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Netball

OPA netball club had mixed fortunes in their penultimate matches in the Essex Met League.

The Greens started their game against Langdon well and led 18-17 at the first break.

But the team of Rasheel Bhopla, Delphina Thomas, Chelsy Honeyghan, Wendy Dorviis, Saranna Maynard, Renae Corbin, Stacey Collins and Louise Francis were unable to sustain their lead and the last quarter was a particular let down as they lost 39-34.

Dorviis and Corbin took the player of the match and umpires award respectively.

OPA Vets were up next against Leyton C, but the team of Colette Corbin, Stacey Collins, Janet Campbell, Stephanie Miller, Karen Turner, Carol Young and Sue Mills were 23-16 down at half time.

OPA kept pushing in the second half and managed to reduce the deficit, but unfortunately they came up short in a 39-37 loss.

OPA Whites were up last against Phoenix Flames and, sitting in second place, needed a win in the running for promotion.

The team of Hannah Gillot, Verena Mitschelson, Rashmi Bhopla, Jess Smith, Jenny McLeod, Bisi Owolabi and Delphina Thomas started the first half well to build a 21-15 lead.

And they continued to pull away in the second half, as Thomas, Gillot and Smith took their awards in a 48-32 victory.

The season ends on April 28, when the Greens and Vets meet in an OPA derby, while the Whites take on Sapphire.

Meanwhile, the club were delighted to see England's women – including Kadeen Corbin, cousin of Newham & Essex Beagles Asha Philip – win Commonwealth Games gold in Australia.

And they are hoping to see a knock-on effect at local level, with club chair Bisi Owolabi saying: "OPA Netball Club and the entire netball family are beyond excited that England Netball are Commonwealth champions.

"We know that this success can only have a trickle down effect into our beloved lower leagues. I know that I'm certainly inspired to play more netball.

"If there are any ladies out there in east London interested in finding out more about netball, playing for fun or looking for serious competition, look no further than OPA Netball Club!"



England's Lorraine Ugen, Bianca Williams, Dina Asher-Smith and Asha Philip with their 4x100m relay golds. Picture: PA

Philip and Williams finish Commonwealth Games in style with sprint relay golds

Athletics

Newham & Essex Beagles Asha Philip put 100m disappointment behind her to claim 4x100m relay gold at the Commonwealth Games at the weekend.

Philip, 27, finished fourth in her individual event in 11.28secs, after running 11.21 in her semi-final, which would have been good enough for a medal.

But having won relay silver at last year's World Championships at London Stadium, following a bronze at the Rio Olympics, Philip completed the set with gold on Australia's Gold Coast.

Philip ran a powerful first leg, before handing the baton over to 200m bronze medalist Dina Asher-Smith, who produced a storming back straight.

Former UEL student Bianca Williams then ran an expert bend, before long-jumper Lorraine Ugen – called into the team at late notice after Corinne Humphries suffered injury – held off the challenge of Jamaica's double Olympic champion Elaine Thompson to bring the quartet home in a new English record of 42.46.

Philip said: "Respect to Lorraine. We had the job of just getting the baton round to her with an ample lead and after that she could do her job.

"Each of the girls did what they were told and we got a medal. After the men won gold, we couldn't embarrass ourselves. We



Newham & Essex Beagles Finette Agyapong (above, left) with 4x400 relay teammates Emily Diamond, Perri Shakes-Drayton and Anyika Onuora. Picture: PA

had to come back with something!"

The 24-year-old Williams had won 200m and 4x100m relay bronze at the 2014 Games in Glasgow, before adding a relay silver at the 2016 European Championships in Amsterdam.

And after finishing seventh behind Asher-Smith in the 200m final, she was delighted to get her hands on gold, adding: "We only officially knew a day before that Lorraine was in the team.

"Some of the girls are doing the 4x400m so we didn't want to compromise their chances in that.

You never know, we might bring a field eventer into every championships!"

Newham & Essex Beagles' Finette Agyapong just missed out on a place in the 200m final after finishing third in her semi-final in 23.38, as the fourth fastest loser, with only two progressing.

And the 21-year-old from Plaistow, in the final year of her law degree at Brunel University, was also pipped to a bronze medal in the 4x400m relay, after running the second leg and seeing Emily Diamond passed on the home straight by a Botswana rival.

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Athletics

Newham & Essex Beagles saw their women shine on the first day of the new Southern League season at Lee Valley.

Grace Jenkins had a hat-trick of wins in hammer, shot and discus, in which she set a new best of 44.05 metres.

And Dolita Awala-Shaw won the 100m and 200m, as Jasmine Whitehead-Shakes and Aleeya Sibbons took the B strings, before the trio combined with Steph Ugbo to win the 4x100m relay.

Ugbo also won the high jump with a 1.55m clearance, while Whitehead-Shakes was second in the B string.

Harmony Lembe took the B long jump, as Sherielle Dalling finished third in the main event.

Adele Stach-Kevitz and Sinead Macauley were B winners of the hammer and discus, while Grace Altise was second in the B string.

And for the men, Aaron Edwards won the shot and B discus, as Matt Baptiste took the A discus and Bob Kingman the pole vault.

Tim Mundle said: "It was a reasonable day all things considered. It's early in the season and we had people away, but those who turned up gave it a good go."

The next round is at Watford on May 20.

*Newham & Essex Beagles men finished 15th at the National 12 Stage Road Relays in Birmingham, to bring the winter season to a close.

Run over six long legs of five miles and six short legs of three miles, Beagles' Eoin Pierce and Josh Trigwell had the fifth and ninth fastest short-leg times on the day.

Frank Baddick ran the fastest long leg for Newham on the first stage where he placed 13th on the most competitive stage.

Newcomer Olivier Heaslip ran impressively on leg two to take the team up to 10th – their highest position of the day – and Jayme Rossiter was strong on the ninth stage long leg as Dan Mees and Dan Giles made their full Beagles debuts.

"We had some injuries and withdrawals in the run-up to the event which probably cost us a top 10 finish," said team manager Tony Shiret.

"It was good to see Rory and Dara Chesser, Niall Sheehan, Luke Conway and Wayne Bell all putting in a shift for the club. Special thanks to Wayne for organising the team."