



### **Southampton Masters end 2011 on a high**

After their most successful season so far, the Southampton AC Masters squad travelled to Ashford in high spirits. Having earned their place in the Southern area finals by winning the Hampshire and Surrey league, Southampton now had their chance to pit their wits against the likes of Enfield, Herne Hill and Blackheath.

Dave Blackman and Jon Grainger kicked off the match with two fine runs in the 800m, Blackman recording a time of 2.09, whilst Grainger won the B string.

Mark West and Jon Tilt shone in the sprints, winning three of the four 100 and 200m M35 races.

Having finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 1500m, Andy Morgan-Lee produced one of the finest performances of the day in the 3000. Leading from gun to tape, Morgan-Lee called on all his years of experience to beat the Herne Hill Harrier who sat on his shoulder for all but the home straight.

In the field Southampton's two multi-eventers, Mark West and Derek Warn, competed with aplomb throwing a variety of implements and jumping into sand pits. Warn produced yet another life-time best, clearing 2.80m in the pole vault despite the windy conditions.

Michael Tanner, who usually competes in ultra-marathons, cleared 1.60 in the high jump before leading off the 4x400m relay.

Paul Johnson and Graham Cotterell took a crash course in race walking but sadly neither were allowed to complete the race for technical reasons. Fortunately this did allow both to save their energy for the 3000m, where both appeared more at ease with the technique.

Between Cotterell and Southampton's other representatives in the M50 category, Sid De Lara and Malcolm Riddle, every event was covered with a smile. Likewise Richie Pearson and Pat Morgan-Lee did a sterling job competing in the M60 category.

Against strong competition Southampton finished the day in 6<sup>th</sup> place. A beaming team manager, Derek Warn, summed the day up: "This has been a fantastic end to the season for Southampton AC, today has epitomised the spirit in the club, with everyone willing to step up and help. I personally can't wait for next season, when I'm sure we will have an even stronger squad"