



## Southern Athletics League Division 1 – R1 – Dartford – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Chelmsford Athletic Club made a fantastic winning start to the season in an exciting and hard fought Southern Athletic League Division 1 match on Saturday. The match was always going to be tough with the opposition coming from: Southampton (three time previous champions); Windsor, Eton & Slough (newly promoted and on top form); and Dartford with home advantage.

As first results came in and it soon became apparent that Chelmsford and Windsor were probably going to be the teams to beat and midway through the competition Chelmsford led, with 93 points to Windsor's 89. As the points tally continued to rise the two teams were never more than a few points apart as the challenges from Southampton and Dartford faded. It was only after the final events, the relays, that Chelmsford realised that they had inched away and managed to pull out a lead of twelve points and take the win.

The final match score was: Chelmsford 216; Windsor 204; Southampton 177 and Dartford 165.

In this league the men and women compete as a combined team and there were many excellent individual performances from the team, and many personal bests over the course of the day. Chelmsford were particularly strong in the Throws on this occasion. For the men, new to the club Joe Bloomfield and Kevin Wilson claimed a double (A and B string) win in the Shot. Joe was then supported by Yasha Bobash in the Hammer and not only did they achieve another double win but Joe broke the forty six year old club record with a massive throw of 62.16 metres, while Yasha took the Man of the Match award by adding almost three metres to his personal best.

The story from the Ladies team was similar. Also new to the club, Georgina Howe paired with Laura Runciman and again they took the Hammer double (Laura throwing a new PB). Georgina also took a win in the A string Discus and under 17 Toni Egbulefu showed her talent by winning the A string Shot, throwing a PB which was significantly further than her senior opposition. The latter feat was repeated by Jess Hopkins (U17) in the Javelin when she also threw a PB with the senior weight implement.

In the Pole Vault Chelmsford took maximum points with Mike Bartlett and Jamie Allway for the Men and Tina Quinlivan paired with Caroline Hill for the Women. The only other wins for Chelmsford in the Jumps came from Mia Chantree, still under 17, in the High Jump and yet another under 17 Dominika Czekajlo in the Long Jump. All these juniors have a great future in athletics ahead.

On the track, many second and third places kept the team points tally increasing. There were however, a number of wins for the Men and Darren Blackwell's 400 and 800 win double was very impressive. The 800, in particular, was an intense battle. Rhys Collings and Luke Keteleers in the 400m Hurdles both took comfortable wins for another maximum points double, while Owen Thomas in the 2k Steeplechase dictated his race from the start.

For the Ladies, the team's strength came from the middle distance - Joceline Monteiro winning the 400m and Georgia Tombs in the B string 800m. The latter was running alongside Hannah Bolton who was in the A string and both these athletes, again juniors, were extremely competitive against the



seniors. There was a double win in the 1500m, with Rosa Prideaux (A string) and Rebecca Luxton (B string) both taking maximum points, with impressive performances.

In the 100m Hurdles, once again another maximum came from Hayley McLean and Claire Netley - Hayley being awarded Woman of the Match for her efforts throughout the day.

In general, Chelmsford struggle with having enough athletes for the sprint discipline. In this match it was therefore pleasing to see both Nathaniel Sherger and Beatriz Melo competing putting in good performances. The latter achieving a PB in the 200m.

The 4x400 relays, as always, were the last events. This is an event where the Men normally excel but it was the Ladies this time who were the stars! Clair, Joceline, Rosa Prideaux and Hayley teamed up and totally dominated, winning by some 130m from Southampton, but more importantly by 350m from nearest match rivals Windsor! Hayley's last leg was recorded by the timekeepers at an amazing 55.8 seconds!