



Press Report 9th February 2016

## **ESSEX CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE**

Colchester Garrison

Sunday 7 February 2016

Ilford AC produced some encouraging performances in the final round of this season's Essex Cross-Country League held on the playing fields at Colchester Garrison last Saturday when placing 4th in the senior men's match and 5th in the senior ladies, their best positions of the season.

The ladies raced over 6km on a parkland course on a windy afternoon. Despite being weakened by 4 of the team being delayed in traffic after an accident closed the A12 and were therefore unable to reach the venue, the ladies still managed to close a scoring team in one of their best performances for several years. Leading the way was team captain Jenni Sheehan in a best ever 11th place in 23mins 24 secs. She was supported by Bree Nordin in 27th with 25m 22s and Mel Jones one spot back 25m 41s. The team was closed by Julie Gillender who battled her way to 65th to give the team a 5th place finish.

The Ilford men fielded a strong squad headed by Blair McWhirter, who is looking sharper by the week, in 3rd spot with 28m 28s for the 9km event. Malcolm Muir came home 9th, regaining fitness following an autumn injury and both Steve Philcox and Paul Holloway were in good form for 35th and 36th respectively in 31m 31s and 31m 45s. Sam Rahman ran one of his better races over the country for 41st in 32m 14 and Kevin Wotton closed the scorers for the Ilford team in 47th with 33m 11s. The team were rewarded with a season high 4th place finish in the match. Neil Crisp was half a stride behind Wotton with the same time. Terry Knightley liked the drier grassland course for 56th in 34m 03s and Rohan Alexander had a rare run over the country in 34m 51s for 63rd. Two long standing stalwarts of the club were next home; Tony Nixon in 72nd and 35m 41s and Andy Catton 77th with 36m 03s, both being bloodied by some low hanging tree branches on route. The squad were completed by Gary Floate 96th, 39m 32s, and Ed Skinner one spot behind him in 40m 09s.

In the earlier junior races the Club were well represented in both the under 13 and under 15 age groups. In the under 13 boys race Bradley Deacon was first home for Ilford in 21st closely followed by Matthew Hick in 23rd with Evan Johnstone following in 35th. The under 15 Girls saw Isabella Hick finish in 22nd and in the boys under 15 Jack Halil was 31st.

Over the season Ilford finished 8th in division 1 of the senior men's league and 5th in the senior ladies. In the separate Veterans league the men were 4th and the ladies 7th. There were also some very encouraging performances from the Club's

emerging Young athletes which bodes well for the future.

Individually Bree Nordin was the winner of the F55 category for the ladies and Andy Catton took the M60 group gold with Tony Nixon in silver position.



## **WATFORD HALF MARATHON**

Sunday 7 February 2016

Iford Acs Nicola Hopkinson took to the roads for the hilly, windy Watford Half Marathon and showed her preparations for the Tokyo Marathon at the end of the month are going well as she recorded 1h 45m 58s for 103rd female finisher and 23rd in her age category.

## **LEE VALLEY INDOOR OPEN MIDDLE DISTANCE MEETING**

Wednesday 3 February

Sam Rahman of Iford Ac ran in ht 2 of the indoor mile at Lee Valley Indoor Athletic Centre and started strongly to be up with the leaders. On the 3rd of the 8 laps he took the race on.



Sam powered on to win the race in a new personal best of 4m 58.59s.

## **NORFOLK SECTION**

Elsewhere on 31st January Our Turkey breeding reporter relates some carrot crunching yarns :-

Ilford AC (Norfolk section) today fielded a full squad to compete in the Freethorpe 10 mile race, organised by Great Yarmouth & District Athletic Club and held on the rolling country lanes in and around the village of Freethorpe in the Broadland District of Norfolk.

The wintry grey sky, cold wind and light rain didn't deter the 600 runners as they set off on what is a tougher course than its location would suggest.

The most notable run of the day for the Ilford squad and first home was by Paul Emery who, having been beset by a long term injury, had the privilege of donning the coveted Blue Hooped vest, in an open race, for the first time since the 11th June 2013.

He was pleased with his time, unofficially 01:21:22, and was pleased to get round following a recent heavy cold and lack of training. He now looks forward to the Broadland Half Marathon on 13th March 2016.

B. Matthews. Norfolk correspondent