



**\*SENIORS\***

**\*Essex Road Relays Harwich 18th March 2017 \***

Harwich, a Haven town and port oft sleepy, tranquil and serene on a Saturday morning was curiously abuzz with activity as a record 98 teams declaring themselves fit to do battle descended on a small oval shelter along the Dovercourt seafront for the annual running of the Essex Relay Open and Veteran Championships. Thankfully the strong winds of the previous night had mostly abated leaving a brisk cross breeze that did little to deter the enthusiasm of either the competitors or the stoic yet somewhat amusing efforts of those stalwarts attempting to erect the Witham pop-up tent. It was equally heartening to see teams from the length and breadth of the County, some surviving vast and tortuous journeys all for the privilege of grasping the cylindrical object inside in which lay that mysteriously wondrous piece of technology that has recently transformed the face of the Essex Relay world.

Favourites for the the open races would have been either Springfield Striders or Colchester Harriers with their sheer strength in numbers and acreage of catchment area, Colchester themselves having entered a record 24 teams in total being much to their credit. Yet there were some outsiders ....with little known about squad composition of teams such as Ilford and particularly East London who were making their debut.

After a quick briefing by the starter in which runners were admonished to carry the baton in their hand at all times and not down the back of their shorts as some runners had done last year Leg 1 went off in good spirits. Adrian Mussett ran his normal storming leg, the 2nd fastest overall of the day in fact, to put the Colchester Harriers M40 contingent in pole position and ahead of Ramadam Osman representing their open squad. Tom Gardner of Ilford was some 18 seconds adrift back in 3rd but 2nd in the open race. Also prominent were Springfield Striders with Peter Robinson and East London's Euan Brown.

Leg 2 saw Colchester Harriers surrender their dominance due to Ilford's Alex Richards passing both the Colchester teams. Meanwhile Patrick Brown of East London had already overtaken Springfield in third and was bearing down



on Colchester for 2nd place. Malcolm Muir took the baton on leg 3 with the Ilford lead now well established. East London's Paul Quinton ran strongly to move into 2nd place with Oscar Dawson of Colchester only 10 seconds ahead of a fast approaching James Wright of Springfield. The scene was set on the final leg for Ilford's Kiwi Blair McWhirter to post the fastest leg bringing Ilford home to a well deserved victory A 1-2 double soon ensued for the East London area with Thomas Grimes bringing East London Runners home in 2nd place about half a minute ahead of a late charge by James Smith of Springfield who was too strong for Colchester's own anchor man.

Colchester Harrier's over 40's easily held on to their category top spot with Mark Harrod bringing the trio home. The Havering squad of Steve Rand, Matt Bland and Jason Lendon all ran well but were always about a minute behind the winners. The Springfield Striders team of Stuart Raven, Lee Martin and Antony Goodall took the bronze.

Ilford AC made it a double success in the M50 section with good consistent runs coming from Tony Hyde, Neil Crisp and Steve Philcox. It was a tightly run affair with Ilford engaging combat with 2 closely matched Colchester teams who occupied the silver and bronze positions and with only 50 seconds covering the first 3 places.

The ladies race saw a standout time posted on leg 1 from Springfield's Liz Davies. Her fastest time of the day of 16.56.73 virtually guaranteed her team the gold but nevertheless she was well supported with accompanying excellent performances from club mates Kate Mills and Sam Bilbie. Chelmsford AC settled into 2nd pace with Rebecca Luxton, Hayley Pegg and Victoria Hayles well ahead of Colchester's squad of Amanda Henry, Stacey Eyres and Rebecca Cooke who took bronze.

In the F35 race Saffron Striders prevailed as Rebecca White, Fiona Halls and Marianne Naylor combined to take the gold over 2 and a half minutes ahead of Southend's Natasha Lagden, Veneass Mathers and Tracy English. Colchester and Tendring bronzed with Ellie Cumner, Jayne Atkinson and Sian Gifford.

Colchester Harrier's showed more of their strength in the F45 section occupying both gold and silver positions, gold going to Denise Morley, Debbie Cattermole and Mellissa Dowell and silver Steph Horner, Jennie



Richardson and Fran Norris. Springfield Striders took the bronze with Rebecca Pitman, Donna Hindle and Hilda O Kelly

Final congratulations go the Halstead Ladies squad of Rachel Roughan, Leigh-Anne Porter and Hazel Buist, winners of the non-championship ladies race.

Many thanks to all of the superb Harwich Volunteer team for providing us with a great day.

