

Run 172: Cockermouth

Hare - Mr Sheen & Happy Sac

The word on the streets is that on Sunday 27th September, Police were inundated with calls from confused Cockermouthians. Apparently, a herd of brightly coloured 'randomers' had decided to hang out outside the old Grammer School and were casually daubing graffiti on the pavement and there were also allegations that Jams and Chutneys were being illegally traded from the boot of a car - what an outrage!

It didn't seem to matter how hard we tried though, the ultimate Hashers badge of honour (the 'ASBO') had eluded us once more.

The fun began well before the pack set loose though. Happy Sac and I had set off to lay the trail, and in a place like Cockermouth, I can assure you that even the slightest dab of flour attracts suspicion - the tell tale signs of twitching net curtains were certainly in evidence. When asked by one of the many dog-walkers 'what are you doing?', Happy Sac replied with a polite and sensible answer 'setting a trail for a run', to which I couldn't resist adding 'why, did you think it was Banksy?'

Anyhow, after worrying countless dog-walkers and do-gooders, the pack was set loose - but those tricky hares had already created mayhem by not marking the initial check with a circle - this was to set the tone of the Hash since Happy Sac was on flour rations, and any dabs that were made were concealed underneath leaves, behind trees and generally out of the line of sight. Fortunately, our top hounds have a good nose for flour and can smell the Co-op's finest self-raising from 50 yards.

Having brought a bit of colour and life to Cockermouth cemetery, we headed for the old railway footpath. The FRB's were initially reigned-in by a string of devilish fish-hooks, although Leopard-Thong soon suffered a bout of selective blindness. The pack weaved its way down to the Cocker and into Harris park where the runners were caught-out by the arrival of some of the 'elite walkers' - the combination of fish-hooks and stealth flour dabs really seemed to be working - which was just as well since the hares had decided to break from tradition, and out of pure laziness (and a little bit of mischief) had decided that everyone would have to make-do with a single route.

The walkers and runners soon started to split once we made our way along Brigham Road, and dropped-down through the immaculately block-paved 'Bimmer Mansions' - we then headed across the river and past the old shoe factory. Rocky decided that the park toilets would be a great On-In, although the whole detour set some of us wondering about whether this was inspired by the exploits of George Michael, or should that be Baden Powell?

A very pleasing loop through picturesque fields followed, revealing rare vistas of Cockermouth Castle as we trotted through the park, and eventually back over the bridge and through a warren of side-streets which eventually led to a 'beer and birthday cake stop' at the Bitter End. (Thanks to Sloppy for the cake).

The walkers weren't far behind, but it soon transpired that they'd opted-out of what must've been the best part of the last third of the route, but they didn't seem to have enjoyed it any less for that!

Anyway, that's all folks! see you in October.

Mr Sheen

