

BAL Qualifying Match Sat 15th Sept 2007 Abingdon.

Mansfield Harriers suffered an end of season hangover finishing a lowly 7th at the BAL qualifying match, just avoiding last place by 1 point.

A long season, injuries, and athletes lacking fitness after returning from holidays all contributed to a disappointing day. Things got off to an inauspicious start with Matthew Woolley (suffering the effects of lack of sleep after coming straight off a night shift) well below his usual best in the discus and long jump. Brother Richard then failed to register a distance in the third round of the Hammer having passed the first two rounds to compete in the long jump. Hurdlers Stefan Wilcockson & Jonny Newell found the going tough in the 400m hurdles. After dominating their event in the Midland league they were both somewhat short of their best have both missed training due to holidays and injuries. The first ray of hope came from Stuart King in the 800m. After sitting back off the pace through the first 600m he produced a superb surge up the home straight to take a credible 4th place.

In the 100m Sam Cordin finished 5th in a tight race with only 2 tenths of a second covering the first 7 athletes. Martin Cook then matched Sam's time with 4th place in the B event.

Arguably the highlight of the day was James Mee's 2nd place in the 3000m-steeple chase. Having taken the race by the scruff of the neck early on, he maintained his composure down the home straight to hold off the challenge of the Channel Islands athlete with both athletes finishing in the same time of 9:36.8 and James being rewarded with a new PB for good measure.

Sam Cordin backed up his 100m run with 2nd place in the 400m A race whilst Paul Wright was just shy of his seasons best in winning the B race.

Stuart King again performed his home straight heroics with another 4th place, this time in the 1500m. Unfortunately Mansfield lost valuable points in the B race where they were unable to field an athlete.

Things seemed to be picking up for Mansfield until Martin Cook pulled up in the 200m with severe cramp despite being in 2nd place at the time. In the B race, team manager Martin White showed he has not fully recovered from his adductor strain, running a very tentative bend to finish in 7th place.

By late afternoon a somewhat refreshed Matthew Woolley set a PB in the javelin coming 4th in 53.29m with team mate Lee Peters winning the B event also peppering the 50m line with a throw of 51.50m

Luke Cragg, (back from altitude training) and James Mee (another pb) both ran well to finish 2nd in the 5000m.

Mansfield's bad luck continued in the 4x100m relay when they failed to get the baton round, however the 4x400m team of Cordin, Wilcockson, King & Wright all ran quality legs to finish in 3rd place in the last race of the day.

Match Result:

1. Leeds	382
2. Channel Islands	316
3. Exeter	288
4. Yeovil	276
5. Reading	264
6. Ashford	229
7. Mansfield	215
8. Stoke	214