

ESAA – SUCCESS AT SIAB AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

JOHN MACKIE

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BACKGROUND

The Schools' International Athletics Board (SIAB) holds 2 annual International events for school competitors from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These are the **SIAB Cross Country International** in March and the **SIAB Track and Field International** in July.

An annual **Schools Indoor Pentathlon International** is held in December and is hosted by the Scottish Schools' Athletics Association.

A relatively short-lived event, the **SIAB Indoor Track and Field International**, was held annually from 1990 to 2000 with the exception of 1993.

There have been many other international athletics events for schools but this document concentrates on these 4 events covering all events to the SIAB Cross Country in March, 2026.

EVENT HISTORY

The **SIAB Track and Field International** started in 1961. For the first 2 years only England, Scotland and Wales competed. Northern Ireland entered the competition in 1963 and in 1968 the Irish team became an All-Ireland Schools one. England did not take part in 1982 and 1983.

The competition was initially for Senior age-group athletes but, in 1974, was changed to be for Intermediate age-group competitors.

The inaugural **SIAB Cross Country International** was held in 1972 with Scotland, Wales and All-Ireland teams taking part. England joined the competition the following year.

For the first 2 years the competition was for Senior age-group athletes but changed, in 1974, to be for Intermediate age-group competitors. In 1977 Junior events were added.

The **Indoor Pentathlon International** began in 1989 and involved school athletes from England, All-Ireland, Scotland and Wales and was for Under-15s. It was not held in 1990. In 1991 and 1992 it was incorporated into the **SIAB Indoor Track and Field International** (see below) and was an event for under-16s. In 1993 it once again became a separate event and was extended to be for Under 18s as well as Under 16s. From 2013 the age-groups have been Under 16s and Over 16s.

A fourth event, the **SIAB Indoor Track and Field International**, was held from 1990 to 1992 and from 1994 to 2000. It was for Under-16s with only 1 team member in an event. In 1990 Belgium and Czechoslovakia also competed. In 1991 a Scotland 'B' team replaced Wales. A Scotland 'B' team also competed in 1992.

NOTABLE COMPETITORS

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The SIAB Championships have been important stepping stones in the illustrious careers of many of the ‘greats’ of British and Irish Athletics.

England representatives have included Tessa Sanderson (in 1973), Kelly Holmes (1986), Paula Radcliffe (1988 to 1990), Jessica Ennis (2001 and 2002), Katarina Johnson-Thompson (2008), Dina Asher-Smith (2011), Keely Hodgkinson (2018), Steve Cram (1977), Darren Campbell (1989) and Mo Farah (1997 to 1999).

Ireland’s competitors have included Sonia O’Sullivan (in 1985 and 1986), Eamonn Coghlan (1971), Frank Murphy (1972), John Treacy (1974) and Mark English (2009).

Scotland’s competitors have included Liz Lynch (later McColgan) (in 1978 and 1979), Yvonne Murray (1980 and 1981), Eilish McColgan (2004 and 2006), Tom McKean (1980), Jake Wightman (2010) and Josh Kerr (2012 to 2014).

Wales’s competitors have included Kirsty McDermott (1978), Lynn Davies (in 1961), Colin Jackson (1982 and 1983), Jamie Baulch (1989), Christian Malcolm (1994 and 1995) and Jeremiah Azu (2017).

EVENTS and COMPETITORS

Altogether there have been 2,830 events which have included 248 relays. The 2,582 individual events have produced a total of 7,745 medallists.

The event breakdown has been :

EVENT TYPE		WINNERS	MEDALLISTS
Cross Country	Individual	198	595
Cross Country	Relay	8	24
Indoor Pentathlon		134	403
Indoor Track and Field	Individual	195	586
Indoor Track and Field	Relay	24	72
Track and Field	Individual	2,058	6,186
Track and Field	Relay	218	650

SUCCESS BY COUNTRY

The competing countries have achieved the following success when it comes to being winners :

NATION	Individual Events	Relays	Total	%
ENGLAND	1,912	200	2,112	74.36
IRELAND	271	12	283	9.96
N.IRELAND	1	0	1	0.03
SCOTLAND	242	30	272	9.58
WALES	164	8	172	6.05

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The competing countries have achieved the following medal success in the individual events :

NATION	Medallists	%
ENGLAND	4,231	54.22
IRELAND	1,401	18.03
N. IRELAND	21	0.27
SCOTLAND	1,218	15.67
WALES	898	11.56

The 7,761 individual event medals have been won by 5,874 different competitors.

Details of the successes for each English county are shown in Appendix A on page 4.

DOCUMENT CREATION

I have built a comprehensive list of the SIAB and other international events over the past 3 years. My information has come from a variety of sources, as shown in Appendix B on page 6.

