

DORSET ROAD RACE LEAGUE

Lytchett 10 Race Report

(Thanks to Richard Brawn of BAC)

Just a week on from their appearance at the brutally hilly Blackmore Vale Half Marathon, the Dorset clubs were back on the start line for another challenging race. This time it was the Lytchett 10 which traditionally attracts a high standard field.

Last season's Lytchett 10 race saw Bournemouth AC men claim the top three places, with Harry Smith just shading it over Jacek Cieluszecki and Rob McTaggart taking third. They of course went on to find themselves relegated from the top flight but had started their 2024 campaign off well and looked very much back in the groove.

The yellow and blues appeared to have assembled another very strong line up for this year's race including Rob Spencer, Rob McTaggart, Josh Cole and Stu Nicholas and they only needed four scorers to make a team for the second division.

There was plenty of top talent from other clubs on the entry list though as well, with Chris Wood, Jez Bragg and Jack Galloway all featuring for Twemlow Track Club. Brian Underwood, Jamie Grose, Dave Hicks and Luke Terry were also in the running from Poole AC.

Egdon Heath Harriers had Christopher Peck, who was second league scorer at Blackmore Vale. He was joined by Adam Davies and Corey Stone but it was always going to be a tough ask for the defending champions to repeat the success they had in the previous race.

After dominating the first two fixtures, the Poole Runners ladies fielded another strong side, with Vicki Ingham, Gemma Bragg and Caroline Wilkins all in the mix. Egdon Heath Harriers had Georgina Povall and Julie Wargent in their team and Purbeck Runners had Isabel Davis and Anna Philips.

Since it's a 10 miler and is in February, some of the more hardy Dorset runners use the Lytchett 10 as a marathon training run. That can sometimes mean running round the whole course once before actually doing it in the race. It may sound like a crazy idea, given how hilly the route is, but if an athlete can do it, it constitutes a brilliant 20 mile training run.

Amongst that group was Rob Spencer but it turned he was still too strong for anyone else in the field, despite the extra mileage. Tearing up the course in 55:08, Rob was first to the line by 29 seconds. Christopher Peck sealed 2nd place in 55:37, with Jamie Grose taking 3rd in 55:43.

Chris Wood finished 4th in 56:57 after blasting through the last mile to catch Brian Underwood, relegating him to 5th. Brian crossed the line in exactly 57 minutes.

Josh Cole arrived in 6th place recording a time of 57:48 and his Bournemouth AC teammate Stu Nicholas was 7th in 57:56.

Jack Galloway came 8th in 58:21 and his teammate Jez Bragg was Twemlow Track Club's third runner in when he arrived in 11th place recording a time of 58:50. Dave Hicks was 1st MV50, clocking a time of 58:54 which put him 12th.

After having raced in the Hampshire Cross Country League race the previous day, Rob McTaggart was unable to hit the heights he did last year and ended up finishing in 10th in 59:48. He was fourth scorer for Bournemouth AC though which meant that they'd easily topped the standings in the second division, since no runner from any other second division club had even finished yet.

Luke Terry was fourth scorer for Poole AC and he arrived in 14th place with a time of 1:00:19. Adam Davies was Egdon Heath Harriers' second running in and he took 15th position in 1:00:25. Then his teammate Corey Stone came in to take 18th place in 1:00:51.

Poole Runners had four men in the top 20, with Rob Arkell taking 10th in 58:42, Luke McKenzie 16th in 1:00:29, Dave Tindall 17th in 1:00:47 and Haydan Clarke finishing 19th in 1:01:11.

Vicki Ingham was first female, crossing the line in 1:01:24 which put her 21st overall. Reaching the finish four seconds later, Rob Doubleday wrapped up the race win for Poole AC in the first division as he was their fifth scorer.

As he consistently does so well, Julian Critchlow took the top MV60 spot, getting the line in 1:02:41 which put him 30th overall.

