

Run 167: 26th Apr 2009 - Dodd Wood

Hares: Doc and Thong

A motley crew of 11 real & potential Hashers sacrificed the opportunity to gain fame & fortune in the London marathon which, due to a scheduling cock-up, clashed with the April Hash, & gathered at Dancing Gate, Bassenthwaite to participate in the annual 'Dancing with Ospreys' Hash run. Ospreys can be fickle creatures & these little darlings had decided to give up the home comforts of Whinlatter for the excitement of a new pad at Dodd Wood.

This is all very well but this resulted in a serious encroachment into Hash territory & to make matters worse a Hashers exclusion zone was throne around the nesting area. The temptation was to follow non-hash-rule No. 1 & not give a flying thrush about rules & regs. However a distinct lack of bottle, a bit of derring-do & a devil may care 'we'll show em' attitude was adopted by the Hares in the creation of an Osprey free run.

The pack set off in surprisingly clement weather for the time of year (Spring) along woodland trails disappointingly lacking in the usual top coat of mud & ascending as far as the ring of feathers would permit. It soon became apparent why so many had forgone the opportunity to run a marathon & so avoid an early grave. The pack thundered on towards the old timber mill but were cruelly dragged across Skill Beck & up the steep embankment to the edge of Longside Wood. Naturally a crossing of the dam wall above the mill could not be resisted & having survived this little bit of excitement the pack charged through Mirehouse car park & back into the jungle. A short trespass into Calvert Trust territory was followed by escape over a barbed wire fence which the Hares had thoughtfully protected to prevent Hashers losing their marbles. A quick scramble up the hill led to the Osprey viewpoint & a rollicking from the Ospreygruppenfuhrer for frightening the squirrels & the birdwatchers & which allowed the pack some semblance of dignity in eventually finding someone to upset.

At last the pack discovered mud & enjoyed an extended contour run back to the gate. This was quite simply a most excellent run in extremely trying circumstances & was a tribute to the ingenuity of the Hares who would not allow a herd of wild Ospreys to put them off their stride. Onon was onhome to cut the grass & watch the grand prix. Hopefully next year the Ospreys will bugger off back to Whinlatter & leave Dodd Wood for what nature intended, the crash bang wallop of Hashers.

ONTHONG

Run 166: 29th Mar 2009 - Lanthwaite Green

Hare: Ever Ready

A spectacularly fine day brought out a bumper turnout to the banks of Crummock, as the well thumbed book of 'runners excuses' got an airing.

The On-On brought checking in every conceivable direction to find the start of the trail across open fell. Eventually, flour was found and the tail set off contouring the fell side in the Buttermere direction. Various checks and sheep trails kept the pack together as the trail undulated up the valley.

Runners excuse #1: I have a dodgy hamstring and don't want to put too much strain on it!

Runners excuse #2: Because of 'recent injury', I've not been out much, so need to keep to a 'steady pace'!

Eventually, the runners and walkers split. The runners had an impromptu 'on-group' waiting for an imaginary hasher some way behind. Despite a hint of frost underfoot, the sun was making it pleasant enough to stand around in shorts and a t-shirt, which was a rare treat! When it finally dawned on us that we should probably get moving, we continued our progress up the valley.

Runners excuse #3: Aren't we waiting for someone to catch up?

Runners excuse #4: I was lagging behind and lost the pack/trail so thought it best to head straight to the pub.

The trail eventually headed down into the valley and back in the direction we came, bringing some impressively slippery mud, and a couple of entertaining hash-crashes. At this point, the runners joined back up with the walkers trail, and dropped back down to the road.

Runners excuse #5: Wrong type of trainers/mud etc.

Another group then brought the pack back together, and across the road into a labyrinth of trails on the shores of Crummock. At this point, mid pack, I slowed down to a crawl as the back of the pack had gone missing, and hoped that I would be able to assist in helping them find the trail. As I exited the woods towards the On-In, I helpfully informed Ever-Ready that we may have strays somewhere in the woods. As he bounded into the woods after his second lap of the trail of the day to find these strays, I arrived at the cars to find the 'back of the pack' had decided to take a shortcut!

