

ESSKiA qualifying race 23 and 24 September 2006 - Bromley
And English Finals 14 and 15 October 2006 Stoke-on-Trent

Over the weekend of 23 and 24 September, over 700 skiers, in 178 school teams, from all over the country, took part in the English Schools' Ski Association qualifying races. These were held at 5 locations in England: Bromley, Hemel, Gloucester, Pendle and Silksworth. From these qualifying races, a total of 71 teams were invited to participate in the age group finals; 27 of these teams qualified at Bromley, making the schools in our region arguably the strongest in the country.

Spectators were treated to some excellent skiing in the finals at Stoke, with some events very closely matched. In the U19 boys' finals just 0.19 seconds split the 2nd, 3rd and 4th place teams after the first run, with Reeds going on to win the event and RGS Guildford taking second place. Rochester Grammar won the U19 girls' title with some very impressive skiing and were the fastest team of the day. Hayes were runners up in this event. Reeds and Surbiton took the U16 boys' and girls' titles respectively. Surbiton went on to take the first 2 places in both the girls' U12 and U14 age categories and St Andrews had a clear win in the U12 boys event with Cranmore winning the U14 boys. In the Mixed event Barton Court were runners up and Heath End third.

In the Open event on Sunday, 32 teams battled it out to qualify for one of England's 9 boys' team places and 11 girls' team places in the British Schools races in November. 16 of the 32 teams qualified for the race at the Bromley qualifier. Of these teams, Hampton, 2 Reeds teams, RGS Guildford, Harvey Grammar and Sir John Williams Mathematical School gained places to represent England and Rochester Grammar, Hayes, 2 Surbiton teams, Simon Langton and The Tiffin gaining places in the girls' event to represent England in the GB finals.

ESSKiA races are primarily team events and the only individual awards go to the first 3 girls and first 3 boys in the Open race. Charlotte Evans came 3rd in the Girls' Open race, with the other individual medals going to skiers from other qualifying races. To see how your team did, visit www.esskia.co.uk and click on the "2006 races" link at the bottom of the page. All schools have been sent the results, including individual results.

We wish all the English Schools' teams luck in the Great British Finals which will be held on Saturday 18 November at Rossendale.

Well done to all skiers and thanks to the many teachers and parents that helped make these races the success they undoubtedly were. Thanks too to Alan Sandell and LSERSA for helping out with timing and race equipment for the qualifying races and Jenny Robbins for organising the Bromley qualifier.

If you didn't take part in the ESSKiA races this year, how about encouraging your school to join ESSKiA and take part in the Schools races next year? Membership is open to all Schools and Sixth Form Colleges or equivalent in England. It is a joint membership of ESSKiA. and Snowsport England. The affiliation fee provides Snowsport England insurance cover and the opportunity to take part in races, in training days in England and snow trainings and races abroad. Contact me for further information or visit www.esskia.co.uk and click on the "affiliation" link.

Bridget Owen
SE Regional Rep for ESSKiA