Bournemouth AC man Barry Dolman finished 1st in the 55-59 category for the league in a time of 1:03:29. He is currently 3rd in that category for the season so far behind Richard Swindlehurst of Twemlow Track Club who leads the way and Bruce Campbell of Egdon Heath Harriers who is 2nd.

Isabel Davis was 2nd lady in 1:03:29 which put her in 32nd place overall. It wasn't long before Georgina Povall arrived to take the 3rd female spot in 1:03:51. That saw her finish 35th overall.

Katie Gunn of Bournemouth AC completed the course in 1:04:38 which made her 4th female and put her 37th in the overall standings.

Anna Philps was 5th female in 1:07:01 which put her 51st overall. Gemma Bragg and Caroline Wilkins gave Poole Runners their second and third women in and they were 6th and 7th ladies in in 1:07:27 and 1:07:34 respectively. That put them 54th and 55th overall. They were also 1st and 2nd FV40.

Hayley Martin of Poole AC was 8th female in 1:08:18 which put her 60th overall. Julie Wargent finished as 1st MV50 and 9th lady in 1:09:09.

Laura Daly was the second Bournemouth AC woman home and she got round in 1:10:14 which made her 10th female and put her 74th overall.

Clare Wood sealed the win in the women's first division for Poole Runners. She was their fourth female finisher, crossing the line in 1:12:57 which put her 98th overall and 11th lady.

Graham Moyes of Poole Runners was 1st in the 65-69 age group for the league and his time was 1:09:31 which put him 67th overall.

Hamish Murray of Purbeck Runners was 1st man in in the 70-74 category, crossing the line in 1:11:18. That put him 82nd overall.

Heather Khoshnevis of Littledown Harriers topped the standings in the FV60 category finishing in a time of 1:15:57. That made her 21st female and 121st overall. She's been first in all three fixtures so far in the 60-64 category for league.

Debbie Lennon had to again settle for 2nd in that category but her time of 1:19:40 made her 28th female and was enough to seal top spot in the standings for Bournemouth AC in the ladies second division.

They'd beaten Purbeck Runners into 2nd place, just as they did at the Broadstone Quarter in the first race of the season. Despite only having two runners at Blackmore Vale, Bournemouth AC topped the second division table for the season so far

Steven Rigby and Steve Cook rounded off the scoring team for Twemlow Track Club and they finished 2nd to Poole AC in the men's first division. It was tight between Poole Runners and Egdon Heath Harriers for 3rd place but Poole Runners got it in the end by one placing.

That put Poole AC top of the table for the season so far with two wins and one 5th place. Defending champions Egdon Heath Harriers are currently 2nd with Poole Runners in 3rd.

The other teams in the men's second division were way behind Bournemouth AC but Wimborne AC took 2nd again, just as they did at the Broadstone Quarter. Bournemouth AC were back on top though with two wins and a 2nd place from the three fixtures so far this season.

Topping the standings in the men's third division, just as they did at Blackmore Vale, Dorset Doodlers were in a good position with two wins and one 2nd place. Dorchester RIOT weren't far behind though and they were runners up at Lytchett to put them on one win and two 2nd places.

Egdon Heath Harriers did get second in the women's first division in the end but they were now some way adrift of Poole Runners who had won three out of three. It isn't currently looking like they will fight it out in a two-horse race like they have in previous seasons.

Lytchett Manor Striders could only manage 5th in the ladies second division for the Lytchett 10 but they were still second in the table currently behind BAC.

Bournemouth Joggers picked up the win in the ladies third division, bucking the trend of Gillingham Trotters coming out on top. The Trotters could only managed 2nd on this occasion but still topped the standings for the season so far.

There is a bit of gap in the calendar now until the North Dorset Village Marathon which takes place on 5th May. That one often shakes things up a bit as its not always easy for clubs to find the allotted number of runners to form a scoring team.

Then two weeks later it will be over to Canford Heath for the May 5. That should be another exciting event that will no doubt be fiercely contested by Dorset's finest.