



SUSSEX COUNTY ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION

President: Phil Baker

Report to the Annual General Meeting on Friday 20th October 2023

With 10 medals over 9 days, Britain finished 7th on the medal table at the World Championships in Budapest back in August. Equalling a best ever medal total at a World Champs, it felt even sweeter thanks to one of our own.

With a fastest qualifying round split time of 49.70, Amber Anning won bronze in the 4 x 400m relay marking the county's first ever medal at the World Champs.

Seeing her step on to the podium was a proud moment for a county who have watched her develop over many years.

Amber started competing at county events 12 years ago, trying her hand at anything from sprints and long jump to cross country league races and park runs.

An undeniable talent from young, but equally as important an athlete who was a team player who always worked hard and respected everyone around her.

Her achievement acts as an inspiration to all of our current up and coming Sussex young athletes.

But is inspiration enough?

With many tracks and facilities not fully fit for purpose or costing extortionate amounts to upkeep or hire, it is becoming a struggle to inspire the next generation.

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With constant demands and changes imposed on grassroots athletics without due consideration and support, it is becoming a struggle to inspire the next generation.

With lengthy waiting lists and a shortage of new coaches, particularly around technical events, it is becoming a struggle to inspire the next generation.

What is the answer? As a county we constantly reiterate the message that without increased support, the issue is being kicked down the road and could easily hit a metaphoric brick wall. This said, there have been green shoots of hope in the past year with a few more officials and volunteers stepping up, but the sad fact is we need a huge amount more.

Luckily the cracks in the infrastructure don't appear to be affecting athlete numbers. The Sussex Track & Field Champs saw entries back towards pre-pandemic figures and anyone who has stood in the wind and rain at a cross country league fixture in the past year will agree races are fielding good entries,

particularly in the younger age groups. Sussex remains a hub for pole vaulters whilst triple jump and steeplechase are seeing increases in participation and in turn standards.

The county has also enjoyed some successful team and individual achievements. To name a few (and apologies to those not mentioned):

- Under 20 Miles Waterworth (Brighton Phoenix) won silver in the 800m at the Commonwealth Youth Games in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Worthing Under 17 hammer thrower Alice Howie celebrated another exceptional year with a gold and CBP (57.01) at the Sussex Track & Field Champs in May, gold at the ESSA Champs in Birmingham, gold at the SIAB International and gold at the SEAA Inter Counties in September. Her 57.68 PB puts her firmly at the top of the UK rankings.
- Tomer Tarragano (Brighton & Hove) represented Britain at the European Athletics Cross Country in December 2022.
- In the past 12 months, in both cross country and on the track, HY's Isabella Buchanan has flourished as an Under 13. She won gold at the Sussex XC Champs in January, gold in the SEAA XC Champs in January, silver at the national inter counties XC in Loughborough in March, 1500m gold at the Sussex Under 13 Track & Field Champs, gold (1500m) at the South of England Inter County Champs in July and she broke the county's Under 13 600m and 100m league records. To top this, she still has another year in the age group.
- In June Hastings' Rae Le Fae (Under 17) became the first Sussex woman to break the 5 minute barrier clocking 4:59.97 in the steeplechase – an astonishing new county record.
- Brighton & Hove AC's Dylan Calvey also enjoyed a summer of success winning the U17 men's high jump contests at the Sussex Champs and the SEAA Inter counties, then impressive silvers at the ESAA Champs the SIAB International.
- Alex Riley (Brighton & Hove 1500m) and Emilie Oakden (Lewes pole vault) won golds at the Under 20 Welsh International with Rachael Wall (Brighton & Hove javelin) silver. Both Oakden and Wall had been victorious in their respective events back at the ESAA Champs and county champs.
- Louis Opoku (Brighton & Hove) came out top at the EA Champs in August in the U17 javelin – beating all the competitors who had come out ahead of him 2 months earlier at the ESSA Champs.
- At the UK Athletics Champs in July Amber Anning was 4th in the 400m, Archie Davis (Phoenix) 8th in 800m, George Mills (Phoenix) 3rd in the men's 1500m and Ellie Baker (Phoenix) 4th women's in the 1500m.
- At the SEC Indoor Champs in Feb in America, Amber Anning ran 50.68 – a Sussex record and something which puts her 3rd on the UK all time record.
- Sussex Under 20 women took the silver team medal at the National Inter Counties XC Champs in March.

In the past year Sussex AA has worked hard to keep athletics flourishing in the county. Thank you to all the officials, representatives, coaches, volunteers, team managers who have all given up many hours of time in all conditions. You really are appreciated.

I would like to also mention the sadness we felt as a county to lose two very respected and much-loved members of our community – John Luxford and Reg Hook.

