

Snow-Hit Cardiff welcomes Wales' youngsters in two-day Junior Indoor Championships

Written by Nathan Jones

Sunday, 03 February 2019 19:02

A Snow-Hit Cardiff failed to disrupt the Welsh Athletics Junior Indoor Athletics Championships from going ahead on the weekend as hundreds of Wales' young stars descended on the Welsh Capital to compete for Welsh titles.



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A Snow-Hit Cardiff failed to stop a major indoor championship arrive in the city over the last 36 hours...as the event got the go ahead on Friday thanks to improving conditions and to the hard-working staff for making the site safe for use at Cyncoed. Following heavy snowfall around the South East Wales area on Thursday evening and overnight in one of the worst areas affected, there was the chance that this could have been called off. However it was great for organisers and participants involved that the championships went on as scheduled.

Wintry Conditions was not a problem inside NIAC...

Over the weekend, the National Indoor Athletics Centre at Cardiff's Cyncoed Campus hosted the 43rd Welsh Athletics Junior Indoor Track & Field Championships on Saturday 2nd February and Sunday 3rd February with Welsh Titles on the line. This came only seven days after the Seniors category took centre stage and entertained the public in front of the Vinco Sport online stream which was broadcasted all over including out to North America.

Athletes had travelled through the wintry elements from all four regions in Wales as well as Welsh athletes who compete for a club in England. This included North Walian who had made the long trip down South, and the vests of Cardiff Archers, Newport Harriers, Llanelli AC, Swansea Harriers, Neath Harriers, Pembrokeshire Harriers, Rhymney Valley AC, Carmarthen Harriers, Bridgend AC, Cardiff AAC, Deeside AC, Brecon AC, Menai T&F, Millfield School, Cwmbran Harriers, Hereford & County AC, Blaenau Gwent AC, Colwyn Bay AC, Pontyclun AC, Barry & Vale Harriers, Wrexham AAC, Rhondda AAC, Lavington Athletics, Aberdare VAAC, Rugby & Northampton AC, Team Bath AC, Swindon Harriers, Maldwyn Harriers, Manchester Harriers & AC, Yate & District AC, Bristol & West AC, Guildford & Godalming AC, Liverpool Pembroke & Sefton Harriers and the DSW Para Academy were all out on show at some point during the course of the weekend.

This was the penultimate fixture of the 2018/19 indoor winter season as far as championships were concerned, with only the Welsh Athletics Indoor International left to come in a months' time ahead of another busy upcoming outdoor track season from April onwards.

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Another excellent spectacle in the Welsh Capital...

Over 400 up and coming sprinters, endurance, jumpers and throwers enjoyed the warmth of NIAC at the indoor facility in an event that has always been popular with athletes and coaches alike. With further showers and a biting cold wind outside, all those in attendance were pleased to be under the roof and this helped to create an excellent atmosphere to encourage the participants on.

The Welsh Athletics Junior Indoor Championships for under 13, under 15, under 17 and under 20 age groups took place over two days and totalled around fourteen hours of competition combined.

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Saturday saw a variety of races on the track including the heats and finals of 60m Hurdles, 60m Sprint and 400m with the 1500m throwing some fantastic surprises and excellent battles. On Sunday, attention turned to an afternoon of 200m heats and finals as well as the 800m and 3000m distance disciplines. Meanwhile, on the field the Long Jump, Triple Jump, High Jump, Shot Put and Pole Vault disciplines were completed at opposite ends of the arena.

For several of the athletes, their weekend couldn't have gone any better, as they produced Championship Best Performances and Welsh Indoor Records to add to their name.

As has been the case in previous meetings, the crowds arrived in their numbers and packed into the venue with only standing room available for the majority of the time. They did not only support their own children and club mates but also got a glimpse of what lies ahead in the future in Wales as races came thick and fast.

For some it was experiencing the big occasion for the first time at a top-class venue, whilst for the more experienced athletes, they aimed for a podium position and to become 2019 Welsh Champion in their respective event. The presentation area was full of activity, with gold, silver and bronze medals awarded to the top three in each event presented by members of Welsh Athletics.

The Welsh Athletics Indoor International will return at the beginning of March on Sunday 3rd, following the unfortunate postponement in 2017 because of the adverse weather conditions.

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Carmarthen Harriers sees biggest numbers for a number of years...

Twenty-Three Harriers along with their parents made the journey up the M4 motorway to compete against the best in Wales, and they succeeded with many coming away with a medal for the efforts and the majority improving on their previous best performances. The total medal tally in this year's championships was thirteen (seven gold, three silver and three bronze) which added to the number won at the West Wales Indoor Championships in mid-January. It just shows that the winter training and hard work is paying off! The vests of the club were clear to see on Saturday and Sunday, and a round-up of all the results and medallists can be found below:

Well done all / Da iawn pawb!

SATURDAY 2ND FEBRUARY - DYDD SADWRN 2AIL CHWEFROR

UNDER 13 GIRLS 60 METRES / 60 METR MERCHED O DAN 13

Casi Gregson made a return from injury by running her way into the 60m final in her first championship as an under 13. She qualified from the third heat in second place with 8.77 and in a field of eight finalists, Gregson worked hard to secure fifth place and improved her time to 8.67 in the process.

