

# DORSET ROAD RACE LEAGUE

## Puddletown Plod Half Marathon Race Report

### Many thanks to Richard Brawn for writing

After a win for Bournemouth AC at the May 5 had interrupted an impressive Egdon Heath Harriers winning streak, it was back to business for the red army at the Puddletown Plod Half Marathon in a race that they themselves organised.

Of course, they made sure they had a strong team out there competing, as well as marshalling and directing proceedings. Their line up included last year's race winner Ben Foyle who got round in a lightening quick time of 1:13:29 that day.

They also had Christopher Peck, Charlie Williams, Martyn Bell and Daniel Hull in a strong looking outfit, underlining their intentions for the get-go.

Bournemouth AC boasted a couple of previous Puddletown Plod winners in their squad in Anthony Clark and Jon Sharkey. They also had North Dorset Village Marathon winner Stu Nicholas in the side, with Rich Brawn and Sam Jackson completing a competitive looking five.

With wins in the previous three races, Egdon Heath Harriers were also beginning to turn up the heat in the ladies' first division and looked on course to make it a possible men's and women's league title double.

They had a strong side out again including last year's individual champion Alex Door, Georgina Povall, Natalie Lawrence and Hannah Martyn.

After prevailing in the last two fixtures, Wimborne AC had started to put pressure on Twemlow Track Club who were leading the men's second division and the fight for top spot and promotion to the topflight was beginning to hot up.

The Puddletown Plod Half Marathon features a fairly testing, undulating route with some tough hills to contend with near the end. It was a cup-less race as well, meaning that for those looking for a fast time, there would be very little opportunity to take any water on board, which added to the challenge.

To begin with it was Ben Foyle who broke off the front in a move that only last year's individual champion Lee Dempster could follow.

Once they got towards the top of the first steepish climb, Ben began to accelerate away from Lee. It was beginning to look like it could well be a repeat performance of the previous year. And so it turned out.

Cruising in for the win, Ben reached the line in 1:14:02 to claim another marvellous Puddletown Plod triumph.

Bournemouth AC man Anthony Clark caught Lee Dempster up in the end finished ahead of him, sealing the runner up spot in 1:15:27. Lee arrived two seconds later, being forced to settle for 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The second BAC scorer was next to arrive at the finish, when Stuart Nicholas came through in 4<sup>th</sup> place in a time of 1:15:42.

It was looking like it was going to be another tight affair between the two teams at the top of the men's first division. Then the Egdon train arrived, with Charlie Williams leading them out.

He finished in a time of 1:16:56 to take 5<sup>th</sup> place. Christopher Peck followed in shortly after to record a time of 1:17:17 which put him in 6<sup>th</sup>.

Less than two minutes went by before Egdon Heath Harriers had their fourth man in. That was Martyn Bell who claimed 8<sup>th</sup> place in a time of 1:19:08.

Repeating the feat that Bournemouth AC managed in the May 5 when they boasted five men in the top ten, Egdon Heath Harriers did the same, in terms of league positions, with Daniel Hull completing their scoring team in a time of 1:19:52.

That was enough to see Egdon Heath Harriers to secure another team win for the fixture, putting them on 6 out of 7 for the season. All they needed now from the remaining five fixtures was one more win to confirm the men's first division title was there's.

Luke Terry of Poole AC got round in 1:20:24 to take 12<sup>th</sup> place and Joe Godden of Poole Runners was 13<sup>th</sup> Dorset Road Race League club runner, recording a time of 1:21:14.

Unfortunately for Bournemouth AC it was too little too late when Rich Brawn arrived to take 14<sup>th</sup> place 1:21:31. They would have to settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, again being outdone by the power of the Egdon men.

Adam Davies had stopped on the last big hill but managed to get going again and see the race out, crossing the line in 1:22:11. Then it was Bournemouth AC's fourth scorer, Sam Jackson sealing 16<sup>th</sup> place in 1:22:36. He was first in in the 45-49 category.

The first man to finish in the 55-59 category was Bruce Campbell and he went over the line in 1:22:40 to take 17<sup>th</sup> place, just ahead of his Egdon Heath Harriers teammate Matt Faramus who arrived 8 seconds later.

Twemlow man Steve Cook was first 50-54 in, finishing in exactly 1 hour 23 minutes. He was followed by his Twemlow teammate David Jones who got round in 1:23:18.

Molly Rasch was first female, crossing the line in 1:23:42 which put her in 22<sup>nd</sup> place out of the DRRL athletes.

Jon Sharkey was Bournemouth AC's fifth man in and he completed their scoring team taking 25<sup>th</sup> place in a time of 1:24:22.

Vicki Ingham of Poole Runners was 2<sup>nd</sup> lady over the line, clocking a time of 1:25:19 which put her 27<sup>th</sup> overall.

Natalie Lawrence was Egdon Heath Harriers' first female to finish and she was 3<sup>rd</sup> lady and 31<sup>st</sup> overall in 1:26:15.

It wasn't long before Georgina Povall arrived to give Egdon their second female finisher. She got to the line in 1:27:30 which made her 4<sup>th</sup> lady and 36<sup>th</sup> overall.

Lauren Baker-Little was the next lady in, taking 41<sup>st</sup> place in a time of 1:29:22 before Hannah Martyn completed the scoring team for Egdon Heath Harriers, securing a men's a women's first division double. She made it round in 1:31:51 to finish as 6<sup>th</sup> lady and 51<sup>st</sup> overall.

Poole Runners finished as 2<sup>nd</sup> placed team for the fixture in the ladies' first division, with Purbeck Runners 3<sup>rd</sup> and Bournemouth AC 4<sup>th</sup>.

The win strengthened Egdon Heath Harriers' grip at the top of the table, having triumphed in each of their last four races, leaving Poole Runners with some catching up to do.

A 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish for Poole Runners in the men's first division edged them ahead of Lytchett Manor Striders in the battle for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Twemlow Track Club picked up the win in the men's second division to restore parity between themselves and Wimborne AC who sit 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In the ladies second division it was a win for Dorchester RIOT, which enhanced their lead at the top of the table over Dorset Doodlers.

That 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish strengthened Lee Dempster's position at the top in the men's individual table, with Christopher Peck in 2<sup>nd</sup> and Martyn Bell in 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Stuart Nicholas's 4<sup>th</sup> place finish at Puddletown moved him up to 4<sup>th</sup> in rankings for the season so far.

With three wins and a 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of the four races she's done so far, Molly Rasch was top of the pile in the ladies' individual, with Georgina Povall in 2<sup>nd</sup> and Lauren Baker-Little 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Egdon Heath Harriers pair Alex Door and Hannah Martyn were sitting joint 4<sup>th</sup>.