



Striding Out



The official news-sheet of Shelton Striders Running Club, founded 1984. Number 123. March, 2010.

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ALSAGER 5 - A CRACKING RACE

Roger Booth reports...

I decided to do the Alsager 5, a race I'd wanted to do for several years and previously tried to put in our championships, but it always seemed to clash with cross country dates. I wasn't disappointed. It's a cracking race that attracts a large, quality field from all over the country, considering it's only a 5 miler. The special appeal is probably the fact that it's a very fast flat course and gives the opportunity to race with or against top runners and hopefully record good personal times.

This year, on 7th February, the race attracted 950 runners who enjoyed good running conditions, on a cool but fairly calm Sunday morning. The 2 lap race starts and finishes at the Leisure Centre in Alsager.

Whilst lining up at the start, I couldn't help but notice all the very fit looking young runners wearing skimpy vests and crop tops on such a cool February day. Wisely, I decided to keep my thermal top, vest and woolly gloves on...this was not Dubai.

After a mad start, that felt more like a 100m sprint, the race settled down and I saw quite a few familiar faces including several Derby AC runners. I was surprised they'd got that many members left!! My target pace was as near to 6 min miles as I could get, which was probably a bit ambitious as I'd not done a short race or even a track session for nearly a year and it was only a couple of weeks since the Dubai marathon. I was surprised that my 1st mile was 5.57 but after that each mile got tougher. I was racing against a guy from Stafford Harriers who I knew was about my age. He passed me with about half a mile to go so I tried to stay fairly close behind. As we entered the school I was on his shoulder and just managed to out sprint him over the last 30m. I was pleased with my time of 30.45, my best for 5 years (no, it wasn't a short course Dave!). Unfortunately I was beaten by 1 sec for 1st vet 60 by another guy I'd not noticed, who I swear must have been using Grecian 2000!

I'd recommend the Alsager 5. It's a great race and only 50 mins from Derby, just off the A500 beyond Stoke. Can we have it in the championships next year please Heather? Janet and I came back via Leek and had a walk over the Weaver hills near Waterhouses, rounding off a great day with a couple of pints in the Tiger at Turnditch on our way home.



The World's First **SPIDERTHON**

FRIDAY 2ND APRIL 2010

(GOOD FRIDAY)

4-7PM

AN ENDURANCE CHALLENGE LIKE NO OTHER!

HOW HIGH CAN YOU CLIMB?

&

CAN YOU BEAT SPIDERMAN?

UP & DOWN EACH LEG OF THE SPIDER BRIDGE = 1 LAP

EACH LAP OF THE SPIDER BRIDGE = 31M OF CLIMBING & DESCENDING

To run up (and down) the tallest building in
....the UK (Canary Wharf) 235.61m high = 8 laps

....Europe, City of Capitals in Moscow, at 301.6m = 10 laps

....New York, the Empire State Building, at 381m = 13 laps

....the Western Hemisphere, the CN Tower in Toronto, at 553m = 18 laps

....the world, the Burj Khalifa (Dubai), at 828m = 27 laps

£5 MINIMUM ENTRY (PLEASE FEEL FREE TO GIVE MORE)

EVERY PENNY DONATED WILL GO TO WHIZZ-KIDZ!

STRICTLY LIMITED NUMBERS: BOOK EARLY OR MISS OUT ON A WORLD
FIRST!

TO BOOK A PLACE CONTACT **DAVE NUNN** OR **HAYLEY HO**

WE ALSO HOPE THAT YOU CAN
HELP US WITH SOME LOW-KEY FUND-RAISING

THE CAMBRIDGE BOUNDARY RUN

A deliciously quirky marathon and half marathon, skirting around the boundary of the City of Cambridge. At registration, as well as our numbers, we were given two versions of a map of the route and a 16 page booklet explaining where to go in great detail. To our huge relief, we were then informed that we would not need the booklet as the route was marked. Most people got lost once, though I heard no stories of anyone going seriously wrong and the whole experience was thoroughly enjoyable.