Runners excuse #6: I'm going slowly to keep the pack together. Particularly effective from the back of the pack, and bonus points for sending the hare on a wild goose chase!

Fortunately, Ever Ready (who must be familiar with the book of excuses), realised the error, and headed in before the pack started to panic about delays in getting to the pub for a well earned pint!

Great Hash, Great Weather!
HAPPY SAC

Run 165: 22nd Feb 2009 - Portinscale

Hares: Jock Strap & Happy Sac

Was it CH3 or the start of the Great North Run?

A veritable multitude of Hashers converged at Portinscale bridge which gave us a running pack in double figures and a similar number of walkers, boosted by old friends returning and some visitors of ours wondering what on earth was going on.

After a brief Hash intro, which only served to confuse the newcomers even more, we were off. Just like that! I ambled towards Keswick, thinking that the last time I'd checked that path we had just lost young Oliver, all those years ago. The mixture of emotions came back - relief that we eventually found him and annoyance that the little so and so had wandered off like that in the first place.

By the time that On On was called, the pack was deep into downtown Portinscale and travelling at speed, with Angie and Alastair leading the charge.

Nichol End passed by at the blink of an eye and relief was only found when some philanthropist took pity on us more mature runners by obliterating the trail for a while. The respite was short lived and we careered on towards the lake, with Catbells becoming a distinct possibility.

A couple of sharp uphill cuts the pace down a bit and took us to the Manesty Road, scene of many a Christmas Hash. Those vertical checks up the flank of Catbells looked promising but we stayed level and trotted back through grockle central (base camp car park for the ascent of Catbells wearing either: complete brand new kit from Fishers or slingbacks and a pacamac, depending on age and geodemographics) and to everyone's delight ended up at the Swinside for a mid run libation.

Equilibrium restored it was back towards Portinscale at a canter. The sight of Cocktail and I was obviously too much for a pair of loose (in every sense) sheep who ran away from us as fast as they could. Unfortunately that was about as fast as we were running anyway which presented the world with the unedifying spectacle of two heavy breathing runners chasing two, not altogether unattractive, herdicks down the road. The glint in Cocktail's eye and his raucous shout of 'I don't fancy yours much' did little to dispel the illusion.

We parted on friendly terms at the junction (although it has to be said, Cocktail never did ring, despite the promises) and entered Portinscale again by the rear entrance. Most headed left for the Farmers Arms for a civilised end to a strenuous morning.

Run 164: Maryport Promenade - 25th January 2009

Hares- Half Dome and Misdemeanour

What a fine day to start the 250th anniversary of Rabbe Burns than to look across the Solway to Burnsland. It's a shame that the cloud and horizontal rain spoiled the view. The carefully drafted instructions to the start to avoid the road works were ignored by a few hashers who tried their own 'short cuts' and arrived fashionably late.

The weather and thought of Maryport on a Sunday after the night before had not put off the dozen hashers who sheltered in their own and other people's cars. When Misdemeanour announced that Half Dome was still out setting the route some of us wondered if this was to be a mega hash or if he had been mugged for his valuable flour and chalk. It was in fact to be a carefully planned tour of Maryport's best tourist attractions and ancient historical sites.

The route started across the Millenium Gardens and down the Promenade with a following gale. Some desperate runners affected by the wind did an on-in into the public toilets en route before continuing to Bank End. Meanwhile the walkers branched off uphill. Some runners ventured towards the golf course to see if Ever Ready was doing his other Sunday morning activity. After running back south again along a byeway an informal regroup took place outside Camp Farm once Half Dome appeared from the mud allowing the pack to gather. It was a relief to Clint and Dirty Digger that there was no fish hook on this stretch.

It is worth mentioning at this point that Clint and Happy Sac had entered into the spirit of Burns night with some tartan headwear with Happy Sac having added sunglasses to his Maryport disguise. The Hasher formerly known as Clint has now been christened Jock Strap.

