

## Hyde Park Relays 2011 - Report

It all started on the Friday evening thanks to a fantastic pasta party laid on by the Whimberry Wimps. Much fun was had all round. Kev kicked off proceedings by challenging everyone in sight to a 'cup of DRY pasta' race. This idea fortunately never hit full fruition; it was a close call though, especially the night before the race - those meddlesome pasties just can't be trusted. Anyway, many tubes of penne later and everyone was pretty much stuffed. The garlic bread was polished off and the group of 15 or so people had delved a good 10% or so into the industrial amounts of pasta that had been shipped in for the event.

Then some more of the girls arrived each brandishing gifts of their own. First up was a slice of chocolate cake for everyone, and again Kev's attempts at organising some form of race failed to materialise. This was followed by a very scrummy, but incredibly tough Rocky Road. Tough in the sense that it took 3 "burly" men the best part of 15 minutes of ice picking away at it to come away with any results. It was about as stuck as Mike Holden is to the Pub - very. Nonetheless, the food was a great success and everyone was fully carbed up for the following day. It was at this point that the games began. And Gooch shocked us all with his attempts at drawing for his Pictionary quiz. Cries of 'That is NOT a ram' could be heard throughout the neighbourhood as round after round provided us with squiggles of nonsensical rubbish. If only Mr. Picasso was around these days the two of them would've made a great double act. Inter Yanan came out on top although marking became a bit suspect as the game slowly transcended into a round of charades.

This was when the real fun started. Some re-enactments were cottoned onto instantly, with the likes of Kerrie, Razmatazz and Jeremy Kyle being identified almost straight away. However some, such as Brydon's pacman, took a lot lot longer to guess. Either way there was no doubt about the (undisputed) best act of the night; that award most certainly goes to Benedikt for his 'Only Gay in the Village' performance. Displaying a stern face which he kept throughout, he pranced around the room and kept everyone in hysterics for absolutely bloody ages. Tears were streaming down some people's faces – it was that good.

Once Tom had recovered from a sexual move by Benedikt (strictly during the act), he then suffered an equally bad fate when losing in the word association round. This resulted in him having to eat a cold leftover tea bag: safe to say, it didn't go down well. The other two highlights from W.A. were: a) Rich Tea's 'Melons!' to kick start a round, and b) Harvey's complete lack of sense when it came round to his turn, in particular his Shark Week outburst. We now know just how much he loves that programme. All in all, it was a smashing night and something which needs to be done more in the future, even Monica managed to avoid any alcohol (we think).

We all met up at Sainsbury's bright and early. A lot of the guys were very helpful in the sorting out of minibuses as we had a large group of people travelling down and minibuses were particularly hard to get hold of (and then keep). The original bad news regarding a few injury dropouts did have somewhat of a silver lining as it meant everyone who wanted to run and even a couple of others who fancied going down were all able to squeeze in. The minibus quiz got underway on the journey

down, and some preposterous answers were to be heard. For example, Tom suggesting that the world record for a 100 year old man running 100m is 15 seconds. Enid Blyton vs. Beatrix Potter was also a source of bother for some, and Gooch's made up US state of Indeoniana was just plain silly. Harvey somehow avoided his bogey prize of running an extra leg in the relays although this has been duly noted. In fairness, he was ousted by a single point, and having not been there to hear the first song in the minibus (question 54), judge's discretion may possibly let him off. Final results were a bit up in the air, with team Sporting Lesbian claiming to take the victory ahead of Trist, Daz and Tom. Attempts at a tie breaker were futile. There was not chance to distribute prizes properly but I do have some gear to give away so if you feel you were in with a shout, pop along to the Euro Champs Party on 6<sup>th</sup> March (my house) and we can try to sort you out with something. Either way the results were incredibly close with the top 5 teams being separated by just 3 points.

Having managed to make it to London safe and sound, there was a bit of a rush to get the numbers over to the first leg runners in time. This however was managed and Matt Grant ran a storming first leg for the men's A team. Tristram strutted his stuff and Katie also put in a very strong performance. We were off to a good start. Even Manuel got involved in the fun, meeting us down there to jump in a leg or two. The 2<sup>nd</sup> leg proved to be a very good leg for our squad with Bradford and Benedikt running the fastest legs out of their respective teams; and in the girls, Kerrie matched Katie's time to bring the ladies up to 8<sup>th</sup> whilst in the B we jumped up an impressive 7 spots to 17<sup>th</sup> place. They then backed this up with a couple more solid races and with that they ended up taking 14<sup>th</sup> position overall. The A team held their position following Captain Kez's leg and took 8<sup>th</sup> place which certainly deserves some plaudit. The men's A team performed equally well as Harvey, Joe and Dhrup stretched their legs round the course, all recording very respectable times. We crossed the line in 10<sup>th</sup> place which in a competitive field of over 600 runners wasn't bad going at all. Take away St. Mary's (those blue-haired norses with the made up degrees) and we would've hopped up to 6<sup>th</sup>. Gooch thought he had meticulously planned it out, but did in fact get caught walking for the B-team – good work Grace - and with that he foiled his chances of not being the slowest in his team. Top praise goes out to Ben who clocked a good time and in doing so took over a whole 14 people on just the one leg. Well done to the rest of the team who all ran similar times to give themselves a 21<sup>st</sup> place finish. The mixed team of past and present were hot on their heels though and claimed 28<sup>th</sup> place. Congratulations to all who ran, everyone did a really good job and did the club proud. Thanks too to Rich and Grace for the support and photography.

