

Poole Runners 2018 team and legs

Stage 1 John Towner

Back in good form John was on stage 1 a little 9.1 miles run and he finished in 8th 1:01:33 and this is not a flat stage by any means. So a very good start from John and set the standard for all others to do their best. He was very chipper for the rest of the weekend so I think could have gone faster.

Stage 2 Steve Ogles

Steve is great, not only ran this but got back to Dorset to play a great set at Wimborne in the evening. He managed to run his stage of 10.7 miles in 01:12.01 and 19th place, what a guy! Also drove up and home on his own just to do this, thank you is not really enough, this shows dedication to the team and apparently he even enjoyed it too.

Stage 3 Rupert Tory

Rupert has a habit of going of fast and hanging on but his stage had a very large hill at the end, this being classified as the first mountain stage. He judged it very well and ran 12.3 miles in 1:26:50 for 32nd place. While this may not sound really fast the hill is steep and even coming down it is not easy. IT was getting very warm in Wales by now and Rupert was a tad tired at the end. He then had to rush off to a wedding reception in Dorset and was partying at 11:30 at night still (he woke me up to let me know).

Stage 4 Mel Langer.

For someone who was not sure how well they would do a win is a pretty good result really. Mel came up in the bus and ran very well, a winner of a stage, which was not at all expected. Mel beat some very good competition, a great run. 16th Overall in 1.04:25 and like most stages it was not flat but she led the way for the team (also would offer some interesting vocal encouragement later)

Stage 5 Chris Stratford

Chris showed he is made of strong stuff. A good run here in third place and time of . He then hung around to cheer others on and come out for a very hot curry. Then the next day he was part of the winning team at Puddletown. That is dedication for you, good effort.

Stage 6 Tom East Tom showed that he is a very fast runner even at this longer distance for him. A very good 3rd place really helped the team move up the leader board a bit. He was even thinking about how to win next year! His stage certainly had a bit of a hill in it but Tom cruised over this with ease. I am sure he will start to get faster over these long distances as he races them a bit more.

Stage 7 Steve Yates

Despite being poorly for several days Steve had a go. We were concerned he might collapse but he made it through a mountain stage in good form, by gradually building pace. This stage keeps going up nothing too steep but a very big challenge. This shows some good pulling though for your team as our reserve Ryan was not keen to attempt this stage. Finished in

Stage 8 Matt East

We got to wave good bye to Matt who was the most relaxed runner we had I think. He drunk half of Mel's beer before he left! This is again quite hilly but not a mountain stage so it should be easy! Despite this relaxed attitude he ran really well and finished in

Stage 9 Chris Guerrier

One of the seasoned Welsh castles runners showed that it is easy really and got through the stage with looking good (although he did sweat a touch but you wouldn't notice). He even ran up the sharp uphill at the end to show how easy it was. A good time and

Stage 10 Neil Sexton

A nice if somewhat hilly stage it being another mountain stage. Neil took to it well through, I am sure Artur was key in getting him round. This also has the joy of being one of the longer stages being roughly a half marathon. He looked relaxed at the end of this tough stage and ran it in.

Stage 11 Steve Claxton

Well I played on the injured card a lot, and dragged my sorry self round in an almost respectable time. A great leg if you like uphill, first 12k all up although it is runnable nothing too steep so quite easy compared to some others.

Stage 12 Joe Godden

This stage has a fair bit of downhill at the start but of course you have to go up a bit and Joe ran a very good race. He did not start to fast and made sure that he could keep pushing until the end. He seemed calm in the morning and was composed with a time of and pace of

Stage 13 Dale Holland

Dale who seems to have had a lovely evening drinking according to Facebook (not sure about race prep). Keen and eager he ran well, he did seem a little surprised by the noise of the bus when we saw him but kept his head up and finished well. We saw him gliding down a slight decline looking in good form.

Stage 14 Carl

Some say ignorance is bliss, Carl admitted to having not read my emails so did not fully appreciate his stage. He asked where the hill is. During running sub 6 minute mile well into the stage. The hill is very large and very long and he ran it superbly, well done. (Also worth noting Carl does not focus on running but Cross fit so this was just a bit of fun for someone who enjoys running uphill).

Stage 15 Jon tug boat.

Fellow minibus driver and route finder took his turn to run. It was hot and it was tough and Jon came through. He ran a well-controlled race and did not burn out like some others. Although after going uphill he did look like he was overheating slightly. A good performance and celebrated with an Ice Cream.

Stage 16 Ian Edwards (the missing stage)

The Minibus should not attempt to support this stage people in cars only – I caused hassle! Ian bravely despite not really wanting to run long distances due to injury said he would run this leg. We did not see him (Sorry again) but he clearly ran well. This is a scenic leg and runs next to the canal, the reservoir and up a lovely hill which is large and steep. The minibus will testify (very dodgy clutch after this); worried we were not going to get up the hill. The second support vehicle (Mike Towner's Yeti) carrying Artur to leg 20 also become stuck in the narrow roads and had to abort and then had a "hairy" drive to get Artur to the start of his leg in time to register.

Stage 17 Dan

A new stage (well redesigned) and won by Dan so he is the record holder (a first for Poole Runners?). A very good run as expected and a comprehensive victory. This is a fairly easy stage (for Wales) to run not many inclines at all. He was too fast for us to catch up after the joys in the hills trying to see Ian. Course record in

Stage 18 Jim

A good run after some time away from competition and stepping in to fill a void. We nearly caught up with Jim! If I had not taken a wrong turn we would have seen him finish! This was a good stage on some trail and round a few houses. Jim is clearly looking forward to coming back and racing more regularly for the club now!

Stage 19 Dom

Well I did not think Dom would win and as ever I underestimated what a great runner he is. A win by over a minute in this competition is very impressive. He is also very modest (and intelligent, hopefully taking part did not disrupted his studies too much), his finish was not easy to find at all for us but he flew to it! 1st in

Stage 20 Artur

All we ask is everyone tries their best and this is summed up by Artur. He tried very hard and did something I have not heard of anyone achieving at the Welsh Castles before – he got a PB. We can ask no more of him but just say well done. Not a stage for spectating due to being almost all on the Taff trail. He came home in

I think the Welsh castles should be about 2 things, running your best and having fun (hopefully this includes supporting others along the way). All stage winners have requested we bow and avert our gaze when talking to them from now on. Also if anyone still owes me money pay up (I have lost the list of who paid and who did not).