

Mansfield Harriers Stephen Lisgo and Luke Cragg, both in the second term of study at American universities, put in fantastic performances in their first outdoor track meets of the season.

Competing in the Oxford Ohio meet Lisgo took a staggering 16 seconds off his own club record in the 3000m steeplechase to go top of the UK rankings so far this season. His time of 8:45.18 is just 5 seconds short of the European Under 23 Championship qualifying time and the former Garibaldi School student will be aiming for that next week when he competes at Hayward Field, Oregon.

Meanwhile Cragg took 18 seconds off the 5 year old 5000m club record previously held by GB international Billy Farquharson. Running in the Mt SAC event in Walnut, California Cragg's time of 14:05.64 places him in 11th spot on the UK rankings.

At the same meeting Lisgo took 3 seconds off his personal best to record 3:48.56 over 1500 metres.

Another Mansfield athlete was in action in the USA over Easter with Lucy Spray competing for Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the annual match against a combined Harvard and Yale team. Spray, currently studying at Cambridge, clocked 58.99 over 400 metres and was a member of the 4x400m relay quartet.

Closer to home Mansfield's men and women travelled to Birmingham's Sutton Park for the National Road Relays, both having qualified through their performances at the Midland event two weeks ago.

With Cragg and Lisgo busy doing their stuff on the track in the USA and with a last minute injury to Sean Ledger the men put in an excellent team effort to finish 37th with a time of 4:42.03, 12 minutes and 7 places better than their 2008 performance.

The women also finished in 37th spot with their team of six recording an overall time of 2:06.01.

Stuart King led off for their men in a 12 leg race where the runners alternate between a long leg of 5.4 miles and a short leg of 3 miles. King was the first of 7 Mansfield athletes to set personal best performances recording 28:17 and bringing Harriers home in 37th position.

Chris Brown was next out clocking 16:02, another PB, over the short leg before handing on to James Mee for the second long leg of the day. Mee is returning to form after illness and ran a staggering 2 mins and 5 secs quicker than he did two weeks ago at the Midland event.

Clocking 27:41, Mee made up 5 places before handing on to Luke Marshall who produced another PB, taking 24 secs off his Midland time to come home in 16:46.

Steve Capewell took on a long leg in place of the injured Sean Ledger and despite not quite being race fit yet over this distance ran well to record 31:20.

Youngster Chris Dale took over from Capewell and, in his debut at this event, clocked a speedy 16:31 over the 3 miles. Faz Fahy was next out and shaved 42 seconds off his Midland time bringing the team home in 43rd spot.

Steve Grainger headed out on the 8th leg producing a PB of 16:45 over the 3 mile loop handing on to Danny Heathcote for his debut long leg. Heathcote ran strongly to record a sub 30 time of 29:50.

Marathon veteran Steve Davies was the late addition to the team running two seconds quicker than his Midland performance to bring the team back in 38th spot with a time of 18:54.

Pete Stafford shifted to a long leg after his short leg of 2 weeks ago recording 31:18 before Doug Ross anchored the team home with a performance of 16:47 over the last short leg.

Miriam Tedder led off for the women's team and, just having returned from a week in Amsterdam, wasn't quite able to match her sub 20 minute run at the Midland event, coming back in 49th spot in a time of 20:11.

With all 6 runners completing one of the short 3 mile loops, Kirsty Huntington headed out second for Mansfield clocking 20:32 before handing over to Helen Scott.

Scott produced the quickest Mansfield lap of the day, running just 2 seconds faster than Huntington to record 20:30.

Khali Johnson went out as fourth leg runner returning with a time of 21:57 with Claire Coombes and Kate Raynor recording 21:42 and 21:09 respectively on the 5th and 6th legs.

Earlier in the week Harriers had their first outing of the year in the Notts AAA Road race League. The venue for the first race was Epperstone where the one lap course of approximately 6 miles saw the field head uphill for the first mile before turning right onto farmland towards Lowdham returning through Lowdham Village to Epperstone.

James Mee continued his return to form with an excellent 2nd place finish. Mee ran 48 seconds quicker than he did over the same course last year clocking 31:01.

Stuart King battled hard over the closing stages to secure 4th spot with a time of 32:04 and Danny Heathcote, on leave from the army, made a welcome return to a blue and green vest finishing in 7th position with a time of 32:21.

Chris Dale made his debut in this league with an excellent 17th place finish and a strong time of 33:46 with Chris Brown only 15 seconds and 2 places behind him to make it 5 Harriers in the top twenty.

Pete Stafford, one of the most consistent runners in this league, was first counter for the 4 man veterans team with a 22nd place finish and a time of 34:18.

The sixth spot in the senior team, who finished second on the night behind Redhill Road Runners, went to Faz Fahy who finished 35th in 35:35.

The next three finishers all joined Stafford in the veterans team, Rob Smith leading the way in 42nd with a time of 35:51 followed in by Tim Raynor (46th in 36:14) and Dave Peet (72nd in 37:51).

Mark Jenkins just missed out on breaking 38 minutes, recording 38:01 for 77th spot closely followed in by new member Jonny Lowe, 80th in 38:03. Graeme Wilkinson, in final stages of training for his first London Marathon and Carl Emery, who the whole team were delighted to see back in a blue and green vest after a long lay off, completed the top 100 finishers in the men's race – Wilkinson finishing 89th in 38:25 and Emery 90th in 38:27.