John was a member of Horsham Blue Stars for 60 years as well as a former county president and team manager.

What can I say about Reg that hasn't already been said over the past few months since he passed away – he worked tirelessly, organised events, sat on committees and captured magic athletics moments. His insight into athletics was astounding, his forward thinking was like gold dust and his contribution to the county unmatched.

There will never be another like him and on a personal and professional level, he is very much missed every day.

Anyone who knew him well would know that he was one of the most pragmatic people you could ever have met. So, with this in mind, this section will be concluded by urging some practical resolution. Sussex Athletics needs help – A LOT MORE HELP. At present a few people do a huge amount. Those people are too stretched, and it isn't sustainable. For athletics to continue to thrive and develop, the next generation of volunteers need to step up.

Reports of activities within the various areas of the county across the year are presented below.

The Development Committee

Peter Masters

· Track facilities and condition of equipment

Following last year's review of Sussex tracks and the agreement that the county would assist with county grants, since the last AGM the county has paid out £2275 to Eastbourne towards a new cage. Withdean's cage and high jump bed have been updated as has the cage at Horsham. Payments for these will be due imminently.

· Arena 80/Sussex grants

Grants were awarded to two recipients in April/May and a second 2023 wave is currently being decided upon.

· Officials

Earlier this year Peter Kennedy, the County Officials Secretary, highlighted the need for support. In light of this Christel Shaw stepped up and as a result is now also the County Officials Secretary.

In the past year Sussex AA invested in purchasing its own EDM equipment which was hired out to clubs over the summer.

Following a successful push in 2022 to recruit timekeepers, the county was in a lot more of a healthy situation in 2023. That is the good news. However, the summer has thrown up a new gap in track judges and we really need to focus some attention in this area. As already mentioned, more officials are needed across all areas to save a few doing a lot.

· Track and field development squads

The 2022/23 endurance squads successfully took place across 4 locations – Camber, Goodwood, Stanmer and Lewes. A total of 134 athletes took part. The current 2023/24 is currently being set up and will kick off next weekend. This year the criteria for selection has been tightened and will be in line with the original ethos.

Due to a lack of volunteers to run the under 13 track and field squad, it did not go ahead in 2022/23. Together with Rhiannon Row, we are determined that this won't be the case again this season. We have booked 4 dates at Horsham for the squads to take place at and are currently approaching coaches to help. We are also creating the shortlist of athletes to invite.

· Sports Hall athletics

Sports Hall athletics successfully took place at Worthing in 2022/2023. A huge thank you to Gavin Stephens, his team and all the officials for enabling this to go ahead.

Melanie Anning stepped back as Regional Sportshall Manager and into her shoes thankfully came Rhiannon Rowe, Sean Dunford and Andy Hall. At the Regional Finals, Sussex placed 3rd in both the girls and boys' competitions.

Cross Country

By Phil Baker

As we are already embarking on the 2023 – 2024 winter season, it is good to be reminded as to what happened last year among the fast pace of modern day living. We were pleased to have a full season of fixtures although the Inter-Counties were in doubt until the last minute. It seemed a long winter with the cold lasting until Easter and once again the Sussex schools at Waterhall probably winning the prize for the most challenging conditions. Once again, our thanks go to the hosts of county events, Chichester and HY Runners for the Relays and Main Championship with a combination of clubs stepping in for the Masters at Coombe Farm, Lancing. Chichester, Haywards Heath at Ardingly and Brighton plus friends hosted the league fixtures with Kate Matthews doing a great job in getting the results out in such good time. We lost one of our Sussex Cross Country stalwarts in John Luxford from Horsham Blue Star whom your current county President remembers as his team manager way back in the late 1960's. We also said a big thank-you to Gail Nerurkar and Dave Leach who are passing the baton as team managers for the Inter-Counties, Gail having done this job for nearly a decade while Dave has been a focal point for Sussex for the past 22 years – we will miss their contribution.

Cross Country Relays at Goodwood

As usual the season started at Goodwood with the Relays with team winners distributed among no less than seven clubs with Brighton & Hove and Eastbourne winning the under 13's girls and boys respectively, Crawley and Bodyworks the under 15's and Eastbourne and Brighton Phoenix the under 17's. While Brighton & Hove won the senior women's race by a clear minute, there was even more of a margin in the senior men's race with Chichester winning the event for the first time and over four minutes ahead of Crawley and Brighton. The Chichester duo of Will Broom and Ned Potter recorded the 3rd and 4th fastest times ever, only bettered by Phoenix athletes Jon Pepper and Ben Tickner. The veteran team winners were Phoenix, Eastbourne and Chichester for the women and Brighton & Hove, Phoenix and of course Horsham Joggers for the over 60 men.

