

The Full Yorkshireman 2008

It's probably best NOT to be eating whilst reading this....

The low heather brushed against the outside of my leg. I felt pleasure, pleasure for the first time in hours. Normally bracken, heather, small bushes, whatever, are too abrasive and to be avoided. Yet I was being drawn to them. It was actually quite sensual. I brushed my legs again....and again.

Even in my drowsy, lack of blood to the brain, confusion, it was easy to work it out. Simply the heather was brushing off the layers of farm yard silage and cowpats that had splashed onto my legs.

Every field seemed to be a quagmire, with cowpats everywhere. That cloud of fresh aroma that we all know, escaping like Billy Fartpants on Beans. The drier fields were no better as you avoid the fresh cowpats only to land in some well matured vintage ones. I'm still confused on whether this was better than the paths/gateways full of sloppy slurry.

Dried mud on legs niggles to start with, but then feels like you've got a fly on your leg. I've tried to train the mind to ignore such wrong signals, but eventually it feels like the fly is eating away ones leg. I'm pathetically weak in these circumstances.

I'd scratch my legs only to realise what I was scratching. I've got sh*t up to my knees, I've now got sh*t over my fingers. I'm starring at my mucky fingers telling myself off. It's so pungent I could smell it. Sadly I know that moments later I'll be using these same fingers to feed myself biscuits and jelly babies. Still it was okay as I hygienically wiped my fingers on my shorts.

The off road marathon is really quite good. It's been on my books for ages, and I'm pleased to have done it. Do it next year if only for the heather sensation, and if it's dry, do it because it's a great course, well organised and marshalled.

....and whilst we at the pub (yes we were surprisingly allowed in after the race) the sun came out, as it always does in Haworth apparently.

Pale Rider (NB I should be safe to approach since I've had a bath since running the race)

Yorkshireman or Scouser?

This was my first attempt at this event and I really enjoyed it. The organisation was excellent, and the course was varied and well marked. I made a very steady start, if anything a little too steady, but quickened the pace a little after three miles. At least the steady start meant that I felt fairly comfortable until the last 30 minutes or so of the race. Chris Preston was at the final food station and gave me some encouragement as well as a piece of cake.

As for the mud, yes there was a lot of it, mostly in combination with cow s***t. Pale Rider writes graphically about his dirty legs, clothes and hands, but he was lucky. Despite wiping my hands on my shorts I DID manage to get some muck into my mouth at some point. I know this because I spent most of the next 2 days being violently ill (I'll spare you the graphic details), and spent nearly a week surviving on dry toast and water. Of course I'll be back next year, but I must remember to take a bottle of Dettol with me.

Last year Colin used this race in an attempt to confirm his standing as a true Yorkshireman. My problem is that I really am an offcomer, and worse than that a Scouser! Even with 17yrs residence in this glorious county I don't think I have any chance. Perhaps I need some regression therapy to restore my Scouse accent and way of life? Just make sure after the next pack run you count the wheels on your car.

Strider