Helen Scott was the first Mansfield lady home, taking 18th place in 42:28. Carol Hartin and Claire Coombes were next back and separated by only 4 seconds – Hartin taking 36th place in 44:45 and Coombes 39th in 44:49. These three made up a Senior team who finished in 8th place overall.

Tina Green took 46th place in 45:54 to become the first scorer in the veterans team and was joined by Louise Harrison (9th in 47:13) and Sue Watkinson (69th in 48:38) to take 7th position overall.

OTHER MANSFIELD FINISHERS:

MEN – 101: Bryan Borrill – 39:06, 106: John Harrison – 39:15, 121: Daniel Ward – 40:05, 129: Phil Shaw – 40:31, 135: Andy Squire – 40:58, 151: Julian Wood – 42:20, 158: John O'Reilly – 42:35, 178: Keith Mellor – 43:49, 200: Dave Robertson – 45:03, 205: Ivan Colton – 45:23, 236: Dave Ward – 47:23, 250: John Morley – 48:36, 252: Trevor Hiscox – 48:40.

WOMEN – 71: Gina Radford – 48:53, 78: Denise Winfield – 49:17, 85: Michelle Peet – 49:51, 88: Lynne O'Reilly – 49:59, 106: Angela Davies – 52:25, 118: Chris Huntington – 56:00.

Seven Harriers turned out at the annual Notts AC Easter 10K at Wollaton Park with Luke Marshall the first blue and green vest home taking 5th spot overall and 1st Junior with his time of 37:25.

Tim Raynor was 10th in 39:24 with Holly Blount and Claire Coombes battling it out next, Blount just edging ahead to take 89th spot in 47:31 with Coombes 3 seconds behind, 91st in a time of 47:34.

The Mansfield line up was completed by Maddy Collinge (118th in 48:53), Carol Hartin (139th in 49:54) and Kate Raynor (214th in 54:36).

Michelle Peet was the only Mansfield representative at the Cotgrave Paws 10K trail race where she finished in a time of 54:40.

Away from the road Hammer thrower Rachel Gair started her field season well with a best throw of 59:33 at the Hull Open meeting. Just 49 cms short of her personal best Gair, one of the country's top female hammer throwers, was delighted with this throw so early in the season and will have helped with her aspiration of throwing over 60 metres this year.

Lee Peters was the only other Mansfield athlete to make the trip to Hull, recording a best throw of 51:05 in the Javelin.

The first of 4 meetings in the Nottinghamshire Mini League took place at Nottingham's Harvey Haddon Stadium where Robyn Foster was the star performer for Mansfield with 3 individual wins.

Foster, in her first year as an under 15 Girl, recorded personal bests over 100m and 200m with times of 13.3 and 27.5 and won the Shot with a best throw of 6.24m.

Chris Clarke recorded a double victory taking first place in the Under 15 Boys Shot and Discus with best performances of 12.27m and 28.41m respectively.

Other athletes to take victory in the scoring events were Caelidh Ross in the Under 13 Girls 1200m with a time of 4:12.7, Beth Mortiboy in the Under 13 Girls Shot with 6.54m, Alex Rieley in the Under 13 Boys Long Jump with 3.92m and Demi-Jade Jakymelen in the Under 15 Girls 1500m in 5:12.5.

Rachel Norris clocked new personal best's in the Under 13 Girls 100m with impressive early season times of 13.4 and 28.3 – the former equalling the club record.

OTHER MANSFIELD MATCH SCORERS: UNDER 11 GIRLS – 80m: Hannah Shaw - 13.6, 150m: Jennifer Dobbs – 34.2, Turbo Javelin: Molly Cabourn – 6.35m, Long Jump: Hannah Shaw – 2.69m. UNDER 11 BOYS – 150m: Josh Boam – 25.2, 600m: Harrison Smith – 2:03.3, Turbo Javelin: Harrison Smith – 9.00m. UNDER 13 BOYS – 100m: Ben Hardy – 14.6, 200m: Jack Foster – 30.6, 75m Hurdles: Andrew Frettingham – 17.4, 1500m: Lewis Ashmore – 5:18.3, Shot: Lewis Ashmore – 4.25m. UNDER 15 GIRLS - Discus: Emily D'Aguair – 14.55m. UNDER 15 BOYS – 100m: Jordan Boam – 16.7, 200m:

Sam Raynor – 33.0, 1500m: Jake Lancaster – 5:22.5, 80m Hurdles: Jack Cabourn – 14.4, High Jump: Jack Cabourn – 1.40m.

The Mansfield Harriers 5K Road race, sponsored by Mansfield Building Society and supported by Ridgeway Textiles, takes place this Friday (24th April). Entries will be taken on the night in the clubhouse in Berry Hill Park and all runners will get a free supper after the race.

Open to club runners and local enthusiasts just keen to try themselves out in a race the two lap course starts and finishes in Berry Hill Park. After a lap of the athletics track runners make their way along the top road in the park towards the Lichfield Lane gates and then turn left before the gates along the park road at the back of the bandstand.

Exiting the park onto Lichfield Lane runners then turn left along the Avenue before taking another left up Blackscotch Lane. The course then turns left into Berry Hill Park just before the school and follows the park road along virtually its whole length before again turning left just before Lichfield Lane and following the same route as the first lap. The finish is clearly marked approximately 300 metres after turning back into the park from Blackscotch Lane.