

## Somerset Sportshall Athletics Success

After 2 months of trials and training, 52 young primary school children from right across the county headed off to Keynsham on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 17 to take on the best that Avon and Gloucester had to offer. Two mixed teams of boys and girls had been training hard at Yeovil College, following their successful selection in December 16 at the annual trials, learning and developing a range of running, jumping, throwing, agility and balance skills for this nationally popular form of athletics.

In recent years, both the boys and the girls teams had narrowly missed taking the overall winners slot, sometimes losing by 3 points out of nearly 500. So, once again hopes were high that all the work put in by Graham Norris and Peter Grosjean and several of the established county coaches would finally pay dividends.

Despite some very last minute drop outs and frantic team alterations, the boys and girls of the Saracens and Spartans team set about their task with commitment and enthusiasm. The Spartan girls got off to a flying start in the obstacle relay and managed to win 6 of their 9 track events throughout the afternoon. The Spartan boys also competed well generally, coming second or third in their track events.

In the field all team members in both the Saracens and Spartans put in great performances, with many athletes producing PBs. Individual winners were:

- Grace Fielder with a standing triple jump of 6.16m meters.
- Libby Kilner with a target throw of 13.
- Ruby Ibbotson with a speed bounce score of 55.
- Tiana Chapman with a chest push throw of 7.25 meters.
- Rhiannon Blinco with maximum points of 60 in the balance test.
- Matthew Templeton with a speed bounce score of 54.
- Toby Wright with 19 meter javelin throw.
- Joe Bassett with a score of 53 in the balance test.

After the final series of relays, the teams sat anxiously awaiting the results, before the organisers announced that the Spartan girls had won the regional north competition for the first time with 484 points, 36 points ahead of Avon, with the boys coming 3<sup>rd</sup> scoring 441 points, just 13 points behind 2<sup>nd</sup> place Gloucestershire. The Saracens boys and girls 6<sup>th</sup>, scored 370 and 378 points respectively, and many of these athletes will be back next year as athletes at the top of their age group.

Peter and Graham who organise the programme are grateful to all 4 athletics clubs, the County and Schools Athletics Associations, and Wells Cathedral School for their support. Next year, they hope that a much wider pool of Primary Schools will take an interest in the event and send their children along to the trials.