

Combined Event National Finals Stoke on Trent Sat 21st/22nd September 2024

It was a big weekend 21st/22nd September at the Northwood Stadium, Stoke on Trent for the ESAA Combined Events Championships 2024.

Thomas Holme - Salisbury Sixth Form College, Jacob Earle - Bishop Wordsworth School and Matilda Green - Dauntsey's School all qualified from the SW Regional Championships in June to represent Wiltshire over the two day event.

Thomas Holme was competing in his first year as a Senior Boy in the Decathlon, with a demanding 10 events over two days. Of the 36 athletes who had qualified from the SW Regional Championships, Thomas was ranked 36th; on the day 33 athletes actually started the first event at the National Finals in Stoke.

In the first event the 100m Thomas achieved a PB of 12.87 and was in 33rd, a 5.06m Long Jump moved him up to 32nd and he consolidated this with a Shot Putt PB.

High Jump started late in the day under heavy clouds and Thomas equalled his PB of 1.59m, but during pool 2 the electrical storm started and all athletes were pulled off the track into the indoor warm up area for safety. After a long wait the decision was made that the high jump be voided as it could not be completed for all athletes and the 400m couldn't be run as the storm showed no sign of stopping.

We arrived on day 2 with the news that the 400m would not be run and we would continue with day 2 as planned. The forecast was for constant light rain all day and it did rain all day!
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A PB for Thomas in the 110m hurdles brought him up to 30th. Considering the conditions he put in a good discus throw and equal PB in the pole vault to elevate him up to 29th.

Long delays followed as they tried to get the rest of the programme completed, but a great Javelin and a storming 1500m meant he finished at 7:54pm in an excellent 24th place overall.

Jacob Earle was competing in the Inter-Boys Octathlon, following a 3rd place in the SW Championships. If he performed at his very best he was hoping for a top 12 position in his first year in this IB age group.

Jacob started the first day well with a huge PB of 6.01m in the long jump, a 26.75m Discus, a PB of 47.47m in the Javelin and a 400m PB of 53.59 leaving him in 10th place after Day One.

Solid performances on Sunday in the 100m Hurdles, and a 1.77m High Jump lifted Jacob to 7th place dropping back to 10th after the Shot Putt. A sublime run and a big PB in the final event, the 1500m (4:38) propelled Jacob into 7th place overall. An outstanding performance.

Matilda Green was competing in the Junior Girls Pentathlon having qualified from the SW Championships in 3rd place. Conditions were not easy again for the athletes on the Sunday.

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In the first event, the Hurdles Matilda put in a solid performance only 0.1 sec down on her SW result. A good start. Matilda continued to produce consistent performances throughout the day jumping 4m 30 in Long Jump and throwing 7.39m in Shot. Matilda is a very capable High Jumper and despite not jumping at the level of SW finished in the top half of the group with her jump of 1.44m. In the final event the 800m Matilda finished in a time of 2:43.99 only 4 seconds outside her SW run which was in much better conditions. An excellent overall performance in the Pentathlon against the best in the country finishing 26th out of 40 competitors.

Congratulations to all three athletes on qualifying and representing Wiltshire at National level. All three have given of their best across the season training hard and competing well. They can be very proud of all they have achieved and I look forward to seeing them again in 2025.

Sally Hornby

Andy Holme

WSAA CE Team Managers