



Southern Athletics League Division 1 R5 – Southampton – 17th Aug 2019

After a disappointing result in their previous fixture at Harrow, Chelmsford's Senior Men and Women journeyed to Southampton for their last match of the season knowing that only a freak set of results would effect their retention of the Southern Athletics League title. And as has so often been the case this season, the absence of some key members of the team meant that they were unable to claim the victory that would have been their own minimum requirement.

Facing a strong home team, and a Bournemouth AC team who compete in Division 1 of the British Athletics League, ultimately Chelmsford had to settle for a third place finish on the day:

1. Southampton AC – 236
2. Bournemouth AC – 216
3. Chelmsford AC – 170
4. Thames Valley Harriers – 143

The Ladies team were especially hard hit by withdrawals – from a squad of nearly 50 athletes, only 10 were actually able to turn out. It was left to the ten who did travel to cover as many of the events as they could.

Jade Harding took on the 100m Hurdles, Long Jump, Javelin, Discus and Shot Put – recording PB's in the last two events, and taking an excellent second place in the Long Jump. She also ran a leg of the 4x100m relay.

Claire Netley, on her last meeting for Chelmsford, was also extremely busy, competing in the 100m Hurdles, 400m Hurdles (in which she claimed maximum points), 100m, 200m, 1500m - and both relays.

Erin Minton-Branfoot, who is still recovering from a foot injury, ran in the 100m, 200m, 400m (scoring a second place in each), before moving on to the Long Jump, and competing both relays. She was deservedly given the Chelmsford Lady of the Match award.

Chelmsford's U17 athletes have done the club proud all season and this was no exception. Martha Smith ran an excellent 800m, and a leg in the 4x400m; Georgia Tombs ran in the 400m, 800m, and a leg of the 4x400m. Lauryn Wood, making her debut in the Senior team took third place in the 1500m. Ndidi Okoh, who has filled events for the team all season registered a PB, and took first place in the B string Hammer, and performed well again in the Triple Jump – and also competed in the High Jump. Lola Kuponiyi came second in her specialist event – the Shot – with a PB of 11.59, throwing the heavier 4kg Senior Shot. She also covered the High Jump, and a leg of the 4x100m.

Not to be outdone, two of the club's Veteran athletes were in actions - Wendy King ran in the grueling 3000m, and Shirley Quinn covered a trio of events – Javelin, Discus, and Hammer (claiming second place in the latter).

The 4x400m relay team finished second – and felt sure that a win would have been possible had they not needed to compete in so many events earlier in the day.



It was a similar story for the Men's team, with athletes competing in events beyond their usual compass. The most success came in the Throws, where Kevin Wilson once again demonstrated his value to the team by winning the Discus, and taking second and third places in the Shot and Javelin respectively. Yasha Bobash won the Hammer with a Season's Best throw – and U17 Nathan Bushnell was once again a high points scorer, claiming wins in the Hammer and Discus B events, and second place in the Shot B – all, of course, throwing Senior weights.

James Allway only just missed out on a victory in the Pole Vault, as he continued his comeback from injury.

On the Track, U20 Joe Lane was the only winner – in the 800m, where he was very close to his PB in very difficult, windy conditions. Another U20, Zach Bridgeland, took second place in the 1500m doing well to fight off the finish from his Southampton rival on the line. Bradley Reed took second place in the 110m Hurdles.

There were some terrific feats of endurance elsewhere on the track. Cross Country and Long Distance specialist David Fewell was pressed into action after over five years away from the track, running in both the 1500m AND 5000m – while Chris Youell also pushed himself to his limits in running both the 800m AND 2000m Steeplechase. Surpassing even that though, was U17 Scott Thomas, who ran both the 5000m AND the Steeplechase, and was rightly awarded Chelmsford's Man of the Match.

Joe Wells ran a Season's Best in the 400m – which was remarkable, given the conditions.

Tom Coley (U17) has his first outing for the Senior team, running a 400m that was only a second outside his best, despite the wind, before making a valuable contribution to the 4x400m relay.

As usual, Luke Keteleers, despite nursing a torn tendon in his knee, was filling as many events as possible – covering the 100m, 400m, 110m Hurdles, Long Jump, Javelin, and 4x100m – and hence making his own substantial contribution to the overall team score.

The team will look back on a season in which at the half way stage they were well on course to retain their title, but were then undone by a clash of competing events for match four, and a low athlete turn-out for match five.