

English Schools Athletic Association Combined Events Championships . Two local young athletes represented Lincolnshire at the national finals of the English Schools A.A. Combined Events Championships at Exeter last weekend. Maria Hollingsworth(Boston High School) was a member of the County Intermediate Girls Heptathlon team which triumphed retaining the national team title won by last year's Lincolnshire quartet. Frances Nuttall (Boston High School) competed in her first national final as a member of the Lincs. Junior Girls Pentathlon team which finished in fifth position.

Maria opened her seven event challenge in splendid form recording a personal best 11.75secs time for the 80m Hurdles which earned a massive 833 points on the International Scoring Tables for Combined Events.Maria was then able to build on her fine start clearing 1.50m in the High Jump to add a further 621 points to her total and then produced another "pb" in the Shot with a putt of 8.08m for a contribution of 405 points. Day one ended on another high as Maria produced another "pb" recording 27.68secs for the 200 metres and 656 points to leave her with a total that left her in an unexpected position in the top ten positions overall. The day two programme comprises Maria's weaker events and after such a magnificent start it was clear that she would not find it possible to retain her high ranking overnight position. In tricky windy conditions she struggled a little in Long Jump finally achieving 3.90m. for 285 points and then experienced problems in the Javelin .Following two foul throws with the 600g. implement on her last trial Maria managed to get in a valid one recording 20.17m for 292 points. In the final Heptathlon event for Maria the dreaded 800 metres she ran better than ever before maintaining a good even pace throughout the two windy laps to clock what for her was a splendid 2mins 52.32 secs and 440 points. With a Heptathlon total of 3532 points Maria claimed twenty second position in the individual placings and given that she has a further year in the Intermediate age group this was an excellent conclusion to her 2011 track and field season. With a team points total of 11830 Lincolnshire had over a 330 points margin of victory over Cheshire to retain the national team title and the Hayward Trophy. Sussex finished in third place ahead of Cornwall, Essex, Warwickshire and South Yorkshire. In her first experience of national competition Frances Nuttall opened with a confidence boosting 12.89 secs in the 75m Hurdles for 579 points. In the second event the Shot one of Frances's weaker Pentathlon events she achieved 5.48m to add 238 points to her running total. In the High Jump a clearance of 1.41m restored equilibrium contributing a further 523 points and coping reasonably well with the swirling wind Frances achieved 4.16m in the penultimate event the Long Jump for another 345 points. At the Regional Championships the final event the 800 metres was by far and away the worst event for Frances but at Exeter her performance over two laps was a considerable improvement on her previous run. Responding positively and setting off from the gun in determined fashion she maintained a steady rhythm over the two laps in blustery conditions to clock a massively improved 3 mins 11.88 secs. for 263 points. A Pentathlon total of 1948 points gave Frances thirty fifth individual position . The Exeter Championships provided her with some very valuable experience and given that Frances has a further year in the Junior Girls age group an insight into the all round standards of multi event competition at national level.