



## **Essex Track Championships**

Chelmsford

*12th - 13th May*

### **Super Mario**

Ilford athletes won 11 medals at the Essex Championships at Chelmsford over the weekend.

Star performer was Mario Dobrescu, who competed in the U15 300m on Saturday and then the 200m on Sunday.

On Saturday the conditions were not great, and Mario eased through his heat. He went flat out in the final chasing a fast time, and was rewarded with first place in excellent time of 36.03. He was slightly disappointed with this having run 35.93 a few weeks earlier. Which was the 12th fastest ever time ran by an under 15 athlete in the UK.

On day two the weather was much better and again he eased through the heats in 22.92. Come the final he destroyed the field to win in a time of 22.39. Which was a personal best and a championship best performance. It also beat the Ilford U15 club record which has stood since 1965 and is the 14th fastest ever by an U15 in the UK.

Esmeralda Mengeyele had a busy weekend, competing in three events. She made the final of the U20 women's 100m, but a stumble out of the blocks cost her a medal chance and she came in 5th. In the 200m she ran a personal best of 28.15. The long jump was her best event with a jump of 4.62 for 3rd place. However she was slightly disappointed when a longer jump which would have got her second place was incorrectly measured.

Gemima Eshimu Massamba took part in the women's 400m, and after her usual slow start, was powering around the top bend. Unfortunately she just ran out of track and ended up in 2nd place in a personal best time of 60.92. It's only a matter of time before she breaks 60 seconds.

Krystle Balogun was also busy with two events, on Saturday she ran the 400m and came in 5th place, although a little disappointed she bounced back next day to run a personal best of 26.60 in the 200m

Ilford also had young athletes out in the longer events, first up was Aaron Samuel in the U17 1500m. The early pace was quite slow, but Aaron was nicely positioned, as they approached



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the bell, Joseph Geller of Woodford shot into the lead, with Aaron close behind. The pair gradually pulled away from the rest of the field, with the Woodford man, continuing to apply the pressure and gradually pull away, with Aaron finally having to settle for second place in a pb of 4.09.94.

Jordan Hinds ran in the 800m, this race combined the U20 and senior ladies. The early pace was very fast, and Jordan was slightly detached, but she hung in there and went through 400m in a fast 69 secs. Along the back straight she continued to push and was closing on the athletes ahead of her, entering the home straight she kicked again to hold off a fast finishing athlete. She was rewarded with 2nd place in the U20 category and a time of around 2.26, which is her fastest for 2 years.

Day two started with the heats of the 800m and despite getting himself in a few bad positions Farris Patel came 3rd in his heat to qualify for the final. Three hours later he returned for the final, this time he was perfectly positioned and as the bell was reached in 60 secs. A group of 5 began to pull away along the back straight and at one point Farris had to go around the outside to maintain contact. He kicked down the home straight and came through to take an excellent 2nd place in a time of around 1.58.

Jak Wright decided to try the 3000m for the first time and settled comfortably in the pack for the first few laps, after about a mile a break appeared and Jak managed to position himself perfectly. With 2 laps, Jak was in fourth place, just behind two Woodford athletes and one from Chelmsford. These four were still together inside the last lap. With 300m to Geller of Woodford who had won the 1500m the previous day, went to the front and opened a decisive gap. Jak responded by moving into third and then second place. It was then a titanic battle down the home straight between Jak and Zac Bridgeland of Chelmsford, with the Chelmsford athlete just prevailing. However it was a great run from Jak and a reward for his recent hard training.

Ilford's only senior men's representative was Alex Richards and he competed in the 800m on Saturday and the 1500m on Sunday, achieving two bronze medals and setting two pb's 1.58 at 800m 4.07 at 1500m.

Three new racewalkers to Ilford, Rachel Lawless, Anne Scurfield, and Lesley Morris competed in their first county championships, all producing personal best times, and Rachel taking the bronze medal, for Ilford. Competing against Melanie Peddle, masters international medallist, who also trains at Ilford's racewalk coaches, and ex international Sophie Haines, and having felt ill all week, Rachel was unsure as to whether or not to compete, but produced her best



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time, with potential for even better

Lesley, despite having worked for 6 hours, was driven over to Chelmsford, by Anne. The girls are aged 55 to 65!!!







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