



**England Athletics U15 & U17 Championships Birmingham
Fri 26th, Sat 27th & Sunday 28th July 2024**

Club athletes won gold and silver and broke a club record as a small group of club athletes competed against England's best at the three-day England Athletics Under 15 and Under 17 Championships took place at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium.

Joel Ajayi had won the English Schools 100m title at the same venue two weeks earlier and last week had won European Under 18 100m bronze in Slovakia so faced his third major competition in a fortnight. He eased through his Under 17 men's 100m heat and semi-final, with victories in both, but showed some discomfort, pulling up after his semi-final win. Joel started slower than usual in his final two hours later, but he recovered well to lead at midway before Max Evans (Wales) went past to cross the line first. With Championship medals only awarded to English qualified athletes Joel won 100m gold, while the Welsh athlete received a Guest medal.

Alicia Fairmaner had been disappointed to miss out on a medal in the English Schools Championships two weeks earlier, finishing sixth after a series of no jumps but made no mistake this time out jumping out to 5.71m with her first jump to take an early lead and she remained in pole position until Sadie Parker, fifth two weeks earlier, edged past with her fourth round 5.75m jump, and sealed victory with her sixth round 5.79m PB. Winchester's Gracie Osman (5.69m) added bronze to her English Schools' silver.

Just six days after breaking the club Under 15 Boys' hammer record, which had stood since 2008, Sam Johnson added over four metres to that mark, throwing the hammer out to 46.20m to place sixth at Birmingham, and for good measure had two more throws over his previous best. The Champion 14-year-old has now added over 13 metres to his best since joining the club, and is ranked in the top ten nationally at both shot and hammer. Another rapidly-improving athlete is Emmanuel Asirifi-Otchere who twice improved his previous best on his way to a final place in the Under 17 Men's 200m. Emmanuel clocked 22.61s in his heat, and improved to 22.43s in placing second in his semi-final to qualify for the final where he equalled his new PB time in finishing fifth in his first national competition. His time was the sixth fastest ever by a club Under 17.

Also in action at Birmingham were Bode Thompson whose first time clearance at 1.66m placed him sixth in the Under 15 Boys' high jump, Jessica Page whose best throw since May of 30.07m placed her seventh and Lila Chapelhow who was 13th in the Under 15 hammer.

Well done to all these athletes who competed in these prestigious championships.