The runners headed up Pigeonwell Lonning to Camp Road through the discarded cans of energy and caffeine drinks which fuels the local school kids. Spectacular views of the Roman Fort and the Solway gave way to Georgian splendour. After crossing Senhouse Street our route took us past industrial archaeology and pigeon lofts ending on the top of Mote Hill. This was followed by a sprint into the wind along the seafront of Glasson then back along by the Marina and docks.

The runners and walkers merged, split and rejoined in a feat of perfect hash timing by the hares. Arrows near the bridge showed the route back to the start. By this time the sun had come out and whilst photographing the foaming white waves Happy Sac was treated to an early Solway shower. For the hash anoraks among you the runners route

was 5.78 miles with 548 feet of ascent- or so says the digi map. (Where was Whingeing Thong? 548 feet qualifies as flat! Ed)

This was a classic route around the best bits of Maryport which had not seen flour since foot & mouth year. If you weren't there you missed a good un.

Rocky

RUN 163: 28th December - Rosthwaite

Hares Half Dome & Miss Demeanour

A crisp cold December day brought out a small yet enthusiastic band of Hashers - the venue was Rosthwaite in the Borrowdale Valley. Half Dome and Miss Demeanour had set an intriguing route taking us through some magical scenery. The carpet of frost had turned flour-spotting into a fine art, but undeterred we followed the trail along the River Derwent - a mischievous check had suggested a refreshing morning dip in the Derwent, but since most of us had seen that Derwentwater itself was freezing over, none were intrepid enough to venture further.

Crossing the Derwent, we ascended Lingy Bank with the altitude offering pin-sharp views of the picture postcard valley below. Then having crossed Tongue Gill, a slippery descent took us to a check point that even the Hare himself was struggling to find - a top tip for the future could be to use wholemeal flour on such frosty outings, but perhaps that would make things a bit too logical and straightforward - this is Hashing after all!

A very pleasant ON ON through Johnny Wood saw several of the runners stretch their legs, but alas, we were reeled in by a cunning fish-hook - we should have known there was something brewing when the Hare dropped to the back of the pack. Plum Tart was at pains to make sure that Highway didn't escape the fish-hook though, so the leading runners, having retraced, then slowed to a walk to make sure that Highway had to walk to the back too.

Having descended back down to the road we headed towards Stonethwaite where we met up again with the walkers (nice to see a festive appearance from the Grand Master himself). Copious amounts of mulled wine, cake and mince pies awaited us. Unfortunately, Half Dome had suffered a nasty puncture on the way so stayed on to fix it whilst the group pressed on through Stonethwaite and across the beck. A somewhat 'balletic' style was necessitated by the stretches of sheet ice we encountered. Indeed we later passed some mountain bikers going in the opposite direction and neither Rocky or I fancied their chances.

So having returned to Rosthwaite, we made our way to the Pheasant at Keswick for a hearty lunch. In the Buff brought along a bag of spare crackers (that's Christmas Crackers rather than the other sort of crackers just in case you were wondering), and Miss Demeanour treated us to a display of post-hash 'Turkey' headgear that Bernard Matthews would be proud of. Highway's run of bad luck with hostelry continued - this time the table was reserved, but his trout hadn't found it's way on to the order and by the time it appeared some feared that it had swam up-river from Borrowdale just to be there, at least it was fresh though which was more than we could say for the Christmas

Cracker jokes,
Clint

Run 162: The Pink Panther Hash - Dearham, Dearham, Dearum, Dearum de rum de...or *Highway hits the Road!*

Hares: Rocky Rock and Plum Tart

A crisp, frosty autumnal day with the sun glinting off the frozen ground - what better way to spend a Sunday morning than on one of R & P's adventures in the urban fringe? A feeling obviously shared by a significant slice of the population as an impressive pack gathered by the Went. 16 runners? It was like the start of the Great North Run and not something CH3 had experienced for many a year! There were welcome returns for Two Jugs and Happy Sac plus Chemical Ali and some new recruits. Jan put us all to shame by cycling there before donning her two Buffs for the run.

A healthy (?) pack of walkers assembled as well, all set to explore the dez-rezzes of suburban Maryport. The first part of the trail was set around the nooks, crannies and ginnels of Newlands Park, where all possibility of looking like a macho running group was ruined by the layer of ice over the roads and pavements. Instead we teetered about like that scene out of Bambi, much to the bewilderment of the locals.