### Leading Results

#### MO

1 22 Ilford Athletic Club 1:4:29.02 1 Tom Gardner 16:13.05 2 Alex Richards 16:11.90 3 Malcolm Muir 16:29.83 4 Blair McWhirter 15:34.24  
2 1 East London Runners 1:6:42.80 1 Euan Brown 16:33.57 2 Patrick Brown 16:42.33 3 Paul Quinton 16:52.89 4 Thomas Grimes 16:34.01  
3 36 Springfield Striders 1:7:13.58 Robinson 16:21.42 2 Mark Waine 17:12.09 3 James Wright 17:8.13 4 James Smith 16:31.94

#### M50

1 23 Ilford Athletic Club 0:55:6.14 1 Tony Hyde 18:42.60 2 Neil Crisp 18:20.70 3 Steve Philcox 18:2.84  
2 79 Colchester Harriers 0:55:40.07 1 Andy Raynor 18:14.13 2 Clive Thomas 18:45.54 3 Pete West 18:40.40  
3 80 Colchester Harriers 0:56:56.02 1 Richard Boden 19:23.81 2 Martyn Clarke 18:36.91 3 Dan Foster 18:55.30

### Individual Times

#### Male

#### MO

1 Blair McWhirter 22 Ilford Athletic Club 15:34.24 2 Adrian Mussett 72 Colchester Harriers (M40) 15:41.72 3 Rob Warner 63 Havering AC 15:49.21 4 Ramadam Osman 67 Colchester Harriers 15:55.20 5 Alex Richards 22 Ilford Athletic Club 16:11.90 6 Tom Gardner 22 Ilford Athletic Club 16:13.05



M50

1 Robin McCoy 21 Billericay Striders 17:51.42 2 Steve Philcox 23 Ilford Athletic Club 18:2.84 3 Andy Raynor 79 Colchester Harriers 18:14.13

Ilford's ladies on the day ran well, however just missed out on a medal place against strong opposition. The Ilford ladies team consisted of Zuzanna Sinalova, Julie Gillender and Dianne Crisp

**\* Brentwood Half Marathon 19th March 2017 \***

6 Ilford Males took part in the annual Brentwood Half Marathon which is now in its 35th year. Of the 4,000 competitors Malcolm Muir, fresh from his Gold medal in the previous days Essex relays, led the Ilford contingent home in 10th place in a great time of 1:15:54.

Less than 15 minutes separated the remaining Ilford contingent for another great days running for Ilford Athletics club, which also saw the club take 3rd place in the overall standings on the day.

Paul Holloway was 27th in 1:19:32, Sam Rahman 40th in 1:22:48, Robin McNelis 59th in 1:22:58, Neil Crisp who also competed in yesterday's relays, 66th in 1:25:20 and Kevin Wotton, came in 134th in 1:30:36

**\*Hampton Court Palace Half Marathon 19th March 2017 \***

Three Ilford AC athletes made the early morning trip to Hampton Court Palace to take part in the Half Marathon.

This popular race starts in the front yard of the Palace once owned by King Henry VIII.

The course is flat and scenic, and is run in and around , East Mosely and Kingston, alongside the River Thames and finishes inside the gardens of the Palace.

Ilford's runners were so good, their efforts were recognised by Royalty, with King Henry VIII himself on hand to receive the Ilford trio.

First home was Dennis Briggs with a pb of 1:40:14, which stands him in good stead for this years London Marathon. Dennis was followed by Club Captain Billy Green in a time of 1:53:23 and Nichola Fairbairn, also using this race as training for the London Marathon in a time of 2:24:58

**\*World Masters Cross Country Championship\***



Press Report. Monday 20th March 2017

\*Daegu South Korea\*

\*Monday 20th March 2017\*

Rob Sargent of Ilford AC travelled to South Korea to take part in the World Masters Indoor Track and Field Championship, which includes area outdoor events. The cross country took place on a flat fast 4course on sunburnt grass. Rob ran in the M60 age group as part of the Great Britain entry. He was pleased with his run finishing 20th in 42 mins 39 secs but as the 4th Brit to finish just missed out on being part of the GB Bronze medal winning team.

**\*JUNIORS\***

**\*Inter Counties Championship Loughborough 4.5k U15M Cross Country 11th March 2017 \***

As the Cross Country season draws to an end, two of Ilfords young athletes were chosen to represent Essex in the Inter Counties Championship, which was recently held at Loughborough. Both Mungo Prior and Aaron Samuel have had great winters and getting their Essex Vests was well deserved.

The Inter Counties brings the top 8 Athletes from all counties across the UK and is a very high standard of competition. The Ilford boys got caught up in the very fast start and spent the rest of the race working there through the field. Aaron eventually finished in 80th place in a field of nearly 300 with a time of 17:10 and Mungo was close behind in 92nd In a time of 17:14

The Ilford pair helped Essex place 13th in the team event.

17 year old Ahmed Abdulle now running in the U20 event

gave a creditable effort in coming home in 22nd place in 28-45 , just 1 minute and 4 seconds behind eventual winner Ben Dijkstra of Leicester with his Essex team finishing in 7th place



in the 8k cross country event

**\*English Schools Cross Country Championship Norwich 18th March 2017\***

One week later Aaron was again representing Essex in the English Schools Cross Country Championships at Norwich, after previously the Essex Junior boys championships, everybody was hopeful of a good run from Aaron. Not content with a good run Aaron produced a great run and came in 15th, in a time of 13:01 for the 4000m course which is one of the best places ever from an Ilford male athlete.

Ahmed Abdulle, carrying a slight hamstring injury battled on to finish 26th in a field of 324 runners in a time of 23:05 for the 7.2k Cross country event.

Both Aaaron and Ahmed were part of the Essex winning team on the day who took the Liverpool trophy for the boys aggregate score from Kent by just 1 point.

.....







# Press Report. Monday 20th March 2017

