

Many thanks and please except my congratulations for last Saturday. It was beyond doubt the best schools event I have been to in hundreds of years - well done.

(More comments can be found in the full cross-country report.)

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I will be bold and state that the event was a resounding success. But this simply is not due to my efforts. Without Richard, Les and Jane there would not be a championships. I am indebted to their thought, support, energy, guidance and friendship. I am also indebted to the many volunteers whose time and effort contributed to the success.

Finally I have made no mention of money! To host these championships there is great expenditure but through doing things 'the Somerset way' there is also a planned income coupled to a 'bargained expenditure'. I know the accounts also show the championships were a resounding success.

National Championships.

Selection the day after the south-west championships was quite straight-forward: injured and south-west unavailable athletes were brought into the team and all eight senior girls were given the chance to opt out if they so wished. (They had become, though, such a close knit and supportive group all decided to compete.)

I again posted the team on the SSAA website with the accompanying email facility. I also emailed all representatives comprehensive and relevant documentations, including return forms, for the championships.

The team was booked into a Premier Inn a few miles from the course in Nottingham and ample time was given to arrive on the Friday evening. We are so lucky for again the coach driver was superb, reception staff well organised, greeting us with banter, and restaurant staff quick and obliging.

With the location of the Premier Inn known months before the championships many parents had again booked their rooms yielding a good social occasion before retiring early for the night – Well not that early as I, along with a couple of others, found myself locked in the restaurant!!!

Team photographs were taken before our departure to Wollaton Park which was bathed in sunshine the entire day. The parkland course was laid out on a sloping terrain with a fast downhill finish.

The whole team (athletes and team managers) accredited itself with much focus, determination, surprise and delight.

Highlights of the day were:

- Junior Girls – a storming, competitive finish by Holly Brown (14th) and Amy Cooper (15th)
- Junior Boys – a relieved but determined eighth place, and thus international vest, for Oliver Fox
- Intermediate Girls – a sound performance from Emily Smith (49th) but great determination from all to finish, whatever the problems, a very competitive event.
- Intermediate Boys – a fantastic and surprising 14th place for a delighted Rowan Preece.
- Senior Girls – a very happy Lizzie Hart completing her SSAA career in 40th but an even happier group of girls who realised what they had achieved in the season.
- Senior Boys – a hugely satisfied Blair Brown finishing 18th after a season blighted with injury and another happy supportive group of athletes.

No team trophies were won but the journey home was one with athletes who knew they had achieved success.

Sincere thanks to all team managers throughout the season:

Jane Yandell
Charlotte Fisher
Tracey Parker
Katie Cobb

Les Neville
Richard Llewellyn-Eaton
Stuart Richards
Larry Tulett
Richard Bowden
Brian Baker

Jason Allen
Adrian Palmer
Rhys Llewellyn-Eaton
Jon Leonard
John Richardson

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SIAB International.

Oliver's eighth place finish meant he was automatically selected for the SIAB home international in Antrim. There he placed eleventh and remained eighth within the team.

Full sets of results are on the SSAA website.

BB

2011 Cross-Country Teams

Minor Boys		County	S-W
Name	School		
Patrick Free	Queens	1	2
Benjiman Jones	Queens	2	7
Freddie King	Queens	8	11
Dan Wilde	Queens	3	12
Harry Cobden	Sexeys	5	17
Ross Clarke	Wellington	10	20
George Samway-Cook	Hazlegrove	7	21
James Bridge	The Park	4	27
Ben Stephenson	Queens	6	29
Toby Kingsberry	Hazlegrove	9	45
SW Team			First



Junior Boys		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Oliver Fox	King's College	1	First	8
Sam Sommerville	Stanchester	3	14	138
Charlie Martin	Millfield Senior	2	9	167
Oliver Livingstone	Queens	4	27	254
Peter Clackson	Sexeys	8	42	273
Luke Reynolds	Haygrove	7	40	280
Aaron Scott	Danesfield	9	63	328
Charlie Fraser	Wells Cathedral	10	44	dnf
Charlie Ormerod	Kingsmead	5	30	
Henry Dufosse	King's College	11	dnf	
SW Team			3	5
C group' Team				9
National Team				34



