

Mansfield's Berry Hill Park lived up to its excellent reputation for cross-country when a highly successful Midlands Championships were staged there last weekend.

Athletes, officials and spectators were unanimous in their positive comments about the day's events and much of this was down to the fantastic efforts of course Director Pat Carlan. Carlan surprised many of the regulars to Berry Hill Park with a new course layout and this proved a firm favourite despite the constantly undulating terrain providing a real test.

James Mee and the Under 13 Girls Team were the stars of the show for Mansfield Harriers ensuring that some of the day's medals stayed in the town.

Mee had an excellent outing in the 3 lap Under 20 Men's 7.5km race and was one of 5 athletes that shared the lead for much of the first two laps. Eventual winner James Trollope of Birchfield broke away half way through the final lap with second placed Matt Withey of Stroud also leaving the pairing of Mee and Eddie Highton of OWLS AC.

With Mee and Highton neck and neck for the last 1000m of the race they provided spectators with one of the most spectacular finishes of the day as they both battled to take the Bronze medal. With a strong local following yelling on Mee he pipped the Leicestershire athlete in the dying stages of the finish area to take a well deserved first major championship medal.

Despite Mee's individual medal the Mansfield team just missed out on the medals in the team event finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> spot. Sean Ledger had a strong run to finish 14<sup>th</sup> with Chris Dale (29<sup>th</sup>) and Luke Marshall (32<sup>nd</sup>) the other two scorers.

Chevelle Baxter led home the Mansfield Under 13 Girls quartet to team victory and just missed out on an individual medal with a 4<sup>th</sup> place finish. Caelidh Ross recorded her first top ten finish at this level with Molly Johnson and Ellie Saxton less than ten seconds behind her in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Senior men's race was the biggest field of the day and they were subjected to 4 laps of a testing course on what was now a proper cross country mud bath in places.

A gripping team race eclipsed some strong individual runs with the final individual victory going to Phil Nicholls of Tipton who covered the 11.4 km course in 36:26 and took gold with a 10 second lead on Coventry Godiva's Matt Lole. Ryan McLeod of Tipton took the bronze.

Tipton were victors in the team event with local team Notts AC just losing out to Bristol and west by one pint for second place.

Danny Barkes demonstrated the impact of some solid training over the last few months and looked strong and comfortable as he was the first blue and

green vest back in 56<sup>th</sup> position in a time of 41:36. Stuart King was the second team counter finishing in a time of 43:19 and taking 89<sup>th</sup> position.

Mark Jenkins followed up on his strong run in last week's final fixture of the North Midlands League with another strong performance to finish 133<sup>rd</sup> in 45:27 with Tim Raynor 25 seconds and 7 places behind him.

Club Chairman Steve Davies took revenge for last weeks defeat by Terry Ashmore opening up 30 seconds on him this week, Davies clocking 48:34 for 183<sup>rd</sup> spot whilst Ashmore was 189<sup>th</sup> in 49:03.

The Senior Women's race was dominated by Charnwood AC with the Loughborough based club taking 4 of the first 5 places. Eventual winner was Jane Potter with Claire Martin of Telford unable to catch her despite a strong late challenge. Potter, along with bronze medallist Hannah Whitmore, twin sister Juliet Doyle (4<sup>th</sup>) and Gemma Steel (5<sup>th</sup>) added to her individual medal with a team gold.

Eva Williams was first back for Mansfield in 77<sup>th</sup> position with Amanda Hardy, who had been close behind Williams for much of the race, in 82<sup>nd</sup>. Claire Coombes (102<sup>nd</sup>) and Tina Green (107<sup>th</sup>) were the other counters in a team that finished 16<sup>th</sup>.

Ryan Saxton was the only other Mansfield to secure a top ten finish clocking 14:40 to finish 9<sup>th</sup> in the Under 15 Boys event whilst Hannah Wragg and Claire Talbot just missed out in the Under 17 and Under 15 Girls respectively, Wragg finishing 11<sup>th</sup> in the Under 17 race whilst Talbot was 12<sup>th</sup> in the younger age group.

Lucy Smith ran strongly in the Under 17/Under 20 Women's race finishing just behind Wragg with Laura Brown the 3<sup>rd</sup> Harrier home finishing 26<sup>th</sup> in the Under 17 age group. Meanwhile Richie Talbot led the home contingent in the under 17 Men's race finishing in 58<sup>th</sup> position.

Ewan Millar was the second Mansfield athlete back in the Under 15 boys race, finishing in 20<sup>th</sup> spot with Tom Wragg (51<sup>st</sup>) and Shaun Baguley (976<sup>th</sup>) filling up the team scoring slots.

In the Under 15 girls race Rachel Brandham was the second scorer, finishing 37<sup>th</sup>, with Demi-Jade Jakymelen (43<sup>rd</sup>) and Hannah Hardy (45<sup>th</sup>) making up the team.

Jake Lancaster was one of the few Under 13 boys not suffering from illness or injury and ran confidently to lead the team home, taking 27<sup>th</sup> individual spot. Bailey Wardle finished 35<sup>th</sup> with George King in 70<sup>th</sup> and Lewis Ashmore in 75<sup>th</sup>.

OTHER MANSFIELD FINISHERS: Senior men -193: Trevor Hiscox, 230: Clive Russell, 248: Julian Wood, 251; Grant Saxton, 266: Steve Wragg, 275: Jason Foster, 283: Alan Smith, 300; David Robertson. Under 17 Men – 66:

Daniel Ward, 72: Jack Longstaff. Under 15 Boys – 79: Will Stone, 89: Henry Partridge, 107: Tom O'Mara. Under 13 Boys – 78: Sam Raynor, 84: David Wilkinson, 114: James O'Mara. Senior Women – 125: Louise Harrison, 136: Sharon Armitage. Under 17 Women – 35: Georgia Milton, 53: Emma Wilkinson, 56: Kate Raynor, 63: Gina Radford. Under 15 Girls – 63: Alice Mortiboy, 73: Corrie-Lee Ross, 84: Charlotte Bellingham. Under 13 Girls – 30: Robyn Foster, 37: Claire Norris, 47: Harriet Codd, 56: Emma Heath, 68: Amelia Mitchell, 69: Hazel Blount, 72: Ella Shirley, 86: Laura Wade, 97: Abigail D'Aguiar, 99: Rachel Norris

On the other side of the Atlantic Mansfield Harrier Steve Lisgo smashed the club record for 3000m and took himself to number 2 on the UK Under 23 rankings. Lisgo, studying at Butler State University finished second in an indoor meeting in Indianapolis recording a time of 8:14.49 – a time which, last season, would have placed him in the top 10 on the UK full Senior rankings. .

#### Midland Champs Images



