

Gold Hill 10k- 8th October 2023- Captains Report

With this race falling on the same weekend as the Run Bournemouth weekend- well done to everyone who took part in these races there were some great performances and PB's earned on what was a warmer than usual October weekend. A select group of 9 Harriers made the journey up to picturesque Shaftesbury for the Gold Hill 10k, luckily we were still able to field both ladies and men's teams for race number 10 of 12 in the Dorset Road Race League.

The course is a hilly one which features a climb up the cobbles of the famous 'Hovis Hill' within the first mile followed by a couple of miles of mostly downhill, before returning to the start and climbing back up the hills- certainly not a PB course! It was especially nice to have our very own club cheerleader **Mike Kibble** cheering us all on at the top of the hills!

For the Ladies, we had the minimum 3 for a team entered so it was important that we all showed up and put in a good performance, which was duly delivered battling hard to fend off ladies from the other clubs. First home and 8th lady overall was **Philippa Shawyer** in 48:45 with a great performance yet again on her first run at Gold Hill. She was closely followed in by the ever-inspiring **Heather Khoshnevis** second home and 10th lady in a course PB of 49:09 and who is in fantastic form at the moment having recently achieved a number of parkrun PB's. Third Harrier lady home and 11th lady overall to complete the scoring for the team, also with a course PB was captain **Maria Everett** in 49:12, with another strong performance. It was a close fought race between Heather and Maria who were neck and neck the whole race and trying to stay ahead of a couple of ladies from Dorchester RIOT, with one out sprinting Heather at the finish and then promptly apologising! With all 3 ladies home within 30 seconds of each other, it was a brilliant team performance!

In the DRRL, the ladies picked up a very respectable 4th place finish, which maintains their 4th position in the first division, with just two races remaining. Individually, **Maria Everett** is the leading female Harrier, currently 6th place overall in the league.

For the Men, a super 6 ran in Orange to ensure we had a full team represented, preferring the hills of North Dorset to the local Bournemouth races. **Christian Rodigier** was back in fine form and shot off at the start as we ran around the wet and grassy (and unmown!) school field at the start never to be seen again by the rest of us until the finish - finishing a fantastic 15th overall in 41:18 and clocking a course PB in the process. Behind Christian was a tough battle with **David Wilson** pulling away as second Harrier early on, before being closed down again around halfway by **Steve Williams** with **Mark Everett** also in hot pursuit... but this was Dave of old back with his head in the game and he promptly put his foot down and pulled away up the hills in the second half with a solid performance finishing in 44:17. Steve and Mark had fallen a little way behind after Dave's surge, and it was too close to call with Mark pulling ahead on an uphill section before Steve managing to put in a little gap which turned out to be just enough to hold off a fast finishing Mark despite having to stop briefly to remove a wasp from his leg! Steve finished in 44:50 followed only a few seconds behind by Mark in 44:55, Mark achieving a fantastic course PB by nearly two minutes. Our fifth runner home to complete the scoring for the team was **Rich Shirley** in 47:17, it was great to see Rich back racing in orange again and looking forward to training with us at the club again soon! Next home and also making a fine return to racing was **Neil Blackmore** in 52:52, clearly motivated by securing the club ballot place for London- we hope to see Neil at a few more upcoming races!

The men also achieved another 4th place for the DRRL, maintaining their 5th position in the first division. Individually, **Mark Packer** still leads the men's scoring in the league and is currently 15th overall.

For full league tables, fixtures and further details of the league check out the website at <http://drri.co.uk/>.

The next DRRL race is the **Weymouth 10** on Sunday 22nd October which also doubles up as a Club Championship race. We hope to see lots of you there flying the flag for the sea of orange!- remember to wear your club vest if you are an affiliated Littledown Harrier so you score for the club!

If you have any questions about being an affiliated runner, please reach out to any of the captain's team.

Steve, Mark, Maria & Louise