

Written by Nathan Jones

Sunday, 13 January 2019 19:27

Following a busy start to the New Year, it was the turn of the West Wales and North Wales athletes to have their chance to shine over the weekend (January 12-13th) following last week's South & East Wales Regional Championships in Cardiff.

Yn dilyn dechrau prysur i'r flwyddyn newydd, tro athletwyr y Gorllewin a'r Gogledd oedd hi i ddisgleirio dros y penwythnos (Ionawr 12-13eg) ar ôl Pencampwriaeth Rhanbarth y De a'r Dwyrain yng Nghaerdydd wythnos diwethaf.

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West Wales & North Wales in the Spotlight...

Using the fantastic facilities at Swansea University Sports Campus and the North Wales Indoor Athletics Centre within Coleg Cambria in Deeside, it was a great opportunity for experienced and new young members to try out Indoor competition in two friendly competitions.

In Swansea, a big entry of just under 300 athletes entered the 2019 West Wales Indoor Athletics Championships held at the University Indoor Athletics Track. Held over two days on Saturday 12th January and Sunday 13th January, athletes battled it out alongside their local friends from the Swansea Harriers, Carmarthen Harriers, Pembrokeshire Harriers, Neath Harriers, Llanelli AC & Run4All Neath clubs.

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The championship was open to all age groups from the young under 11's perhaps making their debuts in an indoor competition to the experienced and elite under 17/20s and seniors, looking to impress ahead of upcoming major races which are on the way before the winter months come to an end.

Thirty-seven athletes were on the start list, returning to defend their titles from 2018 in their respective events. However, for many who had moved up an age group over the summer, it gave the opportunity for other young athletes to aim high with titles at stake.

Great Turnout in Swansea as races came thick and fast...

Because of the growth and popular turnout in competitors over the past few years, the championship had again been split into a two-day weekend to fit in all the disciplines on offer. The majority of the field events (jumps) were held on Saturday which included the Long Jump, Triple Jump, Pole Vault and High Jump. For all Shot Putters, their chance to compete came 24 hours later alongside the track events.

Sunday in particular attracted a large number of spectators to the venue to enjoy the sprint and hurdles races, with plenty of noise created on the side-lines. The 60m Hurdles heats and finals were the first to go at lunchtime, and this was followed for the remainder of the afternoon by a series of 60m Sprint races.

What an afternoon of racing they saw! The Photo Finish equipment came in very handy for a number of the heats/finals, thanks to a few close finishes and exciting battles as the smallest of margins decided the medallists!

On a rather grey, cold and drizzly weekend outside on the Swansea Bay, athletes, officials and spectators were thankful that all the racing and competitions took place in the dry and warmth indoors without any disruption!

Carmarthen Harriers Up and Coming Stars' efforts rewarded with outstanding individual results and haul of

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Regional Medals up for grabs for leading athletes...

For the first time, West Wales medals were up for grabs at the Welsh Athletics Indoor Open Meeting in the Welsh Capital which saw 200m to 1500m events available. Back in Swansea, all the other remaining disciplines were contested. For the fifty-four who competed in the Open element just a week earlier in Cardiff, it was great preparation ahead of Swansea seven days later.

Gold, Silver and Bronze medals were presented to the top three in each event across all of the age groups.

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RESULTS / CANLYNIADAU: Harriers collect haul of medals on a weekend boosted by personal-best performances...

There was good representation of Dyfed competitors from the Carmarthen, Pembrokeshire and Llanelli clubs once again. Carmarthen Harriers athletes produced some outstanding results at these championships showing the strength in depth the club currently has across several

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disciplines. The twenty who entered brought home a total of 24 medals between them. 14 of them were gold with the remaining 10 silver medals.

The members' efforts on the day were boosted and rewarded with a haul of new personal bests for their events, with the majority achieving this at the 2019 championship opener.

Here's a Harriers results round-up by day: **SATURDAY:**

It was an early start for young pole vaulters in the under 13 and under 15 age group as **Cai Allen**

was the first medallist of the championships, winning the under 13 boys' age group with a clearance of 1.95m.