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APPENDIX A – MEDALLISTS BY ENGLISH COUNTY

County	Champions	Medallists
Avon	17	48
Bedfordshire (incl. Beds & Luton)	26	71
Berkshire	61	109
Buckinghamshire	23	63
Cambridgeshire	17	43
Channel Islands	6	8
Cheshire	48	105
Cleveland	8	29
Cornwall	18	35
Cumberland	0	2
Cumbria	23	49
Derbyshire	33	73
Devon	25	59
Dorset	23	46
Durham	31	77
Essex	126	323
Gloucestershire	24	46
Gtr. Manchester	58	148
Hampshire	87	187
Hereford & Worcs	12	38
Herefordshire	0	1
Hertfordshire	51	135
Humberside	18	39
Huntingdonshire	1	3
Isle of Man	0	2
Kent	111	251
Lancashire	54	128
Leicestershire	4	12
Leicestershire & Rutland	39	70
Lincolnshire	32	53
London	106	179
Merseyside	51	111
Middlesex	84	195
N. Lincoln / E. Yorks	0	4
Norfolk	25	44
North Yorkshire	19	39
Northamptonshire	32	53
Northumberland	31	73
Nottinghamshire	20	55

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Oxfordshire	20	61
Rutland	1	1
Shropshire	15	35
Somerset	36	90
South Yorkshire	31	79
Staffordshire	58	121
Suffolk	26	54
Surrey	120	234
Sussex	49	100
Warwickshire	48	99
West Midlands	86	183
West Yorkshire	32	81
Westmorland	1	1
Wiltshire	19	41
Yorkshire	25	45
Totals	1911	4231

Please note that the totals above refer only to individual events.

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APPENDIX B – INFORMATION SOURCES

English Schools Athletics Association (ESAA) Archive – houses a large collection of programmes and results for the SIAB Championships as well as those for the ESAA Championships. The collection is not complete but it was an invaluable source of information and was my starting point in compiling my lists of results. It is looked after by Roger Blades and is kept in Rotherham. Roger very kindly let me borrow the collection for 3 months.

National Union of Track Statisticians (NUTS) Archive – has a very good collection of athletics literature and memorabilia. This includes bound copies of Athletics Weekly and its predecessor magazine from 1945 to the present day. It is looked after by Mike Fleet, a former ESAA competitor and Commonwealth Games 800m finalist. Non-NUTS members are most welcome.

Scottish Association of Track Statisticians (SATS) – they have a fantastic (*not a misuse of the word*) website covering everything to do with Scottish Athletics. It also contains results for the *SIAB Track and Field Championships* and *SIAB Indoor Pentathlon Championships* from 2000 to 2019. These are found by clicking on *Results* on the first page of the website; then clicking on *Championship Results* on the returned page; and finally scrolling down to the table headed “*Scottish Schools Championships & Internationals*” to select the appropriate event.

Amongst the incredible content of the website are A-Z documents for hundreds of Scottish athletes from 1959. These were a great help in finding the first names of the Scottish SIAB medallists and checking that the names in the SIAB results were correct. These PDF documents are reached by clicking on *Archive* on the first page of the website. Near the bottom of the returned page you will see a box with a link to *TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETICS*. Click on the *LINK* and on the returned page, under the heading *THE ATHLETES*, there are *LINKS* to the *MEN’s and WOMEN’s documents*. These documents have over 300 pages of information !

Scottish Association of Track Statisticians (SATS) – Arnold Black

In spite of all the sources above, I was still missing all of the pre-2000 SIAB Indoor Pentathlon results. I asked Arnold if he had any idea where I could find them. To my surprise he had copies of them and scanned them all and sent them to me within a few days !

Athletics Ireland Website - www.athleticsireland.ie – the website contains a very useful list of the schools athletes who have competed for Ireland. The list is accessed by moving the cursor over *Competitions* on the first page of the website. This reveals *Statistics* on the left of the page and click on this. Then on the returned page click on *Roll of Honour* ; look in the area headed “*National Championships*” and within that is an entry titled *Irish International School Caps*. Clicking on this returns a long list in chronological order of all of the school athletes to compete for Ireland since 1968.

This list was a great help in finding the first names of the Irish SIAB medallists and checking that the names in the SIAB results were correct.

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British Newspaper Archive – this on-line subscription service currently contains over 103 million newspaper pages. It has more than doubled in size in the 5 years that I have used it. It was an extremely useful tool for finding early ESAA information but also enabled me to fill in some SIAB gaps.

Alan Lindop – I cannot praise Alan highly enough. For over 3 years he has been incredibly helpful to me. His help with finding missing ESAA information has been truly amazing. This has continued with his help on the SIAB front as well.

Alan was a Great Britain Team Manager in Decathlon and Heptathlon for 20 years and an England Track and Field Manager at 2 Commonwealth Games. He has compiled UK Youth and Junior rankings and, for 50 years, the Combined Events rankings.

Mrs Jan Glynis-Buoy (Schools Athletics Association of Middlesex) – who is building an archive of SIAB information which she brought along to the 2022 ESAA Combined Events Championships to help with my research.

Carmarthen Harriers Website - www.carmarthenharriers.co.uk – it has to be one of the most comprehensive club websites in the UK. Included among the many lists is one with the names of all of their SIAB competitors and how they fared. This list was a great help in finding the first names of the many Welsh SIAB medallists and checking that the names in the SIAB results were correct.