



Ilford AC Walking Section - Press Report 23/07/2013

Ilford Retain National Team Title For a 3rd Consecutive Season

Ilford retained their National 10 Kilometres walk team title, for a 3rd consecutive season, at Hillingdon Cycle Circuit on Saturday 10 July. The scorching temperatures of recent weeks were relieved slightly by a light breeze and a short overcast period, but temperatures were still uncomfortably high as the field set off on the first of five 2kms shuttle laps, designed to avoid the hillier parts of the circuit. Francisco Reis, Ilford's Portuguese and UK International set off with the leading bunch and established himself in 4th place early on, a position he held until the finish in a time of 50 minutes 51 seconds. Steve Uttley, after a period away from training through injury walked a steadier race, gradually working through to 8th place, then holding off a determined late challenge from 2 walkers just behind to retain that position in 55-52. The Ilford scoring team was completed by Steve Allen in 15th place in 60-19, just one place ahead of Stuart Bennett who recorded 60-38.

Sadly Ilford's other competitor, Ed Shillabeer, fell foul of the judges on the requirement to keep the knee straight as the heel touches the ground, a difficult rule to comply with as athletes become tired in tough conditions, and his long journey from the West Country did not bear fruit on this occasion.

Nevertheless, Ilford's 3 scorers beat 2nd placed Surrey Walking Club by the comfortable margin of 8 points on a day in which conditions were far from easy and on which the shuttle course was felt by many to be considerably slower than the lap course which it replaced. Ilford walkers had further success in the Inter counties race held in conjunction, as Steve Uttley was 3rd scorer, with the 2 International King twins from Colchester in the winning Essex team and Francisco Reis won bronze with the Middlesex team.

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