

Striders of Croydon ended the cross-country season on a winning note with a convincing victory in their inter-club match against local rivals at Croydon Harriers at Lloyd Park on Saturday, writes Alan Dolton.

On a snow-covered six-mile course, Striders had the first four finishers. Phil Coales led them home with a comfortable individual win, while club colleague Lee Flanagan took second place and was first in the over-40 cat-

egory. New recruit Tom Lawson made an encouraging debut in third place, while Tom Gillespie was fourth and Joseph Ibe sixth. Steph Upton was the first woman to finish, placing 12th overall, which was a particularly good run as she had also been the first woman to finish at the Riddlesdown parkrun only six hours earlier. Karen Speed was the fifth woman to finish in 17th.

Striders had six finishers in the Hastings Half-Marathon on Sunday.

They were led by William Pennells who ran well to place 190th out of 2469 finishers, recording a personal best 92 minutes 58 seconds. His father Geoff Pennells was next home in 1 hour 40 minutes 23, and was followed by Steve Smith (1:44:56), Richard Myers (1:45:01), Richard Tanner (1:58:53) and Rachel Tanner (2:06:15). On the same day, Sophia Sachedina ran the Hampton Court Half-Marathon in 1:49:52.

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Crystal Palace's James Tomkins (left) and Huddersfield Town's Alex Pritchard battle for the ball. Picture: Richard Sellers/PA Wire.

Eagles are just two good for Terriers

James Tomkins and Luka Milivojevic struck in either half as Crystal Palace secured their first victory in over two months, running out 2-0 winners at relegation rivals Huddersfield.

Tomkins struck from close-range midway through the first period and Milivojevic converted a second-half penalty as Palace halted a four-game losing run to climb out of the bottom three.

The Londoners' first win in eight Premier League games lifted them up to 16th in the table, one point and a place behind Huddersfield, who slipped to another damaging home league defeat - their sixth of the season.

Huddersfield had lost just one of their previous four Premier League games, while Palace arrived in West Yorkshire on the back of four straight defeats.

But the Londoners, buoyed by the return of Wilfried Zaha and Mamadou Sakho to their starting line-up, began full of purpose.

James McArthur's shot was blocked following a corner and after Huddersfield striker Steve Mounie's cross had bounced on top of the bar, Palace skipper Luka Milivojevic's free-kick curled narrowly wide.

Palace took a 23rd-minute lead following Milivojevic's corner. Town failed to clear and after Tomkins' initial shot had been saved by Jonas Lossil, the Palace centre-half prodded home the rebound.

Huddersfield looked to respond immediately. Milivojevic's superb last-ditch tackle on Alex Pritchard denied the midfielder a shooting chance in front of goal following Collin Quananer's cut-back.

But despite taking the game to

the visitors, Town did not muster one shot on target in the first half, while Andros Townsend fired over the crossbar at the end of a Palace counter-attack shortly before half-time.

David Wagner replaced left-back Scott Malone with Chris Lowe at the interval and Rajiv van La Parra went on for Ince soon after as Town struggled to build momentum.

Palace went close to increasing their lead from another corner in the 61st minute when Tomkins' effort was cleared off the goal line by Mounie, who fired just beyond the far post at the other end as the game opened up.

The visitors grabbed the all-important second goal in the 68th minute when Milivojevic slammed home his penalty after Mathias Jorgensen was adjudged to have brought down Townsend on the left

edge of the area.

TV replays appeared to justify referee Mike Dean's decision and Huddersfield were staring at a damaging defeat.

Wagner sent on forward Elias Kachunga in place of Pritchard for the final 20 minutes, but Palace, by now benefiting from Zaha's ball-carrying, continued to look the more dangerous side.

James McArthur headed Aaron Wan-Bissaka's cross just wide and Cabaye forced Lossil to save his low effort.

Van La Parra's low shot was comfortably saved by Wayne Hennessey, but Town served up little to warm a sold-out home crowd in the swirling snow.

Cabaye's neat turn and volley forced Lossil into another save in the closing stages as Palace nothed their first win since January 13.

Robins set for leaders

The big chill vanquished Carshalton Athletic's trip to Ramsgate last weekend but a white-hot fixture is coming that could go a long way to deciding the destiny of their season, writes James Barrett-Sterling.

The third-place Robins visit league leaders Lewes tonight (Wednesday) with just six points separating the pair, plus Carshalton also have a game in hand.

But both clubs are in fine form, with five wins and a draw each from their last six games, and it would take a brave person to predict the outcome.

"It is a big match and lots of eyes will be on it but this is where we want to be," said Carshalton player/manager Peter Adeniyi. "You should want to be playing in this type of game and I know the boys are relishing the chance to play Lewes.

"They are top of the league for a reason, they've been so consistent, but we are right amongst it and I'm confident we can leave with a positive result."

The two clubs met last December when Ricky Korboa and Mickel Miller shared the goals in a thrilling 3-2 victory for the Robins, although the latter has since turned pro in January by signing for Scottish Premiership club Hamilton Academical.

Miller had notched 25 goals since August but that void has been filled by the likes of on-loan striker Omar Koroma whom currently has 12 goals in just 11 appearances.

"I had no doubts in letting Mickel go as, firstly, the boy deserved his move but we also still have a lot of firepower in this squad," Adeniyi added.

"Omar's record speaks for itself and we've also added Christie Pattisson who has hit the ground running.

"Plus it's been pleasing to see the likes of Ricky and Tommy Bradford contributing recently. I have no concerns in that department right now."

Savill record

Croydon Harrier Ben Savill clocked a new lifetime best at the Danish National 10K Championships in Strib, crossing the line in 31 minutes and 41 seconds, finishing 29th overall, writes Matthew Kiernan.

At the English Schools Cross-Country Championships, Jessica Moore finished 191st in a field of over 320 representing Surrey. On the road, Glenn Barden recorded his third best course time at the Hastings Half Marathon, finishing in 88:16 in 94th in a field of nearly 2500 finishers.

Over 20 young Croydon Harriers booked their places at the Virgin London Mini Marathon after qualifying at the Trials race at Lloyd Park on Saturday. The race also doubled up as the club championships with the following athletes triumphing - Robbie Tambling (U17 Men), Saarah Nawaz (U17 Women), Joachim Bambury (U15 Boys), Leanne Moore (U15 Girls), Ebuka Nkamou (U13 Boys) and Amber Bloomfield (Under 13 Girls). In the senior races, Alan Burn and Laura Marshall won the men's and women's crowns respectively.

In Parkrun action, Murray Gordon was 1st home at de Rouen in France, while Julian Forbes was runner-up at South Norwood.

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