

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

Bedfordshire was 1 of the 13 counties who competed in the inaugural ESAA Championship in 1925 at Crystal Palace. They had one medallist at this championship, H. Towle who won the bronze medal in the Boys 880 yards.

However, the *Bedfordshire Schools Athletics Association* was not formed until 25th, March 1935 at a meeting in Bedford.

They held their first county championship on 1st June at Bedford Rugby Ground. There were competitors from 22 schools. Based on the results at this event a team was selected to compete in the ESAA Championship at Kettering just over 7 weeks later.

It was not until 1953 that Bedfordshire had an ESAA champion when George Gray of Dunstable Grammar School won the Senior long jump.

The *Bedfordshire Schools Athletics Association* was renamed the *Bedfordshire and Luton Schools Athletics Association* in 1999. It was renamed in honour of the ESAA Cross Country Championships being held in Luton that year.

For several years leading to 2022 there were 3 educational authorities in Bedfordshire so to leave it as the *Bedfordshire and Luton Schools Athletics Association* was inaccurate. It was decided to revert the name of the association to be the *Bedfordshire Schools Athletics Association*.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALLISTS

Paula Radcliffe (Bedfordshire)	1999 10000m Silver and 2005 Marathon Gold 1988 J CC-3, 1989 I CC-3, 1990 I 1500m-3, 1990 I CC-2, 1991 S 1500m-1, 1991 S CC-2, 1992 S 3000m-1, 1992 S CC-1
-----------------------------------	--

Nigel Levine (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2013 4 x400m Bronze 2006 S 200m-4
--	--------------------------------------

WORLD CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALLISTS

Paula Radcliffe (Bedfordshire)	1997 and 1998 Silver, 1999 Bronze, 2001 and 2002 Gold 1988 J CC-3, 1989 I CC-3, 1990 I 1500m-3, 1990 I CC-2, 1991 S 1500m-1, 1991 S CC-2, 1992 S 3000m-1, 1992 S CC-1
-----------------------------------	--

Tony Simmons (Bedfordshire)	1976 Silver 1964 I CC-1
--------------------------------	----------------------------

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS MEDALLISTS

Paula Radcliffe (Bedfordshire)	2002 10000m Gold 1988 J CC-3, 1989 I CC-3, 1990 I 1500m-3, 1990 I CC-2, 1991 S 1500m-1, 1991 S CC-2, 1992 S 3000m-1, 1992 S CC-1
-----------------------------------	---

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

Ian Thompson (Bedfordshire)	Marathon Gold 1968 S CC-4
Tony Simmons (Bedfordshire)	1974 10000m Silver 1964 I CC-1
Nigel Levine (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2012 4 x 400m Silver 2006 S 200m-4

Nigel Levine (2016 4 x 400m Gold) ran in the relay heat but not in the final.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDALLISTS

Paula Radcliffe (Bedfordshire)	2002 5000m Gold 1988 J CC-3, 1989 I CC-3, 1990 I 1500m-3, 1990 I CC-2, 1991 S 1500m-1, 1991 S CC-2, 1992 S 3000m-1, 1992 S CC-1
Liz Yelling (née Talbot) (Bedfordshire)	2006 Marathon Bronze 1991 I 1500m-2, 1991 I CC-3, 1992 S 1500m-2, 1993 S 1500m-1

Ian Thompson (Bedfordshire)	Marathon Gold 1968 S CC-4
--------------------------------	------------------------------

Nigel Levine (2014 4 x 400m Gold) ran in the relay heat but not in the final.

BRITISH CHAMPIONS

Anne-Marie Devally (Bedfordshire)	1980 and 1981 High Jump 1976 I HJ-2
Paula Radcliffe (Bedfordshire)	1996 and 2000 5000m 1988 J CC-3, 1989 I CC-3, 1990 I 1500m-3, 1990 I CC-2, 1991 S 1500m-1, 1991 S CC-2, 1992 S 3000m-1, 1992 S CC-1
Katrina Wootton (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2007 1500m 1999 J 1500m-2, 1999 J CC-3, 2000 J 1500m-2, 2000 J CC-1, 2001i I 1500m-1, 2003 S 1500m-1
Devon Byrne (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2014 Heptathlon 2010 I 300mH-h-8
Reeve Walcott-Nolan (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2021 1500m 2011 I 1500m-3
Nigel Levine (Bedfordshire & Luton)	2013 400m 2006 S 200m-4

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

Notes regarding the athlete details shown above :

An entry for each athlete consists of the first line detailing their Major Championship medal win or their British Championship title win. Second (and subsequent) lines show their ESAA Championship performances in the abbreviated format – *yyyy a eeee p* where :

yyyy Championship Year

a Age Group (I – Intermediate, J – Junior, S – Senior, pre-1948 the age groups were Under-14 (U14) and Under-16 (U16))

eeee Event

p Place achieved (note an 'h-' indicates the performance was in a heat and 'r-' indicates it was in a preliminary round)