Zara Evans

was another to claim an early medal, this time leaping 4.91m in the under 15 girls' long jump to win the second gold in as many minutes for the Harriers. In the same event,

Jessica Lee

jumped 4.25m to secure a top six finish.

Dion James was involved in a thrilling conclusion to the under 13 boys' high jump competition. With two competitors left in the latter stages, a big crowd gathered to watch and James was able to use his experience to jump a new lifetime best of 1.48m to claim victory. A short time later, he was in the medals again, this time winning silver in the long jump with 4.05m. Allen's jump of 3.59m was enough for fourth, just missing out on bronze.

Beatrice Morgan was another to add to day 1's tally in the under 11 girls' long jump. Recording three consistent jumps, she comfortably won the gold medal in the sand with a best of 3.89m.

Ellie-May John

was in action shortly after in the next age group and recorded 2.72m in her first indoor competition.

Three of Dorrien Thomas' training group won five medals between them on the opening day

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with the coach in attendance. **Beca Roberts** made it a double-win in both the under 17 women's Triple Jump (10.71m) and Long Jump (4.68m).

The High Jump discipline produced some excitement as the trio of Roberts, **Osian Roberts** and **Lili**

Church

continued their fine form this season. In the under 15 boys' event, Osian kept on clearing heights and ended up with a massive new personal best of 1.68m. He wasn't too far away from going over 1.70m either! Lili & Beca took gold and silver respectively in the under 17 women's age group, jumping 1.62m and 1.50m to finish with ten medals and round off a Super Saturday in Swansea. All three are currently ranked number one in Wales for this event.

SUNDAY:

A further 14 medals were won on day 2, as sprinters and throwers took centre stage. All five who competed in the 60m Hurdles came away with a medal. **Dion James** and **James Sloyan** made it a one-two in the under 13 boys' hurdles final, finishing quickly in 10.97 and 11.41 respectively.

Osian Roberts

and

Beca Roberts

were back less than 24 hours after taking part in the jumps events and both won silver. Osian was places second in the under 15 boys' event (10.19) whilst Beca collected the same colour in the under 17 women's 60mH (9.76). In a straight final,

Haydn Davies

was another to finish second, this time in the under 20 men's race in 9.34.

A string of fine performances came in the 60m Sprint, as no fewer than seven athletes made it through their heats and into the all-important finals. **Beatrice Morgan** won her second gold medal of these championships, with the latest coming in the sprint where she raced clear in 8.96. It was also a comfortable victory for

Casi Gregson

in the under 13 girls' 60m final recording 8.74. James dominated the corresponding boys' age group, crossing the line in 8.51 followed by his teammate

Tom Williams

, who ran another excellent race to win silver in 8.81 to repeat the hurdles result in this age group.

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Moving into the older age groups, training partners **Jessica Lee** and **Sophia Reid-Thomas** came through tough heats to qualify alongside four other good athletes. Lee came in runner-up spot in 8.30 and Reid-Thomas just behind in fourth in 8.50 in a very close finish which required another look on the photo finish.

Ellie Loweth

was another to impress, by becoming West Wales Champion in the under 17 women's race in a time of 8.20. Two Under 20 Women contested the 60m final as

Alicia Samuel

led from the first gun to the finish to complete another dominant display in under 8 seconds (7.85).

Tom Morgan (10.77), **Cai Allen** (9.40) and **Ellie-May John** (9.71) also entered the 60m in their respective age groups and performed well on their first attempts at the distance. Great sprinting by the youngsters!

Five members competed in the shot put event with all age groups held on the same day. Sisters **Nia Williams** and **Elen Williams** threw consistently with Nia finishing in second place with a best of 10.17m. Meanwhile, Elen went out to 7.40m in her first competition as an under 15 girl. The under 15 boys in the final event on the field finished off on a good note, as

Kacper Krawcewicz's

throw of 8.10m was enough to place second.

Ellie-May John

was involved in the under 13 girls' shot and came away with 4.59m whilst Sloyan threw 5.35m.

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