

Northern Athletics 12 Stage Road Relays Champions 2012

It is an amazing fact that for the last 10 years of the Northern 12 stage championship, only 2 clubs have won the Blackpool & Fylde Trophy, Leeds City 6 times and the 2011 champions Morpeth Harriers, the remaining 4 times. So would there be another name on the trophy at Sefton Park. With 59 teams on the starting line at 11-30 competition was tough, but with only 80 m run, the competition was over for Liverpool Pembroke when their 1st leg runner was tripped and unable to continue. The other member of the team, including a certain Michael Rimmer, on leg 2 were allowed to continue, but they were an incomplete team.

That long first leg was won by Morpeth, 6 seconds ahead of Stockport with Altrincham 3rd. The first 4 legs all were won by different clubs, Derby, Stockport, and New Marske, following Morpeth. All the time however the presence of a red Salford vest was always lurking just near the front, and Liverpool had improved every stage after that 1st leg. On stage 5 Salford finally hit the front with Ben Riddle, and Liverpool again moved up a place to 4th. Morpeth, were close behind, with Leeds remaining just off the pace. Salford stayed in front on stage 6, but much to the delight of the home fans local hero Jonny Mellor produced the fastest long leg time of the day to haul Liverpool Harriers to the front on Stage 7. Stage 7 also had other top names being played, Andi Jones for Salford, and Nick McCormick for Morpeth, Nothing could stop the seemingly immovable position of Liverpool Harriers and Salford .

Morpeth had Ian Hudspith on stage 8, but despite reducing the gap he was unable to overtake Stockport, who remained third, Leeds City 5th and Altrincham up to 6th.

The first two places now seemed taken, bar a disaster, the gap between them changed but they had consolidated their positions, and it was just the bronze medal that seemed available, Stockport failed to maintain their lofty third place towards the finish but remained in 5th position for the 4 stages. That left just Leeds City and Morpeth, who had dominated the last 10 years of this event, to battle it out for the bronze medal. Third place switched for the last time on leg 11 when Morpeth's Peter Newton went past Leeds, to leaving a tense last leg. Dave Swinbourne for Morpeth lost 17 seconds to Darren Bilton of Leeds, but he had enough of a cushion to give Morpeth that bronze medal by some 12 seconds.

Medals were presented by Pat Green to the winning teams.

1st Liverpool Harriers 3 hours 27 .49
2nd Salford Harriers 3 hours 28.25
3rd Morpeth Harriers 3 hours 30.51
4th Leeds City 3 hours 31.03
5th Stockport Harriers 3 hours 32.42
Fastest Long leg. Jonny Mellor Liverpool 21.43
Fastest short Leg. Nial Brooks Sale 11.07

[Full Results](#)

Report Ken Smith

Photos Eileen Ingham



Liverpool Harriers 2012 Champions

Men 12 Stage Road Relay Report 1 April 2012



Salford Harriers 2nd Team



Morpeth Harriers 3rd Team