

Midland Cross Country Championships Mansfield 24 Jan 2009 Senior mens report by Tom Kenderdine

Boarding our mini bus I could sense a feeling of excitement and apprehension as we made our way to Mansfield for this years' Midlands XC champs. Its good fun to travel down as a team!!

Our driver for the day was Keith Perry, who did a splendid job of getting us there & back safely (apart from a few wheel spins & stalling the engine a couple of times). Thanks also to the Nock brothers who navigated us through many a winding road.

Dom & myself decided to walk the course, so we can become familiar with the battle ground where many a scalp shall be taken. A demanding but fast course lay ahead of us!!

We managed to watch our juniors, who were flipping brilliant. It makes you proud to be donning the mighty colours. Unsure what age categories, but we got team BRONZE & GOLD, well done to the coaches also.

Our senior ladies fought well in such a high class field, it does take nerves of steel to do it.

3pm soon dawned upon us. We lined up. I was tucked behind Dom & Dave Kesterton. The gun sounded, the stampede released.

As expected a fast start. Kesterton drifted of in front to produce a splendid performance of the day finishing in 31st position.

I hung on to Dom for 3/4 of the 1st lap before creaming him like a Victoria sponge mixture (I had to mention that my friend).

It plays on ones mind when you know you have 4 laps to do, risking overtaking Dom so early on.

Unsure what's going on behind me, I had Micky Hager in my sights, but he's just too flipping good (at an staggering age of 58yrs)

Everyone has their own battles in a race. I dipped in at 51st out of 310 runners.

I just about managed to lap Mighty Millington & Guesty, who were playing a very tactical race with each other.

Bill stormed round, still carrying a knee injury, finishing in a respectable 61st.

Next across the line was Dom, whom to be fair was not firing on all cylinders, but still put in a gutsy performance to finish 88th, closely followed 4secs later by Nick Hazelwood, who seems to have recovered well from some kind of sub tropical virus, and put in a blinding run.

To finish our scoring 6, was Mr Kevin Monk, who completed our squad by finishing 148th, and gaining Halesowen senior men's team an unexpected **5th team overall**.

A brilliant result, and as always thanks to all those I haven't mentioned in my report, that took part in what was a great day of racing!!!