

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

Because of the coronavirus pandemic and the related restrictions, the Welsh Schools' national cross-country championships and the SIAB Schools cross-country international have both been cancelled for this year. This is a look back to events forty years ago, in 1981.

Historical background

The Welsh Schools' national cross-country championships were first held on Saturday, March 4th, 1961 with two races, for junior and senior boys.

Newtown High School, in Montgomeryshire was the venue. The course started and finished in the school grounds and it was really tough involving stiles, hills and tracks – and a water splash. It continued to be used until 1978.

With the exception of 1965, when the event was cancelled at very short notice because of snow, the same two race format was held until 1969.

In 1970, there were two major changes. Two races for girls were included for the first time – junior and senior - and the boys' age groups was altered to make it three – junior, middle and senior, based on track age groups.

In 1974, just before local government reform was implemented, the old twelve counties competed for the only occasion with three races for both boys and girls – junior, middle and senior.

After the seventeenth staging of the event at Newtown in 1978, the venue was moved to the lakeside course at Llandrindod Wells for 1979 and 1980, with both championships held late on Friday afternoons.

Of the championships from 1961 to 1972, sadly, there is only a full set of results for the 1963 championships. There are full results for most years from 1973.

Why is this about the 1981 championship?

There are three reasons

1. At forty years, the date is a convenient time period away, one in which many of the participants are likely to be still alive, and with memories of the event!
2. There is a full set of results available – though not with the Christian name and school of all the pupils who competed.
3. The British Schools international and the Inter -Association representative match had been started, so it is possible to provide a follow-up on those two events.

Venue and date

After 17 years at Newtown and two years at Llandrindod, the event moved to a new venue, the Royal Welsh Showground at Builth Wells, and was held there on Saturday, March 21st.

To date, this is the only occasion that the venue has been used for these national schools' championships.

The Winter Cross-Country programme

For club athletes, there was a programme of league fixtures organised by the Gwent and North Wales Leagues, and the Welsh Cross-Country Association organised Inter County and National championships as well as representative matches.

School-based competition might involve just a county schools' championships – to select the team for the Welsh Schools' national – although some counties were proactive and arranged league fixtures and inter county matches. Perhaps one of the best known of these inter county schools matches (at least in south Wales) was the fixture organised by South Glamorgan at Fairwater Park, starting in January 1977. The fixture developed out of the old rivalry between Cardiff and Swansea boys in the 1960s and involved teams (boys and girls) from the three counties in Glamorgan plus Gwent. The addition of teams from Gloucestershire and Wiltshire meant provide a fresh challenge for our top young endurance runners before they competed at national and possibly international events.

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

In 1981, 450 pupils competed across eight races on the testing slopes at Fairwater.

In 1972, Scottish Schools hosted the first triangular international for senior age group pupils against All Ireland Schools and Welsh Schools at Clydebank, and all four countries competed in the 1973 event, which Wales hosted on the Newtown course.

When England were the hosts at Birkenhead in 1975, the age group was changed from senior to middle, and the event was expanded in 1977, back in Newtown, when the junior age group was added. It was now in a format that most people would recognise today – teams of 8 pupils from each of the four countries in the two age groups of under 17 (forms 4 & 5/years 10 & 11) and under 15 (forms 2 & 3/years 8 & 9, and with six to score.

Mention is rarely made of the relative number of secondary schools in these four ‘competition units’ but, of the four, Wales has the smallest number. Our Welsh Schools or Wales team will always find it tough against the national teams from All-Ireland, England and Scotland – but it does not stop us trying to beat them.

With the loss of the senior age group from the British Schools’ international in 1975, Welsh Schools did adopt two initiatives over the next few years as carrots to encourage pupils to compete and specifically to encourage sixth form pupils to continue running. At the 1976 AGM, it was agreed to add a new cross-country competition for school pupils of all abilities. The result was the acceptance that an Inter Schools championships should be organised. This was first held for the first time in March of 1977, on the same age groups as the nationals. In 1980, the event was moved from the crowded March period, initially to October and later to November, and a later change resulted in the age groups falling into line with the clubs.

It took slightly longer to activate an opportunity for sixth formers to ‘gain a Welsh Schools’ vest but the first inter association match against the Welsh Cross-Country Association was held at Fairwater Park in Cardiff in March 1980. Pupils from the sixth form years competed against the Welsh Cross-Country under 20 team, which included students in upper sixth + the first two years at university.

As founder members of ‘the International cross-country championships’ in 1903, the Welsh Cross-Country Association was eligible to select and field teams at those championships, which were usually held towards the end of March each year, and the programme had been extended by the late seventies to include senior women as well as senior and under 20 men.

As the target for representative and international honours, these were the key dates at the end of the 1981 season:

Saturday, March 21 st	Welsh Schools national championships at Builth
Saturday, March 28 th	World Cross-country championships in Madrid
Saturday, April 4 th	British schools international cross country at Swansea
Saturday, April 11 th	Inter Association match at Deeside in north Wales

Sponsor

Welsh Schools has been really fortunate to attract a number of major sponsors in the past.

Think of Esso, the National Dairy Council, TSB Bank, Aviva and the Run 4 Wales Charitable Foundation. There was even backing from an individual one year – Peter Mason, who sadly died recently – and from the Ron Pickering Memorial Trust in another year.

