



On Saturday August 2nd Chelmsford had a great turnout for the fifth and final Southern League Division 1 match of the season. The weather was kind with the rain forecast for the afternoon not materialising, although there was a stiff breeze down the home straight which caused difficulties for some events.

There was a fantastic team atmosphere as athletes worked hard all afternoon against strong opposition. The points were very close throughout with each team suffering their fortunes and misfortunes and it wasn't until the final events were included that the winner, Bedford & County (with an incredibly strong women's team) was known. Chelmsford were pipped into second place by the narrowest of margins.

The final points tally was:

Bedford and County	203
Chelmsford	195
Enfield and Haringey	163
Basingstoke & Mid-Hants	152

Credit should go to the whole Chelmsford team for giving their all for the Club.

The Men's Team were:

Alfie Green, Harry McQueen, Alex Cooke, Markus Hunt, Darren Blackwell, Callum Charleston, Paul Owen, Grant Twist, Sam Robinson, David Fewell, Ken Hoye, Bradley Reed, Luke Keteleers, Stephen Woodford, Joe McQuillan, Alex O'Brien, Liam Yarwood, Jamie Allway, Scott Flindall and Geoff Tyler;

and the Women's Team were:

Maddy Henderson, Rachael Stark, Sophie Johnson, Rebecca Wade, Hannah Morphew, Jessica Swain, Rebecca Luxton, Wendy King, Vikki Hayes, Hayley Pegg, Jade Harding, Chay Clark and Shirley Quinn.

There were many exceptional individual performances during the day and it is difficult to single out any one person for mention from the Men's team because on the track they gained 75 out of a possible 80 points! Darren Blackwell did, however, run a PB of 52.5 secs in the 400m. In the field events Scott Flindall made a good showing, coming back from injury to tackle Javelin, Shot, Discus and Hammer, ably supported by Alex O'Brien and Geoff Tyler. Liam Yarwood produced a very impressive jump of 4.60m in the Pole Vault, whilst Markus Hunt, combined his wins in the 400m A (49.0), 200m B (22.7), 4x100m and 4x400m, with a new PB of 6.15m in the Long Jump.

In the Women's events there was a double win in the High Jump with Chay Clark (1.60m) winning the A string and Jade Harding (1.55m) winning the B. Jade also won the A string 100m hurdles and gained a PB (5.22m) in winning the A string Long Jump. Another win came from Wendy King in the 1500m B string. As always, the Steeplechase provided some fun at the waterjump, although maybe not so much fun for those who had to do the jumping! Rachael Stark, who is normally more at home with sprinting and jumping, helped to cover this event and found the going tough! Jessica Swain set a hand timed PB in the 400m, only .05 off her electronic timing. With such an effort from all it was unfortunate for our ladies that Bedford had brought along an almost unbeatable Womens team for this fixture which secured them the overall win.

Regardless, Chelmsford's team spirit was fantastic. This camaraderie really showed through at the end with the relays which brought together the whole (exhausted!) team. In the 4x100m the Men won and were only just outside the club record, which was incredible considering the wind. In particular though, both 4x400m races were really exciting. The Chelmsford Men and Women's squads, with massive cheers of support from those not competing, were first and second respectively. Despite Rebecca Wade's determined effort in the final home straight, the ladies were unlucky to be narrowly beaten by 1.2 seconds after over 4 minutes of racing.

The 4x400m Relay splits were:

Women: Sophie Johnson 68.4 Rebecca Luxton 67.1 Victoria Hayes 67.4 and Rebecca Wade 61.0

Men: Harry McQueen 51.0 Darren Blackwell 52.6 Paul Owen 52.4 and Markus Hunt 49.7

Man of the Match this time was Markus Hunt with Rachael Stark taking the honours for Woman of the Match.

Lastly, some special thanks needs to go to the officials and helpers who worked very hard behind the scenes to enable the fixture to run so smoothly.

As this is the last SAL meeting this season the Team Managers (Hayley Pegg and Miv Owen) would like to thank all those who ran, jumped or threw for the Team this year; and best wishes to those who will go on to compete in the winter cross country and road races. Come back next year fitter and faster!