

5K Road Race, Track Meeting and a Marathon, all in 1 Weekend!

Competitors from 24 different clubs from as far afield as Ilford and Newham and Essex Beagles turned up at Mansfield's Berry Hill Park for the Mansfield Building Society sponsored spring 5K Road race staged by Mansfield Harriers.

The windy conditions provided a testing run over an excellent two lap course well prepared by Pat Carlan. The undulating route started with a lap of the 400m track before heading out of the park, along Lichfield Lane, down The Avenue before returning into the Park via Blackscotch Lane.

Mansfield Building Society's Pete Doherty made the presentations to the winning men and women and John Cooper from Ridegeway Textiles presented his donated prizes to the winners of the Veteran and Junior categories.

Ian Boneham from Notts AC, who ran the second fastest leg at last weeks Midland Road Relays in Birmingham, was a clear winner producing a strong run to return in a time of 15:03. Behind Boneham a real battle was taking place for the 2nd spot with Mansfield's James Mee eventually clinching it by just 2 seconds from team-mate Stuart King. King, likewise, had a battle with Rob Nixon of Ilford managing to hold him off over the hilly finish taking 3rd place again by just two seconds.

3 more Mansfield runners finished in the top 15 – Chris Brown-Monks taking 10th spot in 17:26 just ahead of Doug Ross who came home as second veteran in 17:38. Steve Grainger was 3rd veteran home finishing in 14th place overall with a time of 17:54.

Taking the honours in the Ladies category was youngster Tamara Armoush from Amber Valley AC. Armoush had a battle with Harriet Canter of Lincoln Wellington throughout the race but managed to out run her at the end to take the honours in 18:47. Mansfield's Lisa Farquharson was third lady back in a time of 19:25.

Prizes in the Veteran category were well spread with Colin Palmer of Notts AC taking the VM40 category, Jonathan Hughes from Lincoln Wellington the VM50 and Michael Davies from Sutton-in-Ashfield the VM50. In the Ladies Clare McKittrick from Charnwood took the VL35, Jenny Chambers from Hallamshire Harriers the VL45 and Sutton-in-Ashfield's Val Naylor the VL55.

Awards were also made to the top Under 17's with Mansfield's Henry Partridge taking the Men's and Rotherham's Abbie Vernon the Women's.

Full Mansfield results: 2. James Mee 15:59, 3. Stuart King 16:01, 10. Chris Brown-Monks 17:26, 11. Doug Ross 17:38, 14. Steve Grainger 17:54, 19. Mike Mumford 18:23, 20. Henry Partridge 18:27, 22. Chris Brown 18:38, 27. Faz Fahy 18:54, 31. Tim Raynor 19:16, 34. Alan Crewe 19:22, 35. Richie Talbot 19:23, 37. Lisa Farquharson 19:25, 39. Thomas Wragg 19:34, 40. Steve Hargrave 19:40, 43. Marcus McCarthy 19:47, 45. John Wood 19:55, 48. Kirsty Huntingdon 19:57, 53. Les Chambers 20:20, 56. Bob Scott 20:28, 57. Alan Maddocks 20:30, 59. Jeremy Kirk 20:33, 62. Stephen Ward 20:44, 71. Hannah Wragg 21:15, 72. Laura Brown 21:17, 75. Daniel Ward 21:41, 77. Kate Raynor

21:49, 78. Paul Scott 21:51, 80. Philip Shaw, 21:53, 83. Sophie Ward 22:00, 84. Tony Gelsthorpe 22:07, 85. Keith Mellor 22:09, 90. Graeme Wilkinson 22:18, 91. Julian Wood 22:27, 92. Adie Bellingham 22:30, 93. Eva Williams 22:45, 97. Holly Blount 23:03, 102. Jodie Bestwick 23:24, 103. Katina Green 23:36, 105. Helen Scott 23:47, 107. Sue Bellingham 24:04, 108. Steve Wragg 24:12, 110. Julie Grainger 24:30, 116. Gary Chadburn 25:24

Sunday saw 7 Mansfield Harriers athletes complete the Flora London Marathon. First home was Marathon veteran Steve Davies whose place in this years race was only confirmed a matter of weeks ago. This didn't stop Davies recording a highly credible time of 2:50.30 taking 14th place in the M50 age category.