How the association’s trustees would welcome a new major sponsor coming forward to fund the domestic and international programme in addition to the support from the NASUWT union for the cup and plate competition!

Back in 1980, it was the National Dairy Council who had come forward as the ‘headline sponsor’.

It must have started by March 1980 because a photograph of the national cross-country championships at Llandrindod has ‘Milk in Action’ flags but it was not until the summer of that year that the national track & field programme was listed as ‘Milk in Action’.

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

That sponsorship lasted for a decade or more, and was very much appreciated by pupils, staff, parents and the association.

The competing teams

The old twelve county system had been replaced from April 1974 by the 'new' eight counties:

- The old powerhouse of Glamorgan had been split into three – West, Mid and South
- Carmarthen, Cardigan and Pembroke had combined to become Dyfed
- Powys was the new name for Brecon & Radnor and Montgomery
- Anglesey, Caernarvon and Merioneth had been replaced by Gwynedd (now Eryri)
- Denbigh and Flint had merged to form Clwyd (now roughly North East Wales)
- Monmouthshire had become Gwent (now South East Wales)

Each county was able to enter eight athletes in each race, with the first six finishers counting as the scoring team.

The maximum team size was 48 pupils, with each county allowed to make substitutions on race day – the hallmark of any schools' competition.

The programme

This was a simple affair consisting of a front cover, a list of the officials and two pages of the names of pupils submitted by the eight counties.

In the event programme, five counties – Clwyd, Dyfed, Gwent, Powys and South Glamorgan – all declared eight pupils in all six races. Mid Glamorgan had full teams in seven age groups but did not declare any senior girls.

West Glamorgan declared seven full teams but only listed six senior girls.

Gwynedd listed full junior and middle teams but only declared two senior girls and six senior boys.

The list of entries is provided as an attachment to this web page.

There are two problems with the list:

- Some counties only provided the initial of a pupil rather than the full Christian name, and
- The schools of pupils were not requested.

The races

Six championships were held with races for boys and girls at junior (under 15, years 7 to 9), middle (under 17, years 10 & 11) and senior (under 20, sixth form)

An August 31st/September 1st qualifying date in the calendar year was used, so effectively these were similar to track age groups (rather than the club age groups used for cross country of under 13 (years 7 & 8), under 15 (years 9 & 10), under 17 (years 11 and 12) and under 20 (years 13 to 15) on the 1st of September before the season starts.

The timetable and distances

2.30 pm	Junior Girls	2000 metres
2.45 pm	Senior Boys	6800 metres
3.05 pm	Middle Girls	3400 metres
3.25 pm	Middle Boys	5400 metres
3.45 pm	Senior Girls	4800 metres
3.55 pm	Junior Boys	4000 metres

The numbering system

Individual numbers were not allocated.

Each pupil wore their single digit county number, starting from Clwyd with 1 to West Glamorgan with 8.

On March 21st

Weather and ground conditions

The association has been very fortunate that the weather conditions have often been kind for these championships. Sadly, this was not the situation in 1981.

The abiding memory of anyone present that day is likely to be 'Wet, wet, wet'!

A flavour of the weather can be gained by one personal recollection and references in two official documents:

1. Derek Osborne, who for many years was the Welsh Schools cross-country secretary, was in the upper sixth/year 13 at Llanilltud Fawr Comprehensive in Llantwit Major. He was the travelling reserve for the South Glamorgan senior boys' team. He reports that the weather was so bad that he did not get off the team coach once it had arrived at Builth.
2. In sending out the results after the event, David Phillips, the long serving Secretary (and Cross-Country Secretary) of the association, wrote:
'Regrettably the atrocious weather conditions made it very difficult for the Championships to proceed as we would have wished, and I was very impressed with the patience and understanding shown by most people when it was evident that they were having a very miserable time. Organising this event on a Saturday poses many problems particularly when the event is not attached to a particular school. However, the support that we had from the staff of Llandrindod High School was excellent, and we are very grateful to them for giving up their time to assist. Had the day been a pleasant one, I am sure that the Championships at the Royal Welsh Showground would have been a spectacle but for many reasons a great deal of thought will have to be made regarding the suitability of this venue for future championships.
I should be grateful to have any constructive criticisms in order that they may be discussed at committee stage before the next Championship.'
3. National track & field secretary, Allan Caughter, included this reference at the start of his report on the 1981 summer nationals at Penlan, Brecon:
'With memories of the monsoon like conditions at the 1981 National cross-country championships at Builth Wells still very vivid in my mind, it was an absolute relief that the 35th National track & field championship meeting should be blessed with fine weather.'

Although no copy of the course map can be found, it's fair to say that it was 'demanding' and included for some age groups the slope up to the entry point off the road to Llandrindod. It also resulted in rainwater running down from the top of the site towards the river at the bottom. As the races proceeded, this became quite wide and fast flowing, and an obstacle which pupils had to cross as they headed for the finish.

Because of those difficult ground conditions, the start of the first race may have been delayed, and the grounds would have been cut up (and more muddy) as each race was completed.

Spare a thought for the officials, like Arthur Davies and David Llewellyn, both long-serving volunteers and officials at Welsh Schools events in Powys

Waterproof clothing was perhaps not as good forty years ago as it is now, and the 'Weather writer' had not yet arrived.