UNDER 13 BOYS 60 METRES / 60 METR BECHGYN O DAN 13

It turned out to be a very busy Saturday for **Dion James** who competed in three events. The second of three competitions was the sprint and he comfortably made it into the semi-final and final by winning his heat in 8.52 and runner up in the semi's with an identical time. His first medal of the day came here, clocking 8.47 to win bronze in the 60m.

UNDER 15 GIRLS 60 METRES / 60 METR MERCHED O DAN 15

The sprint trio of **Sophia Reid-Thomas**, **Jessica Lee** and **Thaia Davies** were back in action after promising starts to the New Year and with such a large number of participants, had to go through up to three rounds.

Heat 3 of 6 is where Reid-Thomas competed and was second in 8.44. Lee went off in the next heat and taking the win with a time of 8.46. Davies waited until the sixth and final heat before running 8.49 to go through in third. In the semi-finals, Sophia and Jessica confirmed their places in the final with performances of 8.38 and 8.41 respectively whilst Thaia was fourth in 8.50.

The final was possibly one of the closest of the day with all eight athletes recording times on the

line between 8.08 and 8.43. The two who went forward ran well in a quality final with Lee taking fifth in 8.38 and Reid-Thomas running her fastest race of the day in 8.43.

UNDER 17 WOMEN 60 METRES / 60 METR MERCHED O DAN 17

Under 17 Women's 60m competition included **Ellie Loweth** who was another to win her heat, this time with 8.20 to go through as fourth fastest. The final followed later on in the afternoon and Loweth finished fifth with an end time of 8.23.

UNDER 13 BOYS 60 METRES HURDLES / 60 METR DROS Y CLWYDI BECHGYN O DAN 13

The under 13 boys provided the first final of these championships with the 60m over the hurdles going off as one race. **Dion James'** first of three events on day 1 started here and just missed out on adding to his total, crossing in fourth in sub 11 seconds - 10.96.

UNDER 15 BOYS 60 METRES HURDLES / 60 METR DROS Y CLWYDI BECHGYN O DAN 15

Five boys took to the start of the under 15 boys' straight final with one being Carmarthen's **Osian Roberts**

. Roberts ended up in fourth place and stopped the clock at 10.03.

UNDER 20 MEN 60 METRES HURDLES / 60 METR DROS Y CLWYDI BECHGYN O DAN 20

Haydn Davies was unlucky not to get on the podium in fourth as four of the six men in the under 20 straight final ran under 9 seconds over the short distance. Davies in his latest race completed in 8.74.

UNDER 13 GIRLS 1500 METRES / 1500 METR MERCHED O DAN 13

There was an impressive victory and gold for **Frances Mackie** who led the group from the starting gun to the finish line. Her time of 5:19:77 was 10 seconds quicker than the next two

finishers from South Wales clubs. Joining her in the same race was

Ellie-May John

who enjoyed competing indoors over this distance for the first time in Cardiff. Running 5:56:79, she finished strongly in fifth.

UNDER 13 BOYS 1500 METRES / 1500 METR BECHGYN O DAN 13

1500m for under 13 boys was the third event on the programme on Saturday morning and this is where Carmarthen Harriers won its first medals of the day. Changing the lead a few times, the duo of **Ifan Bowen** and **Iwan Thomas** pulled away alongside a Newport athlete with the latter coming away with silver - 5:00:71 and Bowen - 5:02:41 making it two podium positions for the Harriers. In the same final, **Jake Lynock** made it three Harriers in the field, coming seventh in 5:19:12.

UNDER 15 BOYS 1500 METRES / 1500 METR BECHGYN O DAN 15

Both **Jack Thomas** and **Steffan Davies** battled well against tough competition in a fast race and came away with good performances to build on. Thomas managed to run under the 5 minute mark for the first time in 4:57:31 whilst Davies was not too far behind in 5:10:84 to take fifth and seventh respectively.

UNDER 13 BOYS LONG JUMP / NAID HIR BECHGYN O DAN 13

In between his sprint heats and finals, **Dion James** moved onto the under 13 boys' long jump featuring eight youngsters in the sand. His second round attempt and a new lifetime best of 4.17m was enough to win his second bronze by the finest of margins (one centimetre between third and fourth).

UNDER 15 GIRLS LONG JUMP / NAID HIR MERCHED O DAN 15

The club's first field medal of the weekend was in the bag thanks to long jumper **Zara Evans** who picked up a silver medal after leaping a new personal best of 4.73m. Her first round jumps of around 4.70m was improved in the all-important final round where everything could have changed.

UNDER 17 WOMEN TRIPLE JUMP / NAID DRIFFLYG MERCHED O DAN 17

After winning bronze at last weekend's Senior championships, **Beca Roberts** was full of confidence entering the under 17 women's triple jump age group championships six days later. Going to form, the Welsh championship went to the Bro Pedr pupil with her best jump of 10.82m coming in round six of six. This was a fourteen centimetres improvement and a lifetime best in the very same pit as last Sunday.



