

Mansfield Harriers & Athletics Club.

May 3rd - 4th Report

Midland Track and Field League Division One

Berry Hill Park was the venue for the first fixture in the newly combined Midland Track and Field League Division One. Until last season the Men and Women had competed in two separate leagues but the AGMs of both leagues in December voted in favour of a merger.

This new league puts Mansfield up against some of the Midlands' strongest clubs with Division One opposition coming from Cheltenham, City of Stoke, Coventry Godiva, Rugby & Northampton and Tamworth.

Clashing with the British Universities Championships this first fixture was always going to be tough for Harriers however some fantastic performances, coupled with home advantage, resulted in a Mansfield/City of Stoke tie for first place.

With only the Women's Javelin result remaining Mansfield had a ten point lead on the visitors from Stoke. The two Stoke throwers then pulled out strong performances to win both the A and B string and to level the points at 356.7 each.

Hurdler Stefan Wilcockson showed strong early season form opening his account with victory in the 400m Hurdles in a time of 56.6. Controversy followed with Wilcockson convinced he had clinched victory in the 110m Hurdles only to be placed second by the judges. He then went on to take 1st place in the B string Triple Jump with a leap of 12.02 metres.

Sam Cordin produced a personal best time of 22.0 seconds to equal a Harriers club record that has stood for 12 years in the 200m. Cordin won the race in 22.0 and was second in the 100m with a time of 11.2.

Multi talented Matthew Woolley scored a staggering 37 points for Mansfield in his 5 events. Opening his account with a personal best of 7.05 metres in the Long Jump, out leaping his nearest opponent by over half a metre, Woolley moved on to the Discus where he finished 3rd and then to the Shot where he took 2nd place. A 2nd place finish in the B string 100m and victory in the B string Javelin rounded off a good day.

Paul Wright and Martin Cook recorded good individual placings in the 400m finishing 2nd in the A string and first in the B respectively before being joined by Stef Wilcockson and Sam Cordin to finish just 1.4 secs outside of the club record in the 4 x 400m Relay coming home first in 3:21.8.

Lee Peters threw 54.30 metres to take second spot in the A string Javelin and Tom Bell took the same position in the Triple Jump with a best jump of 13.60 metres.

Elsewhere on the field second place spots were secured by Steve Woolley in the B string Shot and Paul Gair in the B string Discus whilst on the track Steve Grainger took second in the A string 2K steeplechase.

On the Women's side Team manager Rachel Gair seemed to thrive on the pressure of her dual role as she produced a personal best of 58.26 metres to win the event by nearly 15 metres. This lifts Rachel to 6th place on the UK rankings and again sees her knocking on the door of international recognition.

Lorraine Garvey made sure of maximum points in the hammer winning the B string with 35.09 metres. Meanwhile Mum Pam was not to be outdone securing second in the B string High Jump.

Multi eventer Laura Bennett scored useful points for Harriers with a third place finish in the 100m, second in the Long Jump, third in the Shot and a victory in the Hurdles.

Emma Wilkinson and Claire Beaumont took maximum points in the Triple Jump winning A and B string respectively with best jumps of 8.46m and 8.29m.

Under 17s Jess Grieves and Amie Grainger both took good points in a range of events with Grieves kicking off her tally with another strong run in the 400m Hurdles. In only her second ever race over this distance she finished 2nd in a time of 69.9 secs. Grainger won the B string in this event before going on to take 2nd in the B string 1500m, third in B string 3000m and anchoring the 4 x 400m relay team to 4th place. Grieves also ran a leg of the relay after taking 2nd in the B string 200m and 3rd in the High Jump.

Final match scores were Mansfield 356.7, City of Stoke 356.7, Coventry Godiva 336, Rugby & Northampton 285.7, Tamworth 269.7, Cheltenham 163. This puts Harriers into a strong position going in to the second fixture at Cheltenham on June 7th.

National Young Athletes League

The following day saw the clubs youngsters make the journey to Solihull for the season's first fixture in the National Young Athletes League. Here the opposition was Solihull & Smallheath, Cardiff and Swansea.

With a great support following from parents and family members the youngsters pulled out all the stops to record an unexpected win setting them up well for the rest of the season.

With a severely depleted team the Under 17 boys were unable to field athletes in some events but the 8 athletes on the day more than made up for this.