Meeting Secretary, David Ball, the Powys PE adviser, reports that he had to take the soggy result sheets to the Powys county offices in Llandrindod to have them photocopied.

Race 1 – Junior Girls – 58 listed finishers

Missing from this race was Melanie Davies (Bishop Hannon, South Glamorgan), who was competing for the Great Britain Catholic Schools team at the European Catholic Schools championships in France.

At the Schools Inter -Counties match on the tough course at Fairwater in January, Melanie had finished second to Debbie Crowley, 23 seconds in arrears but 7 seconds ahead of Julie Thompson (Mid Glamorgan).

Debbie (West Glamorgan), the defending champion and under 15 winner at the Welsh cross-country championships in February, came up against the Welsh under 13 winner, Julie Jones (Mid Glamorgan, Ferndale).

It was the form 3/year 9 pupil from Glanafan in Port Talbot who proved to be the stronger, winning by 16 seconds.

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

Behind her, the contest for potential international selection was tight with seven girls finishing within 25 seconds.

The Mid Glamorgan duo of Julie Jones and Julie Thompson claimed second and third finishing spots and with a third Mid Glam counter, Marianne Jenkins, finishing sixth, prospects for a team win looked good, but that contest is not over until the sixth scorer is home and, sadly, the team had to wait until 39th place.

That left the West Glamorgan squad with four in twelve and six in 22 to take the win for a second consecutive year.

		Junior Girls	Individual		
1	8	Debbie Crowley	West Glamorgan	8:37	Glanafan CS
2	5	Julie Jones	Mid Glamorgan	8:53	Ferndale CS
3	5	Julie Thompson	Mid Glamorgan	8:55	Bryn Celynnog CS
4	1	Angela Griffiths	Clwyd	9:03	Holywell HS
5	8	Beverley Morgan	West Glamorgan	9:06	Dyffryn (Port Talbot) CS
6	5	Marianne Jenkins	Mid Glamorgan	9:09	Bryn Celynnog CS
7	7	Rachel Walby	South Glamorgan	9:13	Bishop Hannon RCHS
8	2	Anne Parry	Dyfed	9:18	Preseli SS
9	8	Debra Brambley	West Glamorgan	9:41	Cefn Saeson CS
10	7	Avril Stephens	South Glamorgan	9:42	Llanishen HS

Team

1	West Glamorgan	6	1	5	9	12	20	22	69
2	Mid Glamorgan	6	2	3	6	23	25	39	98
3	Powys	6	11	15	16	17	18	24	101

Race 2 – Senior Boys – 64 listed finishers, 5 not named

There was a wealth of experience in the list of starters.

Nine of them - Marcus Thomas, Keith Noble, Stephen Knight and Will Dewar from South Glamorgan, Richard Toms (Mid Glamorgan), John McKeever (Dyfed), John Chick (West Glamorgan) and the Gwent duo of John Pimley and Ian Williams - had represented Welsh Schools at the British Schools internationals. (Details are included in appendix 6 at the end)

Richard Toms (Mid Glamorgan) had won the junior boys national in 1977 and the middle title in 1979, and was hoping for a senior success. John Pimley (Gwent) had won the middle boys' race at Llandrindod in 1980, and John McKeever (Dyfed) had won the Welsh CCA under 17 title in February.

Lots of possibilities but it was the 'old man, third year sixth Keith Noble (South Glamorgan) who coped best with the awful conditions – and the long course – to come home clear by 19 seconds. It was his third run as a senior having finished second and fourth in 1979 and 1980 at Llandrindod, and it also meant that he completed an Inter-Schools and national double having won at Gwernyfed in October 1980.

It was John Pimley who claimed second spot, finishing 9 seconds ahead of Richard Toms.

With four finishers in the top ten plus 17th and 24th places, South Glamorgan enjoyed a comfortable win over old rivals Gwent and West Glamorgan, and it was the third consecutive year that the county had claimed this team title.

Puzzles

The 1980 senior boys' race was won by Andrew Smith (West Glamorgan, lower sixth) with his Gowerton school-mate Nicholas Boughey (also lower sixth) in third place. Both were eligible to compete in this event but neither were listed in the West Glamorgan entries. Perhaps they had left school.

West Glamorgan were also missing Geoff Hill, who had won the senior boys' race at Fairwater in January, but who was not included in their declaration, although he was entered in the national track & field championships in the summer.

On the results sheets, there are 64 times – a full field of eight teams of eight runners, and the only full field.

However, there are no names or county identified for position 43 and 61 to 64.

		Senior Boys	Individuals		
1	7	Keith Noble	South Glamorgan	28:30	St Cyres CS
2	3	John Pimley	Gwent	28:49	West Mon CS
3	5	Richard Toms	Mid Glamorgan	28:58	Cardinal Newman CS

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

4	2	Peter Lloyd	Dyfed	29:07	Pembroke CS
5	8	David Thomas	West Glamorgan	29:17	Bishop Gore S
6	7	Marcus Thomas	South Glamorgan	29:21	Bishop of Llandaff HS
7	7	Stephen Knight	South Glamorgan	29:26	Howardian HS
8	3	Mark Jones	Gwent	29:32	West Mon CS
9	2	John McKeever	Dyfed	29:33	Penweddig CS
10	7	Jonathan Hooper	South Glamorgan	29:40	Whitchurch HS

Team

1	South Glamorgan	6	1	6	7	10	17	24	65
2	Gwent	6	2	8	13	19	30	34	106
3	West Glamorgan	6	5	11	14	23	25	31	109

Race 3 – Middle Girls – 60 listed finishers

There was a real opportunity here.

