

Giants Head Marathon, Sydling Hill race and the Sydling Bell races 2018

Welcome to the fabulous long winded...and mysteriously similar to last years race instructions. As you may know The Giants Head was voted over the last few years, by The Running Awards the best marathon in the UK. This is an amazing accolade seeing as it's a little race in the middle of Dorset. Accolades are fleeting, but our hills aren't.

Anyways it's a marathon and 10k race ok really it's an 11k race but who is counting right?

Right stuff you need to know

Getting to Sydling. Planning your stay.

We are in the middle of nowhere, but thankfully nowhere is easy to get to. Sydling St. Nicholas is a small village on the outskirts of Dorchester in the beautiful county of Dorset.

Near France.

By car.

Sydling is 15 minutes from Dorchester and about 30 minutes from Yeovil on the A37. We are 40 minutes from Bournemouth and two and a half hours from London. We are about an hour from Bristol and Exeter and 2 hours-ish from the Midlands. We are guessing we don't go to these places.

For sat navs use postcode DT2 9NU



Follow the signs they will be on the A37 from Friday lunchtime.

By train.

There are direct trains from London Waterloo to Maiden Newton , a small village 4 miles away. At time of writing there are no trains early enough to travel from London or any of the stops en route to Maiden Newton on the day of the race. However, trains to Dorchester may be suitable.

By bus. Please check  <http://www.morebus.co.uk/> for bus details.

By air. Bristol, Exeter and Bournemouth airports are all about an hour and half away and hire cars are available at all airports.

Contact us for further information about travel plans, we may be able to help with your journey. (please note we are not coming to pick you up, just give advice)

Day Parking

Right read this it's not hard

Don't park near the start/finish or in the village


Free parking is available in the farm field in the centre of the village, behind the church a 2 minute walk to the Start/Finish. **Please follow the race parking signs on the A37.** If you are heading in from the A352 just follow the signs to Sydling. We can't say it enough, follow the signs, follow the signs don't drive into the village follow the signs from the **A37 don't take the Grimstone turn off, follow the signs to Dollens farm postcode DT2 9PD**

There is more than enough parking for everyone. Stop and talk to the handsome marshal at the gate and he will tell you how to get the shortcut to the village. Once you have parked, **DO NOT walk out the way you have driven in,** follow the arrows to the bottom of the field and there's a short cut to the Start and Race admin, it's quicker honest.

This is important we have worked out a way of getting you parked nearer the centre of the village.

Park at the end of the field and walk out towards the bottom gate follow the signs and you will end up in the village BOOM shortcut Follow the signs

Hotels.

There are plenty of hotels in the area and the site  www.visit-dorset.com will help you select a nice one.

Camping.

So previous years camping was a great success. We are ever grateful to Chris for the use of his 20 acre field. The campsite is huge, right in the centre of the village a one minute walk from the start/finish and registration. Please when you go to the loo after hitting the bar wear some clothes. Madame you know who you are!

This field or as we like to call it

'The Athletes Village'

has had all the cows removed and you are able to drive your car onto the field. If you have a massive camper van or Winnebago it should fit in the gate. If it doesn't come back the village hall we will get you in some other way

Price of the camping is £15 per pitch, you can stay both Friday and Saturday nights.

Please go home on Sunday we need to put the cows back in the field. Unless you want to share!

Portalavs will be onsite. There may be toilet paper...might be Aloe Vera...Shea butter, soft and scented, who knows? Bring some just in case.

There will be drinking water supply. We will have showers at the village hall and they are free to use. We realise a lot of people have travelled a long way, so we thought it might be nice for you to go home smelling of Imperial Leather. Bring your own wash gear and towel it's not a hotel.

If you bring your dog to camp, please, please, pick up any poos they will leave and dispose of them sensibly.

The field will be returned to Chris for his dairy nursery and we don't want any baby cows picking up any nasty infections from the dog poo. Please note dogs are not allowed in the village hall grounds....ever.