Adam Sansom kicked off the day with a win in the 400m Hurdles A string and followed this up with victory in the B string Long Jump and a second in the Triple Jump. Meanwhile Ryan Childs took victory in the B string 400m Hurdles and then took first in the Pole Vault and second in the 400m.

On the field Greg Millar took first in the A string Discus and B string Shot before taking 3rd spot in the Javelin. James Bellingham made it a double in the Discus winning the B string before taking second in both the A string 3000m and B string Steeplechase.

Luke Mason continued his fantastic progress with a personal best of 2:18.8 in the 800 metres before achieving another huge personal best in the steeplechase taking over 80 seconds off his 2007 best to record 5:38.0. Running a controlled race over the first 3 laps Mason picked up pace on the last 400 metres to overtake 2 Cardiff athletes to take 3rd place.

Ollie Fell produced a personal best of 5.59 metres in the Long Jump to win the A string and Tom Lowery secured 3 second place slots in the 100m, 200m and Shot. Daniel Ward was the eight member of the Under 17 team taking 2nd in the 3K B string and 3rd in the 1500m.

The rain that came down at the end of the match didn't deter the Under 17 Women's quartet from smashing the 4 x 300 metres relay club record. With Jess Grieves on the first leg, Dee-Anna Davey on second, Amie Grainger on third and Georgia Milton anchoring them in the girls ran superbly to take first place in a time of 2:58.1.

Yet again Mansfield's dominance at this age group in the middle distance events shone through with victory for Dee-Anna Davey in the 800m A string backed up by a second place for Emily Reeve in the B string, double victory in the 1500m for Georgia Milton and Emma Wilkinson and similarly in the 3000m for Hannah Wragg and Kate Raynor. Elsewhere on the track Amie Grainger won the B string 300m Hurdles.

On the field Charlotte Gair took first place in the A string Discus and B string Shot despite struggling with a shoulder injury and Laura Brown secured maximum points in the B string Hammer.

In the Under 15 age groups Mansfield took double victories in 3 events. Ben Leivers-Riley and Will Stone licked things off in the 400m, Leivers-Riley taking the A string in 57.0 and Stone the B in 60.4.

Connor McHale and Tom Walleth made sure of maximum points in the Pole Vault as did Henry Partridge and Ryan Saxton in the 1500 metres. Saxton went on to also secure victory in the B string Long Jump and not to be outdone McHale did likewise in the B string Hurdles.

Rowan Franks gained useful points on the field finishing first in the A string Hammer and B string Javelin and backing this up with a second place in the A string Discus.

In the Under 15 girls throwers Arlayna Davey and Becky Woolley, both competing at the bottom end of the age group, were on form for Harriers. Becky won the javelin with a throw of 31.24 metres which places in the top 3 in the UK rankings. She followed this up with a victory in the B string Shot and a second place spot in the Discus.

Meanwhile Arlayna, who only joined Mansfield last autumn and finished last season breaking the club record in the Under 13 girl's discus, won the B string in both Discus and Javelin.

A double was secured in the 1500m, Claire Talbot winning the A string in a time of 5:10.7 and Rosie Morley taking the B in 5:22.0. Rachel Brandham and Jessica Smith both took second in the 800 metres with Chloe Elphick doing likewise in the High Jump and Shot Putt.

Lewis Lishman was Mansfield's only winner in the Under 13 boy's age group taking the High Jump with a clearance of 1.30m. Second place spots were secured by Jordan Boam, David Wilkinson and Jake Lancaster in the B string 200m, 1500m and Hurdles respectively.

In the Under 13 girls events Mansfield produced some strong performances in the sprints. Robyn Foster took second in the A string 75 metres and 150 metres with Rachel Norris backing up well with firsts in the B string in the same events.

Claire Norris and Abigail D'Aguiar made it a double victory in the 800 metres and Chevelle Baxter and Tamsin Smith secured 2nd in the A and 1st in the B respectively in the 1200m.

Final match scores were Mansfield 386, Swansea 366.5, Solihull 352.5, Cardiff 340.

Next match in the National Young Athletes League is at Mansfield on May 18th when the visitors will be City of Stoke, Charnwood and Halesowen. The action starts at 11am and spectators are welcome.