

Stuart King showed evidence of a hard winter's training with strong runs on both Saturday and Sunday last weekend.

King ran to victory on Sunday at the final fixture of the Booth Decorator's Cross Country League held on local ground at Berry Hill Park. After a steady start he broke away from the leading pack towards the end of the first lap and despite several contentions from Heanor's Darren Ridout the Mansfield athlete looked strong throughout the 2 lap race.

A day earlier King had teamed up with James Mee to form a Mansfield "A" team in the Ed Prickett Memorial Relays staged by Nottingham University. Staged over 4 legs of a tough 2.05 mile course around the University campus King and Mee both elected to run two legs.

Mee ran an excellent first leg returning in 7th place against some strong opposition and was one of only 16 runners throughout the day to break the 10 minute barrier clocking 9:59. King took over on leg two running a measured 10:05 and bringing the duo back in 5th place. Mee took over again on leg 3 running 10:33 before King ran another strong leg of 10:22 to finish the team of two in 6th place overall.

Mansfield's "B" team were unable to match the strength of Mee and King with Chris Brown, despite a highly credible first leg of 10:40, not being able to keep pace with Mee and bringing harriers back in 21st spot.

Pete Stafford, showing strong form going into the summer road race season, was second out and ran 11:20 before Steve Grainger took over on third recording 11:47. Mike Mumford showed his improving form with a good last leg of 11:33 to bring the team back in 25th spot.

At Sunday's Booth Decorator's League race winner Stuart King (23:54) was joined in the top ten by 3 other Mansfield athletes. Luke Marshall posted his best finish yet taking 3rd place in a time of 24:57 and looked strong at the end being challenged hard by the 4th and 5th placed athletes.

Doug Ross was 3rd Harrier back in 7th place in a time of 25:11 whilst Tim Raynor continued his strong form with a 10th place finish in 25:17. Mike Mumford showed tired legs after his outing at Nottingham the day before however ran well for 16th place recording 26:00, just 14 seconds ahead of 18th placed Rob Smith.

Bryan Borrill came home in 29th place with a time of 28:05, 8 places ahead of Daniel Ward who continues to improve and should be well pleased with his 37th position and time of 28:38. Clive Russell just dipped under 29 minutes for his 43rd place clocking 28:57 with youngster Jack Longstaff 4 seconds and one place behind him.

Kev Wilson made his return to a Mansfield vest just making the top 50 in 49th position with a time of 29:44.

Eva Williams was first Mansfield lady back in 70th position overall in 30:58 with Holly Blount putting in a strong run for 73rd place in a time of 31:17.

Mansfield took full advantage of their home ground to take first place on the day in the Men's and Combined categories with the Women finishing in 4th. After the 5 races Harriers women took the silver medal slot with the men completing the series in 5th, the same position as the combined team.

OTHER MANSFIELD FINISHERS – 66: Julian Wood – 30:45, 78: Dave Rose – 31:44, 84: Kate Raynor – 32:03, 90: Claire Coombes – 32:19, 92: Dave Robertson – 32:44, 98: Louise Harrison – 33:18, 101: Carol Hartin – 33:34, 105: Sue Bellingham – 33:51, 109: Tina Green – 34:36, 113: Maddy Collinge – 36:37, 117: Sharon Armitage – 37:30.

Pete Stafford was the first Harrier home at the Norton 9 mile race. Stafford's time of 54.03, representing 6 minute average miling, gave him second place in the VM50 category.

Fax Fahy was only 16 seconds and 2 places behind Stafford and Harriers will be hoping that this strong form will continue into the summer road race season where Fahy should be a good points scorer.

Next back for Mansfield was ever improving Dave Peet, returning in 57:55 to take 64th place. Peet is in training for the London Marathon and if he can keep the work going over the next 8 weeks should be well rewarded.

Jackie Massey led home a trio of green and blue vests that all crept under the magical one hour mark. Massey finished 77th overall and was 4th lady home. Her time of 59:20 also took the honours as first VL45.

Trevor Hiscox and Steve Davies both followed hot on Massey's heels finishing 78th and 79th in 59:24 and 59:38 respectively.

Other Mansfield finishers were Rick Huntington (87th in 60:11), Graeme Wilkinson (102nd in 60:53), Helen Scott (151st in 64:41), Eric Palmer (181st in 66:43) and Chris Huntington (441st in 86:55).

Several Mansfield youngsters took to the roads at Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham to try and bag a place in the East Midlands team for the London Marathon mini-marathon.

This fantastic event takes place on the same day as the London Marathon with the youngsters taking to the streets over the same last few miles of the famous course just a few hours before the world's best runners. With travel and accommodation for the weekend up for grabs the races attracted competitive fields.

Four local youngsters were successful – all in the 11-12 years age group – Sam Johnson (3rd), Alex Rieley (5th) and Bailey Wardle (6th) all making the boys team with Molly Johnson (4th) in the girls team.

Several others narrowly missed out with Lewis Ashmore finishing 8th in the 11-12 year old boys race, Tom Wragg 7th in the 13-14 year old race, Hannah Hardy 8th in the 13-14 girls and Daniel Winter 8th in the 15-17 boys.

Jake Lancaster (15th in 13-14 Boys), Henry Partridge (15th in 15-17 Boys) and Gina Radford (13th in 15-17 Girls) were the other Mansfield Harriers in action.

Away from the outdoors Stuart King and Sam Cordin both raced indoors last Wednesday evening in the Steel Cup at Sheffield's Indoor Arena. Running for Leeds University for the first time Cordin won the 400m in 49.5 whilst King, running for Leeds Metropolitan University, came home first in the 3000m, winning comfortably after breaking away from the field with 2 laps to go.

Mansfield Harriers are staging an open track and field meeting on Sunday 5th April and an open 5K Road race on Friday 24th April. Full details of both are available on the club's website at www.mansfield-harriers.org