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

ESAA GIRLS CHAMPIONS

1976	J	800m	Alison Clifford	1996	I	HJ	Chloe Cozens
1978	I	800m	Alison Clifford	1998	S	HEP	Chloe Cozens
1979	I	HJ	Lorinda Matthews	2000	J	CC	Katrina Wootton
1980	J	200m	Glenys Quailey	2001	I	1500m	Katrina Wootton
1981	J	CC	Sue Jordan	2003	I	CC	Nicola Sykes
1982	J	CC	Sue Jordan	2003	I	3000m	Nicola Sykes
1982	J	1500m	Sue Jordan	2003	S	1500m	Katrina Wootton
1985	J	HJ	Tracey Clarke	2007	J	LJ	Hannah Longworth
1989	S	HJ	Tracey Clarke	2007	I	300m	Lucy James
1991	J	CC	Vicky Russell	2013	S	CC	Rebecca Murray
1991	S	1500m	Paula Radcliffe	2017	I	300m	Hannah Foster
1992	S	CC	Paula Radcliffe	2018	I	300m	Hannah Foster
1992	S	3000m	Paula Radcliffe	2018	I	TJ	Jazz Sears
1993	S	1500m	Liz Talbot	2019	J	HJ	Gracie Wall
1993	S	800m	Michelle Matthews	2024	I	LJ	Thaila-Jade Mason
1995	J	LJ	Emma Hughes				

Note that from 1999 to 2021 the *Association* was known as the *Bedfordshire and Luton Schools Athletics Association*.

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

ESAA BOYS CHAMPIONS

1953	S	LJ	George Gray	1993	J	HT	Adam Devonshire
1954	J	HJ	Michael McEwan	1993	I	200m	Graham Beasley
1954	S	LJ	George Gray	1993	I	HT	Nick Steinmetz
1956	I	HJ	Michael McEwan	1993	S	400mH	Jason Toal
1957	J	880y	Robin Rowland	1994	I	200m	Graham Beasley
1959	J	TJ	David Clements	1995	S	200m	Graham Beasley
1964	J	DT	Joe Bugner	1996	S	4x100m	Bedfordshire
1964	I	CC	Tony Simmons	1997	J	LJ	Darrell Aldridge
1964	S	200yH	Jim Smith	2002	S	400mH	Rupert Gardner
1965	J	DT	Christopher Scott	2004	J	LJ	Cameron Facey
1965	S	880y	Billett Potter	2005	J	1500m	Ryan Parker
1967	I	DT	Christopher Scott	2008	I	100m	Deji Tobais
1970	I	1000mST	John O'Kane	2008	S	HJ	Scott Johnson
1972	S	TJ	Stefan Nowak	2009	S	CC	Ryan Parker
1973	I	JT	Nicholas Proudman	2009	S	100m	Deji Tobais
1976	J	80mH	William Barker	2010	S	1500m	John McDonnell
1977	I	LJ	Trevor Sinclair	2011	S	3000m	Matt Bergin
1978	J	100m	I. George	2015	J	100m	Kyron Canny
1981	J	200m	Richard Ashby	2015	J	PV	Frankie Johnson
1983	I	TJ	Peter Vaughan	2015	I	1500m	Benjamin Davies
1984	S	200m	Richard Ashby	2016	I	PV	Frankie Johnson
1985	S	200m	Richard Ashby	2016	S	1500m	Benjamin Davies
1986	S	200m	Richard Ashby	2017	I	PV	Frankie Johnson
1990	J	LJ	Karl Walsh	2017	S	TJ	Teepee Princewill
1991	J	HT	Nick Steinmetz	2018	I	100m	Raphael Bouju
1991	I	200m	Danny Joyce	2019	J	DT	Zack Grinsted
1991	I	HT	Glen Kerr	2019	I	OCT	Stephen Simmons
1992	J	200m	Graham Beasley	2021	S	DEC	Stephen Simmons
1992	I	HT	Nick Steinmetz	2022	S	2000mST	Alex Alston
1992	S	HT	Alan McNicholas	2024	S	2000mST	Euan Supple
1993	J	4x100m	Bedfordshire	2026	U16	100mH	Kayden Thomas

Note that from 1999 to 2021 the Association was known as the *Bedfordshire and Luton Schools Athletics Association*.

In 2026 the height of hurdles was changed for certain ages so Under-16 (U16), Under-18 (U18) and Under-19 (U19) races were held.

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

ESAA MIXED RELAY WIN

2023 S 4x100m Bedfordshire

ESAA WHEELCHAIR CHAMPION

2023	100m T34/T54	T54	Varun Bandi
2023	400m T34/T54	T54	Varun Bandi

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL ATHLETICS BOARD (SIAB)

The SIAB hold 2 annual international meetings for school athletes from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These are for *Cross Country* and *Track and Field*. The *Indoor Pentathlon International* (commonly referred to as the *SIAB Indoor Pentathlon*) is actually organised by the *Scottish Schools' Athletic Association (SSAA)*.

A fourth championship, the *British Schools Indoor Athletics Championships* was also held from 1990 to 2000.

