

The 2009 National Cross Country Championships were held last weekend at London's Parliament Hill Fields and with the melting of the recent heavy snow the conditions resulted in several Mansfield Harriers returning covered, quite literally, from head to toe in mud.

Top performance of the day came from Chevelle Baxter in the Under 13 Girls race with a 31<sup>st</sup> place finish. Baxter ran strongly in a strong field of 354 finishers and with back up from Tamsin Smith (52<sup>nd</sup>), Caelidh Ross (56<sup>th</sup>) and Molly Johnson (84<sup>th</sup>) the team finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall. Although disappointed to have missed out on the medals after taking Gold at the Midland Championships and Bronze at November's National Cross Country Relays these youngsters have done themselves proud this season and will look forward to building on their success over the summer.

Sam Johnson led the way for the Under 13 Boys with a 55<sup>th</sup> place spot with Jake Lancaster second Harrier home in 81<sup>st</sup>. Bailey Wardle in 124<sup>th</sup> and George King in 206<sup>th</sup> brought the team home in 14<sup>th</sup> position.

Claire Talbot continued her strong winter form finishing 53<sup>rd</sup> in the Under 15 Girls race with a clear lead on her team-mates. Hannah Hardy was the second blue and green vest back in 108<sup>th</sup> with Demi-Jade Jakymelen and Rachel Brandham taking the other scoring positions in 154<sup>th</sup> and 191<sup>st</sup> respectively to take 16<sup>th</sup> place spot overall.

The Under 15 Boys provided one of the biggest junior fields of the day and Ryan Saxton was first back for Mansfield in 66<sup>th</sup> place. The team finished in 35<sup>th</sup> with Tom Wragg second scorer in 189<sup>th</sup> and Henry partridge and Alex Heath picking up the other points in 234<sup>th</sup> and 355<sup>th</sup>.

The Under 17 Men's race saw Richie Talbot finish in 193<sup>rd</sup> with Daniel Ward and James Bellingham battling it out together finishing just 3 places apart in 268<sup>th</sup> and 271<sup>st</sup>.

In a relatively small field of 184 finishers Mansfield's Under 17 Women's team gained the best team placing of the day finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Hannah Wragg led the team home, as she has done most of this season, with a 40<sup>th</sup> place individual finish. Laura Brown had a strong run to finish 54<sup>th</sup> with Georgia Milton and Emma Wilkinson taking the final scoring positions in 85<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> respectively.

James Mee took on a strong field in the Under 20 Men's race and will be disappointed with his 55<sup>th</sup> placing. Mee has continued to improve as an athlete over the winter and won't let this disappointment affect him as he looks to go into the summer season. Luke Marshall in 121<sup>st</sup> and Chris Brown in 140<sup>th</sup> completed a Mansfield trio in this race.

Daisy Bough was the solo Harrier in the Under 20 Women's race just making the top 100 with a 99<sup>th</sup> place finish.

The Senior Men's race provided the biggest field of the day with 1455 finishers and the start of this race is always an amazing sight. The race was won by international runner Frank Tickner in 38:02 with the first Mansfield athlete home being Tim Raynor, 546<sup>th</sup> in 50:28.

Graeme Wilkinson's training for the London Marathon is paying off as he achieved a highly respectable 819<sup>th</sup> place finish with a time of 54:29. Club Chairman Steve Davies was just 13 seconds behind Wilkinson to take 834<sup>th</sup> position with Terry Ashmore less than a minute behind him, taking 884<sup>th</sup> place in 55:36.

With six to count in the Senior Men's race Clive Russell and Mark Partridge took the remaining slots finishing 1087<sup>th</sup> and 1100<sup>th</sup> respectively both dipping under the one hour mark with times of 58:57 and 59:13. The team finished in 88<sup>th</sup> place overall.

The Senior Women's race was won by international steeplechaser Hatti Dean in a time of 29:34 with Amanda Hardy taking the honours as first Harrier home in 367<sup>th</sup> place clocking 43:15.

Four more Mansfield women made it around the testing course, Ann Brown completing a family line up of 4 on the day with a 394<sup>th</sup> position in a time of 44:29. Claire Coombes and Sue Bellingham were separated by just 7 places and 9 seconds, Coombes finishing 402<sup>nd</sup> in 44:54 and Bellingham 409<sup>th</sup> in 45:03. Louise Harrison completed the line up, recording 51:26 for 505<sup>th</sup> position.

OTHER MANSFIELD FINISHERS: UNDER 13 GIRLS – 95: Claire Norris, 101: Ellie Saxton, 105: Robyn Foster, 178: Harriet Codd, 207: Ella Shirley, 230: Emma Heath, 247: Rachel Norris, 313: Abigail D'Aguair, 352: Holly Smith. UNDER 13 BOYS – 239: Lewis Ashmore, 260: David Wilkinson. UNDER 15 GIRLS – 225: Alice Mortiboy, 301: Emily D'Aguair, 312: Charlotte Bellingham. UNDER 15 BOYS – 391: Jonathan Brown. UNDER 17 GIRLS – 168: Kate Raynor. SENIOR MEN – 1267: Jason Foster, 1322 – Steve Wragg, 1424: Adrian Bellingham, 1449: Alan Smith.

With the London Marathon less than 10 weeks away over 750 runners turned out at the Stamford 30km race, a traditional pre-London training run. Four Mansfield athletes took part with Steve Taylor first back in 32<sup>ns</sup> place clocking 2-02.

Dave Rose was next back in 224<sup>th</sup> with a time of 2-27 with Colin Fell 261<sup>st</sup> in 2-30 and Christine Fell 411<sup>th</sup> in 2-45 making up the quartet.

Mansfield Harriers are again organising a trip to the London Marathon and non club members, who may be running or just wanting to go and watch this amazing event are welcome to join. The trip will leave on Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> returning home after the race on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>. Cost for 2 nights B&B in a London hotel and travel is £120 per person sharing a twin room. For more details contact Steve Davies on 01623 636775.