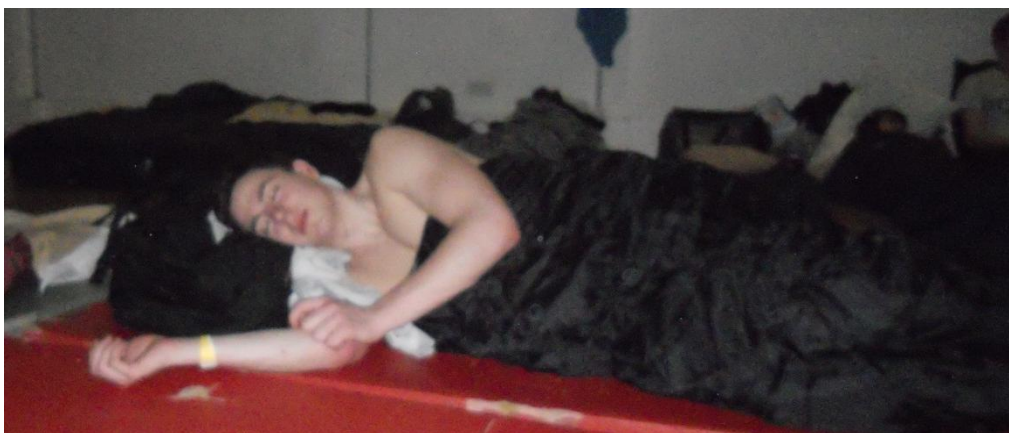


Following the race, the mighty Alehouse put their wit to good use showering then eating in quick succession to ensure we got in there well before everyone else. 50 jacket potatoes and doughnuts later we were ready to rock and roll. We just about managed to co-ordinate the unloading of 3 minibuses worth of gear and found a stock room to shove all our stuff. Echoes of 'Guys, seriously, guys' failed to speed up the process.

There was a closely fought battle between Harvey and Grace in a beer race, Harvey just taking it on the line. And I then threw half a pint down my front struggling to keep up with my arm which was tipping a bit too fast. But feeling good and jolly, we hit up the dance room, first off for the presentation. We were disappointed not to receive a prize for the Best University from the North West region who had orange or purple vests and who had travelled down in three separate vehicles that same day. But we still managed a bit of an applause for the Outdoor team from Imperial who claimed the best internal non-running team award.

After a quick trip to a local 'Old Mans' pub, we headed back to the Union to dance the night away. And that was certainly what we did. Having felt a bit headachey and tired earlier, Abdi had some food or something and got a ridiculous second wind, hitting the dancefloor with incredible zeal. This resulted in the whole team being led on congas and all sorts. Harvey was having the time of his life, and alongside his (some have mentioned the word camp) dance actions, memories of him squirting water from his cheeks will transport everyone back to that moment in time. Gooch and I felt a tad awkward after we started a limbo competition using our arms as the bar when after a few rounds a small person walked pretty much straight underneath without realising. Later on, Feehally and I did Jackie proud having an A-position-off in the middle of the dancefloor, Kerrie was performing some rather inappropriate acts though so we had to call it a draw. We'll keep it under wraps but the famous A-position did come under some criticism. I won't mention any names, but we'll call the person Mr Branny Dadford. This person was heard suggesting that it looked more like an H. Make of that what you will... Anyway after hours of banging tunes and a final 5 minutes up on the stage, we retired to our bedroom.

Unfortunately our bedroom was a gym floor with about 50 people already sprawled across it. But we made ourselves at home and after a lot of light switching, snoring, saying no to Monica, chatting, moaning, 'Harvey looking for his pet hamster'ing, we eventually got a few hours' sleep in.



8 O'clock was the wake up time and before long we'd all had a good breakfast inside us courtesy of the lovely café next to the cheese shop. Then we had the greatly anticipated trip to the museum.

Here, Tom was wowed with anything to do with engineering and the rest of us headed to the 'interactive zone'. Turned out it was for 3-6 year olds but that didn't stop us. After Harvey reluctantly refused to pay a tenner to visit the shark world, we trudged on spotting my very own cooker stuck behind a pane of glass as some kind of ancient artefact. I defended it dearly. Benedikt was heard saying 'It's huge' whilst looking at an absolutely ginormous fighter plane, and everybody agreed.

Eventually after a lot of tired legs had had enough, we got into our buses and made our way back. Joe was still furious that he'd had to pay near £2 for a 99'er. Tom got quite tired on the way back and so Gooch and I sacrificed our throats and sung him awake again. 'Who are you' livened things up a lot although the people on the streets lacked any form of response. There was a similar lack of interest from our signs which we held up in the windows. This was in contrast to on the journey up however where our 'pop your top' and 'flash your gash (please)' signs were a real hit with the ladies. We tried 'Honk if you're horny' and 'We'll change gear if you show us ya rear', but to no avail. We took a 30 mile diversion to visit an almighty Tesco Extra (one of the biggest in the country), and Tom Phoebe was speechless.

In conclusion, it was a super weekend with lots and lots of highlights. Thanks to everyone for coming, and can I please big up the Isle of Man. Get that flight or that ferry booked, the prices are only going to go up.

See everyone round soon,

The Loz Dog Millionaire.