Main Championships at Bexhill

Once again we have to thank Terry Skelton and his team for hosting a great day's racing for the main Championships. Individual winners were well spread with Rex Hastings and Amelia Skelton winning the under 11 races to start the day's action. In the under 13 events both individual winners led their teams to victory with HY Runners and Isabella Buchanan starring for the girls while George Gilbert led his Brighton & Hove team in the boy's race. This was the start of a Brighton boys clean sweep with Finlay Goodman and Alexander Riley leading their club to wins in the under 15 and under 17 age groups respectively. Freda Pearce from Eastbourne and Yasmin Kashdan won the two girls age groups with Lewes and Brighton emerging as team winners. Brighton Phoenix pairing of Matt Geddes and Mia Edwards came first out of the under 20's while there were new winners in both the men's and women's senior races. Beth Garland travelled down from Scotland where she is based as a doctor and made up for the year before when she had to retire with a twisted ankle. Having recently won the Great Edinburgh run when coming off a night shift, she had a minute to spare over Verity Hopkins of Tonbridge but could not stop Lewes from pipping her Chichester quartet to team victory. Until this fixture, Chichester had never won a senior title in spite of a number of minor medals over the previous 40 years. They now have two as Ned Potter showed a clean pair of heels to the men's field with a clear margin of over a minute to Fin McNally of Brighton Phoenix. However that was not where the excitement finished as third placer Jacob Cann was joined by a strong quintet of Horsham Blue Star teammates. Brighton & Hove packed well as usual to score 6 in the first 22 places. All eyes were on Horsham's 6th scorer and Joshua Barnett's 26th place was enough to secure the senior team title for his club for the first time in their history – the margin of victory: Horsham 81 points, Brighton & Hove 82 points.

Masters Championships at Coombe Farm, Lancing

The downland course again provided good competition with Neli Boniface, Chris Gilbert, John Lowden and Tony Lintern winning their respective men's age groups while for the women there were wins for Rachel Hillman, Susy Rushworth, Geraldine Moffat and Chris Naylor. Haywards Heath, Brighton Phoenix, Arena 80 and Horsham Joggers were victorious in the team standings.

Loughborough Inter-Counties

Sussex more than held their own in the main national inter-counties fixture at Loughborough with several team top 10 placings among the 44 counties, the highlight being a superb silver from the under 20 team of Emily Muzio, Ciara Muzio, Amelia Cox and Eadie Yelling. Individual top 10 placings are notoriously difficult to achieve at this event but Sussex had a trio of star performers with HY Runner Isabella Buchanan gaining a fantastic silver in the under 13 girls race. This was followed by a 5th from Brighton & Hove's George Gilbert in the under 13 boys event and an 8th spot from under 17 Miles Waterworth of Brighton Phoenix.

Sussex Cross Country League

The four fixtures at Goodwood, Ardingly Showground with two in Stanmer Park were well supported with over 600 athletes in action. Overall Brighton & Hove had the most convincing margin in the senior men's standings and also won the veterans category but with a much smaller amount – Lewes were the runners-up on each occasion. With a very impressive turnout, Lewes more than made up for this by emerging as top of the standings in both the senior and veterans women's categories. Brighton & Hove, however dominated the junior age group winning 5 out of the 6 team awards including both under 17 titles, always a difficult feat. There was also a record lowest ever aggregate points score in the under 15 boys category with Brighton & Hove again on top scoring a mere total of 36 points from the 4 fixtures.

Road Running

By Kate Matthews

Despite efforts to recruit volunteers, we still do not have a county road running panel, and as a result have experienced gaps in this area.

The little we have done has been thanks to Tom Ulliot and Gavin Stephens.

Firstly, last November, Tom organised an inter county 10K fixture within the Brighton 10K, and he will be doing so again in a few weeks. Then he took a team to the Essex 20 in March.

Gavin took the lead for the second year running organising the Sussex Road Relays at Preston Park, Brighton.

A huge thank you to both of these for all their efforts.

Sussex Indoor Championships

By Melanie Anning

The 2023 Sussex Indoor Championships saw a notable increase in under-13 entries, and a 50% rise across all categories compared to the previous year. This surge in participation, coupled with the absence of cross-country or national fixture clashes, gave the event a sense of returning to the pre-pandemic normal.

There were two outright Championship Best Performances (CBP) and an equal CBP. Brighton & Hove AC under-15 Jaiten Best, the reigning Triple Jump champion, successfully defended her title by leaping to 10.10m. In the under-13 boys' Long Jump, her clubmate Louis Ashworth made an impressive leap of 4.68m, smashing the previous record by 34 centimetres. In the pole vault, Lewes under-20, Isaac Lancaster achieved a personal best (PB) of 4.30m, equalling the championship record that Lewes's Jack Harris and Crawley's George Turner shared.

