



Isle of Man Athletics Association

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FIRST IOM SPORTSHALL ATHLETICS TEAM COMPETE AGAINST THE BEST IN THE NORTHWEST

The Isle of Man Athletic Association is pleased to announce that the first ever IOM Sports Hall Athletics Team competed in the U/11s Northwest Regional 'Fun in Athletics' Final on Sunday 23rd January. The venue for the festival was the fantastic indoor athletics arena at Eastland's, next door to Manchester City Football Club. A team of 15 boys and 15 girls from schools and athletics clubs across the Isle of Man came together to do the Island proud against the best athletes in the northwest counties of England. Teams from Lancashire, Cheshire, Merseyside, Cumbria, Greater Manchester and of course the Isle of Man all came together for what was an amazing festival of Sports Hall Athletics.

All of the athletes worked well in the team relays, notably in the girls competition where team bronze medal positions were achieved in the grand prix for Amber Sibbald, Abbie Melvin, Karie Bridson and Ashleigh Lachenicht. Another team bronze placing came in the Speed Bounce again for Sibbald but this time with Isobel Bridle and Angela Aumonier all showing fantastic footwork through the steps. Sibbald also achieved an individual silver position for this discipline. Team silver positions were the highlight for the girls with the Hi-Stepper trio of Hanna Dobson, Meghan Pilley and Jodie Wickers followed by yet another silver for our Javelin duo of Abbey Magee and Jessica Hill.

In the boys' competition, the combined efforts of Luke Murray and twins Marcus and Calvin Koske achieved team bronze in the Balance test with individual positions of 8th, 11th and 12th respectively. The six lap paarlauf team of Lee Mackey and Jonathan Mason showed good tactical baton changing in the one of the fastest and most closely contested races of the afternoon. In their heat they went neck and neck over the finish line in first position with Merseyside Lightning gaining both teams joint silver overall with Merseyside Thunder stealing gold in the second heat. The best performance of the afternoon goes to the boys target throw with Spencer Cope hitting an individual bronze and Jake Gelling scoring silver giving the boys team gold position for this event. Joshua Hewett with his kangaroo legs popped silver in his pouch breaking the two meter marker by two centimetres in the standing long jump!

Athletics Development Officer and team manager, Trevor Christian said, "Our young athletes were amazing showing great determination and sportsmanship throughout the day and were truly great ambassadors for the Isle of Man. They had a fantastic time at the indoor arena and all have done their schools, clubs, families and the whole of the Island proud. Well done to you all."

The IOM Athletics Association would like to give a big thank you to our team of committed coaches including Lesley Christian, Martyn Strickett, Fiona McGarrigle, Richard Sille and Peter Kaneen without whom the team would not have been so well prepared. The association are most grateful to Scottish Widows for providing our squad and coaches with their vibrant kit".





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Scottish Widows Managing Director Dean Waddingham said, "Scottish Widows are proud to be associated with The Isle of Man Sports Hall Athletics Team. It is fantastic to see so many children keeping active and having fun in this exhilarating format of the sport."

Thanks must also go to Isle of Man Sport who made a significant contribution to the team travel costs and Flybe who have been extremely helpful in rearranging their winter flight schedule to enable the trip to take place.

World class British athletes such as Kelly Sotherton, Mark Lewis-Francis, Paula Radcliffe and Denise Lewis all started their journey in athletics with Sportshall. Who knows, we may see one of our own Sportshall stars emerging as a future talent in the sport so watch closely!

- ENDS -

Notes for Editors

Local athletics clubs and primary schools were asked to nominate their most talented athletes to attend the trials resulting in around 120 children taking part in the fun packed heptathlon. The events were run under the direction of Trevor Christian the Department of Community, Culture and Leisure's (DCCL) Athletics Development Officer with fantastic support from an army of coaches, officials, athletes and parent helpers from each of the Islands athletics clubs.

The top 25 boys and 25 girls based on overall heptathlon points scored were invited to attend weekly squad training sessions to improve their skills and earn themselves one of the 30 available spaces on the team.



Team Arrive at Sport City





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IOM Sportshall Athletics Team receiving kit from Scottish Widows Existing Business Manager Martin Malone.

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