

# Somerset Team Managers Report for 2007

During the 2006/7 seasons Somerset competed as never before as a county, taking in U11 and U15 Sportshall events, SW and National Cross Country events, SW road running events and four different Track and Field matches. While Somerset supports a number of events at South West and South of England level on our own, at National events we were combined again with Avon.

## Sportshall Athletics

We started the year on a great note as our under 11's repeated the previous years showing at the South West Sportshall Festival, with the boys winning and girls finishing second. The under 13 and under 15 events were not as well attended as there are few athletes in these age groups taking part.

## Cross Country

The year kicked off with the first ever South West Inter-County Cross Country event at Bicton College, with representatives from all seven counties. Somerset athletes won three of the ten individual age-group titles (Naomi Speake U13G, George Harris U13B, Nathan Young U15B) and had three more medallists (Blair Brown 3<sup>rd</sup> U13B, Catherine Blew 3<sup>rd</sup> U15G, Laura Parker 3<sup>rd</sup> U17W). The county won the U13G and U15B teams, and finished second at U13B, U15G and U20M. On an overall basis Somerset finished 3<sup>rd</sup> behind Devon and Avon thanks mainly to a poor turn-out of our senior runners.

The UK Inter-County match at Nottingham in March was a mixed bag. Apart from a 4<sup>th</sup> place for the U13G and good runs from Isla Ness (19<sup>th</sup> U13G), Shannon Kurlle (50<sup>th</sup> U13G) and Charlie Maclean (6<sup>th</sup> U15B) both individual and team performances were disappointing. The final race of the day altered all that as Avon & Somerset had the first two men home, with Somerset's Frank Tickner winning from Avon's Ben Node. With Adrian Merriott 16<sup>th</sup> and Andy Hennessy 32<sup>nd</sup>, the men's team won a great victory, and with all 9 runners over the line in the top 87 the county also won the 9 man trophy. Somerset representation in the combined Avon & Somerset squad was down with 41% of both the competitors and scoring team members being from Somerset.

## Track and Field

The CAU Inter-Counties at Bedford saw a very small county contingent, with most of the squad being made up of Bath Performance Squad athletes, though Adrian Merriott was well placed in the 5000m.

The SEAA U15/U20 match was held in early August back at the impressive Coptall stadium. Overall, a depleted team finished 13<sup>th</sup> out of the 16 counties that competed. Highlights of the day were Liam Biddlecombe's double in the U15B Shot (15.04m) and Discus (47.47m) and sixteen year-old Dominic Henry's second place in the U20M 800m in 1:59.1. Pete Baker (2000m S/C) and Kyra Hawkins (U20W 800m) ran well for 4<sup>th</sup> places, while Rebecca David (sprints), Nick Clements (sprints) and Curtis Gibson (U15B 800m) all made the finals.

With a change to the date of the SW Inter-Counties, we managed to send a team to the Southern U13 match at Kingsmeadow. With a fairly depleted team performance, the best efforts came from Grant McConnell (4<sup>th</sup> DT 26.10m) and Dan Barker (5<sup>th</sup> LJ 4.71m).

The South West Inter-Counties went off very well, with increased participation by all 7 counties. After some very tight competition Somerset ended the match in 4<sup>th</sup> place, behind Devon, Dorset and Avon. Individual winners included Roo Black (U13G High Jump), Naomi Speake (U15G 1500m), Katherine Blew (U17W 2000m Steeplechase), Charlie Maclean (U17M 2000m Steeplechase), Henry Biss (U17M Triple Jump), Freddie Biss (U17M Javelin), Rebecca David (U20W 100m and 200m), Katie Wickman (SW Discus), Pete Grist (SM 1500m), and Nathan Young (competing as an U20M managed to win the 1500m outright at the age of 15!).

## Road Running

This year saw the continued growth of the South West's Inter-Counties events (over to John for a report).

## Team Managers etc.

Many thanks to everyone who has helped out with team managing this year, particularly to Julie Singleton, Graham Norris, Bruce Pointer and David Cooke, and also to Dick Bowden for his schools input, and to our colleges from north of the river. I look forward to another busy and successful year next year.

Ian Humphreys, County Team Manager