



Athletics

On a cold and windy afternoon - what else would you expect from the British summer? - Vinehall hosted a Track Only competition v Dulwich Prep School and put our athletes through their paces literally - for the first time this season. We did not record many wins but there were some fine performances and there were encouraging signs of better things to come from both the boys and girls.

For the early part of the season Fridays seemed to be wet and little "meaningful" training or event preparation could be done but we soldiered on looking ahead to the Field Event match at DPS only to have this "rained off" at the last minute. Not an ideal start to the athletics season.

We entered the Tonbridge Trophy, an event we have been to before, and the athletes were brimming with enthusiasm at the thought of competing on an all weather track and how! We came second out of twelve schools losing out to Holmewood House by one single point!

This put the boys in fine spirit for the annual Sussex Championships at Hurstpierpoint College. Unable to be there myself, Mr Newman and Mrs Callard took the teams and by lunch time we had a winner, Adam Boothroyd in the triple jump. This spurred the teams on to greater efforts and many successes followed including wins for Adam again in the 400m, Will Wheeler in the 800m, plenty of second and thirds elsewhere from the others.

Success at this event results in selection for the Sussex team at the National Championships and we were delighted to have 13 boys selected this year. They were Adam Boothroyd in the triple jump and 400m, Will Wheeler and Oliver Sandeman-Allen in the 800m, Tom Chesney in the high jump, Felix Keeling and Fergus Ridley Anderson in the javelin, Josh Roche in the discus, Max Cherrill in the hurdles and Bertie James, Calum Bowie, Edward Stapley, Matthew Pexton and Tom Harvey in the relay.

The girls athletics championships were held at Crawley and we were pleased to have three selected for the Sussex team - Emma Howard-Smith and Charlotte Mursell in the high jump and Iona Edgar in the 800m.

On the Friday before the Nationals, we competed in a head to head v Sevenoaks School on their all weather track. Back to full strength with George Berthon who won three of his four events, we secured an overall win with some fine performances. This put us in buoyant mood for the trip to Birmingham.

The National Championships were held at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham and the party of Vinehall athletes enjoyed a busy and fun filled week end. Courtesy of Mr and Mrs Nichols, we had a restful night - preceded by a swim and barbecue - and got off on time to get to the stadium in under an hour, much better than a 5am start from Vinehall!

Vinehall athletes were in action from the very first event until Iona Edgar's 800m near the end of proceedings. The team supported each other and enjoyed the experience of competing in such an arena against some awesome talent from around the country. The highlight of the day was a bronze medal for Adam Boothroyd in the triple jump. Other athletes put in great performances and I felt sorry for the relay team that having waited until 4.30 for their race they did not quite get the takeovers correct and came last in their heat. Never mind guys, you were there!



Vinehall School 2002-2003



Full Colours were awarded to Adam Boothroyd, Oliver Sandeman-Allen, Josh Roche, Tom Chesney, Emma Howard-Smith, Charlotte Mursell, Max Cherrill, William Wheeler, George Berthon and Fergus Ridley Anderson. Junior Colours were awarded to Iona Edgar, Bertie James, Calum Bowie, Edward Stapley, Matthew Pexton and Christopher Goldsack.

Another collage of photographs is added to the sports hall wall to record our efforts at the Nationals, the culmination of a season that started in the cold and finished in the heat.

Well done to all who represented the school in athletics this season.

N J Butcher