Bryn Smith, a multiple Sussex medallist, secured victory in the Senior Men's 60m with a time of 6.95s, narrowly missing the 2012 record. Meanwhile, Brighton's Bradley Eisnor dominated the hurdles with a winning time of 8.68 seconds.

In the U20 men's 60m final, Chichester's Dominic Barth clinched first place in 7.03s, followed by Brighton's Noah Grant-Barwis and Worthing's Ethan Crane in 7.18s and 7.28s, respectively.

Crawley's Holly Gregory (née Turner) debuted in the 60m event in a close battle with her clubmate Adeline Preston. Gregory emerged as the winner with a time of 7.92s, just 6/100ths ahead of Preston. Brighton's Aneira Farrar-Daniel took third place with 8.15, marking a solid comeback after a five-year hiatus due to injuries.

Jade Brewster (Crawley) won the senior long jump title with a leap of 5.02m, while Brighton's Amber Purcell claimed the under-20 crown with a 5.08m jump and secured the triple jump title with 10.73m. Stella Kalman, also from Brighton, won the under-17 long jump with 5.16m, closely followed by Crawley's Madeleine Way, who jumped 5.02m. In the U15 category, Crawley's Kiera Bruce jumped a season's best of 4.55m, securing the win just eight centimetres ahead of her clubmate Mia Barnes.

Sophie Hogton (Crawley) had a successful day, winning the U20 women's 60m in a PB of 7.96s and later claiming the 60m hurdles title with another PB of 9.38s. The U17 women's 60m title went to Crawley's Charlotte Rayner in 8.17s, with Eastbourne's Caitlyn Spencer and Lewes' Thalia Witham taking second and third place, respectively.

Lewes pole vaulter Amalie Smith Jarman achieved a 10cm PB of 3.35m to secure the top spot in the U20 women's competition. In the U15 girls' competition, Phoebe Scott of Lewes jumped a personal best of 2.70m, outperforming her clubmates Ava Hayes and Ayla Kimpton-Bragg.

Brighton's Charlie Fisher, last year's U15 60m champion, excelled in the U17 age group, emerging as the fastest qualifier from the heats and securing the title in 7.35s. Daniel Allan from Brighton won the U17 hurdles title with a PB time of 8.94 and had earlier pole vaulted to a PB of 3.70m, earning him fifth place in the UK rankings.

In the U17 women's Triple Jump, Harriet Yelling of Worthing achieved a PB of 10.17m to claim the title, with her clubmate Alice Howie winning the shot put with a PB of 10.65m.

The U15 boys' triple jump featured top performances, with Worthing's George Barker winning with 10.19m. In the pole vault, Lewes' U15 athlete Ivan Wray jumped to a height of 2.90m, moving to fourth place in the UK rankings, alongside Crawley's Milo Hilborne, who competed in an older age group.

The U13 category had two events: the long jump and the 60m sprint. Notably, the boys' 60m had enough participants for heats this year. Brighton & Hove AC athletes dominated the final, with Matthew Reid securing the gold medal in 8.74s, just ahead of long jump champion Louis Ashworth (8.78s). For the under-13 girls, Worthing's Eva Taylor achieved a double victory, winning the long jump with a leap of 4.28m and the 60m in 8.81s, while Brighton's Klara Novak took the silver in both events.

It was a strong two days of competition. We thank all the officials and volunteers from Sussex and Surrey who ensured the competition ran smoothly across the weekend.

Race Walking

By Ron Penfold

Sad to report the death in the past year of Dave Boxall one of Sussex's great ultra distance walkers. He specialised in races over 50 miles and regularly raced on the continent winning many 200k races, as reported in the February Walking Report. And of Reg Hook a great supporter of race walking over the years, he will greatly missed.

The national walking scene is just about back to where it was before the Pandemic shutdown, but still with smaller fields, walkers today do not want to travel far to races, unlike us in the heyday of race walking when we would catch an early train up to York, race 10 miles and travel back again the same day.

To encourage walkers, especially the youngsters, a 4 match series of track meetings with races over 2k,3K and 5K has been set up in memory of Ray Hall a GB international, these will be Category 'A' races, so unfortunately will exclude some of the older walkers who have trouble straightening their knees .

Again it has been a below average year for Sussex walking.

We still have a small core of regular Sussex walkers, and some that just do the local races, it is difficult to get them to enter the championships or big races very often, it does not help that most are now getting on in age and suffer with injuries and other ailments, although we have had a past good runner turn out and race several times.

