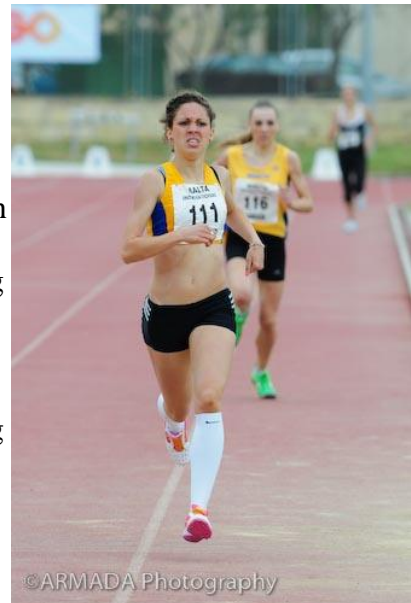


Northern Athletics' U20 team excelled at the recent Malta International Meeting, collecting a total of 15 medals, with 9 athletes producing personal best performances. In what for most was their first taste of international competition, the young team rose to the occasion, competing in many cases against much more experienced senior athletes.



Emily Moss got the team off to a flying start in the first event with an excellent personal best of 66.21 to win the 400H. But arguably the finest performances from Northern athletes came from 16-year-olds Liam Clowes and Dannish Khan in the 200m. Despite being among the youngest athletes in the field, both ran brilliantly to finish 1st and 3rd overall, achieving personal bests of 21.87 and 22.13 respectively. Harry Doran and Luke Edwards also performed extremely well in a high quality 400m event, recording times of 48.4 and 49.1 (PB) respectively to place 4th and 5th.

The middle distance events proved to be a major success with Harry Ellis and Abbie Vernon winning the male and female 1500m, the former in a personal best of 3:54.47. Ellis's strong run was also backed up well by the performance of training partner Stephen Broadhurst who claimed the bronze medal over the same distance. In the womens' 800m, the North occupied the first two spots with Leigh Lennon demonstrating a confident display of front running to take the win in 2:09.51 ahead of April Stevenson, who with 2:12.30 was just outside of her PB in 2nd. In the mens' equivalent, Chris Kays ran fantastically to finish marginally outside of his PB with 1:54.39 to claim the bronze medal, in a closely fought event.



After the water jump was deemed unsafe for use at the last minute, the steeplechase events were cancelled, leaving Amy Talbot and Jamie Crompton with little choice but to contest flat races. Talbot enjoyed a fine run to finish 2nd in the 5000m with a PB of 18:29.22 and Crompton too recorded a PB of 8:40.25 to win silver in the mens' 3000m.

Despite falling when in the lead in her main event the 100H, Danielle Rooney bounced back brilliantly to clock a PB of 12.63 in the 100m. In the field events there were wins for Alex Russell in the long jump with 5.78m and Adam Smith in the discus with a PB equalling throw of 39.56m. Indeed Smith had done particularly well, as the time of the discus event had been brought forward 2 hours at very late notice, leaving him very little time to warm up and prepare himself. Paul Allsopp also enjoyed a great victory in the javelin with 55.50m.

Both mens' relay teams performed well, with Adam Forrest, Sam Lawrence, Clowes and Khan teaming up to finish an excellent 3rd in the 4x100m in a time of 42.71, whilst the 4x400m team reached the finish line in first place, well clear of the other competitors, only to be disqualified later for incorrect positioning.



Undoubtedly boosted by the good athletics performances, the Malta experience was enjoyed tremendously by Northern athletes and team managers alike.

Although the unsettled weather meant that there was little chance to gain a suntan, a good time was had by all. Such trips are arguably invaluable to the development of talented junior athletes, in that they can experience racing abroad as well as learning to cope with the

pressure that comes with such a challenge. However, this fantastic trip could not have gone ahead without the superb organisation on the part of Sandra White, along with the huge dedication and support from team managers Etta Kessabah, Christine Warden, Don Lennon, Alex Kruger and physio Steve Borrill.

Let's hope other teams follow the North's example and send teams to compete internationally in an attempt to help developing young athletes progress smoothly into the senior ranks. [Results](#) [Photo Gallery](#)

*Report Emily Moss*

Photos [Armada Photography](#)

