

Midlands Indoor Championships

NIA
February 6th/7th 2009

Corby AC had a very successful weekend at the Midland Counties Indoor Championships when they secured three gold, four silver and two bronze medals.

The meeting at the NIA in Birmingham saw Beth Smyton, Gaby Bangay and Sam Baker all clinch titles in their respective events.



Smyton, whose winter season prior to the turn of the New Year, was hampered by injury and illness came good to take the under-15 girls 800m with a superb front running performance. Her brave run saw her pass through the 200m mark in a fast 32 sec as she went on to take the title in a new lifetime best (indoors or out) of 2.22.34, a time which ranks her second nationally on this winter's indoor circuit.

In her wake the Wolverhampton duo of Amy Hillyard (2.24.83) and Kay Oakley (2.27.77) took the minor medals while also in the race was Corby's Emma MacFarlane who clocked 2.39.09 for eighth. She also competed in the final of both the 60m hurdles and was eighth in 10.90 (10.59 in the heats) and the high jump in which she cleared 1.40m for ninth.

Bangay's success came in the under-17 womens 60m hurdles and was achieved when she smashed through the nine second barrier for the first time. After running a new best of 9.05 to win her heat she lined up for the final as the favourite and didn't disappoint when she produced a slick performance to take the title in a superb 8.97 to finish ahead of Birchfield's Chelsea Alagoa-Oliver (9.36) and Megan Dixon of Wolverhampton the bronze medallist who ran 9.52.

Gaby almost made it a medal double when she cleared the same height of 2.90m as the runner up Laura Butcher (Team Bath) in the pole vault, only losing out on countback. She finished fifth in the contest which was won on 3.20m by Hannah Grubb (Team Bath).



Baker's victory was achieved when he set new indoor figures to equal his outdoor best in the under-17 men's pole vault. He scaled 3.0m to take the title by 20cm from Thomas Lyons (Notts AC) and capped a successful championship when clinching the silver in the 60m hurdles. He just edged out Solihull's Morton Hart (9.48) when returning a time of 9.42 as Themba Luhana (Rugby and Northampton) convincingly won in 8.27 and also leapt 5.28m for seventh in the long jump.

The under-15 trio of Scott Kendall, Lucy Hatton and Jasper Larken were Corby's other silver medallists. The former smashed his previous best by well over a metre when putting a fine 11.42m in the shot to finish behind Conor Guest (Stratford on Avon) who produced a winning mark of 13.15m. Hatton was involved in an exciting long jump competition with the final outcome resulting in her just losing the title by a slender 1cm to Nikita Campbell-Smith (Birchfield) with her best leap of 4.94m. She also took part in the high jump where her clearance of 1.46m slotted her into eighth as Leamington's Cosimo Berry won with 1.60m.

Larken was a busy lad at the NIA when competing in four events with his highest position coming over 800m when he clocked 2.28.55 for second behind Yates's Kane Lee (2.16.22). Only 15 minutes earlier he sliced a tenth of a second from his best (set in the heats) when he clocked 25.80 for fifth in the 200m won impressively in 23.98 by Matthew Hudson-Smith (Birchfield). The previous day Jasper won the bronze in the 400m in a new best of 59.18 behind the Birchfield pair of Jamai Logan (56.62) and Hudson-Smith who secured a double in 55.50. He also set new figures in the 60m when making the final with 7.87 but failed to go any faster once there when coming eighth in 7.99.

Corby's other third place came from under-20 Lauren Boyd who putted a below par 10.17m in the shot behind Coventry Godiva's Katherine McBeth (10.85) and Jade Weston of Stoke who logged a winning mark of 12.39m. Lauren, whose disappointing form comes as no surprise following a catalogue of injuries, also clocked 10.54 for fifth position in the 60m hurdles.

Katie Barry leapt 4.68m for fourth in the senior women's long jump while also in action for Corby were Katie Fowler, Ross Davies and Tony Wells.

Fowler's time of 28.80 in the heats of the under-15 girls 200m was a new best as was that of Davies who clocked 7.87 in the heats of the under-17 men's 60m. He also ran 24.60 in the heats of the 200m and 54.79 in the 400m heats which made it in to the final but due to injury he had to withdraw.

Wells prepared for his forthcoming major championships in the veteran-60 age group when running heat times of 8.65 (60m) and 27.52 (200m) in the senior men's age group. He was also allowed to compete as a guest in the under-15 boys 60m hurdles (the same age as his veteran age group) and he returned a time of 9.63.