Partly because of clashes with other races our 3 County Track Championships were again poorly supported, we could only get 3 walkers to the start lines, one in the Masters and Senior 3K held at Carlshalton with Surrey AA, and 2 in the 10K at Coulsdon, luckily held in with other counties, whom also had very few walkers, It does not help that the races are held in Surrey with other counties. We will look at getting the 3K Seniors and Masters and the 2K YAG's back into our Main May Championships next year.

On a better note the walking races included in with the Sussex Master T&F League were well supported with good performances from the first few, we hope to get some of them to enter some of our local races, of which there are 7 in Sussex over the winter.

Notable performances this year have been by.

Ian Richards 1st EVAA M75 5K Track. 3rd WMA Indoor M70 3K. 1st BMAF M75 5K Road.

Ian Torode 1st BMAF Indoor M65 3K. 3rd BMAF M65 5K Road.

Nigel Gates getting his first BMAF medal for race walking 3rd M70 5K Road.

Peter Selby still continues to hold coaching sessions at the Lewes Track on a Saturday morning, and says he has a nice little group training. Athletes from other clubs are very welcome to come along and give race walking a try.

Track and Field

By Kate Matthews

The 2023 Sussex track and field season closed on Sept 10th with the Under 15/17 Inter Counties at Horspath, Oxford. Kari Sprostranov and Verity Cox brilliantly team managed for the day and the county enjoyed some success with Dylan Calvey (B&H) U17M high jump gold, Dulcie Yelling (B&H) U17W javelin silver, Grace Tuesday (Lewes) U17W 800m silver, Arun Khursheed (B&H 1500m bronze) and Alice Howie (Worthing) U17W hammer gold.

The event marked the end of what has been a brilliant (and long) summer.

Back in May, at the county champs at Crawley, we had just under 1000 entries – a number matching that of pre-covid – and four CBPs. These included 2 by U17 Hastings' Rae Le Fay in the 800m (2:11:45) and the 1500m (4:32.08). Jaiten Best (Brighton & Hove) leapt 10.86 in the U15 girls' triple jump and as previously mentioned Alice Howie (Worthing) threw 57.01 in the hammer. Alice won 5 medals in total across the weekend! Thank you to Kate Leyshon who was an amazing help on the Sunday.

The U13 Champs with U11 Quadkids clashed with the English Schools. Thankfully Rhiannon Rowe and Christel Shaw stepped in for me on the day and everything went relatively smoothly (if we ignore the glitch with the Quadkid result system).... Over the day Isabella Buchanan (HY) ran a 1500m CBP of 4:42.72, Brighton & Hove's Louis Ashworth won 3 medals including a long jump CBP of 5.03m. Archie Oates, Crawley, threw a phenomenal discus CBP of 33.44 and Amelia Dorrington (Brighton and Hove) retained the Quadkid title and broke the record with 262 points.

In 2022, due to a lack of team manager, the county did not send a team to the SEAA U20/senior inter county match. This year Phil Sproston stepped up and was rewarded with a string of golds on the day including Lewes' Pyers Lockwood's CBP of 54.80 in the 400mH, Jimmy Seacombe (Worthing) won both the 100m and 200m, Under 20 Brighton and Hove AC's Ciara Muzio 1st in the 1500m as was team mate Fionn O'Murchu in the men's race and SW Livvy Connor (Brighton and Hove) in the 100mH.

Across the summer there were 4 Under 15 League fixtures (all held at Withdean, Brighton), with Brighton and Hove league team winners. At the first match Crawley's Isabella Akpoveta broke the 100m record and then went on to continuously break it again clocking a league best of 12.2. She also broke the 200m with 25.9. Team mate Christiano Anah broke the boys' 100m record with 11.3. Brighton and Hove's Saul Bennett clocked 2:04.3 in the final fixture to break the boys' 800m record.

The Under 13s are divided into 2 divisions (East and West) for the first 3 fixtures, then all clubs join together to compete in the final held at the K2, Crawley, in September. Crawley were winners in the West and Brighton & Hove winners in the East and overall. Thank you to the following clubs who hosted fixtures across the season: Crawley, Horsham Blue Stars, Brighton & Hove, Lewes and Eastbourne. League record breakers were Isabella Buchanan in the 600m and 1000m and Crawley's Archie Oates in the discus with 34.63.

Archie's summer PB of 41.49 ranks him number 1 in the UK and was actually performed while representing Sussex at the South of England Under 13 Inter Counties at Walton in July. I team managed this one and as always was so impressed with the attitude and enthusiasm of all the youngsters. Other notable performances included Isabella Buchanan's win in the 1500m and Seren Rowe (Brighton & Hove) 3rd in the 800m.

