



Press Report. January 8th 2022

## **ESSEX CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIP**

*Gloucester Park Basildon*

Saturday 8th January

The 2022 Essex Cross Country Championship took place in a very wet and muddy Gloucester Park on Saturday and Ilford AC had good representation.

The course was over wet parkland and the park's hills which became more slippery as the meeting progressed.

First race was the U17's both men and women combined, in which Ilford had 1 runner, Ronan Edwards. Ronan has been training well this winter, and was up with the leaders as they approached the difficult hill section of the course, including one very slippery downhill section, where everyone seemed to be taking their time. Ronan took advantage of this and raced into the lead. Around the flatter parts of the course the chasing pack closed the gap on Ronan, but he still hung in there and finished in a very creditable 7th place, which hopefully will gain him selection for the inter counties.

Next up were the U20's in which Ilford had 5 athletes.

In a small field the Ilford guys were always to the fore, with Mungo Prior and Jak Wright in the leading bunch, just behind were Bradley Deacon, Rhys Edwards and Dylan Harrod.

Halfway around the small lap, an unknown athlete from Billericay hit the front where he stayed but Mungo hung in well to secure an Essex individual Silver medal. Not far behind was Jak in 5th, Bradley 13th, Rhys 15th and Dylan 19th. Combined the Ilford U20 team secured first place and Essex County team Gold medals. This means this group of athletes have now won 4 Essex team titles across three different age groups over the last few years.

Next race was the Senior ladies with the Ilford ladies led home by young prospect Jordan Hinds in 35th place in 36m 15s for the about 8km course in her first season as a senior.

Next home was Anna Crawley in 36mins 29 secs for 39th with Carlie Qirem 53rd with 38mins 06 secs. The Ilford team scorers were closed out by Bree Nordin in 63rd in a time of 38mins 44 secs. In the team competition Ilford finished 9th in the senior ladies event. One place and 8 seconds behind Nordin was Alison Sale, who is having a good season on the country. Gaye Young was next up in 74th with 41m 19s and Dianne Crisp ran in 95th with 46m 13s. Frieda Keane had a strong run and is improving as the winter progresses in 99th and 47m 09s, while Julia Galea, who is in the F65 age category, finished 109th in 48m 32s.

Final race of the day was the Senior men. First home for Ilford was Ahmed Abdule who ran a very strong race to take the bronze medal, despite taking a couple of falls over the 10km course, in a time of 32 mins 51 secs.

The ever reliable Malcom Muir came home 32nd with 36mins 06 secs while John Crawley was 111th with 42m 47s and Diarmuid Mac Donnell recorded a creditable 43m 31s for 117th. One place and 13 seconds behind was Terry Knightley. Neil Crisp was the clubs sixth scorer closing the team in 125th place with 44m 15s. Ilford men recorded 10th place on the day





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Backing up the team with strong runs over the challenging course were; Steve Crane in 131st (44.32) and Tony Young 184th (51m 48s)







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