At last we hit some open countryside and the chance to stretch our legs. Happy Sac marked his return by stopping to take photos, which can be seen at the link below:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/16333334@N05/sets/72157610623905746/>

They are remarkable for the fact that there is an awful lot of standing around and very little in the way of running going on!

Looking at the map, its virtually impossible to say where we went - there simply aren't that many footpaths in Dearham. There were woods, rivers, stream, fields and more woods - some bits we did twice and I suspect there were others that we covered even more times. There was quite a long stretch of road by a farm but I'm blowed if I can see which one it is on the OS.

It was a masterclass of the Hares' art, which left us (well me at least) utterly confused and disorientated. A job well done then!

Finally the running pack hit some familiar territory and jogged the long On In back to the cars. Rocky realised that we were well haed of the walkers, so as our new recruits warmed down by trying to push the cars back to Cockermouth (last picture) Cocktail and I jogged back to meet them to avoid freezing.

The walkers meantime, had lost Godiva who had taken the struggling Spreadlegs home after having competed a somewhat truncated route, having previously had the virtues

of Dearham extolled to her by passing residents. Reports suggest that the walkers pack worked and checked like a well oiled machine.

The real excitement though came at the pub. After transporting In the Buff and her bike to the Belle Vue, and realising the the man with no name was Clint, the party found whatever seats were available amongst the regular Sunday munchers. All of a sudden, Highway's negotiations for food and a seat resulted in his eviction from the establishment - a badge of honour that most Hashers would put on a T shirt albeit one that does nothing to fill the void the way that a roast and 2 veg would have done.

Run 161: Lorton

Hares: No Name, Sloppy, Happy Sack, Top Off, Cocktail
(and from the sound of it, the cast of Ben Hur - Ed)

Foreign Holiday and Time Travel (all in 2 brief hours).

October's hash started with clearing out the baking cupboard, of umpteen part used bags of flour. These were placed by the front door for the hares on Sunday morning. The day was clear blue and sunny. Which was strange as the day before a month's rainfall had fallen.

I left home around 10.00am with a short stop at Broughton Bridge, to see the River Derwent in spectacular flood across the valley floor. Next stop Lorton with many more minor floods along the way (actually some were quite deep - so I approached Lorton from higher up the valley, towards Whinlatter.)

Met the hares at Low Lorton (none of them had drowned!), but just in case extra hares had been drafted in: top-off, third man/happy sac and cocktail with snorkels at the ready. Fears that the surviving hares would outnumber hashers were allayed as we arrived back to a fantastic turnout at the start. Talk of thousands of 'original mountain marathon' hardened fell runners being stranded on the fells seeming to provide some bizarre motivation?

Sloppy and 'No Name' tried to convince two stranded Kendal hashers to join the throng whilst their car was marooned in the valley until the floods subsided but they seemed reluctant to get their feet wet - something that Cocktail would find inconceivable.

The Hash kicked off with a 'cunning' false trail to start, leading us to consider the river, which was roaring under the bridge (Cocktail again!) and had caused the nearest property to build defences - perhaps they'd heard that hashers were at large. (No river wading this day though - unless you fancied a white water adventure.) Then it was back the way we had come and off down Lorton Vale towards Loweswater (passing a foreboding road closed sign).

Then left into the squelchy fields, where inspirational checking by the walker's lead led them to decide that the false trail looked far more appealing than the actual trail, and led to a shortcut being found. This is the type of 'Zen Hashing' that I think we can all learn a lot from. Some eventually trailed back, and others consulted a non-conventional and slightly archaic navigational device - a map sssshhhh! Luckily this device was foreign to the Hares, and provided no assistance.

Runners were foolish enough to stay on trail. Streams had turned to raging torrents and one could be forgiven for thinking that this was an Alpine rather than Cumbrian hash.

Even found an edelweiss (actually it was a thistle covered in flour, the only thing high enough and dry enough to hold flour). Long range and high level flour spotting then ensued.

