

The AAA Tom Pink Relays were held at Sportcity, Manchester on Thursday 7th June as an activity for the half-term holidays and despite the extended holiday for the jubilee this year, there was a good turn out. Some clubs experienced difficulties in fielding complete teams and so mixed teams were formed ensuring that all children wishing to run in the relays were able to compete and have a great time.

Ray Crocken, the Team Manager from Spenborough sent the following email:



“May I congratulate you on what was a fantastic event yesterday.

Our small team from Spenborough had a busy and fun-filled afternoon made all the brighter for the clutch of medals and gold certificates between them. My daughter in particular was quite disheartened when she arrived because we had gone from 9 interested u13 girls to just the one. She did however, have a fabulous time due to the individual pentathlon (where as a year 7 she struck gold) and being kindly awarded a bronze medal in the 5000m pursuit. She must have been happy because ordinarily she would not countenance doing



an endurance event but yesterday she couldn't wait to have a go.

Unfortunately, we do not have access to any indoor facilities at Spenborough and I believe that the club misses out on encouraging in and then maintaining the interest of young children to our fantastic sport, especially during the dreary winter months. We are therefore very grateful when we get the opportunity to take part in a Tom Pink or other Sportshall event because quite frankly the children just love the variety of experience that it offers. It is fun, it is play, yet it is competitive too. Please extend our thank you to all of your team for the superb organisation on the day. It was my first experience of "team management" for Spenborough and the excellence of your team made my job really rather easy. All I can say is please let us know of any future events because I know our kids would love to repeat the experience.”

All the children were also able to take part in the Aviva UKA Sportshall Pentathlon Awards which continued while the relays for the other age groups were in progress.

One of the highlights of the day was achieved in the 5000m relay for girls in school years 7 and 8 when the team from Sale set a new event record, being the first girl's team to run under 14 minutes. This is a tough challenge calling for pace judgement and stamina and there was an excellent run by all the girls involved. The Sale girl's team averaged 33.5 seconds for each of the 25 laps, the Crewe and Nantwich girls averaged 35.4 seconds whilst the Bolton girls averaged 35.8 seconds. This form of relay is recognised as an excellent training exercise for both sprinters and distance runners and the groups can now work to improve their averages as part of their clubs training programme. The winners of the boys race, Crewe and Nantwich, recorded an average of 33.7 seconds which still compares well with boys results

Photos supplied by Ian Williamson