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Geele glory but team fall short

Newham & Essex Beagles By Ben Welch

NEWHAM & ESSEX Beagles runner Moumin Geele claimed a magnificent silver medal at the National Cross Country Championships on Saturday.

But the Beagles, who triumphed in the team event in 2009, had only the bare six athletes for the team competition and were relegated to a disappointing eighth place overall, with Aldershot, Farnham & District taking the honours.

The Beagles actually entered 24 runners for the gruelling Yorkshire event, but in the end only half a dozen made the trip north and the Beagles had to fall back on their individual success.

Geele, 23, finished second in Leeds behind Aldershot's Andy Vernon.

In the second half of the 12k race the 24-year-old strode out in front, with Geele hot on his heels, but he turned on the afterburners in the final 800 metres to accelerate away for his first senior national title, with a nine-second winning margin.

Geele crossed the line at the Roundhay Course in 38 minutes and 10 seconds. Stockport's 29-year-old Steve Vernon claimed third place with a time of 38.20.

Somalia-born runner Geele admitted he was amazed by his performance having not competed since finishing second in the European trials last November.

"The race went off very slowly but it was very good for me. I'm very happy to get a medal," he said.

"I'm going to Kenya for a month's training to prepare for the track season.

"I want to make the GB team for the 10,000m at the European Championships."

Further down the order for Beagles was Karin Stone who finished 25th in 40.20.

Under-23s runner Rory Chesser negotiated the course in 40.31 to claim 31st place. Veteran competitor Ian Grime was the next home for the Beagles.

The 39-year-old completed the race in the



MUDDY MARVELLOUS: Beagle star Moumin Geele (far left) stays with the leaders in Leeds on Saturday.

useful time of 41.44 to occupy 69th place. Creeping inside the top 200 was Jamal Mohamed who clocked a time just under 45 minutes.

Andy Barber completed the Beagles' line-up, finishing in 268th place in a time of 45.37.

Elsewhere, Beagle Victoria Ohuruogu won the 400 metres at the Aviva England Age Group Championships, in Birmingham on Saturday.

The 17-year-old younger sister of Olympic Champion Christine Ohuruogu clocked a personal best time of 55.36 in the final to take the title.

At Sunday's Spanish Championships in Valencia, Lara Richards recorded 5.79m in the long jump to claim 11th place.

Keith Gerrard made the trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico, United States on Friday to compete in the MWC Indoor Championships.

In the men's 5,000m Gerrard finished in sixth place with a time of 14.41.

Tessa invites all of us to the Newham 10k

OLYMPIC gold medallist Tessa Sanderson is once again hosting the Newham Classic 10k.

The event, which takes place on March 18, starts and finishes at West Ham Park passing Stratford Abbey, Stratford High Street and the London 2012 Olympic Park.

Sanderson said: "My race is great for all talents. People new to running or nervous about the distance won't be overawed because we make the course so much fun.

"Equally, serious runners will also have a great time since we have some amazing athletes running.

"The course record is very impressive – 30 minutes 14 seconds held by Florian Neuschwander. So regardless of your ability, come down and you'll see me there shouting encouragement at you."

For information and to register visit the website at: www.newhamclassic10k.com
Why not give it a go?

Hockey

There's plenty of Larkin about

Thurrock 3 East London 4

ADAM LARKIN gave a captain's performance to help lead East London Hockey's men's team to a crucial away victory against promotion rivals Thurrock at the weekend.

The narrow win leaves East London two points behind Thurrock with one of their four remaining games in hand.

As expected, the game was contested throughout and Thurrock took an early lead after stealing the ball from the East London defence.

However, the Londoners struck back within minutes when Larkin slotted the ball past Thurrock's wrong-footed keeper from a penalty corner.

Another goal at either end left nothing between the teams at the break and the second half continued in the same manner.

Larkin struck for a second time to give East London a 3-2 lead, despatching a loose ball emphatically into the Thurrock net, only for this again to be cancelled out at the other end.

Both teams continued to push for the win and with the game stretched, Kevin Taylor found space to slip the ball under the keeper to give East London a slender advantage which they held for the remaining 10 minutes.

East London 7 Romford 0

EAST LONDON LADIES' first team managed an incredible 11th successive victory after putting seven past Romford without reply at Mile End Stadium.

The victory puts them back on the top of Essex Women's Hockey League Division One.

Goals from Martje Langerwerf, Gilly Grey and a hat-trick from Eilis Quinlan were straddled by two strikes from Sophie Hollington.

Hollington opened the scoring minutes into the game and wrapped it up from a penalty corner with the last hit of the match.

East London II 5 Wapping V 1

EAST LONDON'S men's second team followed the ladies on the pitch at their Mile End home and treated the spectators to a second victory.

The home side looked like winning from the start with goals coming from Tom Bullock, Rob Rouse, Sean Channing and Alex Kickham.

Park series comes to an end with fitting finale

IN FORM: Laura Turner was the top woman.



ATHLETES converged on Newham for the fourth and final event of the West Ham Park Run Series at the weekend.

Clayton Scott won the series in 17 minutes and 54 seconds, three seconds short of the course record set by Harun Abdi on February 14.

More than 120 runners took part in the entire series aimed to prepare runners for the Newham Classic 10k to be held on April 18.

Athletics Extra

Robbie Shaw took the boys' title and Rachel Shaw won the girls' section. Gary Tennant emerged victorious in the men's category.

In the over-40s section John O'Shea was the eventual winner.

Laura Turner was unbeatable in the women's category and Rachel Brittle was champion of the over-35s division.



TOP MAN: Gary Tennant collected the overall men's trophy.

CHAMPION: John O'Shea was the men's over-40 winner in the West Ham Park Run series.