Only Jackie Thomas had previously won a title at this event before – the junior girls' in 1979.

At Llandrindod in 1980, she was second to Debbie Crowley in the junior race but had finished ahead of the Mid Glamorgan duo of Fiona Harwood and Julie Jones by only 8 seconds while, at the Welsh CCA championships at Cardiff in February, the order in the under 15 race behind Debbie Crowley was Harwood, Thomas, Jones.

In addition to that trio, there were three other girls – Anne Parry (Dyfed), Tracy Thomas (Powys) and Judith Kirk (Clwyd) - in the race who had also been members of the Welsh Schools' junior team at Dublin in 1980 and Jane Thomas (South Glamorgan) who had been in that middle team plus Michelle Phillips (West Glamorgan), who had been a junior at Inverness in 1979.

This was the closest race of the day.

Fiona got home by a mere two second from Jackie, with a 30 second gap before Jane finished in third place. Like Keith Noble, this made it an Inter Schools and National double for Fiona.

The Mid Glamorgan team again enjoyed the solid foundation of three in the top ten but then made no mistake completing their scorers with 13, 15th and 23rd positions for an easy win with a score of 65 points.

Puzzle

On these results Jackie Thomas has been listed as a pupil of Gwendraeth CS. In other results, she is listed as Lampeter CS. Can anyone shed any light on which is her correct school?

		Middle Girls	Individual		
1	5	Fiona Harwood	Mid Glamorgan	16:35	Bryn Celynnog CS
2	2	Jackie Thomas	Dyfed	16:37	Gwendraeth CS
3	7	Jane Thomas	South Glamorgan	17:07	Llanedeyrn HS
4	5	Julie Jones	Mid Glamorgan	17:16	Pencoed CS
5	1	Nicola Charlton	Clwyd	17:23	Mold Alun HS
6	6	Tracy Thomas	Powys	17:25	Brecon HS
7	1	Judith Kirk	Clwyd	17:29	Hawarden HS
8	8	Michelle Phillips	West Glamorgan	17:39	Morryston CS
9	5	Mandy Lewis	Mid Glamorgan	17:41	Pencoed CS
10	7	Helen Rankmore	South Glamorgan	17:49	Lady Mary RCHS

Team

1	Mid Glamorgan	6	1	4	9	13	15	23	65
2	Clwyd	6	5	7	19	26	27	28	112
3	Dyfed	6	2	12	18	22	31	33	118

Race 4 – Middle Boys – only 53 listed finishers, 1 not named

There were two former 'junior' champions in the field – Mark Griffiths (West Glamorgan, 1979) and Nick Comerford (South Glamorgan, 1980).

Mark had already competed three times at the British Schools international – at Gateshead (1978), Inverness (1979) and Dublin (1980) – while Nick discovered when he competed at Inverness that he was only the second Barry boy (and the first Barry junior boy) to compete at a British Schools international (after his coach and South Glamorgan team manager, Andrew Ireland, who competed as a senior in 1972 and 1973).

Nick had also finished fifth in the junior race at Dublin in 1980, but he was hampered here by a damaged toe!

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

In addition to this duo, there were four ‘juniors’ from the Inverness international in 1979 – Rodney Keeble (Gwent), Scott Atkins (South Glamorgan), Grant Howells (Dyfed) and Nigel Gooch (Mid Glamorgan) in the race plus ‘junior’ Dale Rixon (Mid Glamorgan) from Dublin.

One of the athletes expected to have gained international honours in 1980 was form 4/year 10 Brian Matthews (Barry Boys’ CS), son of long-time volunteers for athletics in Wales Keith and Margaret Matthews, but, on his own admission he had not run to his full potential that year and had only finished twentieth in the middle race. A season older and better prepared both physically and mentally, the now form 5/year 11 pupil had finished second to John Pimley (Gwent) in the Welsh cross-country championships in February, but was the top placed pupil in his year group ahead of Nigel Gooch (Mid Glamorgan), who had won at Fairwater in January.

This time his determination shone through and he claimed the win by a margin of 12 seconds.

Mark Griffiths, having finished only 12th in the Welsh championships in February, upped his performance significantly to claim second place while, in the ‘Barry battle for third spot’, Nicky Comerford’s desire ‘to make the international team for a third consecutive year’ saw him win through the pain barrier to finish ahead of fellow form4/year10 and clubmate, Martin Jones.

South Glamorgan packed five in the first thirteen places but then had to wait until 27th to complete their scorers and claim the team win and, in the process, gain revenge over old rivals Gwent, who had won this section in 1980.

