

# DORSET ROAD RACE LEAGUE

## Marnhull 12k Race Report

The clubs headed up to the outer regions of North Dorset for the third fixture of the Dorset Road Race League season which was the Marnhull 12k.

With the race being staged right in the thick of the spring marathon season though, it was always going to prove tricky to scrape teams together for it and amidst all big event talk and preparations, the event could easily have been forgotten about.

The Marnull 12k was an old fixture on the Dorset road race scene that was brought back to life in 2016 by a couple of members of Dorset Doodlers and St Gregory's School PTFA and the proceeds from the race go to help fund St Gregory's Primary School.

Defending men's first division champions Egdon Heath Harriers had won the previous fixture which was the Lytchett 10 so they were looking to continue in that vain at Marnhull. They had brought a strong squad over, with Christopher Peck leading the attack, accompanied by Charlie Williams, Adam Davies and Simon Arthur.

Some of Twemlow Track Club's squad were doing spring marathons so they, like Bournemouth AC, couldn't get a team together. They did have last year's race winner Lee Dempster turning out though, alongside Steven Yates and Tim Jones, who hadn't been seen on the running circuit for quite a while.

Poole Runners were probably the major contenders for Egdon to worry about in this one. They had Dion Garner, Hayden Clarke, Joe Godden and Dave Tindall in their line up, amongst others.

In the ladies first division, it was neck and neck between defending champions Egdon Heath Harriers and Poole Runners after they had each recorded a win and a second place in the first two fixtures. Something had to give in this one though.

Poole Runners had Vicki Ingham in their side and she was usually the favourite of all the women in the race. Egdon had strength in numbers though, with Hannah Martyn, Julie Wargent and Alex Door all featuring.

The route for the Marnhill 12k was fairly undulating, incorporating over 400ft of elevation. In spite of that though, Harriet Slade of Bournemouth AC did really well, going faster than both her best 5k and her best 10k times during the course of the run.

That culminated in a finishing time of 49:16, which put her in 44th place overall. The only woman capable of beating that was Vicki Ingham and she put in an outstanding performance to eclipse Mollie

Rasch's course record. Getting round in 44:29, Vicki had crossed the line in 9th place overall, which was a great result for her in a highly competitive league encounter.

Although she wasn't a lover of hills, Harriet must have handled them pretty well to have nailed the run in the way that she did. She was almost a minute ahead of Hannah Martyn of Egdon Heath Harriers who was 3rd female in 50:20.

Hannah's teammate Julie Wargent was the next woman over the line, clocking a time of 50:56 which won her the FV45 crown. Tamara Lake was 5th female, sealing the first FV55 prize before Alex Door arrived to seal the team win for Egdon Heath Harriers. Clocking a time of 51:36, she had taken first prize in the FV35 category.

Bournemouth AC veteran Jud Kirk was 2nd in the 65-69 category in a time of 55:05 and he was narrowly edged out by Colin Bird of Egdon Heath Harriers who finished 17 seconds ahead.

Recording a finishing time of 1:07:25, Helen Ambrosen took 181st place overall and 45th female. If there had been an FV65 category prize, she would have won it but for the league, she was first in the 65-69 category.

It was a nice course and although there were some tough inclines, there was quite a bit of downhill to complement it. There was a testing hill at 8k which was also on the North Dorset Village Marathon route and the uphill finish for the last half a mile was character building.

Poole Runners sealed the second spot in the first division for the fixture, with Lytchett Manor Striders taking third and Poole AC 4th. With their win, the Egdon Heath Harriers women now topped the table for the season so far.

Last year's runner up Christopher Peck went one better this time and picked up the race win whilst also nailing down a new course record. He rocketed round the course in 40:29, which was extremely quick for a hilly 12k.

His Egdon Heath Harriers teammate Charlie Williams was second in a still very quick 41:02, with Dan Cahill of D C Performance Coaching taking third in 41:53. He was a non-scorer in the Dorset Road Race League though so the next person to bring points to the table was Dion Garner of Poole Runners.

He crossed the line in 43:15 which put him just ahead of Adam Davies who was Egdon's third man over the line. He took 5th place in 43:44, with Tom Andrews of Lytchett Manor Striders taking 5th in 43:56.

Hayden Clarke came in in 7th place registering a time of 44:01, giving Poole Runners their second scorer on the board. Taking first prize in the MV40 category, Simon Arthur was Egdon's fourth man in when he arrived to take 8th place in 44:14.

Joe Godden then arrived in 10th place, getting round in 44:46, showing that Poole Runners were really were making a good fist of it. They then had Dave Tindall arrive in 12th place in a time of 45:03 to give them their fourth man in.

Coming in in 17th place, Mark Peddle completed the scoring team of five for Poole Runners. He managed a time of 45:32. That meant that Poole Runners were the first team to get five runners over the line. But that didn't mean they'd won the fixture.

23 seconds later Brandon King came over the finish line to seal the win for Egdon Heath Harriers. He recorded a time of 45:55. Since they had the top two runners and they had three men in the top six. It was enough to give them the lowest scorer in the end, so Egdon had their second win of the season in the men's first division.

As he usually does, Purbeck Runners man Julian Critchlow took first prize in the MV60 category with his time of 45:31. That was enough to put him in 16th position in the overall standings. 266 runners successfully completed the race.

Poole Runners were forced to settle for 2nd place in the end, with Littledown Harriers taking third in the men's first division for the fixture.

Wimborne AC sparked their season into life in the men's second division, picking up the win at the Marnhull 12k. Westbourne kept their place at the top of the table though by finishing in 2nd place, meaning they had two second places and two wins from the first three fixtures.

In the ladies second division it was Royal Manor of Portland who picked up their first win of the season with Westbourne taking 2nd place and Wimborne AC in 3rd. There was no clear team taking charge in that division thus far, but it was Dorset Doodlers who had the best record out of the first three fixtures.

In the ladies individual, Harriet Slade had moved up to 3rd position after her 2nd place at the Manhull 12k and her 7th place at the Broadstone Quarter. Only Vicki Ingham, with two wins in the bag, and Lauren Baker-Little, also of Poole Runners, were ahead of her in the standings.

In the men's individual, Christopher Peck topped the standings with his teammate Charlie Williams in second. Steven Yates was in third, with Adam Davies making it three out of the top four for Egdon Heath Harriers.

The league tables did not make good reading from a Bournemouth AC perspective, with both the men's and the ladies' teams bottom of their respective divisions. They both need to seriously step up their game if they're to avoid getting embroiled in a dangerous relegation battle that could see them sink to the second tier in the league which would be unprecedented.