

# DORSET ROAD RACE LEAGUE

## Boscombe Prom 5k Race Report

(Many thanks to Richard Brawn for writing)

Brought in to replace the cancelled Marnhull 12k, the Boscombe Prom 5k was a no frills, low cost and easy to organise event designed to help the Dorset Road Race League fulfil the 12-race requirement for the competition to exist as it's always been.

It took some resourcefulness from the league to make that happen, with perceived EA red tape causing some of the county's favourite local races to be struck off the list but the traditional 'best seven of twelve' scoring system is what the league is built on.

The course was the same as it was for the Boscombe Winter Series which dates back to 1980, that being a straight forward out and back from the east side of Boscombe Pier, down towards Southbourne before turning round a cone and heading back. It wasn't likely anyone was going to get lost on that route!

With the race being located on their patch, Bournemouth AC were always likely to have the upper hand when it comes to assembling a strong team to challenge for the top placings.

They had Josh Cole who finished 4th scorer at the Blackmore Vale Half Marathon and 3rd scorer at the Stur Half. He was right at the top of the standings in the men's individual table after the first seven races.

Their side also included Rob McTaggart who won the Broadstone Quarter in the opening race of the 2025 season. He also finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Lytchett 10 and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Purbeck 10.

Alex Knauf was another in their armoury who had the speed to be a danger to the lead contenders. He finished 11<sup>th</sup> in the Purbeck 10k and 12<sup>th</sup> in the Stur Half.

Poole AC had some top-quality runners out who were well capable in being in contention including Dom Willmore who was 2nd in the Purbeck 10k and came 2nd to Jamie Grose in the Upton Summer Series.

They also had Callum Wadlow who was 12th in the Purbeck 10k and won the Romsey Beer 5 in June in under 28 minutes. They also had Theo Cobley who's a very quick youngster, well capable of a 16:30 sort of time for 5k.

Some of the more seasoned campaigners in their lineup such as Adam Colbert and Luke Terry helped add strength in depth to their attack. Rob Arkell of Poole Runners was also competing and he'd just produced a 15:33 at a Friday Night 5k Under the Lights in Battersea Park.

After finished 2nd at Blackmore Vale and 6th at the Stur Half, Rich White of Dorset Doodlers was also a contender and Wimborne AC pair Louis Verdi and Mark Savage were also in the mix.

Bournemouth AC had a strong ladies side out, with Katie Gunn featuring for them. She finished first female in the North Dorset Village Marathon and 2nd lady in the both the May 5 and the Purbeck 10k.

They also had Isabel Cherrett who is an under 17 athlete with huge potential. She won the Dorset Schools, South West Schools and South West Inter Counties Cross Countries earlier in the year and was 9th at the Southern Cross Country Champs.

She also finished first female in the Coombe Keynes 10k, setting a new course record in the process.

Emma Mogridge of Dorset Doodlers, who was 5th female at the Purbeck 10k and 2nd lady at the Stur Half, was on the starting line. As was Poole AC's Rachael Haddow who came 2nd in the Southampton Running Festival 10k. Teresa Green of Egdon Heath Harriers and Gemma Bragg of Poole Runners were also competing amongst a strong looking women's field.

The main fear for some of the runners was that it would be a windy day and they'd end up having to endure a massive headwind for half the race. It's probably like that 90% of the time on the prom at Bournemouth.

On the day of the race, it was a northerly wind though, which meant that it wasn't really much of a headwind in their direction. That was a massive bonus for anyone hoping to clock a fast time. The only thing that could realistically slow them down would be sand on the prom in certain places. That wasn't likely to be a major issue though.

The chip matt wasn't very long so it was a bit tight trying to fit everyone in behind it before the race started. They all squeezed in though and once the race got going, the faster runners quickly moved to the front and settled into their stride.

When the race started all the big guns were up there and it looked like it would be a fiercely contested encounter. It was young Oliver Canavan of Bournemouth AC who took the bull by the horns though and got into the lead. Dom Willmore and Josh Cole were giving chase and the rest of the field weren't quite able to match that speed.

It was a tremendously strong run from Oliver Canavan and he showed he's ready to tackle the top runners out there and well capable of blowing just about anyone out of the water.

Getting to the line in a lightning quick time of 15:24, he finished one second ahead of Dom Willmore who was 2<sup>nd</sup>. At the age of 35, Josh Cole ran his fastest ever 5k time, getting over the line in 15:27.

It was only two days after Rob Arkell's 15:33 PB at the FNUL so he had a slight tightness of the hamstring so took it cautiously at first. He was soon able to get up to the speed though

and ended up with the 4th place finish in a time of 15:59. That made him first vet, since he's in the 40 to 44 category.

Crossing the line in 5<sup>th</sup> place, Alex Knauf registered a time of 16:02. That was an average pace for the run was 5:10 per mile.

Getting to the line 10 seconds later, Rob McTaggart was Bournemouth AC's third finisher in the top six.

It wasn't over yet though and Poole AC had Theo Cobley and Callum Wadlow taking 7th and 8th places in 16:17 and 16:19. With three runners in the top eight, they were certainly putting up a good fight.

