



## **Ilford AC 10 mile Cross Country - (Race for Kev)**

Tuesday 27th December 2016

Ilford AC enjoyed a wonderful turnout when hosting their winter showcase 10 mile cross country event on a cold crisp Christmas bank holiday Tuesday morning. Near on 150 runners were also treated to some beautiful bright sunshine which was probably better appreciated by volunteers and spectators as it did little to thaw the frosted tracks and rutted mud that characterised most of the 3.3 mile course which the runners had to negotiate 3 times.

Nevertheless conditions were ideal for fast times with the leading 3 runners all cracking the magical 1 hour barrier, unusual for this normally extremely challenging course. The stage was therefore set for Woodford Green's John Powell to power away from the start pursued by Ilford's Malcolm Muir and Fairland Valley's Grant Ramsay, a frequent visitor to this event.

Apart from the gaps slightly lengthening somewhat there was little change to report over the 3 laps with Powell coming home unchallenged in an impressive time of 57.45 over a minute clear of Muir in 58.48 who in turn enjoyed a similar advantage over Ramsay who finished in 59.56. Ilford's Steve Philcox took the male 50 prize with a performance of 64.50 which earned him 9th place overall.

In the ladies race Taryne McPherson of Eton Manor posted the fastest time of the day clocking 75.41. She was chased home by 2 excellent veteran 45 runners, Dagenham's Caroline Tuck who finished with 76.59 and Victoria Park's Naomi Bourne in 78.15.

The event also doubled as the Ilford AC 10 mile cross country club championships and with many potential participants on volunteer duty there was ample opportunity to pick up medals. In the Men's section Malcolm Muir's effort easily won him the club gold with Steve Philcox taking the silver. The bronze went to Neil Crisp, 68.49 and 15th place, who also provided a wonderful family of volunteers. Club captain Billy Green closed the Ilford mens squad to 3rd place in the team competition recording 91.09 for 88th place. Somewhat disappointingly only 2 Ilford ladies ran in the championships with Nicola Hopkinson taking gold clocking 85.54 and Julia Galea the silver with 97.23.

The race is now held annually to commemorate Ilford AC stalwart Kevin Newell who unfortunately suffered a serious brain injury two years ago and now requires full-time care. A donation will be made from the race proceeds to a suitable charity. It is not only supported and promoted by his comrades at Ilford Athletic Club but many of his friends that he has made from the local running community and throughout the county also turn up to either run, volunteer, or just cheer on the runners in tribute to Kevin.

## **Witham Boxing Day 5**

Malcolm Muir was one of three runners from Ilford AC in a 400 strong field contesting the Witham RC 5 mile run held over a rural course on a beautiful sunny Boxing Day morning.

With Morpeth's Andy Whitwam, an over 40 veteran, taking the Main prize by winning the race in 25.54 it was left to Muir in 5th place overall to scoop the veteran category prize with his clocking of 27,10.

Conditions were great apart from the slight headwind on the road out of Witham, however, this was compensated by slight wind 'assistance' on the final 2 miles back into Witham. He was accompanied by his sister Carol who recorded 47.55 for 318th place and Steve Cheal whose time of 41.26 placed him 214th. All times given are gun times.



