

DORSET ROAD RACE LEAGUE

GOLD HILL 10k RACE REPORT

Many thanks to Richard Brawn of BAC for compiling

The penultimate fixture of the Dorset Road Race League calendar took the county club scene over to Shaftesbury for the gruelling Gold Hill 10k.

Renowned for its acute and ample speed bumps, the Gold Hill 10k includes the killer climb made famous by a 1970's Hovis advert, along with several subsequent slopes that will sap the energy stores and strain those leg muscles to the extreme.

Although they'd already been confirmed as Men's Second Division champions, Twemlow Track Club brought plenty of meat to the table, with Lee Dempster, Harry Lauste, Jez Bragg, Steven Rigby and Steve Cook all chomping at the bit for some hellacious hill action.

And despite already having sealed the Men's First Division title, Egdon Heath Harriers still assembled a strong looking line up, with Christopher Peck, Martyn Bell, Jamie Barrington and Matt Faramus in their team.

The Bournemouth AC ladies were boosted by the return of Emma Caplan, who hadn't featured in a league race since she helped the team on to victory in the season opener of the Broadstone Quarter on New Year's Day.

The course starts out from Shaftesbury School on Hawkesdene Lane in Shaftesbury and consists of a single loop round scenic country lanes. The iconic Gold Hill climb is the first one that the participants encounter. It's pretty much up and down all the way, with the elevation total reaching close to 1,000ft over the 10k distance.

Just as he did in the previous fixture, the Hoburne 5, Christopher Peck picked up the win in a remarkably quick time of 36:02. Given how hilly it was, that was a cracking effort from him and was enough to see off stiff competition from Harry Lauste.

On this occasion, Harry had to settle for 2nd place, registering a still mightily impressive time of 36:44. Jamie Barrington was 3rd in 37:39 and at just 18 years of age, he looks to have bags of potential.

Jez Bragg gave Twemlow Track Club their second scorer when he arrived to claim 4th place in a time of 38:14. Then Steven Rigby reached the line to give them their third runner in. He recorded a time of 38:59 which put him in 5th place.

Thomas Daniel of Bridport Runners was 6th in 39:32 before Matt Faramus arrived to give Egdon Heath Harriers their second scorer. He clocked a time of 40:01. Adam Switzer of Yeovil Town RRC was next man over the line, getting round in 40:33.

Steve Cook was the first over 50 man to come in and he completed the course in 41:07. The sealed 1st team prize for Twemlow Track Club, since that was decided on the first four runners.

Martyn Bell arrived in 12th place, recording a time of 41:28 and he was fourth man in for Egdon Heath Harriers. That both Egdon Heath Harriers and Twemlow Track Club were waiting for one more runner to complete their scoring team for the Dorset Road Race League.

Lee Dempster was the fifth man in for Twemlow Track Club, giving them bragging rights as the top scoring team for the fixture. He took 38th place, crossing the line in 45:36. Egdon Heath Harriers completed their scoring team when Anthony Rimmer reached the finish, giving them the win in the First Division. He registered a time of 47:13 which put him in 47th place.

Littledown Harriers were 2nd in the Men's First Division for the fixture, with Lytchett Manor Striders taking 3rd and Poole Runners in 4th. Littledown and Lytchett were now joint fourth in the standings for the season so far so that was going to go down to the final fixture at Wimborne.

Royal Manor of Portland were 2nd placed team in the Men's Second Division, with Westbourne taking 3rd.

Matilda Bengtsson of Poole Runners was first female, at just 15 years of age. Her time of 40:56 put her in 9th place overall, which was a tremendous result for her.

Georgina Povall of Egdon Heath Harriers was 2nd female, crossing the line in 21st place overall with a time of 42:56. That strengthened her position at the top of the standings in the ladies individual table and meant that Lauren Baker-Little of Poole Runners could no longer catch her.

The only woman that can prevent Georgina from being individual woman's champion is Molly Rasch of Dorset Doodlers. She will need to run the last race which is the Wimborne 10 though in order to do that.

Finishing as 3rd lady, Emma Caplan was 1st female vet and earned herself a handcrafted bowl when the prizes were distributed after the race. She clocked a time of 44:43 which put her in 34th place overall.

Kate Wilkinson of Poole Runners was 4th female at just 16 years of age, finishing in 47:24. That put her in 49th place overall.

Debbie Lennon of Bournemouth AC took 5th and was 2nd female vet, completing the course in 47:59 which put her in 53rd place in the overall standings.

That gave Bournemouth AC a massive chance of winning the fixture for the Dorset Road Race League. All they needed was one more woman to come in. They got that when Tamzin Petersen arrived to record a time of 53:33, making her 15th female and 83rd overall.

It was Bournemouth AC's first win the Ladies First Division since the opening day of the season at the Broadstone Quarter, so they were glad to get another one on the board.

Poole Runners were 2nd placed ladies' team with young superstars Matilda Bengtsson and Kate Wilkinson being joined by Esther Downes who completed their scoring team. She got round in 58:34 which made her 19th placed scorer in the Dorset Road Race League.

Dorset Doddlers were the only ladies' team in the Second Division to field a scoring team of three, so they won the fixture by virtue of that. That moved them ahead of Dorchester RIOT in the race for 1st place in the Second Division and meant that that will be decided on the final day, at the Wimborne 10.

The race win moved Bournemouth AC onto level points with Lytchett Manor Striders in 3rd place for the season so far so that will also be decided on the final day of the season at the Wimborne 10.

Bournemouth AC also took the ladies' team prize for the race which was decided on the best four runners for each club. Lea Lohk was their fourth runner in and she was also first female over 60, completing the course in 55:50.

Christopher Peck has won the Dorset Road Race League men's individual title as the Gold Hill 10k was his 7th race. He was first scorer in the last three races which saw him wrestle the title away from last year's champion Lee Dempster.

Even though the First Division titles have long since been decided it should still be an exciting final day of the season at the Wimborne 10. Dorchester RIOT could still sneak in ahead of Westbourne and claim a place in the new look Men's Division Two as the seven teams that do not finish in the top three in the Second Division will be in the Division Three.

The Bournemouth AC ladies are embroiled in the three-way battle for 3rd place in the final standings, with Lytchett Manor Striders and Littledown Harriers so it will be interesting to see how that one plays out.

The Ladies Second Division title is still up for grabs, with Dorset Doddlers and Dorchester RIOT taking it to the final day. It's quite tight for third place though and four different clubs are still in the hunt for that final passage into Division Two and to avoid falling into Division Three.

The ladies individual title is still hanging in the balance as well, with Molly Rasch potentially able to steal it away from Georgina Povall if she competes at the Wimborne 10.