Booking Camping

This year please book camping by going to

<https://www.fullonsport.com/event/weekend-camping-for-a-wsr-event-2018/profile>

Got any questions raceadmin@whitestarrunning.co.uk its cheap.

Food

Once again we are ever so grateful to the people of Sydling for welcoming us back and feeding us. All ingredients used are sourced locally as much as possible. You need to **Pre-book by Wednesday 20th.**

Prices £8.50 and £5.00 for children portions.

Friday, the food is made locally in the village by the W.I.

Three sittings at 6.00 pm, 7.30pm and 9pm with max 70 persons at each sitting.

MENU CHOICES

Meat lasagne with salad and roll Or

Baked Potato with Ratatouille, with or without grated cheese. (Ratatouille is roasted peppers, aubergine, courgette, tomatoes, garlic and onion.)

Followed by Fruit salad and ice cream.

Friday 6pm sitting <https://www.fullonsport.com/.../ghm-weekend-friday-fo.../profile>

Friday 7.30pm sitting <https://www.fullonsport.com/.../ghm-weekend-food-frid.../profile>

Friday 9pm sitting <https://www.fullonsport.com/.../ghm-weekend-food-frid.../profile>

Saturday 24th July Chilli Supper served from 7.00pm at the Village Hall

This supper is prepared by SHARP a small village organisation which raises money for local and overseas charities.

Meat or Veggie/Vegan Chilli, fresh bread, green salad and Tzatziki with pudding of fruit crumble and cream

<https://www.fullonsport.com/.../ghm-weekend-food-satu.../profile>

Now listen this bit is important. You have to book, pay and make your menu choice in advance. Remember this is all the hospitality of the Ladies of Sydling, it is not a commercial restaurant and they are all busy doing other things....but have kindly agreed to help us out by cooking for us with a nice slice of Dorset hospitality.

YOU MUST BOOK ONLINE AND PAY

NO BOOKING NO FOOD. THERE IS NO DROP IN FACILITY.

Food on race day

Breakfast

Tea and coffee and toast at reasonable prices in the village hall from 6.30am there will be bacon sandwiches and porridge with tea and coffee for breakfast there will be a microwave and hot water will be available for porridge etc

Hog roast and post race meal

Hog Roast and BBQ (vege available) from late morning until last runner is in there will be enough for everyone this year, refreshments and CAKES in the village hall from early doors.

Bar will be open as soon as someone wants a pint until we a. run out b. we all go home

2014 the bar was drunk dry 3 yes 3 times LOL

Bar are selling these metal pint cups, they are made from re-cycled stainless steel, pressed into the pint cups and then engraved.

Order yours here to be collected from the Bar during race weekend

<https://www.fullonsport.com/product/12524/detail>

Bar run by the villiagers will have Cerne Abbas Ale and Blonde on draught cooled to cellar temperature and will again have Watercress Warrior and Styrian Wolf Pilsner in bottle.
Cider from Dorset Dabinett on draught, and half a dozen or so reasonable wines of various hues.

Barn dance and food

We have the return of the barn dance with live band and caller.

Black Sheep are back for 2018

you will dance.....yes we know you have just run a long way.....yes your feet ache.....yes you need to rest.....no you are going to dance.....and yes we are evil and yes you will love it!

Band starts at 7.30 pm sharp, interval about 9 and bar open all night

Sunday

Breakfast, porridge, bacon rolls and tea and coffees will be available from 7am. Either to see you home or for the Easier 4km ish at 10 and Hardcore Bell race at 9am which is about 6k.

Race instructions

Number Collection

We will not be posting out numbers in advance.

Please note we are doing the numbers at the finish line on village green (you can't miss it). The village green admin will be open on Friday between 16.00 and 19.00 (we go for a pint at 19.30) and from 06.30am on Saturday to pick up your numbers.

Please allow enough time to do this before the race starts.

Race times

The marathon starts at 08.30.