We headed up Swinside some more than others following a false trail. The trail then levelled off along the valley side with stunning views over the valley no lake - Lake Lorton! towards the sea. Practical geography in action - back 70,000 years to the end of the ice age. At this point the runners noticed that we were one-down. Slasher had taken to the walkers 'Zen' approach, and gone missing. Lots were drawn to see who wanted to head back down the hill to search, but fortunately she arrived before this came to blows.

At this stage, the trail was split with the walkers starting their descent back to Lorton, with the runners continuing along the road.

To avoid the monotony of running along the long section following the road, the hares gave a hint that a check that had been passed without investigation might be worth a better look. The hares then watched in amusement as the hashers fell back and checked every sheep trail in a half mile radius, the exception being the actual trail which continued up the road. The walkers saw from a distance, a yellow topped runner heading a considerable distance up the fell side (and then back again!).

The walkers heading down the path (riverbed) back to the valley through High Lorton and joined back on to the running route passing into the churchyard and past a reverent dot of flour on the path. Across the fields and past a large ON IN - the hares hadn't run out of flour (after all).

The runners were then swiftly abandoned by the hares, who headed directly to the bar at the Wheatsheaf, leaving the hashers to fend for themselves. Once everyone had found the pub, there were no steins of beer, just good old Jennings, Sunday lunch and a wood burning stove to dry Cuddle's socks on - poooooh!! Midge was also convinced there was something on the bookshelf - I have since remembered I saw a mouse (well educated) up their years ago.

Notes to/ from Hares - early Sunday morning good time to spot wildlife - red squirrels, deer and rescue sheep. Plum Tart noted use of wholemeal flour (as well as self raising, plain and strong white bread flour??). Observers eventually have to ask when you have passed them several times laying flour - what ARE you doing? They were rewarded with a practical demonstration several hours later when Cocktail passed them again with runners in tow. We would also like to reassure the Hashers that the large number of Hares has absolutely nothing to do with the pleasant Wheatsheaf pub-garden and the route planning falling on rare sunny days!

A spectacular hash, which was concluded, on leaving the pub, with yesâ€¦â€¦more rain!

Run 160: Threlkeld Bridge

The Procrastination Hash - We just didn't get around Tewitt
Hares: Huggy and The Slasher

Cometh the sun, cometh the Hashers.

A startlingly good turnout over over 20 greeted the first appearance of the sun for what seemed like months. So keen were we in fact, that we were all there well before the appointed time. Plum's Bazaar did a roaring trade and it was great to see so many friendly faces after a couple of lean months.

This was a Blue Peter type of run, cobbled together by the Hares from old bits of sticky backed plastic, toilet roll tubes and discarded bits of trail from previous recce's. There was the usual misdirection at the start, as we (and they) found that Huggy and Slasher were using different marking conventions - this was going to be like playing Mornington Crescent in Braille.

Huggy's promise of false trails was soon honoured as Cocktail and Mark (the still innominate Mark by the way - this needs to be rectified next time out) needlessly plunged into the Glenderamackin, with the Hares smirking from the bridge above.

The trail was soon found across a waterlogged piece of countryside, generally south towards Low Rigg, Miss Demeanour rolling back the years as she joined the runners until the split.

We then came to Tewitt Tarn, site of many appalling puns, and then onwards to the Youth Centre. Cocktail enquired of a passing grockle whether she had seen any flour and as she had an honest face we all piled down the (unbelievably false) trail she indicated. Never trust a grockle.

The real route was down the valley side into St Johns in the Vale and then up towards Clough Head and the network of old quarry trails. We competed for space here with a gaggle of Paragliders also relishing the sunny conditions (like Barn Owls they can't really fly in the wet).

Runners and walkers came together on the downhill stretch to the railway line. The pace picked up as we all passed some livestock that wouldn't have been out of place in Pamplona High Street and there was then a gentle on in along the railway.

Brilliant hashing territory, exploited to the full! The feeling of wellbeing was somewhat deflated by another indifferent performance from the staff at the Horse and Farrier but nothing can take away that feeling of good company, good exercise and the sun on your back.