Middle Boys

1	7	Brian Matthews	South Glamorgan	22:35	Barry Boys’ CS
2	8	Mark Griffiths	West Glamorgan	22:47	Penyrheol CS
3	7	Nicholas Comerford	South Glamorgan	23:00	St Cadoc’s RCHS
4	7	Martin Jones	South Glamorgan	23:01	Barry Boys’ CS
5	3	Alwyn Ormond	Gwent	23:14	Croesyceiliog CS
6	3	Rodney Keeble	Gwent	23:17	Chepstow CS
7	5	Nigel Gooch	Mid Glamorgan	23:19	Bryncelynnog CS
8	7	Scott Atkins	South Glamorgan	23:29	Radyr CS
9	5	Mark Lawrence	Mid Glamorgan	23:33	Bryn Celynnog CS
10	3	Glen Durham	Gwent	23:34	Tredegar CS

Team

1	South Glamorgan	6	1	3	4	8	13	27	56
2	Gwent	6	5	6	10	19	22	28	90
3	Mid Glamorgan	6	7	9	16	18	20	37	107

Race 5 – Senior Girls – 39 listed finishers

As has often been the case, this was the smallest field of the day.

Rebecca (Becky) Powell (Powys) was the defending champion but not the favourite. The upper sixth/year 13 student had won Inter Schools titles at u13, u15 and senior in past years and was 10th in the senior women’s race but she had made only one schools international appearance, at Inverness in 1979.

The big favourite was lower sixth/year 12 student Kathryn Williams (West Glamorgan).

The Cymer Afan pupil from a small school near the top of the Afan valley had won the junior girls title at Newtown in 1978, and had become the first girl to gain four consecutive selections for Wales at the British Schools’ internationals, finishing 13th and 15th on her two junior appearances at Newtown and Gateshead and 11th on both occasions as a middle at Inverness and Dublin.

At the Welsh championships in February, she had won the intermediate race, a performance which had earned her selection for the Welsh senior team at the World cross-country championships in Madrid on March 28th.

Kath made light of the difficult conditions, coming home in a time of 22:56, over two and half minutes ahead of second placed Rebecca over the long 4800 metres course while, in the battle for third place it was Lorena Marchetti (South Glamorgan) who got the better of Cath Owen (West Glamorgan).

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

Despite both South and West Glamorgan having three finishers in the top ten, it was the better packing of the Powys squad which claimed the team win as they finished all six scorers by 19th place to win the section for the first time since 1975.

Senior Girls		Individual			
1	8	Kathryn Williams	West Glamorgan	22:56	Cymer Afan CS
2	6	Becky Powell	Powys	25:35	Llandrindod HS
3	7	Lorena Marchetti	South Glamorgan	26:05	Bishop Hannon RCHS
4	8	Cath Owen	West Glamorgan	26:14	Bishop Gore CS
5	7	Gaynor Cox	South Glamorgan	27:09	Bishop of Llandaff HS
6	6	Caroline Devereux	Powys	27:12	Gwernyfed HS
7	7	Margaret Crockett	South Glamorgan	27:14	St Cyres CS
8	1	Julie Barratt	Clwyd	27:22	Yale College
9	8	Nicola Lewis	West Glamorgan	27:33	Gowerton CS
10	2	Ann Jones	Dyfed	28:23	Pembroke CS

Team

1	Powys	6	2	6	12	14	15	19	68
2	South Glamorgan	6	3	5	7	16	24	28	83
3	Clwyd	6	8	23	25	26	27	33	142

Race 6 – Junior Boys – 58 listed finishers

Ferndale form 3/year 9 Carl Worthington was the only boy who had international experience having finished 25th at Dublin.

At Fairwater in January, Peter Bridger (South Glamorgan) had won the junior race from the Mid Glamorgan duo of David Morgan and Worthington but fortunes had changed at the Welsh championships' under 15 race in Cardiff. With the front end dominated by Nicky Comerford and form 4 boys, Worthington was the first form 3 finisher, in 7th, followed by Gary Ellis (Gwynedd) and Bridger.

At Builth, the front end of the field developed into two races with a quartet consisting of the three Mid Glamorgan boys – Morgan, Worthington and the much-improved Alan Phillips - battling it out with Bridger for the top honours and a second much bigger group pushing for possible international selection in the top ten.

Team managers and supporters of the Mid Glam squad were delighted that 'their boys' produced one of those rare clean sweeps of the top three places, with Bridger having to settle for fourth.

Even with only two finishers in the top ten, the South Glamorgan boys came back with excellent packing in the teens to close by 18th place, but it was not enough to thwart Mid Glam, who claimed the team title for a second consecutive year.

Junior Boys		Individuals			
1	5	David Morgan	Mid Glamorgan	17:00	Heolddu CS
2	5	Carl Worthington	Mid Glamorgan	17:06	Ferndale CS
3	5	Alan Phillips	Mid Glamorgan	17:08	Porth CCS
4	7	Peter Bridger	South Glamorgan	17:13	Cowbridge CS
5	2	Nigel Saunders	Dyfed	17:36	Tregib CS
6	7	Michael Powell	South Glamorgan	17:40	Bishop of Llandaff HS
7	8	Ian Parry	West Glamorgan	17:49	Cymer Afan CS
8	8	Andrew Griffiths	West Glamorgan	17:50	Bishop Gore CS
9	4	Gary Ellis	Gwynedd	17:55	Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen
10	3	Stephen Price	Gwent	18:01	King Henry VIII CS

Teams

1	Mid Glamorgan	6	1	2	3	11	15	21	53
2	South Glamorgan	6	4	6	12	13	14	18	67
3	Gwent	6	10	16	17	22	23	27	115

Results

A full copy of the transcribed results is attached to this web page.

