

# **BLUE AND GREEN ARMY ON TOUR**

## **ROAD RACE LEAGUE REPORT EPPERSTONE – 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**WHAT A NIGHT!!!!!!**

**A FANTASTIC ALL ROUND TEAM PERFORMANCE SAW ONE OF THE BEST NIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF MANSFIELD HARRIERS. THE TEAM CARRIED ON WHERE THEY LEFT OFF THROUGHOUT THE WINTER WITH A POLISHED DISPLAY THROUGHOUT. 29 MEN TOOK TO THE FIELD WHICH IS A RECORD FOR THE CLUB.**

**SENIOR MEN WERE VICTORIOUS ON THE NIGHT WITH 52 POINTS ONLY 14 POINTS IN FRONT OF REDHILL WHO USED VETS TO TRY AND NULLIFY OUR PERFORMANCE. THE B TEAM ALSO FINISHED IN 7<sup>TH</sup> PLACE OVERALL**

**VETERAN MEN COMPLETED THE WIN DOUBLE WITH A 24 POINT GAP OVER REDHILL AND THE B TEAM WERE ALSO AN EXCELLENT 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE OVERALL. BECAUSE OF OUR NUMBERS ON THE NIGHT WE ALSO FIELDED A C TEAM IN 13<sup>TH</sup> PLACE.**

**Steve Lisgo** and **Luke Cragg** produced awesome displays to come home together in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places, a full 45 seconds in front of the rest of the field. The two young guns have had an excellent winter's training and are now starting to reap the benefits of a fantastic training group at Leeds University. Steve sometimes struggles to replicate good form in training to racing but this should now give him the confidence to push on and produce his best season ever. Luke only joined the club less than a year ago but has already proved what an asset he is not just for his running ability but his enthusiasm and positive approach. **Steve Capewell** and **Stuart King** produced a battle royal throughout the course and finally finished 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> respectively. Steve is another runner who has only been with the club a few months but is proving to be a superb addition to the squad. Nothing seems to faze him and has a good head on his shoulders and having only been in the sport a few years will only improve with experience. Stuart had a run that we have all been waiting for him to produce. By his own admission he has flattered to deceive in races the last few months but showed his fighting spirit to produce his best position ever in a road race league. He should now use this as a springboard for the rest of the season and produce what he knows he is capable of. Pocket rocket **James Mee** again showed what a consistent runner he has become by finishing in an excellent 12<sup>th</sup> place even though his mind was set on track races later in the week. James has excellent potential and over the last year has become one of the best runners in the club, both for his talent and his desire. The "evergreen" **Pete Stafford** again showed what a different prospect he is on the roads with an excellent 14<sup>th</sup> position. In all my years knowing Pete I have never known him outside the Top 15 which is testament to his durability and experience. There maybe runners more talented than Pete or running better at the time but on many occasions they can't overhaul him in races.

**Mark Jenkins**, the comeback kid proved there is life in the old dog yet by storming through the field to take 22<sup>nd</sup> place overall. Mark has had a night mare 3 years fighting injury, illness and lack of motivation but showed here that he can still be a force in the athletics world. To me it feels like we have signed a new athlete and long may his improvements continue. **Steve Grainger MBE** was next finisher for the club in 27<sup>th</sup> position, his best ever finish in a road race league and a top performance. Steve has been suffering with a dodgy ankle for a few weeks but showed the moral in the squad by producing the goods and ensuring the Vets made a good start in the league. **John Farquharson** was hot on his heels only 2 places and 9 seconds adrift. John looks like he is finally coming out the other end after having a virus for the past 2 months. John will be looking for improvements throughout the season and once again break into the Top 20. John has had an excellent winter and never lets the club down. **Doug Ross** showed what an improved runner he has become by finishing in 34<sup>th</sup> position despite missing the start due to a late finish of one of his exams. He was back in 70<sup>th</sup> place still at 3 mile but worked his way through the field to help the team. Doug will be looking to smash his way into the top 10 in the next fixture and spearhead the Veteran challenge for glory. **Chris Brown** ran a courageous race to hold it together and finish just behind Doug in 36<sup>th</sup> position. Chris is deep into 800m training and probably lacks the stamina base to compete over tough 6 mile courses. He has bigger fish to fry on the track and will be looking to break 1:50 during the summer. I think he will come out for the last 2 road races and prove again that he can mix it with the endurance boys. **Nigel Watkin** showed what we have been missing while he has been away with a superb run to dip inside the Top 40 despite running the Marathon 3 days before and suffering major problems with a throat infection. If Nigel gets himself right both physically and mentally he will once again become a vital member of the squad. **Paul Fox**, the old warhorse who has won the overall title in the past proved that you can come back after many years out of the sport and still be competitive. He is still only trying to build a base at the moment but showed all his experience to beat runners who are much fitter than he is and have completed much more training. Paul has proved to himself that he can come back from the brink and could once again become a scary proposition for the rest of the road race community. Don't be surprised to see him back in the Top 20 by the last fixture. **Chris Sleath** **Doug Flett** and **Rob Smith** produced another Club battle finishing in 46<sup>th</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> places on the night. Chris has very little experience of road running and has had a lack of training recently due to University commitments. He proved in the winter that if he gets it right he could become a top performer for the club. **Doug Flett**, the "proclaimer" had his best race for a while and paced the race to perfection by starting off steady and picking people off throughout the course. Doug now needs to believe in himself again to produce the form he showed during the cross country season. **Rob Smith** has had a little bad patch just lately but proved on the night that he is starting to come out the other end again. Rob has been a brilliant servant to the club over the years and will be striving to get back in the Top 30 before the end of the season where he belongs. **Carl Emery**, aka Frank Spencer again had a calamitous night at the office and finished in 67<sup>th</sup> position. He has suffered with a back injury for the past two months and has hardly trained. After having a few days pain free decided to race only to twist his ankle at 4 miles. He is starting to think if he is cursed and it is easier to just be the Team Manager (watch this space). Mike "the Viking" Munford used the race as a hard training run due to track commitments but still managed to finish a creditable 71<sup>st</sup> position only 11 seconds behind Carl. Mike is starting to mature as an athlete and will become a key runner for the club over this next year especially if he

produces the form from the cross country season. **M McCarthy** was next back for the club with an excellent debut performance for the club in 79<sup>th</sup> position. It is runners like this we need to build the club who aren't scared to race even though they have very little experience. Good effort.

Other Mansfield Harriers placings:

**129 A King**  
**138 K Mellor**  
**141 J Kirk**  
**142 B Harris**  
**145 L Marshall**  
**148 H Caudwell**  
**194 J Hall**  
**197 C Lowe**  
**203 S Ross**  
**232 D Ward**

**THANKS LADS IT WAS A PROUD NIGHT FOR THE CLUB AND ME ON A PERSONAL LEVEL.**

**WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF HARD WORK STILL TO DO OVER THE COMING RACES BECAUSE OTHER CLUBS WON'T GIVE UP THEIR TITLES WITHOUT A FIGHT. THE CLUB HAS MADE GREAT STRIDES OVER THE LAST YEAR AND I WANT US ALL TO STICK TOGETHER AND PROVE WHAT WE CAN DO AS A CLUB**

**NEXT FIXTURE IS MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> AT HOLME PIERREPONT**

**SEE YOU THERE!!!!!!!!!!**

**LOVE CARL**