

MIRACLES DO HAPPEN! (SW SPORTS HALL CHAMPIONSHIPS REPORT)

Avon's Schools youngsters proved too strong for South-West opposition by winning all 4 team titles at the South-West Sportshall championships at Torbay Leisure Centre. They retained their 2012 titles in style -- but not without incident.

Whilst the Under 13 Girls won by a clear 50 points from Devon, featuring 12 podium places and 2 Relay wins, the Under 13 Boys suddenly found themselves in danger of not qualifying. In the 4x 1 lap relay, Sam Elrick, the silver medallist in the Shot, collapsed to the ground with torn thigh muscles. Thankfully he is not seriously injured but it meant zero points instead of (potentially) 70 points in a tight situation.

A quick team meeting appraised the team of the situation, and from then on team spirit took over. With just the 8 lap Paarlauf and 4x2lap relay to go ,the Avon team needed to win both races and hope. Ben Lewis (Priory) and Alex Crofts (Sidcot) ran superbly to win their event, and then the Relay team of Adam Millward (Clevedon), Josh Bagnall Green (Brimsham Green) Lucas Mortimer (Backwell) and captain Will Hines (Redland Green) destroyed the other counties to win the 4x2lap relay with plenty to spare, although Adam had a scary moment when he slipped on the first turning board and almost fell: he recovered brilliantly to set up a lead. The Avon U13 Boys had performed a miracle to win by 17pts (less than 2 places) from Dorset.

Amongst many great performances in the Under 13 Girls, Rosie Harris(KLB) won the 2lap with Esther Leong (Backwell) in 3rd place. She then jumped a pb in the Long Jump of 2m18 for Silver. Young Emma Bakare, a star of the future, won the Standing Triple Jump with a pb 6m84 and was a major contributor in the 4x1 and 4x2 lap victories. Hannah Dyer (John Cabot) and Isabella Parseille (Clevedon) took Silver and bronze in the 6 lap, whilst Anna Loughlin (Colston Girls) took 2nd in the Triple Jump with a massive pb of 6m33. Nina Nemi, also of Colston Girls, took the Vertical Jump title with an impressive 57cms. Olivia Furey (Red Green) and Dani Prendegast (Fairfield) took Silver and Bronze in the 4lap and then combined in the Paarlauf to win silver. Leah Woodman (Priory), Jasmine Nolan Kemp (Hayesfield) took 6th and 7th in the High Jump, whilst Isabelle Murray (Redland Green) and Sarah Wilkinson (Hayesfield) all contributed greatly to an excellent win.

With 13 podium places and 2 relay victories, the Under 13 Boys, from 11 different schools, gelled brilliantly to win their title, ably led by captain Will Hines (Redland Green). Will won silver in the 2lap race behind teammate Adam Millward, who led from the start. Ben Lewis (Priory) had a great day, winning the Long Jump with 2m30, the 4lap in 46.4, and (with Alex Crofts) the Paarlauf. Alex himself won the Triple Jump on countback from teammate Lucas Mortimer, each achieving a magnificent 7m08. Michael Koehler Barnes (Redland Green) timed his 6 lap victory to perfection, wearing down his Dorset opponent on the last lap to grab a well deserved Gold. Other podium positions were achieved by George Adams (Monkton Combe) in the High jump (1m45) supported by Adam Sinwell (Downend) in his first competition with 1m35. Adam achieved a 5th place in the 6lap. Sam Elrick (Clevedon) took Silver in the Shot with 10m17, Ben Barbosa (City Academy) won Bronze in the Vertical Jump (53cms) and Liam Brailsford (Henbury) won Bronze in the Long Jump (2m26). Josh Dunstan(BEC) recorded 6m40 in the Triple and won the 2Lap non-scoring race, whilst Simon Elrick (Clevedon) also performed well in the 2lap and Shot.

A great day with wonderful support from parents and ex Sports Hall athletes means that all four teams head to Birmingham on April 7th in good spirits. Team Results:

Under 13 Girls: Avon 709; Devon 659; Dorset 622; Gloucestershire 530.

Under 13 Boys: Avon 664; Dorset 647; Devon 636; Gloucestershire 501.