The aim has been to try to provide full names and the school/college of each pupil but the two difficulties of some pupils declared only with an initial (instead of a full Christian name) and schools not required has been referenced earlier in this report.

Where a pupil's name is listed in black or his/her school in black, it is considered to be accurate.

Where a name or a school is in red, there is a possibility that there may be an error.

If anyone spots an error OR can identify the full Christian name or school/college of a pupil, please contact Pete Morris at pmorris46@aol.com and let him know. That would be much appreciated.

Awards

Because of the weather conditions on the day, presentations were not made and any awards, including the new 'Milk in Action' team trophies were not distributed to counties until the British Schools international at Swansea.

One new trophy was awarded. This was the overall points' cup.

Over the forty years since its first presentation, the method of scoring has changed a number of times.

For this first year, it was decided that it would go to the county with scoring teams in all six races and with the lowest overall points total.

As part of that process, an overall boys' scoring and an overall girls' scoring were calculated as a help but without awards.

In the boys' team competitions, Gwynedd failed to close a team in the senior and middle sections and West Glamorgan also did not close a middle team.

In the girls' team competitions, Gwent, Gwynedd, Mid Glamorgan and West Glamorgan did not close a senior team.

These are the positions and points:

Boys overall			Girls Overall			Overall Points		
1	South Glamorgan	178	1	Powys	302	1	South Glamorgan	507
2	Gwent	311	2	South Glamorgan	321	2	Dyfed	872
3	Mid Glamorgan	317	3	Dyfed	414	3	Clwyd	1065
4	Dyfed	458	4	Clwyd	457	4	Powys	1076
5	Clwyd	608	5	West Glamorgan		5	Gwent	x
6	Powys	774	6	Gwent	x	6	West Glamorgan	x
	Gwynedd	x	7	Gwynedd	x		Gwynedd	x
	West Glamorgan	x		Mid Glamorgan	x		Mid Glamorgan	x

South Glamorgan (178) headed the boys' competition, and Powys (302) the girls' section but South Glamorgan were declared the winners of the new trophy with 507 points.

A Surprising statistic, possibly not appreciated previously

On the last page of the full results (which are attached to this web page) there is a set of statistics of the pupils which each county finished in each of the six races..

This is a practice which was used in Welsh Schools for a number of years from 2005 to 2016, but was not done before that.

The maximum number of pupils that a 'District' can now field is 96 (8 races of 12 pupils).

No district has managed to finish the magic figure of 96 in modern times!

Obviously it was easier in 1981 because the maximum number was only 48 (6 races of 8 pupils, and there is the difficulty that the county for six pupils cannot be identified.

For actual figures, these are the number of finishers per county, starting with the smallest:

Gwynedd	33 (this could be higher as some of the six 'no county pupils in the SB race may be from Gwynedd)
West Glamorgan	34
Mid Glamorgan	37
Gwent	42
Dyfed	43
Clwyd	45
South Glamorgan	48

APPENDICES

There are six appendices in this section:

1. **Winners at the 1980 Welsh Schools' national cross-country championships**
2. **Winners at the Welsh Schools' inter-schools championships on October 10th, 1980**
3. **Winners at the Welsh Inter Counties Championships held at Newtown, Powys on November 8th, 1980**
4. **Results of the Schools Inter Counties Match held at Fairwater Park, Cardiff on Saturday, January 24th, 1981**
5. **Results of the Welsh Cross-Country Championships held in Cardiff on Saturday, February 21st, 1981**
6. **Pupils who had gained international selection for the Welsh Schools teams from 1977 to 1980 at the British Schools international and who competed at the 1981 nationals**

ATTACHMENTS

1. **List of the pupils entered by the eight counties – in race order**
2. **A set of transcribed results**

Appendix 1

Winners at the Welsh Schools' national cross-country championships at Llandrindod, March 14th, 1980

1980 winners

Individuals

Senior Boys	Andrew Smith	Gowerton CS	West Glamorgan)	22:44
Middle Boys	John Pimley	West Mon CS	Gwent	18:57
Junior Boys	Nicholas Comerford	St Cadoc's RCHS	South Glamorgan	14:27
Senior Girls	Rebecca Powell	Llandrindod HS	Powys	16:13
Middle Girls	Trudy Kenward	Bassaleg CS	Gwent	12:37
Junior Girls	Debbie Crowley	Glanafan CS	West Glamorgan	9:26

Teams

Senior Boys	South Glamorgan	52
Middle Boys	Gwent	77
Junior Boys	Mid Glamorgan	49
Senior Girls	West Glamorgan	55
Middle Girls	West Glamorgan	69
Junior Girls	West Glamorgan	83

Appendix 2

Winners at the Welsh Schools' Inter schools cross-country championships at Gwernyfed HS on October 11th, 1980

Winners

Individuals

Senior Boys	Keith Noble	St Cyres CS	South Glamorgan	22:50
Middle Boys	Brian Matthews	Barry Boys' CS	South Glamorgan	16:32
Junior Boys	C Phillips	Bryn Celynnog CS	Mid Glamorgan	14:15
Senior Girls	Rebecca Powell	Llandrindod HS	Powys	20:38
Middle Girls	Fiona Harwood	Bryn Celynnog CS	Mid Glamorgan	14:39
Junior Girls	Julie Thompson	Bryn Celynnog CS	Mid Glamorgan	11:54

