



## **The Essex Way - 10 Stage Relay Event**

Epping Station to Harwich Lighthouse

Sunday 4th September

Ilford AC had 7 hardy runners, "the magnificent 7" flying the flag for the Club in the iconic 28th running of The Essex Way. This is one of the County's truly inspirational and premier events with 58 teams from clubs from all over the county and beyond racing on the ancient trails and footpaths which make up the 82 miles of the historic Essex Way that runs from Epping Station to Harwich Old Lighthouse. Rachel Halpin and Nichola Fairbairn duly set off from Epping Station at 8am on Sunday morning to represent Ilford on Leg 1 finishing 7.5 miles later at Chipping Ongar finishing in joint 50th place. The first leg is also jointly organised by Ilford with East London Runners.

Despite still finding his full fitness Malcolm Muir provided Ilford's highlight of the day by winning his favoured leg 7, covering the 11.2 miles from West Bergholt to Dedham. This followed a solid run by Steve Cheal on leg 6, Great Tey to West Bergholt who finished 42nd over the 5.7 miles. Muir then went on to accompany Billy Green on leg 8, the 8 miles from Dedham to Bradfield with the latter finishing 36th. Nicola Hopkinson chipped in with her usual reliable performance placing 31st on the shoreline leg of the River Stour which runs the 5.7 miles from Bradfield to Ramsey Village. Fittingly it was left to Ilford's senior stateswoman Pam Jones to complete a truly enjoyable day by running the 10th and final leg from Ramsey and along the Dovercourt seafront to Harwich coming home in 57th place.



It was a shame that Ilford could not field runners on legs 2,3,4 especially when 30 runners had turned out only the week before at Barking which meant that the Club incurred heavy penalties on these legs and was therefore always playing catch up only managing 43rd place in the team competition. No doubt the Harlow 10 being held on the same day provided an unwelcome split of resources.

Therefore once again the dominant Essex club Springfield Striders took the spoils in all 3 of the mens womens and veteran sections. Ilford however maintained an excellent presence at



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the prizegiving held in Harwich's Hanover Arms after the race which was also attended by Club President Robin Davis who had assisted and supported throughout the event. At the presentation both the presence and performance of a team from the Netherlands was recognised, the first time the competition has had an overseas team, but pride of place went to the 2 man team from East London Runners consisting of Ciaran Canavan and Aaron Williams who remarkably completed the whole 82 miles between them running alternate legs.

### **Harlow 10 miles**

Sunday 4 September

Blair McWhirter returned to competitive action for the first time since April's London Marathon and led Ilford Ac to success at the Harlow 10 mile road race on an overcast breezing Sunday morning. Blair took control of the race from the gun and came home for a convincing victory by over 3 1/2 minutes in 53 minutes 53 seconds. He was supported by Sam Rahman and Paul Holloway who ran close together with Sam crossing the line 8th in 61m 16s and Paul 9th with 61m 32s. The trio combined together to win the team prize for Ilford.



Bree Nordin continues to show good form winning the F55 category trophy and taking sixth position in 74mins exactly while Declan Cullen recorded a new personal best of 75m 13s.

Other Ilford athletes in action were Rohan Alexander (54th 71.06) Satha Alaga (83.21) Dennis Briggs (86.49) Pathrose Louis (92.10)

### **VAC Championship**



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Kingston

Sunday 28 August

It was a good day for the masters athletes of Ilford AC at the Veterans AC Championships at Kingston who returned with their customary clutch of medals.

Pam Jones continues to excel in competition and won the 800m and 1500m in the F80 category and set new Championship Best Performances in both events. Her times were 4m 23.37s for 800 and 8.59.52 for 1500m.

John Batchelor ran in the M75 group and also won double gold in the 800m in 2 mins 56.45 secs and the 1500m with 6 mins 07.03 secs.

Julia Galea ran in the F60 and ran a well judged race in the 1500m to finish 2nd in 6m 50.77s and also took silver in the 500m with 26mins 05.99 secs.

Rob Sargent ran in the M60 5000m finishing third with 25mins 12.27secs.