

Hash Report

Run 277– Black Horse, Ireby, 7th May 2018

Hares – Rent Boy and Tricky Ticker Tyke

The sky above the hills was the colour of a television tuned to somewhere usually much sunnier, as a band of some nine hashers gathered in the 'Square' of Ireby on what would be the first (of 2) gloriously sunny Bank Holidays in May. Will this be like the summer of 1976 again (before my time, but apparently quite hot), or the other aspect of the summer of 1976, where we failed to reach the European Cup Finals? Time will tell on both accounts, but onwards with our tale...

The pre-hash brief was simple enough, three blobs and you're on, any crosses and you're not. Beware the muddy field and the creosote gate - which may have got the Hare twice?? – oh, bad luck, Hare! Yours truly felt lucky and set off in almost completely the wrong direction for a quarter of a mile before deciding the Hare was highly unlikely to set a starting trail that long and the two blobs seen must have been some sort of coincidence. Eventually reuniting with the others who looked puzzled at the almost instant disappearance of one of the hounds.

It was then due east and up the hill - through a private garden (via a footpath) with homeowners concerned at the sudden appearance of a half dozen loons festooned in brightly-coloured lycra on their lawn on a usually quiet Sunday morning. They attempted to be helpful with leading questions (where are you going to? *Sorry, no idea! Who are you with? We're following a trail.... Have you seen a lady running down this way?* Yes, she went that way, but the footpath goes the other way...) Once again Plum Tart had managed to quietly get ahead of us all whilst appearing not to move at all. Safely through a field or three, we went down a thin road (they're all thin near Ireby, but this was positively anorexic) to a field entrance where a footpath sign caught my eye, almost speaking to me 'come this way...'

However said checkpoint led only to a single dot in what was apparently the biggest field in Cumbria. After some tentative scanning one hasher went for the stile at the top and, lo!, found the next blob some three hundred yards distant. Perhaps flour was still rationed when the hare was a child?

Now whoever owns the next field obviously missed the lectures at AgCol about not keeping heavy stock in waterlogged fields over winter.... What should have been a simple meadow looked like a pockmarked quagmire. They must have to jetwash the cows' udders off once they'd managed to dig them out is all I can say. Still, it is a truth universally acknowledged that a lonely hill in possession of a good amount of shiggy must be in want of a group of hashers to run over it (or through it?..), and so we did and felt much better for the free mud pack on the way.

Later research suggests we were then at a place called 'Wat Riggs' though 'Wat ya doing??' may have been more appropriate. Yours truly was somehow at the front again, and remembering it's easier to run downhill rather than up, carried on regardless, this time to the start of a grassy lonning. Some tarmac had been seen here once, but now the ruts were a foot deep in places – someone in highways

should surely fix that! Random checkpoints on the route led into small fields with no exits and were quickly ignored.

At the top the course took a turn past a pile of rubble near Bintree hill, though the keen-eyed would have spotted a quarry in the background with two of best-preserved lime kilns seen in these parts in front, proudly standing some 25 feet high and neatly tucked into a natural scarp. Further round the corner more small, well-kept kilns were seen before the team followed the road down, around the bends and into a field leading further downhill. Having avoided High Ireby we also avoided Ruthwaite and a quick cross-country track led on to Uldale Mill Farm, complete with a photo stop with the world's friendliest pet lamb, before a few minutes contemplation within the walls of the picturesque St James chapel.

Any sensible hash route would then have gone straight back to Ireby, and indeed Plum Tart did just that, the rest of us followed the path on until Rocky said to me 'it leads on to Aughteree'. 'Looks quite far really', says I – thankfully we both got each other's hint and found the others cascading across a field eventually leading towards a deadly steep bank near Ellen View Farm and thence across the river. After a shoe wash it was ON IN back to the square and the other people there, The Black Lion providing refreshments afterwards and two more joining us for lunch.

Overall a most enjoyable Hash in the bright sunshine with plenty of interesting things to see en route, thank you Rent Boy and Tricky Ticker Tyke.

ON ON!

Sweat Monster