Appendix 3

Winners at the Welsh Inter Counties Championships held at Newtown, Powys on Saturday, November 8th, 1980

Appendix

Junior Men	6 th Keith Noble	South Glamorgan	29:58	leading schools qualified athlete
Youths	John Pimley	Gwent	22:24	Form 5 & 6L/Years 11 & 12
Boys	Nick Comerford	South Glamorgan	18:49	Forms 3 & 4/Years 9 & 10
Colts	Gareth Davies	Mid Glamorgan	16:33	Forms 1 & 2/Years 7 & 8
Intermediate Women	Trudy Kenward	Gwent	17:4	Form 5 & 6L/Years 11 & 12
Junior Women	Fiona Harwood	Mid Glamorgan	10:37	Forms 3 & 4/Years 9 & 10
Girls	Julie Jones	Mid Glamorgan	8:19	Forms 1 & 2/Years 7 & 8

Appendix 4

Results of the Schools Inter Counties Match held at Fairwater Park, Cardiff on Saturday, January 24th, 1981

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

Senior Boys 49 finishers	Senior Girls 32 finishers
1 Geoff Hill (West Glamorgan) 21:50	1 J Davis (Wiltshire) 17:00
2 J Barton (Wiltshire) 22:06	2 J Mullins (Wiltshire) 17:04
3 Keith Noble (South Glamorgan) 22:11	3 K Taylor (Gloucestershire) 17:12
	4 Wendy Ryan (South Glamorgan) 17:35
Middle Boys 57 finishers	Middle Girls 53 finishers
1 Nigel Gooch (Mid Glamorgan) 17:14	1 Fiona Harwood (Mid Glamorgan) 11:32
2 T Davis (Wiltshire) 17:15	2 Jane Thomas (South Glamorgan) 11:52
3 Martin Jones (South Glamorgan) 17:29	3 Julie Jones (Mid Glamorgan) 11:53
Junior Boys 73 finishers	Junior Girls 75 finishers
1 Peter Bridger (South Glamorgan) 14:46	1 Debbie Crowley (West Glamorgan) 9:58
2 David Morgan (Mid Glamorgan) 14:49	2 Melanie Davies (South Glamorgan) 10:21
3 Carl Worthington (Mid Glamorgan) 14:50	3 T Sayce (Gloucestershire) 10:22
Year 7 Boys 52 finishers	Year 7 Girls 59 finishers
1 Andrew Jones (Mid Glamorgan) 12:16	1 Claire Pugh (Gwent) 8:40
2 David Gough (South Glamorgan) 12:23	2 Natalie Wood (South Glamorgan) 8:49
3 G Ferguson (Gloucestershire) 12:28	3 D Burgess (Wiltshire) 9:06

Appendix 5

Results of the Welsh Cross-Country Championships held in Cardiff (Heath Park?) on Saturday, February 21st, 1981

Pupils competed for their club at this event but they are listed here by the schools' county, for ease of identification.

SB=qualified for the Senior Boys' race; SG=qualified for the Senior Girls' race

MB=qualified for the Middle Boys' race; MG=qualified for the Middle Girls' race

JB=qualified for the Junior Boys' race; JG=qualified for the Junior Girls' race

Y7G= year 7 girl; dnc= did not compete

Welsh Cross-Country Championships held at Cardiff on Saturday, February 21st

Junior Men

2	Nicholas Boughey	(West Glamorgan, SB, dnc)	24:53
5	Andrew Smith	(West Glamorgan, SB, dnc)	24:55
8	Geoff Hill	(West Glamorgan, SB, dnc)	25:17
11	Peter Lloyd	(Dyfed, SB)	25:50
17	Keith Noble	(South Glamorgan, SB)	26:21
20	Richard Toms	(Mid Glamorgan, SB)	26:36

Under 17 Men – Forms 5 & 6L; Years 11 & 12

1	John McKeever	(Dyfed, SB)	22:18
2	Brian Matthews	(South Glamorgan, MB)	22:24
4	John Pimley	(Gwent, SB)	22:27
5	Nigel Gooch	(Mid Glamorgan, MB)	22:50
7	Scott Atkins	(South Glamorgan, MB)	23:19
8	Ian Williams	(Gwent, SB)	23:22
9	Stephen Armstrong	(Clwyd, SB)	23:23
10	Rhodri Breeze	(Mid Glamorgan, MB)	23:26

Under 15 Boys – Form 3 & 4; Years 9 & 10

1	Nicholas Comerford	(South Glamorgan, MB)	15:45
2	Martin Jones	(South Glamorgan, MB)	16:00
3	Lee Williams	(Mid Glamorgan, MB)	16:06
4	Raymond Perry	(Gwent, MB)	16:13
5	Andrew Ridgeway	(Clwyd, MB)	16:23
6	Dale Rixon	(Mid Glamorgan, MB)	16:30
7	Carl Worthington	(Mid Glamorgan, JB)	16:38
9	Gary Ellis	(Gwynedd, JB)	16:43
10	Peter Bridger	(South Glamorgan, JB)	16:47

Under 13 Boys – Forms 1 & 2; Years 7 & 8

1	Rob Hughes	(Dyfed, JB)	11:28
---	------------	-------------	-------

Welsh Schools national cross-country championships – 40 years ago – March 21st, 1981

