

Northern Athletics 12 & 6 Stage Road Relays Champs 22 March 2011

Mens 12 Stage Championship



The start of the 12 stage proved to be very similar to that of the 6 stage event. The winner of the 12 stage first leg provided an equal fastest leg of the day, and was the only athlete from that club at the event.

Tom Lancashire was Bolton's only athlete. He won the long first stage, with the time of 21.37, a time that was matched by Morpeth's Jonathon Taylor, on leg 3, but not beaten.

Close behind Bolton were Morpeth, Sunderland, Derby, and Holmfirth's Mark Buckingham. By the end of stage 2, Derby, last years 6 stage champions, were showing serious intent as they moved up into 1st place, Morpeth remained 2nd,

holders Leeds up 4 to 3rd place and fastest time on this the short leg was Niell Brooks, Sale, in 11.08 which pulled his club up 12 places.

Stage 3. This was the leg that put Morpeth at the front, a position they never lost after that. Jonathon Taylor's equal fastest leg time moved his club up 1 place, and Leeds also moved up 1 as Derby slipped back to 3rd. and Gateshead stormed up 11 places to 5th. The top 2 remained the same at the end of leg 4, but these 2 were now some 90 seconds ahead of Gateshead, 3rd and Derby 4th. Leg 5 saw no change in the top 2. Bingley hit 3rd place from 12th thanks to Alistair Brownlee, whilst another flying lap came from Gareth Raven, as he moved up Sale from 9 to 4.



Leg 6. An unchanged top 5, Trafford and Salford both moved up a couple of places and Derby drifting out to 9th. Morpeth were 30 seconds ahead of Leeds, but were over 4 minutes clear of 3rd placed Gateshead by the end of leg 7. Leeds showed their strength in depth as their B team hit 7th place. Leg 8 saw Leeds reduce the gap behind Morpeth to 9seconds, and Bingley again pushed into the top 3.

The leaders now showed their intent with 2 experienced athletes on the next 2 legs, game on. First on the long 9th leg was Ian Huspith, who increased the lead to 28 seconds, before handing over to Niel Wilkinson on Leg 10. Niel knew exactly what was required as the lead was only reduced by 5 seconds, and now there were only 2 legs left. Morpeth and Leeds were going to collect Gold and Silver but in what order, and what about that bronze medal. Gateshead, Bingley and Derby were all in contention, with Salford also moving up.

Leg 11. Leeds put out Simon Deakin, but Morpeth's Peter Newton held the lead with a 55

Northern Athletics 12 & 6 Stage Road Relays Champs 22 March 2011

second advantage over Leeds, with Gateshead hanging on in 3rd place. The final leg saw Morpeth pull away slightly from the defending champions, Leeds City, and in that last lap it was Derby who got past Gateshead for the Bronze medal, Bingley 5th and Salford 6th. [Mens 12 Stage Results](#)

Above Left Nine out of the twelve plus a happy Jim Alder as Morpeth celebrate their 12 stage title

photo Eileen Ingham

Above Right Matthew Nicholson holds off the Leeds City challenge to clinch Morpeth's victory

photo Harry Shakeshaft

Northern Athletics 12 & 6 Stage Road Relays Champs 22 March 2011

Womens 6 Stage Championship

Catterick Garrison last held this championship relay in 2008, and although we did not have any snow, I am not sure the temperature was any higher.



The women has 40 teams declared in the programme, with the surprising omission of holders Chester Le Street, and they were started on time at 11-35 for their 4 k lap.

The first leg saw Salford's Tessa Walker prominent early on, along with Kingston's Joanne Maddick. However it was Stockport's lone athlete Eleanor Baker who had the outstanding run, winning the leg as well as clocking the fastest, time of the race, 12.09, some 14 seconds ahead of Trafford, Kingston and Salford.

It was Salford that were first back after the second leg, with Anna Weaver, gaining 3 places and handing over a 23 second lead over Trafford.

The fireworks were all happening however behind the leaders. Lara Thomas pulled Lincoln and Wellington up some 16 places, into third spot with a time of 12.39. In 4th place, moving up 10 places, were Rotherham, whilst the

experienced Sarah Wilkinson moved Morpeth up from 20th into 7th. The biggest impact however was saved for Wakefield's international 1500 M athlete, Charlene Thomas.

Charlene clocked the fastest leg time, 12.11, moving her team up 14 places and into 9th place some 90 seconds behind Salford.

Leg 3 saw Leigh burst onto the scene with Dionne Allen moving up some 10 places into 6th. Trafford had a 7 second advantage at the front over Salford, with Lincoln 3rd.

Leg 4 belonged to Wakefield and Helen Singleton, as they finished with a 20 second advantage over 2nd placed Scunthorpe, Lincoln held 3rd, Salford were 4th and Jenny Clague moved Liverpool up 4 places into 6th.

Leg 5 was dominated by Lauren Howarth of Leigh, as she moved her team up from 7th to first. Salford's Hayley Kutter gained 2 places and was 2nd, with Wakefield 3rd.

These 3 were now over a minute ahead of 4th place and were going to sort the medals out, as there was just 3 seconds between them.

The last leg runners for the top 3 teams were Salford, Bev Jenkins, Julie Briscoe, Wakefield, and Laura Riches, Leigh. It took the fastest leg time by Julie Briscoe to move Wakefield from 3rd into the gold medal position, as she overtook both Salford and Leigh. Leigh won Silver, and Salford Bronze. Morpeth were 4th team. [Womens 6 Stage results](#)



Above Left Julie Briscoe overhauled Leigh Harriers on the final leg to secure a victory for Wakefield after an exciting last leg photo Harry Shakeshaft

Above Right Wakefield Womens Team 6 Stage champions 2011

Northern Athletics 12 & 6 Stage Road Relays Champs 22 March 2011

photo Eileen Ingham

Report Ken Smith



Women's Relay start

photo Steve Gains