Following on from a 2022 chaotic Masters Champs being held within the Surrey equivalent, the county was looking to rethink in 2023. This led us to include the Masters Track Champs within the May Champs, and then the plan was to hold a Field Champs in September at Lewes. Unfortunately,

this was cancelled at the last minute due to unforeseen issues at Lewes track. Again it is obvious we need a re-think for 2023.

Sussex Schools

Sussex Schools Championships Tues 17th Jan - Waterhall - Simon Lilley

Thanks to everyone who helped make the 2023 Sussex Schools Cross Country Championships at Waterhall Playing Fields, Brighton, a huge success. The turnout was fantastic (record Junior boys' numbers), the weather kind and our team of volunteers who register, record, time keep, judge, set up the course, marshal etc as nuggets of gold and we owe them enormous gratitude for making the event possible through giving their time and expertise.

What went well:

- Most athletes and schools registered online accurately.
- All races set off on time due to excellent admin for coaches, teachers etc getting there on time and warmed up.
- Only a few injuries or complications. Mild asthma, hamstring, ankle etc.

Even better next year:

- Schools amend the entry spreadsheet on the day before the event to delete non-runners or change names.
- Schools do not appear at registration and enter multiple athletes having not entered any online.
- Say thanks to any volunteers who run the event. We need them to turn up next year to make it happen again.
- Woodchip on entry and exit to the hill on far side of course.

In all a brilliant day of racing and good preparation for all the athletes representing Sussex at the Inter Counties and English Schools.

SEISC Cross Country 4th Feb - Ardingly - Sue Thomas

On a cold but dry day, Sussex entered a total of 89 athletes in the 6 age groups, competing on a challenging course at Ardingly Showground, against Berkshire, Essex, Kent, Hampshire and Surrey. Sussex had 2 individual medallists - Alexander Sproston (Senior Boys) and Alice Cox (Inter Girls). We also won 2 age groups - Intermediate Girls and Senior Boys and this is very encouraging with the English Schools on the horizon. Overall, a very encouraging display by all the Sussex teams. The four remaining places in each team for this event will be announced shortly.

Special thanks to Leanne Buxton for co-organising this event with help from officials from the other counties and to the Team Managers who helped on the day. One comment going forward - Could athletes/parents who drop out of the course please find their Team Manager to let them know they are ok and not disappear off home! Overall, an enjoyable event. Representatives from English Schools were murmuring that this could be a good venue for future years - watch this space!

Yr7&8 Sussex Championships Tues 28th Feb - Christ's Hospital - Sue Thomas & Ryan Doyle

Thanks to everyone who contributed to make the 2023 Year 7 and 8 Cross Country Championships a very successful event. The turnout was amazing (Year 7 girls had 250 runners) All made possible with fantastic help from Christ's Hospital staff and students as well as a small band of Sussex officials.

What Went Well

- Course management - venue, grounds staff, first aid and course superb.
- Help of officials.
- Students from Christ's Hospital marshalling.
- Weather.
- Number of entrants - approx 200 in races.
- Envelopes all prepped.
- Online entry works well but needs to go out with the results of the Senior cross country.

Even Better If

- Schools enter on time - closing date before half term.
- Set date early with Hannah for roughly the same time next year.
- Do not use envelopes and tokens - have two sets of two recorders at the funnel for cross checking of finishing order.
- Write names on numbers instead of bits of paper.
- No laptops - results typed in afterwards.

ESAA Championships 18th March - Nottingham report by Sue Thomas

Team Managers - Tim Brown, Sue Thomas, Jason Jeffery, Emma Satterley and Vince Golding

The organisation for this event was very difficult for Sussex and especially for Leanne. We had great difficulty in finding group accommodation for the 48 athletes and 5 team managers, so in the end it was decided that athletes would have to travel up to Nottingham with their parents. 11 athletes had difficulty with this, so Jason swung into action and booked a 17 seater minibus to cater for these athletes and the Team Managers and drove us all the way there and back - heroic! He also managed to get a last minute hotel booking at Premier Inn at Loughborough too!

So to the Cross Country races at Wollaton Park, Nottingham. All Athletes arrived safely at the venue and the races started. The Intermediate girls were off first and ran superbly well and packed in their numbers. As a result they won the trophy for having all 8 runners finishing with the lowest number of points Rosie Gasson (Brighton Girls) was our highest finisher in 27th place. Further placings were Ava James (40), Stephanie Shaw(57), Alice Cox (66), Ray Le Fay (73), Eloise Hudson (81), Esme Stephenson (91), and Dulcie Yelling (155) Total number of runners -338.

