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A light falling of snow greeted the runners for the final Essex League fixture of the season at Basildon on Saturday. Although the snow meant that some of the fields were a little down in numbers, this was a real cross country test, with repeated ascents and descents of a steep hill on every lap.

First up was Matthew Hick in the Under 13 race. Matthew had hit a bit of form in the last few weeks and his confidence was high and this showed in the way that he started the race. After the opening 400m, Matthew was up with the leaders nicely placed around 11th. The course then took the runners out of view to the hilly sections. Matthew dug deep on the hills and by the time the runners reappeared he had moved up to 8th, but unfortunately lost two places in the sprint finish, but still ended up an excellent 10th which also placed him 8th overall in the final tables.

Next up were the Under 15 Boys in which Ilford had four runners. Mungo Prior led with a charging effort followed by Aaron Samuel. Next was Jack Halil who also made an aggressive start and finally Bradley Deacon. The Under 15's had a similar course to the Under 13's, but with an additional loop at the end of which saw Mungo contesting the lead with Aaron back in about 12th, Jack behind and Bradley in the mid 20's. As the race progressed Mungo was still in the top three and Aaron was making rapid progress through the field. Jack was having his best run of the season and Bradley had moved up a few places. Descending the final hill Aaron overtook Mungo and held onto third place, Mungo came in fourth place. Run of the day was from Jack who came in a brilliant 11th, Bradley also had a great run getting a best ever league finishing position of 21st. The final overall tables saw Mungo in a brilliant bronze position with Bradley 20th. The boys finished top of the tree in this fixture out of 9 competing teams and 5th out of 12 in the final tables.

After a tough winter season, which has been disrupted by injury and exams, Jordan Hinds had her best race of the season in the Under 17's women's race. Although a small field, it was packed with quality, including the first four in this year's Essex champs. The leaders made an early break, but Jordan had positioned herself in a great position just outside the top ten and as the field approached the hills she pushed on into the top ten. On the long run into the finish, it looked like she might even take a few more places, but the women in front just held on, and Jordan ended up with a League best place of 8th.

Away from the Country two of Ilford's younger girls took part in the Valentines Park Run, Lesley Rogers produced a great personal best of 27.12 to take 51st place overall and 8th in the ladies section. Katie Deacon was rewarded for all her recent hard training with a personal best of 30.40 for 97th overall and 25th in the ladies section.



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In the Senior Races at Basildon the Ilford AC men rallied to place 5th place out of 12 to lift themselves to 8th position in the final tables thus avoiding relegation. They were boosted by the appearance of their U20 top runner Ahmed Abdulle who produced his normal brilliant run finishing 2nd only being beaten by the established Cambridge veteran Sullivan Smith. He was well supported by Alex Richards who had an extremely

solid run for 10th place and veteran Paul Holloway likewise producing the goods with 31st place in a very high class field. Seb Parriss continues to impress and improve with 54th place ahead of the dependable Neil Crisp in 64th sharing another good run with another veteran Dennis Briggs in 119th. Ted Skinner flew the flag in the over 60 category with 155th place. Additionally Paul Holloway placed a very high 4th in the mv40 final tables, Dennis Briggs 27th and Ted Skinner the 5th mv60.

Unfortunately a depleted Ilford ladies team could not stave off relegation despite the efforts of 2 club stalwarts Bree Nordin who finished 41st and Dianne Crisp not far behind in 58th. Final reckonings placed Ilford 11th out of the 12 competing teams in Division 1 with Nicola Hopkinson showing 8th and Dianne Crisp 11th in the w45 section.

Elsewhere and on the roads Satha Alaganandsundaram took part in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park 10km last Sunday (Feb 12) run in the park pasting the main Olympic stadium on a flat fast course. Satha, who is running in the London Marathon in April, showed his training is going well by finishing a well paced race in 157th in a field of 737 with a new personal best time of 47 mins 08 secs chipped time gun time 48m 28s. His previous best was at BUPA 10k few years ago 47m 48s.





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