It was low-key, amateur, but not in a bad way. A range of running surfaces added to the challenges and whilst the first half was surprisingly undulating and largely on quiet roads or laid paths, the second half was the opposite, with many more stiles, gates and a lot more mud!

Rather than try to describe the run in any more detail, here are a few completely genuine quotes from the instruction booklet, which I think will give you a good idea of what it was all about.

“After you have run through a thick bush/hedge you might find another stile, and then a field with some strange animals in it.”

“Down the steps to the disused railway, left on the path for 7metres then right and up the other bank”

“St Catharine’s College has given you permission to use this path today, at your own risk. If you do not wish to accept this risk, please continue into Newnham”

“Follow the path to the road and navigate the gate (which may be open). If it isn’t open there is a missing post on the fence making it easy to crawl through!”

“Use the level crossing, avoiding the trains travelling between Cambridge and London.”

“Use care when crossing the dual carriageway. Cars can go very fast on this road!”

It was fun, quite an adventure and the opposite of a big city marathon. Great value at £7. Oh, and Shelton Striders won! More accurately, **Shaun Cooper** won it, in a time of 3.04’, despite having gone wrong at least twice. Typically modest, Shaun was reluctant to step forward for a prize-giving though became keener when he saw that he had won a bottle of champagne. Whilst supportive colleagues tried to convince the organisers that Shaun was only 17 and that they would have to give one of them the bottle to look after, they set up a photo of the presentation, only to find that the man in charge of the camera had forgotten to put a battery in it, so Shaun’s blushes were spared as the moment went unrecorded.

Chris Sexton and **Dave Nunn** both completed the full route in respectable times, whilst **Ian Barker** completed his first half marathon and his longest race for around five years and **Alison Nunn** enjoyed being the first Strider female across the line.

FLIPPING GREAT DAY OUT!

a.k.a. Shelton Striders Shrovetide Shenanigans

The Shrove Tuesday day out is becoming a staple in the Shelton Striders calendar, having happened each of the last three years and getting more popular every year. Almost 20 of us were there this year and enjoyed a great day out. Why not put it in your diary and come along next year?

The day started with a get-together in Derby to share transport and then we all set off for a free car park just north of Ashbourne. Blessed, as previous years, with sunshine on a crisp winter's morning, our running route involved passing through the lanes to Tissington, following the old railway along Tissington Trail and then dropping dramatically into Millers Dale. At this point the group split, with some going straight along the side of the river whilst the more adventurous headed uphill to Alstonefield. Conversation was difficult as we headed uphill but mention was made of the Winter Olympics which were taking place at that time in Vancouver; the luge and skeleton run was 1.5km long with a fall of 150 metres. We climbed just over 100 metres in 1km! No more needs to be said! Except that coming back down to the river was even steeper!

Re-joining the same route as everyone else, the runners meandered through Dovedale, meeting up again at the far end, near Ilam, then continuing along the river, through a bit of mud before finishing with two monster up-hills back to the cars. Stunning views, beautiful countryside and wonderful company; with so many runners, there was always someone to chat with. One of the best features of a day like this is the chance to run and natter with clubmates that you might not usually run and natter with.

After a quick change we decamped to Ashbourne, where a long queue for fish and chips awaited us, then the 2pm start of the famous Shrovetide Football game. If you have never seen it, you are missing an absolute gem of our local heritage. It is as far from what we know as football today as is embroidery! Crowds of locals scrap and fight over a large, ornately painted ball, aiming to move it towards goals 4 miles apart. The whole town is out, watching, cheering, joining in and periodically nipping in to the pubs for refreshment. All of the pubs clear their furniture out to allow more people in but also because the game can (though not very often does) go straight through pubs or shops! Only the church is out of bounds! How do we know that the pubs take all of their furniture out? How do you think?

The start is spectacular, with the ball being ceremoniously marched out of the Black's Head and Green Man to be thrown up by a celebrity, but only after a speech by a very drunk sounding Chairman and a recital of first Auld Lang's Syne, then the National Anthem.

All round, a most enjoyable day out, a run, a couple of beers, fish and chips and some culture. Great fun! Come and join us next year!

