



## **Ilford AC gain promotion in Centenary year**

### **SOUTHERN ATHLETICS LEAGUE**

Ilford AC has been competing in the lower leagues of the Southern league athletics competition for nearly 20 years.

Ilford have always had many talented individual athletes but never had enough athletes to be able to compete over 4 individual matches during the track season

However from the very first match of the 2023 season Ilford were able to compete very well against the other teams in the league and after the first 3 matches ,Ilford were in the top 3, this was after winning their first match for the first time for many years.

The last match of the season was held at Ware and promotion was in Ilford's hands.

Five of the top six teams in the league were competing in the last match and Ilford had to get in the top 2 on the day whilst also beating Luton and Harlow to secure promotion.

Due to the August school holidays, some key athletes were not available so the team on paper was a weakened team, however the small team that we took to Ware were happy to compete in more/new events than they had previously done.

Special mention must go to the Super seven ladies that covered most of the ladies' events on the day.

Ever consistent sprinter Krystle Balogun, has been injured for a few weeks but put her body on the line to complete in the 100m ,200m, Shot-putt and both relays to gain lots of points

Our middle distance superstar Jordan Hinds did her normal 400m, 800m and 1500m ,winning 2 of these and coming second in the 400m.

She also found energy to do her first high jump and both relays.

Anna Crawley always makes herself available and once again gained lots of points in the 400m, 800m, 5000m, Discus, High Jump and 4x400m whilst Suzanna Sinalova did the tough 5000m and 1500m double, winning the 1500m and also competed in the 4x400m.

Youngsters Stacey Kwarteng Amaniampong and Adaeze Oyem, at the age of 15, did amazingly well in the sprints, hurdles, long jump and relays.

Last but not least in the women's event was Claire Thake. Claire hadn't competed in the southern league for many years but agreed to make a comeback to help the club out and hopefully inspire other Ilford ladies to compete next year and support the club on the track. Claire did all the throws and triple jump and added key points to the Ilford total.

In the men's events many athletes, like the ladies, competed in lots of events.

Akwasi Nkrumah competed well in both hurdles' events, pole vault, long and triple jump, discus and javelin. Sam Malekout won the 110 hurdles, pole vault and threw the shot, discus and javelin. Youngsters Samuel Crane and Aaron Hick, both 15, gained valuable points. Both did the 1500 and 2000m Steeplechase with only 10 mins between races.



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Aaron also won the 400m hurdles and came second in 4x400m.

Malachi Harley looked super quick in the 100 and 200m and ran a relay leg.

Key sprint coach Nat Senior came 2nd in the 100m and threw well in the Shot putt.

Youngster Jeremiah Brown won the 200m and Triple jump and was also 2nd in the high jump.

Dylan Harrod ran well in a tough 800 and 400m double whilst also competing in the 4x400m relay and Oliver Blainey won the A string 400m.

James Thake got lots of points for second in 800m, was 3rd in the Long jump and ran a great relay leg In the Men's 5000m. In that relay Sam Rahman and Fabrizio Stefanoni both ran under 18 mins to also gain valuable points

Last mention goes to veteran Pete Whiting who did the Hammer and Mohammed Zergouat in the relays

The final match was very close during the day but due to the amazing team effort of everybody who have competed this track season and especially in the last match, Ilford came second in the final match which means that Ilford AC have won promotion to the Southern league division 2 for the first time in many years

Well done to everybody in Ilford AC's centenary year





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Founded in 1923

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