

## **Worcester Athletic Club's young Combined Events athletes show their promise**

After being inspired by athletes Katrina Johnson-Thompson (KJT) and Niamh Emerson, who won the gold and silver medals, respectively, in the pentathlon at the European Indoor Championships in Glasgow earlier this month, Worcester Athletic Club's young athletes showed their promise at the England Athletics National Under 17 and Under 15 Combined Events Championships in Sheffield, which also incorporates the Midlands Championships.

Hannah Sahota, Amber Hopkins and Louisa de Vos all competed in the U17 pentathlon (60m hurdles, high jump, shot, long jump and 800m) with 46 other girls from across the UK in a very high standard competition, which saw the winner (Abigail Pawlett from Stockport Harriers) break the British record to be the first U17 woman to score over 4000 points in an indoor pentathlon. Sahota, a pupil at Bromsgrove School, achieved personal best (PB) scores in the shot and 800m and in her overall points score to finish with the Midlands bronze medal.

Hopkins, a pupil at The Chase in Malvern and competing in her first indoor pentathlon, achieved PBs in the hurdles, shot and 800m to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in the Midlands. She said "My first pentathlon was so much fun and a great opportunity to compete alongside athletes from all over the country. I am now looking forward to seeing what the outdoor season will bring."

De Vos, a pupil at King's Worcester, also competing in her first indoor pentathlon, finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the Midlands, with indoor PBs for shot and 800m.



*[from left to right; Louisa De Vos, Amber Hopkins, Hannah Sahota]*



*[Hannah Sahota on the left with her Midlands Bronze medal]*

Oliver Hill, also a pupil at King's Worcester, took part in the U15 boys pentathlon. This was his first ever combined events competition and he achieved personal bests in all five events - you can't ask for any more than that! He said "I really enjoyed doing my first combined events competition. Without my coaches, who put in so much time and effort, I would not have been to compete in a national competition at just 12 years-old."



In the U15 girls pentathlon, Maya Stewart from Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College, competed in a very large field of 50 athletes. She performed brilliantly, achieving 4 personal bests across the 5 events. With an overall score of 2861 points, she finished in 10<sup>th</sup> place overall and won the Midlands silver medal. Her total score was also a new club record, as was her 60m hurdles time of 9.50 sec. She said "I was really looking forward to the competition and was so happy that I was able to produce personal bests and get a good overall score and club record thanks to the training and support from my coaches over the winter."



*[from left to right, Deirdre Elmhirst, Maya Stewart, Mike Bennett and Christina Boxer]*

Worcester AC's lead coach for the girls, Deirdre Elmhirst, said "Competing in five events on a single day is a big ask for these young athletes, but they rose very well to the occasion as you can see from their results". She continued "I want to say a huge thank you to the other coaches at the club who provide coaching support week-in and week-out; they are Mike Bennett (long jump), Richard White (hurdles), Quentin Elmhirst (throws) and Christina Boxer (800m)". The next step is to prepare for the outdoors season, which is a heptathlon for the U17 women, with the additional events of 200m and javelin.