Next Harrier home was Rob Smith in 3:11.27 just 15 seconds ahead of Clive Russell whose 3:11.42 saw him finish 33rd in the V50 category. 4th placed Mansfield athlete

Terry Ashmore finished 615th overall with a great sub 4 hour time of 3:53.59. Dave Ward and Maz Lee-Cerrino achieved their sub 4 target with a good minute to spare! These 2 have been training together and it was fitting that they finished so close together. Indeed Dave could even be seen on the BBC interactive coverage waiting at the finish line for Maz to finish! Dave achieved a negative split – running the second half quicker than the first – something very difficult to achieve in a Marathon whilst Maz ran an excellently timed race with her first half virtually the exact same time as the second. Ward finished in 3:58.11 and Lee-Cerrino in 3:58.40.

Final Mansfield athlete home was Chris Cotton in 4:29.40. Tragedy struck Dave Rose at the 7 mile point when he had to pull out with a calf problem. Rose had been training with Ward and Lee-Cerrino and will be disappointed not to have been able to complete the course.

Sutton-in-Ashfield Harrier Alison Whittingham who had done a lot of her training with some of the Mansfield athletes had an excellent race and was another athlete to smash the 4 hour mark. Going through the half way point in exactly 2 hours she picked up the pace in the second half catching Mansfield's Maz Lee-Cerrino with about 1.5 miles to go and finished in 3:57.42.

First Sutton Harrier home was Dean Cross in a time of 3:14.54 but the highest age placing went to Tony Staniland with a 10th place spot in the V65 age category with a time of 3:33.12. Other Sutton harriers completing the gruelling 26.2 mile course were Leah Chillery (3:59.23), Paul Beasley (4:07.55) and Zoe Jones (5:09.35).

Whilst the distance runners were in London preparing for the Marathon track and field athletes were taking part in a Spring Open meeting – the first meeting of the season at Berry Hill Track. Attracting athletes from around the region this early season gathering gave athletes the chance to test their form.

With just 20 minutes to go to the first event a huge storm arrived leaving the track covered in hailstones which made the conditions difficult for the hurdlers who were first on. However this didn't prevent Mansfield's Adam Sansom from recording another excellent time in the 400m Hurdles. Under 17 Sansom ran 59.2 last week at Nottingham

and was just two tenths of a second slower in poor conditions.

First event on the field was the Discus where Charlotte Gair showed some promising early season form. Gair, the 2007 AAA Under 15 Champion, improved on a disappointing first outing last weekend at Nottingham to throw 29.56 metres. Lawrie Dunn, competing as a Vet 60, threw 26.63 metres and Rowan Franks, in the Under 15 boys, threw 25.22 metres.

A good cohort of sprinters turned out for the 100 metres and 200 metres event with Sam Cordin recording the fastest Mansfield times in both events. Cordin, who returned from injury just 2 weeks ago at the Spar sprints event held at Loughborough where he finished 2nd in the 100m in 11.25 seconds, took the 100m in 11.8 and 200m in 22.9.

Chris Brown, Mansfield's leading 800m runner, showed signs of improving speed with a strong run over 400 metres to record his first sub 50 second time. Brown finished in 49.9 with fellow Mansfield athlete Paul Wright second in 50.7.

Triple Jumper Tom Bell recorded a new personal best distance of 13.46 metres in the Triple Jump again gaining the rewards of a hard winter's training and will be hoping this will allow to return to the form that he was showing in 2006.

League track and field competition starts for Mansfield Harriers over the next few weeks with the first fixture of the Nottinghamshire Mini League, providing competition for Under 15 age groups, taking place next Sunday at Berry Hill Park and the following week sees the Under 20 athletes making the trip to Birmingham for the first fixture in the National Junior League Midland Premier Division.

Mansfield Harriers are always keen to welcome new members of all age groups from 9 upwards. Training takes place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the Berry Hill park track from 6.15pm and anyone interested just needs to turn up. The club are particularly interested in hearing from boys and girls aged 14-19 that may be interested in joining.