



Report on British Athletics League Match 1 – Trafford – 5th May 2018

It was a great start for the Chelmsford Athletic Club Men's team in the first match of the British Athletic League season on Saturday, with the team travelling up to Manchester to compete at the Leigh Stadium. Expectation had been lowered by a number of injuries, leaving the team without some key athletes. However, such was the team spirit and will to win, many athletes volunteered to fill the missing slots and boost the overall team strength. The effort and sacrifices paid off and Chelmsford were rewarded with a highly commendable third place, less than 10 points behind the winners. The overall result was Notts AC 315 points, Trafford AC 314.5, Chelmsford AC 305.5, Bedford and County AC 295, Enfield & Haringey AC 254, Nene Valley Harriers 254, Bristol & West AC 192, and Southend AC 189.

There were some great performances throughout the day. In the early events Joe Bloomfield, in his British League debut for Chelmsford, stamped his authority on the match with a convincing win in the Hammer, shortly followed by second in the Discus and later in the day, a third place in the Shot. Chelmsford now have a formidable throwing squad as Joe was supported by Yasha Bobash's second place in B string Hammer and Kevin Wilson's double win in B string Shot and Discus.

On the track the team also made a very convincing start as Rhys Collings and Luke Keteleers both smashed their personal bests in the 400m Hurdles, the former with a second place in the A string and the latter a win in the B string. Luke was later awarded Man of the Match as he went on to take good placings in the 110m Hurdles, Javelin, Long Jump, High Jump and the 4x100m relay.

Following a difficult year for Chelmsford in sprinting last season it was good to see some sprinters enhancing the team. New to the team was Lewis Thorn who joined Marcus Hunt and took valuable points in both 100m and 200m, and then later both competed in the 4x100m Relay with Luke and Bradley Reed. Fifth place in the sprint relay was one of the highest Chelmsford had achieved for some time but with a blanket finish this was very close to being much higher. In the longer track events Owen Thomas set two personal best when taking on both the 3000m Steeplechase and the 3000m flat. Owen was partnered in both events by ever reliable Ken Hoye who had battle through an injury to run at the match and score significant points for the team. These longer events are always tough but were made particularly gruelling by the heat during mid-afternoon.

In the jumps, Mike Bartlett and Jamie Allway scored heavily in the Pole Vault with Jamie taking a B string win. Mike took a fourth place in the A string on this occasion competing with a painful knee injury picked up earlier in the High Jump.

The Triple Jump was an event where Chelmsford had no specialist athletes on the day, so hurdler Bradley Reed and 400m runner Joe Wells, new to the British League, took the reins. Neither are Triple Jumpers, but the points were so valuable to the team when Bradley took fifth in the A string and Joe a fourth in the B. This was one of the many examples of how the team rallied to the challenge and showed their determination to win. Joe Wells then went on to finish in an impressive third place in the B-string 400m and, without a chance to catch his breath, ran in the very next track event, the 1500m, with Chris Youell. While expectation was that Joe would likely finish last, two of the other clubs failed to field athletes which allowed him to pick up three crucial points.



The event that Chelmsford likes to call its own is the Men's team is the 4x400m. It was the final event of the day and the Chelmsford team consisted of Rhys Collings, Harry Sloman, Paul Owen and Marcus Hunt. Competition was fierce and Chelmsford held level with first place until the third leg where, after a demanding day of competition, with Harry and Paul both having to cover the 800m for missing athletes, legs were very tired and the team were edged into second place by the home club who put in a particularly good performance to take the win.

This result was important to Chelmsford's promotion hopes. The team was weaker than it could have been and yet still managed a close third place. The next match is at Home on Saturday 2nd June and hopefully, with injuries clear and a full strength side, hopes of a win are realistic. All support would be welcome at the Melbourne stadium. Admission is free.

Chelmsford Athletic Club can now be followed on Instagram to see live races and updates of matches on the day. Follow us @chelmsfordac