



Essex Cross Country League

Epping Forest, Chingford

Saturday 10 January

There was a good turnout from Ilford AC at the 4th round of this winters Essex Cross-Country League held on the usual tough course set by host club Orion Harriers in Epping Forest at Chingford. This near the conditions were harder than usual as the recent weather meant the course was soon churned into a quagmire.

Four young Ilford athletes took on a very tough and muddy course finding the the going difficult and mainly trying to keep their feet, but still gave a good account for themselves. Matthew Hick placed 5th in the u/11 in 5-24 with sister Isabella Hick 31st u/13 girls 22-50 Manraj Gill was 38th in the u/13 boys (13-24) where Bradley Deacon placed 40th (13-28). Under 17 Usamah Patel is starting to return to full fitness and put in a solid run for 9th place in 27-40.

The senior ladies event was over the same distance and Jenni Sheehan continued her good form on the country and finished in a season high 24th in 32m44s while Bree Nordin was once again the leading F55 in 38th with 37m 42s. Doris Gaga went off course on the 2nd lap of the race but soon corrected herself without losing too much time to finish 82nd. The ladies finished 13th in this match.

There were 12 Ilford vests on the start line of the senior mens 9km race and the team were led home by an excellent run from Tom Gardner in 8th with 29m exactly. Malcom Muir was his normal gritty self to lead home the M40 category in 14th spot overall in 30m 00s, while there was a good run from Steve Philcox for 36th in 32m 15s. Ben Jones recorded 34m 07s in 60th and Neil Crisp placed 77th with 35m 47s. Sam Rahman, racing on his least favourite surface, closed the scoring team in 79th in 35m 57s. The men placed 7th in this match but were 3rd in the veterans match. Andy Catton finished 81st and leading the M60 age group with 36m 03s and Bradley Brown 115th in 40m 16s. There were two runners having their first race of the winter; Mike Horsey (125th 41m 18s) and Matt Maple (140th 45.15) , and completing the line up for the team were Steve Parker (130th 42.18) and Steve Cheal (133rd 42m 57s)

With one match left this season, at Colchester on January 31st, Ilford are 8th in senior mens table and the ladies are also 8th with the u17 men 10th. The mens veterans team are 3rd and the veteran ladies 10th.

On the individual front Tom Gardner is 7th senior man, Malcolm Muir 1st in the M40 group and Steve Philcox 8th in the same category, while Neil Crisp is 5th M50. For the senior ladies



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Krystle Balogun is in 5th place and Jenni Sheehan 10th. Bree Nordin is leading the F55 group



and Usamah Patel is 13th in the u17 men.

South of England Indoor Champs Lee Valley

Saturday 10th January

Running in his first ever 1500m indoor Ahmed Abdulle took an excellent silver medal. With a very slow early pace Ahmed stayed with the lead runner to nearly half way. With two laps to go the leader made his move with Ahmed in chase but had to settle for 2nd place in a time of 4.21.