GIRLS WINNERS

1977	I	800m	Alison Clifford	2003	I	CC	Nicola Sykes
1987	I	HJ	Tracey Clarke	2007	I	300m	Lucy James
1996	I	HJ	Chloe Cozens	2009	I	HJ	Hannah Frith
1996	U16	iLJ	Emma Hughes	2017	I	300m	Hannah Foster
2000	J	CC	Katrina Wootton	2017	I	TJ	Jazz Sears
2003	I	3000m	Nicola Sykes	2021	I	80mH	Etienne Maughan

BOYS WINNERS

1965	S	880y	Billett Potter	1992	I	HT	Nick Steinmetz
1972	S	TJ	Stefan Novak	1992	U16	i200m	Graham Beasley
1979	I	100mH (B)	Desmond Wilkinson	1993	I	HT	Nick Steinmetz
1980	I	100mH (B)	Mark Whitby	2008	I	100m	Deji Tobias
1987	I	LJ	Basil Edwards	2016	I	PV	Frankie Johnson
1991	I	200m	Danny Joyce	2017	I	PV	Frankie Johnson
1991	I	HT	Glen Kerr	2018	I	100m	Raphael Bouju

Winning performances are shown in the following abbreviated format – yyyy a eeee where :

yyyy Championship Year

a Age Group (I – Intermediate, J – Junior, S – Senior, Under-16 (U16), Over-16 (O16) and Under-18 (U18))

eeee Event (preceded by an 'i' indicates at an indoor meeting).

In some events in the 1970s and 1980s two races (A and B) were necessary because of a limited number of lanes at the venue. An '(A)' or '(B)' highlights where this was the case.

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

WORLD JUNIOR / U20 MEDALLIST - GIRLS

2014 Sabrina Bakare 4 x 400m Silver

WORLD JUNIOR / U20 MEDALLIST - BOYS

2008 Nigel Levine 4 x 400m Silver

WORLD YOUTH / U18 MEDALLIST - GIRLS

2013 Sabrina Bakare 400m Gold

EUROPEAN U23 MEDALLISTS - BOYS

2009 Nigel Levine 400m Silver
2011 Nigel Levine 400m Gold and 4 x 400m Gold
2013 Deji Tobais 100m Silver and 4 x 100m Gold
2017 Sam Hazel 4 x 400m Gold
2023 Raphael Bouju 100m and 200m Silver (*now competes for Netherlands*)

Deji Tobais (2011 4 x 100m Silver) ran in the relay heat but not in the relay final.

EUROPEAN JUNIOR / U20 MEDALLIST - GIRLS

2011 Lucy James 4 x 400m Gold

EUROPEAN JUNIOR / U20 MEDALLISTS - BOYS

1985 Richard Ashby 200m Silver and 4 x 100m Gold
1993 Danny Joyce 100m Gold and 4 x 100m Gold
2003 Rupert Gardner 400m Hurdles Bronze
2007 Nigel Levine 4 x 400m Gold
2009 Deji Tobais 4 x 100m Bronze

EUROPEAN YOUTH / U18 MEDALLIST - BOYS

2018 Raphael Bouju 100m Gold (*now competes for Netherlands*)

ESAA – BEDFORDSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

MULTI-SPORT ATHLETES

Many gifted young athletes who competed in the English Schools' Athletic Association (ESAA) Championships have become very successful in a wide variety of sports including Bobsleigh, Boxing, Cricket, Cycling, Darts, Football, Hockey, Modern Pentathlon, Netball, Powerlifting, Rowing, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Skeleton, Triathlon and Weightlifting.

Details follow of two of Bedfordshire's ESAA competitors who have gone on to have a successful career in other sports :

BOXING - JOE BUGNER

Joe was born in Hungary but his family brought him to Britain to escape from the 1956 Soviet invasion. He represented Bedfordshire when winning the 1964 ESAA Junior Discus Throw title. He was second in the ESAA Inter Championship Discus Throw a year later before he decided to switch to a career in boxing in 1967 at the very young age of 17.

In 1971 he somewhat controversially defeated British boxing legend Henry Cooper to take his British, European and Commonwealth Heavyweight titles. Later in the year he surprisingly lost his titles to Jack Bodell.

In 1975 he fought Muhammad Ali for the World title in Kuala Lumpur, losing a one-sided contest on points over 15 rounds.

In 1976 Joe regained the British, European and Commonwealth Heavyweight titles by beating Richard Dunn but retired in 1977. After a 3-year absence from the ring he returned but only had 13 bouts in 7 years before retiring again in 1987. Eight years later, at the age of 45, he returned to the ring for a further 9 fights in 4 years before finally retiring for good.

FOOTBALL – JAMAL LEWIS

Jamal represented Bedfordshire and Luton when finishing second in the 2014 ESAA Inter Cross Country. He had already been playing football for Luton Town youth sides for 5 years at that time.

He joined Norwich City in 2014 and made his first team debut for them at the end of 2017. In September 2020 he signed a 5-year contract with Newcastle United.

Although born in Luton, his mother was born in Belfast and so he was eligible to play for Northern Ireland. Jamal was given his first full Northern Ireland cap in 2018 and by January 2025 had played 39 times for Northern Ireland.