Over 30 athletes travelled by Coach to Leigh, Greater Manchester, with others making their own way there, to compete against 9 other counties in the U15/U17 Northern Inter Counties match against athletes they would not normally have a chance to compete against. On one of the hottest days of the year, conditions were fine for the sprinters but the endurance runners had to ensure that they were well hydrated.,

On the day, the North East team finished third behind a strong Yorkshire team and the “home county” of Lancashire, but they did enjoy several outstanding victories and all the athletes performed to the best of their abilities. Although they all compete for different Clubs , on the day they all pulled together and everybody enjoyed the day. As usual the first events on the track were the hurdles races and all the North East athletes finished in the first three in their races with Aaron Lillistone winning the U15B hurdles and Amy Lott setting the second fastest time in the U15 girls hurdles race, while  Oliver Lewis and Curtis Bingham won both the U17M 100M hurdles races. In the U17M 1500m the race was a tactical battle between two club mates from the north east - Will Bellamy and Henry Johnson (both Houghton), with  Will taking the race on and leading for over 3 laps before Henry  passed him with about 250 metres to go to lead the NE to a convincing first and second.  In the field events, Andrew Knight was having his first competition after injury and was a convincing winner in the U17 men Shot, while Luke Allen made it a double by winning the “B” event. Although the North East only had two Pole Vaulters, they both set outdoor PB’s for the event with Sam Gorman winning the mens event, while Molly Elliot second in the Ladies Pole vault. Jess Gardiner and Grace McDonald won both the U15Girls discuss events, while despite having 3 no throws in the U15Boys Discus, jack Halpin returned to form and won the Under 15 Boys shot.    Adam Ord was a convincing winner in the “B” race of the U17M 800m setting a faster time than many in the “A” race where Josh Fiddaman finished second after being blocked in, Ben Waterfield also found it hard in the U15 Boys 800M race.  The U15 girls sprinter had success at the 100M with Afoma OFor and Joy Eze both winning their 100M races. They then teamed up with Charlotte Rutter and Darcey Garbutt to win the U15Girls 100M relay, with birthday Girl Afoma bringing them home, not to be outdone the U15B quartet of Liam Eastaugh, Thomas Paterson, Daniel Lennie and Matthew Lumb also won their race. The final event of the day saw one of the best performances by a NE athlete. Sam Tyers had finished second in his 400M race, but ran his favoured 800M in the medley relay, Oliver Lewis and Jamie Hutton ran the 200 metres leg of the race and passed  onto Sam Gorman who then did the 400M, with Sam Tyers doing the final leg of 800M. Sam was approximately 50 meters behind the first runner as he started his 800m but passed him in the final 100 meters to win by 10 meters, this run was appreciated and enjoyed by everyone in the stand, not just the NE supporters.

Just over 30 of the NE team were representing the Association for the tiem and received their County badges.

Lynsey Smith (ladies Team Manager) and Keith Willshire (Boys Team Manager), said “All the athletes were amazing and very accommodating to filling the gaps in events. They were a credit to themselves, their parents, their clubs and North East athletics in general and were a joy to be with”

I**mportant information for those that do not know.**

The selection criteria is;

**The first two from the appropriate event** at the North Eastern Counties Championships are asked first if they wish to represent the NECAA at the competition

Not every event is covered in the Inter Counties as it’s a one day event (the throws tend to rotate every year)

Girls U15 Team; Charlotte Rutter (Darlington Harriers), Amy Lott (Morpeth Harriers), Afoma Ofor (Middlesbrough Mandale), Darcey Garbutt (Darlington Harriers), Joy Eze (Gateshead Harriers), Rosie Hughes (North Shields Poly), Lucy Scothern (Chester-Le-Street), Jessica Gardiner (Morpeth Harriers), Grace McDonald (Middlesbrough Mandale), kate Smith (Tynedale Harriers), Kosi Izuora (Chester-Le-Street).

Girls U17 Team; Philippa Ellis (Gateshead Harriers), Annabel Robson (Middlesbrough Mandale), Sophie Robson (Jarrow&Hebburn), Emma Hart (Darlington Harriers), Rachel Caygill (Jarrow&Hebburn), Anna Pigford (Houghton Harriers), Megan Noble (Darlington Harriers), Lydia James (Houghton Harriers), Jess Levy (Blaydon Harriers) Lucy Giles (Gateshead Harriers), Rachel Donnelly (Gateshead Harriers), Grace McGlone (Chester-Le-Street), Eve Robson ( Middlesbrough Mandale), Niamh Brennan (Gateshead Harriers), Molly Elliot (Birtley AC)

Boys U15 Team; Aaron Lillistone (Blaydon Harriers), Thomas Paterson (Jarrow&Hebburn),Liam Eastaugh (Gateshead Harriers), Luke Russell (Chester-Le-Street),Daniel Lennie (Gateshead Harriers), Matthew Lumb (Gateshead Harriers), Ben Waterfield (Morpeth Harriers), Jack Halpin (Gateshead Harrriers), Callan Holborn (Gateshead Harriers), Harry Coldwell (Tynedale Harriers), Matthew Ward (Hartlepool Youth),

Men u17 Team; Oliver Lewis (Gateshead Harriers), Curtis Bingham (Jarrow&Hebburn), Archie Lowe (Middlesbrough Mandale), Sam Gibson (Houghton Harriers), Andrew Rhodes (Sunderland Harriers), Adam ord (Durham harriers), Josh Fiddaman (Blyth), Henry Johnson (Houghton Harriers), Will Bellamy (Houghton Harriers), Sam Tyers (Middlesbrough Mandale), Jamie Hatton (Gateshead Harriers), Ethan Hill (Tynedale Harriers), James Wordsworth (North Shields Poly), Andrew Knight (Morpeth Harriers), Luke Allen (Gateshead Harriers), Jason Archer (Blaydon Harriers), Sam Gorman (Blaydon Harriers)