At 8.20. am there will be a race safety briefing and village notices will be read in the grounds of the village hall. Runners will form up on the road by the church. Please be there to listen to the briefing, it's for your benefit. Anyone not listening will be handed to the W.I. for punishment

The 10km race starts at 10.00 again runners will form up on the road by the church after a race safety briefing. Please be there to listen to the briefing, it's for your benefit.

Baggage

No space for baggage, its better if you give us your car keys. Now numbers have a label thing on them, tear that off and tie it to the keys. See Mrs WSR in the shop, she will look after your keys, we reserve the right your car for spin round the car park if it's a posh one.

Presentation of your number will get your keys back, we will only give the person wearing the number their keys. No number no keys. Any unclaimed keys will have the contents rifled and then burned in a Wicker Man style ceremony...it is the West Country remember

Please note you leave the keys at your own risk.

Changing

There isn't any. Random nudity is fine.

Showers.

Like last year there will be showers on site please be patient this is a service we provide free of charge and please leave them in a good state. May be a good idea to have a shower as soon as finish. One person at a time in showers. Sir and Madame we know who you are too.

Toilets.

There will be portaloos and toilets in the village hall and at the campsite. There is never enough we know, we ask you to be patient. Gentlemen please don't wee around the village.

The Race\Route

The Giants Head and Sydling races are both predominantly off road races.

The area in the Sydling and Cerne valleys are typical Dorset chalk downs areas and drain very well. All the paths we use are usually well maintained public access routes.

The course is designed to take in the smashing views and beautiful countryside. The course follows several paths and rights of way.

We are very grateful to the landowners and farmers in the area for their co-operation in bringing this event to life. All the farms are 7 day a week operations and the farmers have been very helpful moving livestock allowing us to open some gates and helping with logistics.

We rely on the goodwill of the landowners please don't do anything to jeopardise our good working relationships.

The course will be well marked with signs, arrows; some trees, posts etc will have red and white marker tape around them just to reassure you that you are not lost.

Litter Just don't drop it, nuff said, anyone found littering will be publicly humiliated on Facebook and banned from our races. The countryside is not a dump.

CUT OFFS

The cut off for the marathon is 7 hours and 37 minutes

Cut off in the hill race is 2 hours or whenever Gill gets back in her only race of the year.

There will be a sweeper in both races and we reserve the right to pull you out of the event if you will not make the cut off.

The sweepers word is final. If it looks like you won't finish in about 7.30 ish minutes we will ask or even tell you to pull out. The sweeper in the marathon will be running to pace if the sweeper overtakes you, you better hurry up or its curtains

Got it? The course is doable in 7.45 walking it, it is a running event, therefore some running is involved.

GATES.

Most of the gates will be open, if its shut, its shut for a reason, please shut it behind you, don't leave it open for someone behind you. The last thing we want is an animal escaping. In some places the gates are next to a stile please go over the stile its easier for you and we don't have to worry about gates being open.

The race is in the countryside in June and as we have seen in the past couple of years the British summertime can vary from beautiful warm to blistering hot to belting down with rain. So please take into consideration the previous days weather when considering what to wear on your feet. Trail shoes are recommended.

Safety.

We ask that runners be sensible and if it looks like it's going to be hot and sunny, put on sunscreen, wear a hat (balding middle age runners that means you!) and wear suitable clothing. Please remember to bring your own sunscreen, the nearest Boots is 10 miles away!

Basically, be prepared for all eventualities bring clothing suitable for the changeable British summertime. If it's blowing a gale and belting down with rain wear appropriate clothing.

We won't be cancelling or changing the race if it's inclement weather. On the back of your number is an emergency details section for you to fill out. Please

fill it out, we need an emergency contact number. This will help us and you. If you are struck by lightning or flake out with exhaustion we need to get you help as quickly as possible. We recommend that you carry a fully charged mobile phone for emergency use with race HQ emergency number stored. This number appears on the back of your number.