The Junior boys followed and with a number of Year 8 runners in the team, they found the going tough. The team finished a creditable 11th with 555 points. Finishing positions as follows :- George Gilbert (62), Freddie Boniface (76), Fin Lumber-Fry (83), Ben Hutton (86), Alex Roberts (87), Jonah Messer (160), Michael O'Connor (167) and Saul Bennett (232)

The Junior girls were outstanding and in the team event finished as runners-up to Surrey with 308 points. First runner home was Daisy Connor (20), closely followed by her teammates - Freda Pearce (35), Molly Smithers (39), Bibi Webb (46), Elsie Whyman(66), Julianna Walsh (99), Eva Winton (119), and Evie Lennard (199). This bodes well for the future.

The first two Sussex runners in the Intermediate boys team, Lucas Gorrill and Finlay Goodman had excellent runs and finished 18th and 19th respectively. Owen Wallek (37), Fin Sutcliffe (82), Charlie Leedham (), Jonathan Beckett (145) and Jude Clayton (181) all finished well and the team finished 6th overall. Unfortunately Rowan Curtis was ill before the start of his race, so he did not run.

Both Senior teams finished 4th overall which was excellent. The best run of the day was from Yasmin Kashdan who finished in 6th place in the girls race. She was ably supported by Amelia Cox (29), Eleanor Strevens (66), Eadie Yelling (67), Cerys West (94), Ellie McLean (111) Lisa Shi (164) and Ella Ayden (178).

In the boys race the first runner home in an excellent 10th place was Miles Waterworth. He was followed home by Matt Geddes (25), Alex Sprotson (31), Alex Riley (50), Henry Yelling(70), Luke Newton (97) and Charlie Ferris (118)

All these results show that schools cross country running in Sussex is in a very healthy condition! Well done to all the athletes who ran so positively. A special thanks to all the team managers who give freely of their time - Tim Brown, Sue Thomas, Emma Satterley, Vince Golding but especially to Jason Jeffery for booking our accommodation and driving some of us to Nottingham!

SESIC Year 7&8 25th March - Tonbridge

The Inter Counties event was held at Somerhill School at Tonbridge. The weather was very blustery but dry, and the course was very challenging with a number of steep hills. Luckily it was not too wet underfoot. We had selected 20 athletes in each of the 4 races but unfortunately a number of athletes did not take up their selection and so we did not have full teams. Some of this may have been because some of the private prep schools had already broken up. Next year we will give out 5 reserve letters for each age group.

However all the athletes competed well in the difficult conditions.

Best performance was a silver medal for Taylor Thom Watts in the Year 7 Boys. Gracie Fox was our highest placing in the Year 7 Girls and Evie Lennard (11th) and Finley Lumber Fry (6th) in the Year 8 events. Thanks to new team helpers - Suzy Casebourne (St Bedes Prep) and Neil Thomas (Heathfield CC)

Full results as follows:- **Year 7 Girls** : Gracie Fox (9), Elise Aston (19), Seren Rowe (29), Caira Olney (30), Iris Hunter (43), Phoebe Sutton (50), Annabel Axford (51), Zoe White (63), Antalya Cole (63), Maeve Jennings (71), Elise Forman (73), Chyna Wai (74) Team Sussex A 4th Sussex B 11th

Year 7 Boys

Taylor Thom Watts (2), Max Seddon (22), Oliver Brophy (27), Louis Ashworth (36), Joshua Webster (42), Jasper Burton (43), Max Gayle (47), Zach Collinson (51), Byron Roberts (58), Oliver Aylward (63), Harrison Crellin-Elligate (68), Harrison Clowe (71) Team - Sussex A 5th Sussex B 10th

Year 8 Girls

Evie Lennard (11), Elodie Hill (20), Isola Crawford (31), Aurelia Dinnage (35), Megan Hopkins-Parry (39), Ayla Millward (43), Elodie Clayton (44), Florence Tuesday (49), Mia Potton (54), Tey Muir (55), Molly Burton (56), Mylie Corbett (60), Kira Dunford (61), Isla Hill (69), Rosie Ferguson (76)
Team Sussex A 6th Sussex B 9th

Year 8 Boys

Finley Lumber Fry (6), Jack Jordan (14), Matthew Lones (34), Thomas Crewe (50), Sammy Harkin (53), Oscar Swift (56), Ewan Delgado -Howell (58), Ben Stewart (60), Harry Cruttenden (67)
Team - 6th

Open combined events 31st May - K2 Crawley

Well organised mainly by Surrey. 12 Sussex boys (mainly U13) and 10 Sussex girls entered. I believe this is higher than last year. Gave some idea of who to enter into the Regional round. Potential in the U13 girls which was won by a Sussex athlete K Pifti (Eastbourne) and A Koloutsos finished 3rd.