Rich White came 8th in 16:28, with Wimborne AC pair Louis Verdi and Mark Savage coming in in 10th and 11th in times of 16:29 and 16:31 respectively.

The next man over the line was Adam Corbin though and that was a wrap for Bournemouth AC. They'd won the fixture, with Adam registering a time of 16:43 which put him in 12th place.

Darren Robinson was the next man over the line, arriving just a second later but it wasn't enough for Poole AC. They'd have to settle for 2nd on this occasion. Luke Terry sealed that for them when he reached the finish in 16:47 which put him in 16th place.

Nick Reynolds of Twemlow Track Club was first in the 45 to 49 category when he reached the line in 16:53 which put him in 21st place. James Rogers of Littledown and Alessandro Zanonato of Purbeck Runners were also given the same time.

Poole Runners man David Penwarden finished in the same time and he was 1st in the 50 to 54 category.

Finishing first female by quite a considerable margin, Isabel Cherrett came 31<sup>st</sup> overall in a time of 17:27. She got to the line with a cluster of other runners including teammates Rich Brawn and Jack Barwick and Twemlow Track Club man Lee Dempster.

Poole AC man John Bassinder was first in the 55 to 59 category. He completed the course in 17:46.

Purbeck Runners man Julian Critchlow was first in the 60 to 64 category in a time of 17:49 which put him in 42nd place.

At the other end of the spectrum, Finley Hurst Atkins of Bournemouth AC was first in the 12 to 13 category, clocking a time of 18:08. He came 52nd with the same chip time as Littledown Harriers man Mark Packer.

Completing the course in a time of 18:38, Katie Gunn of Bournemouth AC was 2nd female and 57th overall. That put her in a very strong position in the Dorset League individual standings if she does three of the remaining four fixtures.

Emma Mogridge of Dorset Doddlers was 3rd female in 18:47 which put her in 62nd place overall. Rachael Haddow of Poole AC was 4th female in 18:58 and she came 68th overall.

Victoria Chapman reached the line in 19:16 which made her 5th female and 74th in the overall standings. She was third scorer for the Bournemouth AC women, meaning they just needed one more to complete the scoring team.

Sharon Hutchings of Dorset Doddlers was 6th female and 78th overall in 19:26 and Gemma Bragg was first woman in the 40 to 44 category, going over the line a second later. She finished 79th overall and 7th female.

Dawn Andrews of Poole AC was next woman over the line in a time of 19:29 and that put her 81st in the overall standings. Teresa Green of Egdon Heath Harriers was first in the 45 to 49 category in a time of 19:44 which made her 9th female and 85th overall.

Sealing the win for the Bournemouth AC ladies, Kate Bowers got over the line in 19:55 which put her 89th overall and 11th female. She was also 2nd in the 40 to 44 category so earned herself a trophy for that achievement.

It was tight between Poole AC and Poole Runners for 2nd placed ladies team but Poole AC got it in the end. Poole Runners still lead the way in the title race though having recorded three wins the three second places thus far.

There is a list of known course records for reach different age group in the Boscombe 5k and most of them had stood since the early 2000s or even the late 90s. Impressively, four of those course records were broken in this edition.

Paul Wilding of Lytchett Manor Striders took the 65 to 69 record, posting a time of 18:55 which put him 65<sup>th</sup> overall.

Hamish Murray of Purbeck Runners broke the 70 to 74 course record, clocking a time of 20:47 which put him in 106<sup>th</sup> in the overall standings.

Ian Barnes of Poole Runners set a new record in the 75 to 79 category, getting round in 24:17. That put him 160<sup>th</sup> in the overall standings.

The fourth and final record that was broken was the 80 to 84 one which fell to Ken Parradine of Littledown Harriers who completed the course in 26:55. That put him in 179<sup>th</sup> overall.

To have some outstanding performances like that made it seem an even more special day and they all received a prize in the awards presentation in the pub after the race.

Wimborne AC have already won the Men's Second Division and have sealed promotion but Littledown Harriers prevented them from getting a clean sweep by winning the Boscombe 5k fixture.

Dorset Doddlers claimed victory in the Ladies' Second Division ahead of Wimborne AC but its Wimborne who currently top the standings for the season so far.

Lytchett Manor Striders were the only club the Men's Third Division to get three runners out. They've are pretty much certain to be promoted as winners of that division.

Verwood Runners were the only team in the Ladies Third Division to get three runners out at the Boscombe 5k and that was their fifth win of the season.

They look huge favourites to gain promotion although Lytchett Manor Striders could still deny them of that if they were to win most of the remaining fixtures.

Winning those last two fixtures has lifted the Bournemouth AC men off the bottom of the table for the first time this season. The 2<sup>nd</sup> place will help Poole AC in their quest for the league title with table toppers Egdon Heath Harriers only managing 4<sup>th</sup> on this occasion.

The next race will be the Round the Lakes 10k and that will no doubt be another hotly contested affair as the Dorset Road Race League season rolls on.