

HARRIERS TAKE NORTH MIDLANDS TITLES

Mansfield Harriers turned out in force at the last fixture of the 2007/8 North Midlands cross country league. The last minute switch of venue saw the races take place at Wollaton Park in Nottingham and Harriers came away with several individual and team awards.

14 year old Rachel Brandham, in winning the Under 15 girls title, became the only athlete in the entire league to win all 4 races in the series – victory at Wollaton adding to her earlier wins at Kettering, Mansfield and Derby. Still with another year in this age group this clean sweep demonstrates her growing potential over the country.

James Mee, Chevelle Baxter and Kayleigh Ross secured individual series victories in the Junior men, Under 13 girls and Under 11 girls respectively whilst Mansfield took the Under 13 girls, Under 15 girls and under 17 women's team titles. This hat-trick for the juniors led to Mansfield becoming overall league champions in the female competition with the male side of the club working well to take third place overall.

The Senior Men's race again saw the biggest field of the day with over 200 athletes completing the 3 lap course. Top Mansfield athlete was James Mee with a fine overall 8th place. Doug Ross followed James in as Mansfield's second athlete home in 19th place overall. This was a strong run from Doug and one that demonstrates his growing fitness and readiness for the upcoming road race season.

Stuart King had another battle around the course with Doug but couldn't match his endurance in the closing stages to finish 23rd. Darren Hodgkinson was next home in 36th with 40th placed Andy Plumb not quite able to keep pace with Darren but still recording his highest placed finish in this league.

A not uncommon battle between John Farquharson and Steve Davies followed next with the two of them battling all the way to the line - John getting the edge this time to finish 53rd, Steve just two seconds behind in 55th. Mark Jenkins completed the scorers in the first Mansfield Senior team home with his 76th position and there were top 100 finishes also for Rob Smith (90th) and Pete O'Mara (96th).

In the Senior Ladies event first Mansfield athlete home was Siobhan Harrison, a junior who, after slipping at the start of her own race, re-started in the senior race. Siobhan was followed in by Lisa Farquharson who, more used to running on the road, ran well over the Wollaton course to finish 20th. Top 50 finishes from Carol Hartin (41st), Eva Williams (46th) and Jane Stafford (50th) led to the Mansfield Veteran ladies taking 2nd place overall in the series.

Mansfield's Under 13 girls were beaten in number only by the senior men with 13 youngsters turning out. Chevelle Baxter was first back in 5th place followed by Hannah Hardy in tenth and then a real battle between Molly Johnson (12th) and Hayley Silver (13th), only one second separating the 2 girls.

Second position for Dee-Anna Davey and 6th for Hannah Wragg was enough to keep both girls in the top 3 in the Under 15 girls series – Hannah finishing second overall and Dee-Anna third. These two, along with the winner on the day Rachel Brandham, made sure of the team award dropping only one point along the way.

The Under 17 women secured an overall series win to complete the hat-trick for the junior female teams with Georgia Milton the leading Mansfield athlete with a second place finish. Amie Grainger returned from a long lay off following an injury sustained during a steeplechase race at the end of July, completing her first race back with a seventh place finish and the third blue and green vest home was Holly Blount in 9th place.

Jonny Brown led the Under 13 boys home in 6th place and with Sam Johnson in 12th and Jake Lancaster in 17th the team managed to hold on to 3rd place in the series.

Ryan Saxton finished the Under 15 boys race in 5th place to produce his top 5 finish of the series followed in by Henry Partridge in 13th and Richie Talbot in 16th. Meanwhile James Bellingham (20th) and Daniel Ward (21st) were the only Mansfield representatives in the Under 17 event.

Overall Under 11 girls series winner Kayleigh Ross finished the mixed Under 11 race at Wollaton in second place and was joined by Jack Foster (9th) and George Partridge (14th).

Other Mansfield finishers: SENIOR MEN: 104: Chris Brown, 111: Tim Raynor, 118: Trevor Hiscox, 129: Les Chambers, 130: Alan Maddocks, 132: Clive Russell, 150: Jeremy Kirk, 152: Graeme Wilkinson, 157: Julian wood, 179: Steve Wragg, 186: Adie Bellingham, 199: Mark Partridge, 201: Dave Ward. UNDER 13 BOYS: 21: Sam Raynor, 22: James O'Mara, 34: Jordan Boam. SENIOR LADIES: 55: Maddy Collinge, 56: Sue Bellingham, 66: Denise Winfield. UNDER 17 WOMEN: 10: Kate Raynor, 11: Gina Radford. UNDER 15 GIRLS: 7: Laura Brown, 14: Sophie Ward, 16: Hannah Harrison. UNDER 13 GIRLS: 17: Charlotte Bellingham, 18: Emily Saxton, 19: Robyn Foster, 20: Emily D'Aguiar, 21: Kiera Abbott, 25: T. Smith, 26: A. Mortiboy, 27: J. Smith, 30: H. Smith