



The Vitality Big Half Marathon

Central London

Sunday 4th March 2018

The Vitality Big Half Marathon is a new event that starts outside the Tower of London, following much of the first half of the London Marathon route, but in reverse, passing through the Boroughs of Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Lewisham before finishing up in Greenwich. It was the only big outdoors running event last weekend that survived last weeks 'Beast from the East' and six Ilford athletes pitted themselves against Mo Farah and 2017 London Marathon winner Daniel Wanjiru.

In what other sport do you get to compete with and against the worlds best?

Unfortunately none of the Ilford runners managed to beat Mo, but all gave a good account of themselves and recorded times they were happy with.

First home for Ilford was Amin Koikai with his best run for 13 years at the distance in 1:13:21 followed by Tony Hyde, who despite having some health issues recently ran a steady and decent time of 1:29:50. Tony started in pen 'A' and despite a very congested start soon got in to his stride and enjoyed the route.

Tony was followed by Rohan Alexander, who despite running his first race since last September, put in a good solid performance to finish in 1:37:33

First female home was Breege Nordin who ran a steady race to finish in 1:44:01.

Breege was very closely followed by Carlie Qirem. Carlie who is in training for both the Paris and London full Marathons this Spring had decided to use this run as a training run rather than 'race' it, but her race instinct soon took over and she finished in a time of 1:44:59, just 10 seconds outside her personal best.

Completing the Ilford six, and ensuring that all finished under the magic 2 hour mark for the Half Marathon was Anna Crawley, who continues to impress in her first season with Ilford AC. A little inexperience at the distance led to Anna starting the race running at a pace that was more like she would have run in a 10k race. At the halfway point she was beginning to struggle but dug in, and although slowing over the next 5 miles she rallied for the final couple of miles to finish in a very good time of 1:55:51 which was a 3 minute PB for the distance

EAMA (England Athletics Masters Association) Indoor Challenge

Lee Valley

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With athletes travelling from all over the country for this national event there was speculation



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that the event might not take place following the big freeze, but fortunately a lot milder Saturday ensured a good turnout for the challenge

Ilfords Super Vet John Batchelor once again impressed despite having to compete as a M70 rather than his usual M75 and therefore giving away a few more years to some of the competition on Sunday.

In his first race, the 1500m, John placed 2nd to former rock musician and Vets AC runner Peter Giles (King Crimson, 21st Century Schizoid Band – if you look up their Japan concert on YouTube he's the tall bass guitarist) in a seasons best time of 5:55:59.

Nearly 3 hours later the roles were reversed in the 800m. John, leading from the start, gained his revenge over Peter Giles to win the race in 2:56:68.