If you need to drop out of the race at any time we will try and get you as quickly as possible. The good thing is, the race is very centralised, and you are never far from an access road or from the finish. We will have 4X4 vehicles and ambulances on standby to come and get you if need be. If you do drop out please, please return your number to admin. We then know that you are safe, and we do not have to send out search parties.

If you drop out at a marshal point, aid or water station give your number to the lead marshal.

Roads.

Thankfully there is very little road running in this race. That said you will have to cross the A352 twice first at Cerne Abbas and then at Minterne Magna. Both road crossings will be marshalled and they will help you across the road.

The A352 is not a busy road but is a quick one and we don't want you splatted by a car please listen to the marshals and stop, don't charge straight across. At miles 14ish, 19 and miles, there are short sections of road. These areas too will be marshalled let the marshals help, stay close to the side and look out for cars.

Ipods and MP3 players

The perennial question about these devices...are they allowed? Yes. We won't drag you out of the race for wearing one, but we advise against it.

“WHY? I love my Pato Banton greatest hit album....”.....90's reggae was shocking. So safety is the only reason we don't encourage you to wear them. The roads, as we said are quiet country lanes, but there are cars, trucks, tractors and even the odd combine harvester out there and you need to hear them and any instructions from marshals and warnings. If you really must

sing along to The Carpenters turn it off when you get onto the road sections. For your safety and the fact it's a lot of paperwork for us if you get clobbered by a tractor.

Waterstations/Aidstations.

Waterstations will be evenly placed.

3 miles, 8.5 miles, 10.5 miles, 16 miles, and 23 miles.

These stations will have plenty of water.

All drinks will have cups. We know not everyone likes cups, but we want to cut out litter completely, cups are easily disposed of as bottles are bulky and are usually chucked after a mile or so. The area is full of Organic farms and has many sites of scientific interest, Wildlife reserves and is teeming with Deer, Sausage dogs, Pheasant and other wildlife and livestock. We would not want any animals affected by litter. So, we ask everyone to drink and dispose of the litter at the waterstation or carry it with you to the next one.

So if you have a Camelbak or carry a bottle ask the nice marshal to fill your bottle straight from the container.

Please, please dispose of your litter and plastic cups responsibly.

There will also be three aid stations.

- **6 miles**
- **13 miles**
- **20 mile Lovestation will return, run by WSR A team.**

Now these aid stations are designed for you to get some cake, a sports drink, a gel, jelly babies, there will be water melon and few savoury bits. If you were at the Ox races the Water melon proved to be a favourite so like the cider it will be at all our summer races.

You can drop off in advance drinks, gels, pork scratchings, whatever you want.

Miles 13 aid station drop off only.

When you pick up your number in admin, there will be marked boxes that will be delivered to the aid station before the race starts. Make sure you label your bottles or gels so no one picks up your drink by mistake. Please make sure the items are in disposable bags and bottles we cannot guarantee its safe return post race.

You must deposit you drinks etc to be taken to the aid stations box in admin by 8 am.

Miles 6, 13 and 20 will also have cakes from our lovely Carmen and they are Gluten free and other stuff maybe

Photos

Race photos are expensive, so we have our own photographers and make photos available to you, free, on our own race Facebook page, there will be a selection of the best photos on Facebook and Instagram

Please share on Facebook in an open folder (little globe pic)

Last year we took hundreds all of them great, except the one of the cow poo.

This means any photos you or your supporters or fan club take can be shared too. Our pet photographers Bertie (don't touch the beard) will be on site we hope to snap you looking your best, before, during and after the race. Our photographers will be wandering around the course taking snaps and will be at the finish should you wish to have a photo with friends and family. These snaps will then be uploaded in due course to the Flickr page and to Facebook. By entering the race you are giving your permission to have your photo taken and placed on Flickr. If there is a pic you object (didn't get your right side, your bum looked too big etc.) please contact us and we will remove it. (Please note you must highlight the said photo we won't root through all the pics looking for it)

Mementoes

All runners in both races will receive a tech race t-shirt and quality uniquely minted race medal.

