



Southern Athletics League Division 1 – R4 – Harrow – 13th July 2019

Chelmsford AC's Senior team went into Saturday's fourth Southern Athletics League match of the season on top of Division 1 and hoping to push on to a second successive championship title. The match took on a must-win aspect, given that two of the other teams competing (the hosts - Harrow AC, and Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow AC) were equal on points with Chelmsford.

It was hence particularly frustrating for the team, that the match clashed with both the highly prestigious English Schools Championships in Birmingham, and the Southern Intercounties match in Ashford. With the club's best Juniors (many of whom have been pivotal in this season's Senior campaign) called up by Essex for the former, and their best Seniors selected by their county for the latter, the team was robbed of many of their top performers for arguably the most important match of their season.

It was not surprising, therefore, that despite the very spirited and impressive efforts of those athletes who were available, the team ultimately ended the day behind their rivals for the 2019 Southern League title:

1. Windsor Slough Eton & Hounslow AC: 239.5
2. Harrow AC: 213
3. Chelmsford AC: 190.5
4. Crawley AC: 128

With a total of nine athletes missing from the Women's team alone, it was the club's U17 ladies who had to step up to support the Seniors – and they all put in a sterling effort. Hannah Bolton had a successful day, taking second place in the Triple Jump and 800m, first place in the Steeplechase and running a leg of the winning 4x400m mixed relay.

Georgia Tombs also had a good day, winning both the B string 400m and 800m. Martha Smith ran a superb leg in the 4x400m relay, going under 60 seconds for the first time – and that coming after running an excellent 1500m. Ndidi Okoh threw a PB in the Hammer, competing with the heavier implement for the first time, having also scored valuable points in the Triple Jump and High Jump.

Team captain Claire Netley put in a very full day's athletics, recording a PB in the 100m - and also competing in five other events. Erin Minton-Branfoot, who has just about recovered from a toe injury, also registered a PB in the High Jump and ran in four other events.

Jade Harding was another member of the team to have a full day, competing in the 400m Hurdles, 100m Hurdles, Long Jump, Shot, Discus and Javelin. She recorded PB's in both Shot and Discus, and was deservedly awarded Chelmsford's Woman of the Match.

Tina Quinlivan, as she has all season, again proved her value to the team, scoring valuable points in that most difficult of disciplines, the Pole Vault.



Marleen Avontuur returned to the team for the first time this season, competing in the Shot, Discus and Javelin, and gaining two second places.

Amongst the Men, U20 athlete Joe Lane once again showed his great potential by winning the 800m, and taking a fine second place in the 400m. U17 Seb Clatworthy also made his mark at the Senior level for the first time by taking second place in the High Jump with a clearance just 2cm short of his recent PB 1.90m.

Two more U17 athletes – Joshua Ogunfolaju and Johnson Alo combined in the Triple Jump, recording very similar distances and taking second in the A string and first place in the B string. Alo also had the opportunity to impress in the 200m, and recorded an excellent time of 23.4secs. Darcy Sullivan – another U17 – has already become a regular addition to the Senior team in the sprints, and claimed an impressive second place on the 200m A race.

U20 Zach Bridgeland took a fine second place in the 1500m, as well as running in the 400m for the first time. Owen Thomas had to dig deep to claim second in the 3000m (in which namesake Scott Thomas won the B race), followed by third in a Steeplechase run over the same distance.

Kevin Wilson was as busy as ever in the throws – recording a second place in the Discus, and third in the Shot and Javelin, while Yasha Bobash claimed second place in the Hammer – an event in which Samuel Alexander won the B string.

With the Men's team stretched to its limits, even Team Manager Paul Owen was pressed into action – competing in the 110m Hurdles and Pole Vault despite nursing a back injury.

The day ended with a highlight, with the team winning both the A and B races in the 4x400m Mixed Relay.

The team will now travel to Southampton in August, hoping to be back to full strength, and knowing that only a win will do, if they are to retain any hope of winning another Southern League title.