



Press Report 3rd February 2015

Essex Cross Country League  
AbbeyFields Colchester  
Saturday 31 January

The final round of this winter was held over a grassland course at Abbey Field in Colchester on a cold afternoon last Saturday.

First up were the junior races where the ever present U/13 boys Bradley Deacon and Manraj Gill completed their 1st season at X country. They both put in solid runs with Manraj in 27th place in 10-32 and Bradley in 33rd place in 10-53. The overall points position was that Manraj finished in 21st place and Bradley in 24th place.

The Senior Ladies race was held over 5km and Ilford were lead home by two athletes producing their best league runs to date; Krystle Balogun finished 7th in 22m 03s and Jenni Sheehan 18th with 23m 21s. They were supported by Bree Nordin, the first F55 category, in 28th clocking 25m 15s and Nicola Hopkinson, giving 100% as usual in 44th with 27m 11s. In the match the Ilford team were an excellent 5th.

The senior mens race was over 8km and there was a good turnout from Ilford AC with Malcom Muir leading the way in 4th spot and first in the M40 group, with 27m 45s. Close behind in 6th was Tom Gardner with 27m 54s while Paul Holloway put in a good run for 45th and 31 21s. Andy Catton was the leading runner in the M60 age category in 33m 26s. Terry Knightley, who is never at home on the country in 89th was home next with 34m 37s and Ian Knight returned to racing following a spell of injury recorded 34m 37s for 96th place and closed the scoring team. Also in action were Steve Cheal (120th 39m 54s) and Matt Maple (125th 44m 00s) The Ilford men placed 9th in the fixture.

For the 2014/15 season Ilford finished with some good results. The men team finished 8th in the 24 strong league and were 3rd in the veterans category. The ladies came home 8th also and in the veteran table placed 11th.

On the individual front Malcolm Muir took the M40 group title and Bree Nordin won the F55 grouping. Other notable performances were Krystle Balogun pacing 5th in the senior ladies and Jenni Sheehan 8th in the same category. Tom Gardner was 8th senior man and Neil Crisp 5th in the M50 age group.

Schools Inter Counties Champs  
Reigate 31st January

Another 2 Ilford athletes flying the flag for the club were Ahmed Abdulla and Usamah Patel



## Press Report 3rd February 2015

both representing Essex. After taking a tumble at the start of the race Ahmed worked his way through to finish in 10th place and the 2nd Essex runner home, with Usamah coming home in 26th place. This gave Essex some good packing with 6 to score in the team event. Essex finished in 3rd place.

### Serpentine 5k - Hyde Park

Friday 30th January

Ilford M40 veteran Malcolm Muir put in a superb race on Friday to win the Serpentine "Last Friday" 5K race in Hyde Park. In cold, breezy conditions and a field of 265 runners he led the pack for most of the race, preferring to dictate the pace, but having broken away with Damian Nevins (Harrow) in the last kilometre he then wisely dropped behind to take the attacking position. Over the last 200 meters Malcolm turned on his now renowned finishing speed to burst to the front just before the line and take the win by a second in 16m 13s.

Ilford's superveteran John Batchelor started the race but retired at 1 Km with a bad back.

### London Winter 10km

Sunday 1 February

There were over 11500 entrants for the London Winter 10km which runs along the Embankment and around St Pauls Cathedral. For Ilford AC Bill Green recorded 51m 04s and Doris Gaga produced a personal best of 54m 16s after going through 5km in 27 minutes. Both runners placed in the top third of the large field.

### Condura Skyway Half Marathon, Manila

Sunday 1 February

Ilford AC's New Zealand athlete Blair McWhirter, who is currently teaching in the Philippines, took part in a half marathon wearing Ilford colours. The race started at 3.30am, which is common in the country to avoid the worst of the weather conditions, however it was still 22C and 78% humidity. Blair was always up with the leading pack going through halfway in 34m 24s before tackling the tougher second half of the course. He crossed the line in 4th place in 1hr 12 mins 25 secs just 14 seconds off a podium place.