SUNDAY 3RD FEBRUARY - DYDD SUL 3YDD CHWEFROR

UNDER 13 GIRLS 200 METRES / 200 METR MERCHED O DAN 13

Seven heats were contested in the under 13 girls 200m which meant that qualification was just a little tougher. **Casi Gregson**'s warm up in the 60m on Saturday helped her move on to the 200m track. First place went to Gregson in the heats in 29.39 before in the semi-finals, it was another great run for second in 29.21.

UNDER 13 BOYS 200 METRES / 200 METR BECHGYN O DAN 13

Heat four is where **James Sloyan** was seeded and his performance of 32.51 was not too far off his previous best.

UNDER 15 GIRLS 200 METRES / 200 METR MERCHED O DAN 15

Sophia Reid-Thomas was back in Cardiff on Sunday, this time to run over a slightly longer distance of 200 metres. Round 1 saw her qualify as one of the fastest losers having finished second in the heat - 28.11. Into the semi-final and as expected, all three races were close. Sophia finished third in heat 1 and just missed out on a place in the final four with 28.20.

UNDER 17 WOMEN 200 METRES / 200 METR MERCHED O DAN 17

The trio of 200m runners were completed by **Ellie Loweth**, another to have competed on day 1. She went through to the semi-finals after a win in the fifth heat - 27.50. She wasn't far off a place in the final, coming runner up in the opening semi in 27.59.

UNDER 13 GIRLS 800 METRES / 800 METR MERCHED O DAN 13

UNDER 13 BOYS 800 METRES / 800 METR BECHGYN O DAN 13

The 800m races for under 13 age groups were run as time trials, which meant that the quickest three out of all the events would confirm their place on the podium.

The three boys' trials were exciting and **Macsen Toogood's** clear win in heat 3 saw him claim a silver medal after running the second fastest time of 2:29:98 out in front.

James Sloyan

, in trial 1 was third in 2:44:93 and seventh overall in the race where the quickest time was recorded.

UNDER 15 GIRLS 800 METRES / 800 METR MERCHED O DAN 15

It was the second event of the day on Sunday morning and this is where **Amy Greatrick** ran in the second heat of three 800m races. Her time of 2:46:03 put her in fourth, finished off with a sprint finish down the home straight.

The girls' corresponding age group events were just as entertaining for the crowds who stayed on to watch the final few events of day 2. **Ellie-May John** was back after running 1500m just 24 hours earlier. In the 800m she was third in under 3 minutes 2:57:17.

UNDER 20 MEN 800 METRES / 800 METR BECHGYN O DAN 20

The pace of the under 20 men's 800m heats were fast with all nine competitors separated by only eleven seconds between the two heats. **Trystan Leech** went off in the opening race and completed the four-lap discipline in a new personal best time of 2:09:32.

UNDER 15 & 17 BOYS 3000 METRES / 3000 METR

BECHGYN O DAN 15 a 17

Eight endurance athletes started side by side on the 200m finish line in the first of the finals on Sunday afternoon. It turned out to be a good day for all of the athletes, with every one getting on the podium in their respective under 15, 17 and 20 age groups.

Tomos Rees - 9:18:04 and **Frank Morgan** - 9:38.10 came in third and fourth overall but in their age groups, Rees won a silver medal in the under 17 men whilst in the under 15 boys, Morgan became Welsh champion for the distance of 15 laps around the indoor track.

UNDER 13 BOYS SHOT PUT / TAFLU'R PWYSAU BECHGYN O DAN 13

Another personal best was to come in the under 13 boys' shot put by **James Sloyan** on a busy Sunday. He threw 6.30 and 6.33 in rounds 1 and 2 before getting his longest in round 3 of 6.49m.

UNDER 13 BOYS HIGH JUMP / NAID HIR BECHGYN O DAN 13

The High Jump was an event which Carmarthen picked up three medals in quick succession. The finale to the under 13 boys couldn't have been any closer with two athletes tied on 1.43m, however on the countback, **Dion James** picked up medal number three in gold.

UNDER 15 BOYS HIGH JUMP / NAID HIR BECHGYN O DAN 15

The under 15 boys went at the same time as the U13B and it more of the same as **Osian Roberts** was another to continue his fine form. This week he easily went over 1.43 to 1.53 before finishing off with a best clearance of 1.63m.

UNDER 17 WOMEN HIGH JUMP / NAID UCHEL MERCHED O DAN 17

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Lili Church was full of confidence as she returned for the Junior Championships, having picked up a gold at the Seniors last weekend and repeated this once again. Competing in the first round of High Jump events, she cleared 1.63m on her third attempt to confirm the win and was the only one to try out 1.68m.

Results Link & Where to Find Social Media Updates...

Social Media Live Race Coverage was available via the Welsh Athletics Social Media Pages which was updated with the latest in Cardiff as it happened, as well as re-tweets of your messages and photos: [Twitter](#) - [Instagram](#)

In addition, you can find more photos of Carmarthen Harriers' medalists via: [Facebook](#)

[LIVE RESULTS / CANLYNIADAU BYW - Cardiff 02/02/19 & 03/02/19](#)