

# Holme Moss: Runner No 134 reports back

After running the Three Yorkshire Peaks two weeks before, I was feeling very optimistic that not only could I finish this race, but that I could do it in less than four hours. Conversations at the pack run both eroded and reinforced this optimism, depending of course on who I was listening to!

I arrived in good time so as to avoid the car parking problem, picked up my number and got changed. I then milled about waiting for all the rest of the Tod Harriers contingent to turn up. I had a long wait, only four others turned up (note 1). The start was looming and as it was really warm I filled my 2 litre camelpack to the top, had a good drink of the free isotonic stuff and made my way to the start. Where was everyone? It turned out there was only 101 starters, not many based on my limited previous experience.

A little brief by the starter (note 2) and we were off. My strategy was to start slowly and get slower, unless of course I felt good and then I would go a bit quicker after the half way point. Needless to say the feel good bit didn't happen as I had drunk far too much of the isotonic stuff and felt ready to burst. By the half way mark I realised that the four hour target was in jeopardy so decided to press on a bit harder so I could at least finish in daylight. Another incentive to press on was the lack of flagging, I hadn't a clue where I was going so keeping the people in front was imperative. At this point there was nobody behind me that I could see, and in parts you can see a long way.

At the top of yet another hideous climb I was met by a couple of marshals who cheerily directed me to the next checkpoint, a tent on a distant hill, anyone with less than 20/20 would now be scuppered, tiny tent b....y miles away." Don't go too far to the right" I was cautioned (note 3), "why? I asked, "Cliffs" came the reply, brilliant thought I.

On the way to the tiny orange speck that was a marshals tent I caught sight of the familiar white head of our own Peter Erhart, at least a mile in front but I was closing on him. The tent was at the top of yet another stiff climb that must have been the last straw for some as I made the first of my overtaking moves, at least I was not last any more. Having got past our Peter is was time to drive home the advantage of the overtaking feelgood factor and push on for some more scalps. In the distance I could see the slight figure of a lady runner, couldn't allow a mere slip of a lass to beat me so I dug a bit deeper into my energy reserves and was instantly rewarded with such intense thigh cramps it would have killed a civvy, I fell flat on my face. No amount of deep breathing or drinking from my camelpack made any difference, some five minutes later I was still in agony, at this rate all my efforts would be undone all the people I had overtaken would be coming past me. Deep breathing and water had not helped, the only other thing I had with me apart from the whistle was a GO Gell. I swallowed the Go Gel and within a minute was on my feet chasing the lady runner again ( note 4).

At three quarters distance there was a drinks station, from here I could see how far I still had to go, in view of the previous cramps I decided to settle just for a finish and set of for the finish. The last stretch was all my nightmares rolled into one "down hill tussocks" I was convinced I was going to break a leg or worse. Finally the tussocks finished and we were on a track where I could use my very last bit of energy and run to the finish, I even managed to run up the little hill to the finish to applause, this brought a smile to my face until I realised it was one of the winners, I had finished just in time to witness the tail end of the prize giving.

Holme Moss, harder than I thought! Will I do it next year? Yes

## Notes:

- 1) My previous race, the Hendon Brook only had a few more Tod Harriers! Something is obviously putting people off the races I choose to do, as yet the only identifiable common denominator is me!!!!
- 2).I heard nothing of the starters brief because lots of people around me had more important things to say!
- 3) Just what does" don't go too far to the right "actually mean?
- 4) Only a personal opinion but I think GO Gells work better in your belly than in your pocket!

- Stuart Bolton

Grand Prix dates changed

Stainland 7 from 3/9/06 to Sunday 17th September

Thieveley pike now one week later on 30th September.