

### **National Athletic League Match 3 Yeovil 2<sup>nd</sup> July**

We do have a great core of athletes who have committed to the NAL team and are turning out to support their club and at this last match there was even greater effort beyond what could be reasonably expected with athletes covering team gaps to scrape vital extra points. The venue just down the road in Somerset will be familiar to most, the weather was changeable but ok for the most part. Yeovil as the home club were strong as expected and easily won the match, Belgrave and Portsmouth also looked as though they meant business with what seemed like plenty of athletes. Things began to look difficult with a number of late drop outs for our squad, but with perseverance the team kept battling and adding points. It was difficult to know where we were positioned in the match as announcements of point scores were infrequent.

Possibly the highlight for the team was the stunning 10.84s 100m from Ethan Steel, a huge Pb which also left him shocked. The men managed to cover the sprint events this time, Matt Muggeridge supported Ethan in the 100m and Kane Lee backed him up in the 200m after he showed a return to form after illness in a competitive 800m. Ben Wells and training buddy Nik Kanonik produced strong 400m performance and later combined with Kane and Liam Hillier for an exciting 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 4x400m relay.

Liam Hillier improved his Pole Vault Pb with Masters multi-eventer Jerry Musselwhite turning out to secure some extra 'B' string points as well. Sophie Hornung took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the womens pole vault.

Amelia Brandon has played a huge part in the team this season again she covered the maximum 5 events helping to secure 40 points for the team, a brilliant effort.

Jodie Dale continued her NAL winning form in the Javelin securing her 3<sup>rd</sup> win while our two Hammer boys secured 1<sup>st</sup> places with just a centimetre difference in their performances. A fine 51.41m Pb for James, a consolation after his holiday flight got cancelled and he decided to turn out for the team instead. Maisy Harvey threw close to her Hammer best and late 'B' string Hammer replacement Karen Jones was also pleased with her effort to place 2<sup>nd</sup>. Aaron Sloan covered Shot, Discus and Javelin with solid points gaining performances. Matt Muggeridge got himself back over 12 metres in triple jump to put the pressure back on the clubs young pretenders and Luke Ball as expected made light work of the opposition in the High Jump again.

Grace Cardwell pushed her 400m Hurdle Pb under 70 seconds for the first time with a committed first 200m and training partner Daisy Harvey claimed a 'B' string win.

James Harrod, recently returned from a Kenyan altitude training camp improved his 5000 metre Pb and expects to make more improvements as the training camp effects start to kick in.

Amy Pye had a change from her usual 400m Hurdles and showed a great turn of speed in the 200m, establishing a lead around the bend she easily held her position with a dominant display.

Katie Robbins squeezed her 400m Pb a little and combined with Amy Pye, Grace Cardwell and Daisy Harvey in the 4x400m relay which was unexpectedly (compared with the previous matches) a competitive and entertaining race. The girls were narrowly shaded into 2<sup>nd</sup> place with a neck and neck battle in the last 100m between Katie and the Belgrave team.

Lucy Durham who has travelled from North London for every match so far was solid in her accustomed Triple Jump role but also joined the hero list by stepping up to fill the unaccustomed roles of High Jumper, Long Jumper and 4x100 relay sprinter. Also on the 'going the extra mile' hero list were Kane Lee (200m), Toby Conibear (4x100m)

Relay), James Viner (4x100m Relay), Jodie Dale (SP, DT, 4x100m Relay), Daisy Harvey (Javelin), Maisy Harvey (Discus), Karen Jones (SP), Sophie Hornung (4x100m Relay).

Hero status also for our Officials who again scored us maximum points working their socks off assisting Yeovil to compensate for the clubs that failed to fulfil their officials requirements. Thank you Graham Brooks, Debbie Brooks, Seren Brooks, Matt Viner, Matt Lewis, Jeremy Dale and James Viner.

Our battle with Belgrave and Portsmouth was close but unfortunately was not in our favour so we finished 4<sup>th</sup>. The positive though is that we should be in 4<sup>th</sup> place overall after the 3 matches having pushed 1 point ahead of Milton Keynes. The 4<sup>th</sup> match is our home match and we should be fielding our strongest team so no more excuses if you haven't put yourself forward for a NAL match yet.

Graham Howell  
NAL team manager.