

High Sports

Spring Term | March 2019

Welcome to the first edition of the new look High Sports, Northampton High School's termly sports review.

This new look newsletter will cover a plethora of school sporting events and achievements, including a round up of each individual sport each term. This edition will focus on the sports of Hockey, Netball, Gymnastics, Cross-Country and Badminton - and what a busy couple of terms we've had!



Since the start of the academic year, our teams have reached 3 National Finals, 5 Regional Finals, and become County Champions in two age groups.

Our varied clubs programme has seen an increase in the number of girls participating in a range of activities and we are delighted when girls suggest new clubs, such as volleyball for the summer term.

Jo Hackett
Director of Sport

U16 Netballers qualify for National Schools Netball Finals!

Our U16 Netball team have already enjoyed a stellar year. As a result of being crowned County Champions in November the team qualified for the Regional Finals, and a squad full of optimism travelled to Leicester in February to test themselves against the best players in the region.

The girls knew that progression to the final of this tournament would see them qualify for the National Finals. Inspired and driven, the team qualified for the semi-finals of the event, remaining unbeaten during the group games. The semi-final was a well-fought affair, and after securing a victory in extra time we booked our place in the Final! Unfortunately, Loughborough just edged the tie in what was a hotly contested affair, but that was not without the best efforts from a very talented squad.

Reaching the final, however, means that qualification for the National Finals was secured. Being the only school in Northampton to reach this stage, the team competed in the Finals on the 16 March and achieved a very respectable 11th place finish. Well done girls for all your accomplishments.

Sports Review

Hockey

It has been a busy start to the academic year for our Hockey team, including weekend events and qualification to Regional tournaments.

We started the year by attending two Matt Taylor conferences. The purpose of these events is to raise the skill level of players, with teams having the chance to meet some of the stars from the world of Hockey and have the opportunity to seek advice from their heroes, including Olympic Gold Medallist Kate Richardson-Walsh.



The first GDST Rally of the year soon followed, and our 1st XI performed admirably, just being edged out in the quarter finals on penalty shuffles.

The U14 team have enjoyed a fun weekend in Bath competing in a GDST Hockey tournament, and also performed supremely in reaching the Regional round of the English Schools competition in Rugby.

Our U11 side enjoyed an exciting weekend of sport in Newcastle, which included the chance to play a host of sides from across the country, and our U13s ventured to Gresham to take part in a weekend long event.

In the GDST November Rally in Oxford, it was the turn of the U15s to compete, and after a strong showing, the team narrowly missed out on a quarter final spot.

Badminton

Our school Badminton teams have gone from strength to strength this year. A number of girls have played matches for the first time and the standard has improved throughout. The particular highlight was an impressive win against Bedford Girls' School at all age groups.

At the County tournaments, the U14 team played brilliantly and finished runners up, winning all matches but one. However, the U16 team went one better, winning every match and being crowned County Champions. The U16s then travelled to Nottingham to take part in the Regional round, and after a fantastic display the team finished 2nd, meaning they are the Regional runners-up - well done girls!



Cross Country

We have enjoyed a busy year in Cross Country, entering a host of events in which all girls have performed superbly. Thornton Trail, ESAA Cross Country Cup and the GDST Rally in Bromley were amongst these competitions, alongside the ESAA National Cross Country

Championships; an event in which 46 counties compete, with the qualifying participants moving forward to the Inter-Counties competition, and then potentially, the Nationals.



We have seen the girls go from strength to strength during the year, with Phoebe Haynes, Ruby Curtis-Free, Elysia Lay, Lucy Shepherd and Emilia Thompson placing strongly throughout, alongside Ella Darby who placed first in the Thornton Trail, District Cross Country and County Cross Country.

Netball

It really has been a year to remember so far for our Netball teams. Across all of the age groups we have seen memorable displays, fantastic skill, and outstanding team spirit as our teams develop and improve their game.

Our U16 team have so far racked up a Regional runners-up place and a place in the National Finals to go alongside the title of County Champions, with notable performances coming from Georgie Forde-Wells, who was selected to represent the GDST Select VII side in a weekend of Netball. The team attended the National Finals on 16 March, and despite the awful weather conditions the girls battled resolutely and finished a very respectable 11th in the Country!

Our U15s have secured 5 wins so far this year, and Lily King and Radhika Pandya were also selected for the U16 squad at the County, Regional and National Finals. The U14s finished as runners-up in the County Championships and placed a strong 6th at Regionals, with our U13s winning an impressive 6 games this season so far.



Our U11 and U12 teams have only lost one game apiece so far this season, remarkable considering each age group has multiple teams.

Gymnastics

We have enjoyed a high level of attendance at all of our Gymnastics clubs from Years 5 to 8 so far this year. Our Junior and Senior teams trained hard and performed admirably at the GDST Rally in Bromley earlier in the year, finishing a respectable 10th place with notable performances from Rosie Davies and Ques-Li De Bruin.

The hard work will continue next term as we look forward to our now annual Gym and Dance Extravaganza.



Sports Presentation Evening

Sport is a key component of life at Northampton High and we have much to celebrate on both an individual and team level at our Junior and Senior Sports Presentation Evenings.

We recognise the excellence of our girls in various ways - from the budding athletes in the Junior School through to the development teams and the A teams, those at the beginning of their sporting journeys and those who are already accomplished and are moving on to competing at an elite level. The students' tenacity, sportsmanship and commitment to their sports, their teams and each other is evident in all they do, and we applaud this culture of community and integrity.

The Team of the Year Award recognises the essence of collaboration and competition. Congratulations to this year's Team of the Year nominees:

- U16 Badminton team**
- 90cm Equestrian team**
- 110cm Equestrian team**
- 1st XI Hockey team**
- U14 Hockey team**
- U14 Netball team**
- U16 Netball team**

This event is also an opportunity to celebrate our pupils' individual achievements. Our girls compete in a wide variety of sports, with many performing at County, Regional, National and International level in their chosen disciplines. It has been difficult to narrow down nominations to just nine girls for the Sports Personality of the Year Award.

All students who have been selected are, without question, worthy of the honour. Congratulations to our nominees for the Sports Personality of the Year Award for 2019:

- Alexa Dykes:** Hockey & Equestrian
- Georgie Forde-Wells:** Netball, Gymnastics & Athletics
- Lara Jameson:** Dance
- Chloe Mercer:** Swimming
- Ellie Robinson:** Swimming
- Leah Tanna-Shah:** Karate
- Amelia Tutt:** Athletics & Rugby
- Gemma Watts:** Equestrian
- Emily Wilde:** Skiing

Our thanks this evening also go to our guests, three stars of the sporting world, for helping us to inspire our own budding athletes to the top of their game. We are delighted to welcome Northampton Saints' leading lights, Luther Burrell and Jamie Gibson, and Commonwealth Games Gold Medallist and Team Bath Netballer, Eboni Usoro-Brown. Eboni will be speaking at both Junior and Senior events, and she will be joined by Jamie for the Junior event and Luther for the Senior event.