Sussex Schools championships 10th June - K2 Crawley

A big thank you to everyone who helped with the championships. Attendance overall was 77% which is nearly 10% up from 2019 and 2022. Entries were generally okay before the event, however athletes still turned up on the day who hadn't been entered and told to turn up in case the others

don't. There was an issue in the field event as we did change a couple of event times and some athletes didn't check the website.

Field cards were completed electronically and Dave Freeman sorted the duty sheet, but as always I am so thankful to all the officials who work with very little time off. We did have a few more volunteers which helped, this is still an area that needs to improve.

The electronic timing files were transferred and used for the official results, and a database set up for field events. The electrics were not working for the first few events but luckily the team got it sorted. This was made more efficient with the use of a field database. Big thanks to Tim Kimber and Marilyn Morgan. Also thank you to Richard Carter for being the announcer.

Having the card reader on the gate made a massive difference and meant we were not dealing with so much cash, although we still had a fair amount. This year we also had a digital programme which was accessed via a QR code. This worked well although the setting out of the programme needs to be improved. The timetable could also be accessed this way too.

Many thanks go to everyone involved in the championships; Mandy for the smooth operation of the track and all the officials, ground staff, team managers, caterers, volunteers and anyone else who helped on the day that I may have missed.

Records: There were seven CBPs:

Grace Tuesday, IG 800m (2:09.80), Amelia Cox (Hazelwick) SG 1500m steeplechase (5:03.53), Ava James (LOGS) IG 1500m steeplechase (5:15.70, Alice Howie (Davison) IG Hammer (57.68), Dulcie Yelling (Varndean School) IG Javelin (44.25m), Rachael Wall (BHASVIC) SG Javelin 41.44, Louis Opoku (Kings) IB Javelin 61.82.

Cuncliffe Cup 17th June - Basingstoke

The team had a few drop outs towards the end of the week, however there were some cracking performances on the day that secured team places for the national finals. Thanks to Sue, Ryan and Leanne for managing on the day and Becci for dealing with the entries and emails in the week. We got athletes to sign for the borrowed vests which definitely helped in getting them returned.

There was an issue with the IB 100m hurdles where a hurdle was misplaced, reminiscent of the last time the event was at Basingstoke.

ESAA Regional CE 24th/25th June - Middlesex

Sussex had six athletes representing the county. Two JB, JG, 1 IG and SG. Unfortunately, there was confusion with the location so two athletes went to the wrong place. The team gained PB's and had a great experience with Tallulah SG the only Sussex representative to make the finals in September.

ESAA T&F Championships 30th June/1st July - Birmingham

Sussex took 63 athletes to the championships this year. The team had many distance athletes, javelin throwers and vaulters, which highlights the strengths of coaching in the county. 11 medals were won; 3 gold (Alice Howie IG hammer, Rachael Wall SG javelin, Emilie Oakden SG pole vault), 4 silver (Alex Riley SB 1500m, Miles Waterworth SB 800m, Dylan Calvey IB high jump, Beth Boyes JG pole vault), 4 bronze (Gemma Tutton SG pole vault, James Pratt SB javelin, Isaac Lancaster SB pole vault, Dulcie Yelling IG javelin). Sussex also had 7 fourth placed athletes.

The team were generally well behaved and demonstrated support for one another. A big thank you to Ryan for sorting the entries and being the link between parents, athletes and management leading up to the champs, Tim for leading over the three days, Sue, Judy, Jason and Trevor for looking after the athletes so well considering you were stretched.

ESAA CE Finals 16/17th September – Bedford

Sussex Schools had one athlete at the finals. Tallulah Sullivan in the senior girls heptathlon. Day 1 didn't go to plan with a fall earlier in the week, confidence for the hurdles was knocked. A safe run was completed, along with solid performances in the other events.

Day two started with a close to pb performance in the long jump, pb in the javelin and a strong 800m to finish 16th. Tallulah now moves on to Loughborough to continue her athletics.

Obituaries

In 2022/23, Sussex AA was sad to report the passing of the following stalwarts:

- Dick Morley, 94, who was responsible for bringing ESAA cross country to Sussex sadly passed away in November 2022.
- Eastbourne stalwart, official and county athletes, Angela Morgan, died in November 2022 aged 63 year.
- Brighton & Hove AC runner and race Walker Dave Boxall passed in January 2023.
- Former Sussex president, county team manager and Horsham stalwart, John Luxford, 89, died in May 2023.
- Brighton & Hove AA and Sussex AA legend, Reg Hook, died aged 88 in May 2023.

Kate Matthews 2023