



Southampton AC seniors open the season on a high.

Following the formation of the new mixed Southern Athletics League, Southampton AC headed off to Harrow for the first match of the season in high spirits. On a warm and humid day, the athletes pulled out a fantastic well balanced team performance with everyone contributing to the result and a great team spirit.

Athletes Clemmie McAteer, Karoliina Isoaho, Emily Bonnett, Norman Fullard, Fred Legah and Mark Thompson were making their debuts for the club. Whilst some athletes were asked to compete in events in which they would not normally perform, notably Clemmie McAteer in the 100mH and Sarah Ellis in the Hammer and High Jump and Russ Jones in the 110H they all performed well.

On the track there were some outstanding performances notably by Millie Clifford in the 'A' 400m in a time of 55.2 which is a European Junior qualifying standard, she also won the 'A' 400mH (61.5). Emily Bonnett won the 'B' 400mH (64.6) and 'B' 800m (2:27.0). There were also victories for Emily Newton ('A' 100m – 12.3), Rachael Lewington ('B' 400m – 57.9), Jenny Beckingham ('A' 800m – 2:15.8), Russ Osborn ('A' 1500 – 4.11.1) and Jon Tilt ('A' 400mH -57.8).

Garry Newton kicked off the season by dominating in the field, setting personal bests in the Shot (14.48) and the Discus (41.73), and was followed with a double win from Freya Jones in the 'A' Shot (11.75m) and 'A' Javelin (44.28m). Other wins in the field came from Sarah Ellis ('B' Javelin – 42.81m), Joanne Bottell/Mark West ('B' Triple Jump) and Mark Thompson ('B' shot 12.00, discus 36.59).

All four relay teams continued the outstanding performances with victories in both the 4x100m and a win for the women's 4x400m. The women's 400m team (Rachael Lewington (59.7), Jenny Beckingham (58.6), Emily Bonnett (56.7) and Millie Clifford (56.3)) rounding off the day with a winning margin of over 20 secs (some 130m). The men's team missed out on victory by just 0.2 seconds, despite an incredible last leg of just over 48 seconds by Ben Winstanley.

Team Managers Tim Hall, Pete Wareing, Derek Warn and Jon Tilt were delighted with the team's performance agreeing it was a great start to the season and that there's a fantastic future for the club with so many superb successes. Hall commented: "You couldn't fail to be motivated seeing the red and white vests at the front end of so many events and the atmosphere before and after was extraordinary."

Southampton's next match is at Lee Valley on May 21st. Anyone interested in joining as an athlete or supporter please see their website for details: www.southamptonathleticclub.org.uk

Match Result:

*Southampton 203
Harrow 189
Chelmsford 178.5*

Walton 146.5