Intermediate Boys		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Rowan Preece	Castle	2	11	14
Isaac Taschimowitz	Kings of Wessex	1		67
Kieran Young	Whitstone	11	29	80
Max Patch	Holyrood	6	18	93
Matt Dickinson	King Alfreds	3	10	109
Joe Walton	Castle	4	15	111
Sam Bedford	Millfield	5	31	211
Philip Bridge	The Park	9	47	308
Ben Hawkins	Wellington	8	32	
Curtis Stevens	Whitstone	7	51	
Mat Borghi	Millfield	10	dnf	
SW Team			2	First
C group' Team				First
National Team				5



Senior Boys		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Blair Brown	Queens			18
George Harris	Yeovil College	2	19	108
Tom Austin	Yeovil College	3	24	174
Louis Voizey	Yeovil College	8	27	189
Fred Whittaker	Wells Cathedral	1	32	191
Zach Stephenson	Millfield	4		225
Alex Rogers	West Somerset	5	30	228
Alexander Toomey	Downside	7	41	258
Charles Harbord	Downside	6	37	
Ashley Martin	Huish Episcopi	9	48	
Jonathan Bentham	King's School	11	51	
Cameron Rafferty	Richard Huish	13	56	
SW Team			5	5
C group' Team				4
National Team				25



2011 Cross-Country Teams

Minor Girls		County	S-W
Name	School		
Lucy Baldwin	All Hallows	1	First
Amy D'Arcy	Stanchester	3	18
Imogen Keeling	King's Hall	7	21
Olivia Reid	King's Hall	11	23
Lydia Lavallin	Huish Episcopi	2	24
Jess Morris	Preston	5	28
Cordelia Shelidan	All Hallows	6	31
Daisy Mant	All Hallows	9	36
Clemmie Kerr	Hazlegrove	8	43
Georgia Silcox	Westfield	12	61
	SW Team		4

Junior Girls		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Holly Brown	Queens	1	3	14
Amy Cooper	Millfield Senior	2	14	15
Hannah Lidbetter	Millfield Senior	4	23	126
Jemma Jones	Sexeys	3	17	167
Marissa Stevenson	Hazlegrove	7	42	180
Aby Gibbons	Whitstone	5	30	225
Yasmin Bailey	West Somerset	9	54	306
Amy Cavender	Wells Cathedral	6	45	318
Alex Sheehan	Chilton Trinity	10	61	
Ellie Porter	Wells Cathedral	8	62	
	SW Team		4	5
	C group' Team			5
	National Team			16

Intermediate Girls		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Emily Smith	Wells Cathedral	1	4	49
Harriet Rogers	Taunton Sch	2	11	105
Hermione Toomey	Downside	5	32	159
Laura Biddiscombe	Crispin	8		200
Adele Martin	Huish Episcopi	4	18	254
Rebecca Carver	Whitstone	3		268
Penny Guess	King's College	7	35	269
Lily Hawkins	Stanchester	6	30	271
Katy Rushmer	Millfield Senior	9	43	
Esme Sheridan	Wells Blue	11	61	
Daisy Hunt	Wellington	12	62	
Hollie Gale	Chilton Trinity	10	63	
	SW Team		4	5
	C group' Team			9
	National Team			28

Senior Girls		County	S-W	National
Name	School			
Lizzie Hart	Strode College	1	8	40
Rachel Langbein	Richard Huish	2	14	102
Daisy Baggs	Huish Episcopi	5	18	109
Emily Kouirdri	Kings of Wessex	6	27	141
Jess Bejamin	Kings of Wessex	4	24	154
Jessica Potter	Yeovil College	7	35	253
Chloe Rice	Yeovil College	8	47	279
Helen Smith	Millfield Senior	3	20	dnf
	SW Team		2	4
	C group' Team			5
	National Team			21

