



Press Report 2nd September 2019

## **England Athletics U15 / U17 Championships**

Bedford

*Sat 31st Aug - Sun 2nd September*

The UK U15/U17 championships were the climax of the season at Bedford at the weekend. Ilford had two athletes taking part. Mario Dobrescu was running the 400m and Aaron Samuel the 1500m. The best of the weekend weather was on Saturday when the heats took place.

Mario was first up in the U17 men's 400m, there were three heats with only the top two-guaranteed qualification to the final. Mario eased through to the final winning his heat in 50.2. Aaron's heat of the U17 1500m was later in the day and there were thirty plus athletes across two heats going for 12 places in the final. Despite getting boxed early on, Aaron was in perfect position at the bell and eased through in second place in a seasons best of 4.05.6

Unfortunately, the weather conditions had worsened on day two, with a very strong wind blowing down the back straight, this did not deter Mario in the 400m final, who made a positive start and by the two hundred metre mark was ahead of the field. Over the next 100m Mario continued to push and had opened up a lead of 3 metres, using all of his strength in the last 100m, he extended his lead and crossed the line in an impressive 48.71, his second fastest ever time. Mario still has another year in this age category. Nat Senior, coach of Mario had the distinction of coaching the winner of the U17 men's 100, 200, and 400m, (the 100m and 200m being won by Joel Pascall- Menzie who trains win Nat's squad at Ilford, but competes for Newham & Essex Beagles)

Thirty minutes later, Aaron lined up with 10 other athletes for the 1500m final, the early pace was set by Jacob Reynolds of Cardiff, with his brother possibly the favourite tucked in behind. Aaron was nicely positioned as the first lap was completed in 64 seconds. The pace slowed a bit on the second lap, and Aaron was involved in a few pushes as the pack closed in. The field was beginning to split as the bell was reached in 2.59, and Aaron was still in a great position, he made a move with 300m to go and was clear of the field. However up the home straight Ben Reynolds of Cardiff and Daniel Payne of Middlesbrough came past, but Aaron held onto a great third place. His time of 3.57.87 was the first time he had broken 4 minutes and was an Ilford U17 club record.

Ilford AC are extremely proud of these 2 talented youngsters for performing to such a high standard and putting Ilford AC back on the Athletics map. Their achievements are probably the best performances any Ilford AC athlete has done for many years



# Press Report 2nd September 2019

