

South West Athletics League 2009

Taunton Athletic Club celebrates its first league series victory having clinched first place by just one point.

Report provided by Charlotte Fisher:

(images Chris Holmes)

The final fixture in Division 1 of the South West Athletics League took place at Exeter Arena last weekend (6th September) with three clubs all hoping to secure the series. Going into the final meeting there were just 2 points separating Taunton, Yeovil Olympiads and Cornwall AC.



With a number of Taunton's highest points scoring athletes unavailable, plus a couple of last minute withdrawals prior to the start of the day the team managers were sceptical about Taunton's chances, but a tremendous team spirit from those athletes who were available enabled Taunton to secure a big lead over Yeovil early on in the day, but chasing Cornwall AC. By the end of the day Cornwall had managed to win the fixture, but not the series which for the first time in the club's history went to Taunton. The final league positions were: 1st Taunton AC, 2nd Cornwall AC, 3rd Yeovil Olympiads, 4th Poole AC, 5th Newquay & Par, 6th Newton Abbot, 7th Dorchester and 8th Team Bath.

Five years ago Taunton AC were competing in Division 2, following promotion to Division 1 the first couple of years were spent trying to avoid relegation. Last year the club finished mid-table and resolved to ensure consistency of the teams' performance across the series with ambitions of winning the series. Patience, developing strength in depth of the athletes at the club and enthusiastic and committed team managers have ensured success.

In the separate age groups Taunton won the U17 Mens, U15 Boys, and U13 Boys categories, with U17/Senior Women and U15 Girls finishing 3rd.

On the day the club produced winners in 27 events (15 A string & 12 B string), gaining maximum points for the club on the day were:

A String Events

U17 Women (Discus) – Bethany Harrison
Senior Women (400m & 1500m) – Catherine Blew
U13 Boys (75m Hurdles) – Ashley Harper
U13 Boys (100, 200 & 800m) – Luke Reynolds
U13 Boys (Javelin) – Will Larkman
U15 Boys (Javelin) – Charlie Granville
U17 Mens (400m Hurdles) – Simon Cooper
U17 Mens (Discus) – Ben Thompson
U17 Mens (Long Jump) – Ben Davies
U20 Mens (100 & 200m) – Tom Shaw
U13 Boys (4 x 100m) – Relay Team

B String Events

U15 Girls (200m) – Abigail Barton
U15 Girls (1500m) – Charlotte Rogers
Senior Women (400m) – Rachel Langbein
U13 Boys (75m Hurdles) – Arthur Friend
U13 Boys (100m) – Joe Macconnell
U13 Boys (800m) – Euan Friend
U15 Boys (Javelin) – Oliver Heal
U15 Boys (High Jump) – Matthew Sparkes
U17 Mens (800m) – Blair Brown
U17 Mens (3000m) – Rowan Preece
U17 Mens (Discus) – Robin Danaher
U17 Mens (Long Jump) – Josh Searle

Such was the strength in the Taunton U13 boys age group that of a potential maximum points score of 152 points they scored 119 pts with only 1 performance of 4th that fell outside a top 3 finish (from 8 potential competitors in each event).



Of course there were many more club athletes who competed valiantly for the club picking up crucial team points in the minor places and giving there very best in events not always in their specialist area. For example the slightly built distance runners, Catherine Blew, Holly Brown & Charlotte Rogers collected points in shot and discus. Distance runners Isaac Taschimowitz & Ben Hawkins gave their best in the sprints despite a distinct lack

of fast twitch fibres. National javelin thrower Robin Danaher ventured over the hurdles, whilst older senior and veteran members of the club covered as many of the event gaps as their state of fitness and injuries would allow.

All in all it was a complete team effort by everyone involved.

For Full details of all performances from Match 4 and also results of all earlier SWAL matches during the 2009 season see our [SWAL pages](#) on the Taunton AC web-site.