



National Athletics League Match 3 – Chelmsford – 7 Aug 2021

Chelmsford's Senior Team kept up their 100% record in the National Athletics League and Southern Athletics League on Saturday as they comfortably won their home fixture in Match 3 of the 2021 NAL. Once again the team was significantly depleted as a result of injury, illness, holidays and competitions elsewhere – but with the other teams, if anything, even more short of team members, Chelmsford's victory was rarely in doubt, despite a spirited showing by the team from Peterborough and Nene Valley.

The final match score was

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| 1. Chelmsford AC: | 381.8 |
| 2. Peterborough & Nene Valley AC: | 286.4 |
| 3. Bedford & County AC: | 219.4 |
| 4. Herts Phoenix AC: | 196.8 |
| 5. Southend AC: | 153.2 |

The first events on the Track were the 400m Hurdles races, and Chelmsford's ever-reliable hurdling duo of Bradley Reed and Luke Keteleers got the team off to an excellent start by winning the A and B races respectively. Erin Minton-Branfoot followed up by taking second place in the Women's race – the first of a five-event contribution from her that ultimately won her Chelmsford's Woman of the Match award.

Hannah Bolton, Rebecca Quinlan, Tom Woodward and Men's team manager Paul Owen then all scored well in the 800m races, to keep Chelmsford's points tally building.

In the Field, Yasha Bobash took first place in the Men's Hammer, ably supported by Sam Larkins, who won the B string event. Josephine Larkins and Ndidi Okoh then put in performances in the Women's Hammer that added valuable points. It was a busy day for Ndidi, who covered for absences elsewhere by also competing in the 100m Hurdles and the Long Jump.

Kissiwaa Mensah took a fine second place in the Women's 100m A race – as did Lewis Thorn in the Men's 100m – although the latter pulled up with an injury as he crossed the line, that ruled him out of any further events. Nathaniel Sherger battled very hard to take second in the 100m B race.

Shannon Rapacchi scored maximum points in the Women's Pole Vault, despite reporting feeling unwell on the day – while Oliver Early claimed second place in the Men's event.

The Women's Shot was dominated by Chelmsford's U20 athletes, with Lola Kuponyi and Alexandra Adeniji scoring wins in the A and B event – and then Michael Bartlett made a surprise, but very welcome return to the team after a couple of years' absence, to grab second place in the Men's Discus.

Back on the Track, Megan Williams won the Women's 1500m in style, with Faye Sweeting ensuring another maximum for the team by winning the B race – before Kissiwaa Mensah and Erin Minton-Branfoot took second places in the Women's 200m A and B races.



Scott Cousins totally dominated the Men's 3000m from start to finish, where veteran Ken Hoye weighed in with his own contribution in the B event. Ken also scored extremely well in the Steeplechase, to underline his continued value to the team, while Hannah Bolton and Faye Sweeting also took on this most gruelling of events for the Women's team, and returned maximum points.

U20 Johnson Alo was again in top form, winning both the Long Jump and the Triple Jump

The team will now go into the last match of the NAL season at Bedford on 28th August feeling confident that they can see out the summer unbeaten – especially if some of their injured and absent stars are able to return to competition.

Women's Team Manager Shirley Quinn commented: "We had a small team but they gave their all, many doing extra events to cover. This group of ladies are great team players in an individual sport and it is clear to see they are enjoying being there, even when the weather is not kind. We had six PBs on the day - Erin in the 400m, Ndidi in the Hammer, Olivia Mayhew (Javelin), Megan Williams (1500m), Georgia Tombs (100m) and Hannah Bolton (2000m Steeplechase).