

Stratford ACs Andrew Pozzi made the podium at this weekend's European Junior Under 20 Championships in Tallinn, Estonia and in a hard fought final of the 110 metre hurdles he was beaten to the gold by his GB team mate and training partner Jack Meredith from Liverpool Harriers.

Pozzi went into the championships as favourite after setting the UK record and European leading time of 13.29 in Mannheim, Germany earlier this month, which puts him third on the European all time junior list over the 3'3" (99cm) barriers and sixth on the all time global list.

Prior to the opening heat Pozzi said "I think this event has come at the right time for me and I'm in shape to run really fast but I can't control what the others do and I'm just focused on my own performance".

He blasted into the semi final by winning his heat in the fastest time of the heats and in the semi final whilst he considered "he ran a shocker", Pozzi won his race which set him up for a titanic battle with the best under 20 hurdlers in Europe.

The race started with a faulty start and in the pressure cooker atmosphere of a major championship it put everyone on edge. In the final dip for the line Pozzi was "very disappointed" to be beaten into second place (13.57 secs) and he paid tribute to his training partner: "my race was ok but Jack deserved it, he was just a bit better on the day".

Stratford coach Paul Bearman said afterwards "in Andrew's words he's gutted that he didn't win but everyone in the club is extremely proud of him and he's such an inspiration to the young athletes". He added "Andrew missed competing all last year recovering from a stress fracture in his foot and so to have worked so hard to come back a year later and achieve what he has is fantastic and he has so much more to look forward to in the future as he moves into the senior ranks next season".

Another of Stratford AC's young stars Adriano Ritchie was also in amongst the medals competing for Great Britain at an international competition from the International Sports Federation for Catholic Schools Games in Lisbon, coming home with a double medal haul.

The competition is a mini Olympic style event and athletes are nominated by their schools for selection and Ritchie was one of GB's choices based on his previous performances, particularly at this year's English Schools championships, where he represented Warwickshire.

His trip to compete was part sponsored by his family and his school in Alcester, St Benedict's Catholic High, which by coincidence was where Andrew Pozzi spent 5 years of his school days studying for his GCSEs.

In a thrilling final of the 400 metres he took the silver medal in the 400 metres in a personal best time of 50.65 seconds which also broke Stratford's Under 17 club record for the 400m which had stood since 2003.

He followed his silver with a bronze in the 4x400m relay running the last leg.