2	Gareth Davies	(Mid Glamorgan, JB)	11:36
3	Gareth Noble	(South Glamorgan, JB)	11:49
4	Justin Price	(Gwent, JB)	11:51

Senior Women

10	Rebecca Powell	(Powys, SG)	18:11
22	Julie Barrett	(Clwyd, SG)	20:57
24	Carol Dicks	(Dyfed, SG)	21:41

Under 17 Women – Forms 5 & 6L; Years 11 & 12

1	Kathryn Williams	(West Glamorgan, SG)	11:33
5	Elizabeth Williams	(West Glamorgan, SG)	12:18
7	Claire Paisley	(West Glamorgan, MG)	12:35
8	Mandy Lewis	(Mid Glamorgan, MG)	12:39
9	Wendy Ryan	(South Glamorgan, SG, dnc)	12:47
10	Cath Owen	(West Glamorgan, SG)	12:48

Under 15 Girls – Form 3 & 4; Years 9 & 10

1	Debbie Crowley	(West Glamorgan, JG)	8:45
2	Fiona Harwood	(Mid Glamorgan, MG)	8:46
3	Jackie Thomas	(Dyfed, MG)	8:57
4	Julie Jones	(Mid Glamorgan, MG)	8:59
5	Melanie Davies	(South Glamorgan, JG)	9:07
6	Julie Thompson	(Mid Glamorgan, JG)	9:08
7	Beverley Morgan	(West Glamorgan, JG)	9:13
8	Deborah Matthews	(West Glamorgan, MG)	9:25
9	Tracy Thomas	(Powys, MG)	9:26
10	Rachel Walby	(South Glamorgan, JG)	9:27

Under 13 Girls – Forms 1 & 2; Years 7 & 8

1	Julie Jones	(Mid Glamorgan, JG)	8:05
2	Claire Pugh	(Gwent, Y7G)	8:10
3	Natalie Wood	(South Glamorgan, Y7G)	8:18
4	Ann Evans	(South Glamorgan, JG)	8:28
5	Marianne Jenkins	(Mid Glamorgan, JG)	8:29
6	Debbie Pitten	(South Glamorgan, JG)	8:32
7	Karen Whitehouse	(Gwent, Y7G)	8:34
8	Angela Griffiths	(Clwyd, JG)	8:38
9	Sharon Mathers	(Powys, JG)	8:39
10	Lianne Dix	(Gwent, Y7G)	8:40

Appendix 6

Pupils who had gained international selection for the Welsh Schools teams from 1977 to 1980 at the British Schools international and who competed at the 1981 nationals

The number after their county is their position.

From 1977, Irish Schools only fielded junior teams when the event was held in Ireland – at Dublin in 1980.

There were 32 pupils in competing in the junior races at Dublin, but only 24 at Newtown, Gateshead and Inverness British Schools international & Under 20 inter association match.

1977 Newtown, Wales

Junior Boys	Marcus Thomas (South Glamorgan; 5); Will Dewar (South Glamorgan; 19); Richard Toms (Mid Glamorgan; 24)
Junior Girls	Kathryn Williams (West Glamorgan; 13);

1978 Gateshead, England

Middle Boys	Keith Noble (South Glamorgan; 30)
Middle Girls	Carol Dicks (Dyfed; 28)
Junior Boys	Mark Griffiths (West Glamorgan; 15)
Junior Girls	Kathryn Williams (West Glamorgan; 15);

1979 Inverness, Scotland

- Middle Boys Marcus Thomas (South Glamorgan; 27); Richard Toms (Mid Glamorgan; 28); John McKeever (Dyfed; 30)
- Middle Girls Kathryn Williams (West Glamorgan; 11); Becky Powell (Powys; 27)
- Junior Boys Mark Griffiths (West Glamorgan; 5), Rodney Keeble (Gwent; 14); Scott Atkins (South Glamorgan; 15); Nick Comerford (South Glamorgan; 19); Grant Howells (Dyfed; 21); Nigel Gooch (Mid Glamorgan; 23)
- Junior Girls Jackie Thomas (Dyfed; 10); Judith Kirk (Clwyd; 14); Michelle Phillips (West Glamorgan; 20);

1980 Dublin, Ireland

- Middle Boys John McKeever (Dyfed; 20); Mark Griffiths (West Glamorgan; 23); John Chick (West Glamorgan; 24); Scott Atkins (South Glamorgan; 27); Stephen Knight (South Glamorgan; 28); John Pimley (Gwent; 30); Grant Howells (Dyfed; 31); Ian Williams (Gwent; 32)
- Middle Girls Kathryn Williams (West Glamorgan; 11); Nicola Charlton (Clwyd; 21); Jane Thomas (South Glamorgan; 30)
- Junior Boys Nick Comerford (South Glamorgan; 5); Dale Rixon (Mid Glamorgan; 12); Carl Worthington (Mid Glamorgan; 25)
- Junior Girls Debbie Crowley (West Glamorgan; 5); Jackie Thomas (Dyfed; 13); Anne Parry (Dyfed; 17); Fiona Harwood (Mid Glamorgan; 18); Julie Jones (Mid Glamorgan; 20); Tracy Thomas (Powys; 23); Judith Kirk (Clwyd; 28)