All runners in the marathon will get a specially made WSR MUFF to wear.

**Warning Muff has Willys on it*

White Star running shop. Will be onsite selling our own branded t-shirts and hoodies.

You may have seen the lovely [Runderwear](#) team as part of the baggage crew at Dorchester, well they're supporting White Star again for this event.

Being runners themselves, they know how important is to feel comfortable when you run. Their high performance underwear is guaranteed chafe-free and uses 360 degree seamless technology and a lightweight, durable and moisture wicking fabric.

5 lucky runners will win a free pair of their Award-winning Runderwear. Enter here for your chance to win: <https://a.pgtb.me/1tgPW2>

There will also be spot prizes as part of the race weekend or if you have some undies to get, treat yourself with 15% Discount code: RW-GIANTS15 - valid until 8 July 2018.

SYDLING BELL RACE 2018 its new-ish well apart from last years and year before...

Ok so on Sunday as if you haven't done enough running we have a Chaos style race. If you did the Invader Chaos last year you will know what we mean.

So here's the score race starts at 9 and 10 am Sunday 24th June

You need to pre-book as we can't guarantee any entry on the day, then pay for entry in cash when you collect your number. £7 each.

Pre-book here

[tough](#)  [9am](#)

[fun](#)  [10am](#)

All profits go to the Sydling St.Nicholas Church bell repair funds...Bell race see, yes, got it? So then we take your shoes off you and get you to run to your

shoes Le Mans start When you find your shoes, run up the hill to where Bad Dave, Flash Gordon and Jimbo will be there to give you tasks Now once you have finished your task you will receive a Swiss Cow bell (bell race see yes eh?eh?) then you can run down the hill with your bell clonking away.

First bloke and Lady back get a prize maybe

FAQs Based on feedback from last year's race

Q. Can I run with my dog? A. No sorry we ask people not to run with their dog.

Q. Can I bring my dog to the campsite A. Yes

Q. Can I wear an iPod, MP3 ? A. If you are anti-social yes

Q. I want to camp near/away from my friends? A. Arrive early and sort yourself out, it's a big field, we may ask you to shuffle up if space is limited

Q. What do I need to bring for camping? A. Usual stuff, mozzie repellent, sunscreen, wet weather gear, a torch is essential, as is a sense of humour.

Q. Is there a cash point in the village? A. No the nearest free cashpoint is Dorchester, bring cash with you

Q. Do you take debit or credit cards ? A. No cash only.

Q. Is there a Costa Coffee/ Starbucks nearby? A. Don't be daft, this is the countryside.

Q. Is camping secure? A. No, lock cars and place valuables out of sight.

Q. Where is the nearest Dr. A&E etc? A. Dorchester

Q. Can I pet the Cows? A. No don't even think about the cows in Dorset are nearly all wild and will attack on sight. Seriously don't go near cows, they like trampling and stamping.

Q. Do I have to dance at the Barn dance? A. Yes its the law.

Q. What time does the bar shut? A. When its empty.

Q.Can my car, motorbike, light aircraft, park next to my tent?

A.Yes it's a big old field..

Q.Camper, caravans, Winnebago vans?

A.Yes bring them, if it has loo we may want to borrow it...joke btw

Q.Headtorch at the campsite why?

A. Camping is dark in the night you know dark

Q. Do I have to enjoy myself?

A. No, its running about in the most beautiful areas in Dorset you will hate it

Q. What other races do you organise?

A. Right ready? The Larmer Tree Races, 20 miler Marathon and Half, Hilly (it was great this year)

Chase Races and Cider frolic praise the Lord races at a Cider brewery

Crafty Fox...you thought this was hilly?

East Farm Frolic 12 hour race for solos and Teams Multiple laps and marathon half and 10k on Saturday before The Dorset Invader, Marathon and Half Marathon.....Roman madness

Have fun at the bestest non-road race in Dorset but remember it's not a Fun run.

If you enjoyed this tell your mates and come back next year.

One last thing, enjoy yourselves

