

Disaster struck promising middle distance runner James Mee when he injured his ankle only 4 minutes into last weekends European Cross Country trials at Liverpool.

Mee, who has had a fantastic year on the track, road and over the country was in with a chance of place in the GB team for the upcoming European Junior Championships. After an early scare that the ankle may have been broken ligament damage was confirmed and he should be able to be back in light training within 2 weeks.

Mansfield hosted their home fixture in the North Midlands Cross Country league in icy and foggy conditions at Berry Hill Park. With 3 fixtures out of 4 now complete Harriers remain in medal spots in 7 of the categories.

Danny Barks continued his ever improving winter form with a run of 32-21 for 23rd position just two seconds ahead of Chris Brown, who had taken on the early pace with the leading pack, in 24th.

Next back for Harriers was youngster Luke Marshall whose 39th place finish shows excellent promise. Marshall was only 7 seconds ahead of 42nd place Pete Stafford, whose solid performance kept him in second place overall in the M50 category.

Doug Ross joined Stafford as a counter for the Mansfield veteran men team with his 53rd place spot in 34-24 and with this retained the bronze medal position overall in the VM45 category. Rob Smith had his best race so far of the winter to finish in 62nd with a time of 35-06 securing the 3rd spot in the veteran men team who retain 3rd place spot overall but are only 22 points off second placed Derby AC.

Tim Raynor came through the field strongly on the last lap and was one of two veterans who took the 4th and 5th place spot, along with Barks, Brown and Marshall as scorers for the senior team. Raynor was 65th in 35-10 and was just ahead of the battle between Steve Grainger and Mark Jenkins who had been battling it out since the start of the second lap. Grainger's speed at the end took 5th scorer spot coming back in 72nd in 35-21, Jenkins in 76th with a time of 35-31.

Eva Williams was first home for Mansfield in the Ladies race finishing 37th in a time of 27-48. Daisy Bough in 43rd, Amanda Hardy in 46th and Sue Day in 48th all made sure of top 50 finishes.

Williams, Day and Hardy made up the veteran team on the day and stayed in second place overall after 3 of the 4 races. Bough was joined by L. Harrison and Claire Coombes in 51st and 52nd respectively in scoring for the senior team.

Mansfield Under 13, Under 15 and under 17 girls teams all go into the last race of the series, at Wollaton Park on January 17th, in pole position in the overall league table.

Molly Johnson was first Under 13 back in 4th place followed home by Ellie Saxton in 5th and Claire Norris in 8th – only 15 seconds separating these three.

Rachel Brandham returned to form with a convincing victory in the Under 15 girls race opening up a 21 second gap on overall league leader Georgie Freeman of Peterborough. Brandham will be hoping her recent bouts of tonsillitis are behind her now as the Championships races in the New Year get closer. Claire Talbot in 4th and Demi-Jade Jakymelen in 5th kept the team in a dominant first place.

Georgia Milton was first Mansfield counter in the Under 17 race finishing in 4th place in 17-01, 11 seconds ahead of Laura Brown in 6th and Amie Grainger continued her return to racing with a 9th place finish in 17-24.

Sam Johnson's 3rd place finish along with Jake Lancaster in 9th and Bailey Wardle in 10th kept the Under 13 Boys in the gold medal position overall with the Mansfield B team still in bronze medal spot.

Ryan Saxton had another excellent race at Under 15 level finishing second with a time of 14-11 and retaining his overall lead in the league, Ewan Millar in 11th and Henry Partridge in 18th keeping the team in second spot overall.

Richie Talbot had his best run of the season to finish 11th in the Under 17 Boys race with Ryan Childs managing to hang in for 13th spot with an injured ankle. Jo Longstaff was third scorer in 21st place keeping the team in contention for a series medal. They currently lie in 4th but are only 17 pts off third placed Nene Valley and 19 off second placed Derby AC.

Three Under 11's braved the wintry conditions with Harrison Smith the first green and blue vest back in 5th position followed in by George Partridge in 9th and Bert Lewis in 16th.

OTHER MANSFIELD FINISHERS: SENIOR MEN – 89: John Farquharson, 91: John Wood, 92: Steve Davies, 100: Trevor Hiscox, 115: Dave Peet, 117: Clive Russell, 122: Grant Saxton, 131: Jason Foster, 134: Jonathan Mitchell, 138: Graeme Wilkinson, 143: Julian Wood, 146: Les Chambers, 161: Chris Ashmore, 185: Dave Rose, 206: Alan Smith. UNDER 15 BOYS – 28: Will Stone, 36: C. Day. UNDER 13 BOYS – 14: Lewis Ashmore, 15: J. Day, 18: David Wilkinson, 27: Sam Raynor, 30: Jordan Boam. SENIOR LADIES – 60: Sue Bellingham, 63: Maddy Collinge, 67: Wanda Curley, 70: Carol Hartin, 73: Ann Brown, 75: Tina Green, 83: Michelle Peet, 88: J. Armitage, 89: Tracey Lancaster, 91: Rachel Foster, 95: J. Glover. UNDER 17 WOMEN – 14: Christie Childs, 18: Kate Raynor, 19: Gina Radford. UNDER 15 GIRLS – 8: Charlotte Bellingham, 13: Hannah Hardy, 23: Emily D'Aguair, 29: Jess Smith, 36: S. Dixon. UNDER 13 GIRLS – 15: Robyn Foster, 18: H. Codd, 20: Rachel Norris, 21: Tamsin Smith, 24: Amelia Mitchell, 28: L. Wade, 29: Abigail D'Aguair, 32; Hazel Blount, 35: E. Heath

Hannah Wragg competed in the McCain Cross Country Challenge at Liverpool where she finished in 80th position in the Under17/Under 20 Women's race.

Three Mansfield athletes braved the icy conditions in last week's Clowne Half Marathon with Trevor Hiscox first home clocking 1:27:59 for 56th position overall. Rick Huntington was only 4 places behind in 60th spot with a time of 1:28:36 and Dave Ward completed the trio in 406th recording 1:57:45.