

# LONDON MARATHON

Just returned from sunny London. Yes I had a really good time-it was definately hot and close especially in the middle part of the race but the crowd support was absolutely fantastic!!

There were people cheering,singing,clapping etc virtually the whole way!This time I had my name on my top and seem to spend the whole race hearing my name and waving!(Most of the time it was John.P-I do not know how he got so quick round the course(unless perhaps he was cycling!!)Thanks John I really appreciated it.

I kept pretty strictly to my pace-until about mile 21 when the tarmac started to eat my legs!!By then it became all about finishing rather than a specific time.There were some fabulous outfits-I got overtaken by a carrot,a couple of smurfs,male fairies,Darthvader etc.How well would they run without their costumes?Trust me a vest top was plenty.

The atmosphere is what makes it!!-I did have a very hassly time getting to the start I set out at 6.30am!!The train from London Bridge stopped in a tunnel-I made it to Blackheath with only 20 minutes to go-most people were on the startline(Stressful stuff especially as I like being early!)

I finally saw the boys and Russ on Birdcage Walk(mile 25.5) and they were there at the end with a picnic and some more London friends who had come along to soak up the atmosphere.(There were so many of us in a group Chris and Johnny which is why we did not see you at the "W", the boys were also desperate for the picnic!!)

When I finished and I saw the number of poor collapsed people and queues for St John's Ambulance I was just pleased I had trained fairly hard and managed to get round without any niggles!!No doubt I will stiff as a board tomorrow but so far so good!!

Well done to everyone who ran-I am now trying to decide whether I am up for it again next year??

I am really grateful to anyone who kindly sponsored me-hopefully I will make about £800 for Breast Cancer.

Mel B

## Grand prix blog

So, another couple of races gone by and I missed most of them, Coniston coming up as I write and my new learned Hill climbing technique will be put in to practice, we'll see. As for bagging the coveted Fell G P trophy, I have not considered some serious issues... competition from some of the unwitting and willful cruel and selfish runner – namely any of those in the club faster than me on any particular race day! These insufferable characters will just have to watch as I improve my technique and off the back of fell and mountain training hints from fellow runners, and scoot past them to claim more points towards the end of the year. At least that's the plan. Well good luck everyone at Coniston, especially me as long as I don't go and get swine flu and die it should be a great weekend having a right knees up in tents with all the lovely Toddies (Including the fast ones...) Mr Blogger.

## Turning Japanese - an excerpt from the Forum

I was taken walking up the local hill to pick fern shoots by my next door neighbour. He is 72, but the men round here don't do old age. We went up a steep zigzag for 20 minutes, then he plunged through some trees and stood on the edge of the kind of steep, loose, unstable earth slope that it's safe to say you will never find on an Alan Greenwood race. Off he went down it, sliding and hanging on to saplings, and slipping 15ft or so at the bottom with no ill effects. An hour picking wild food, then on with the heavily laden iron-framed rucsac and back up the slope, hanging on to the saplings and heaving up. I think I understood his gestures to say that he had given up smoking because he had a big operation- he mimed a big incision down his belly then pulling it apart. He is one of the younger generation here. He gave me a tool belt to wear with a big retractable stanley blade and a big fuck off cleaver which looked like it would take your arm off. It adds a certain unusual frisson to fannying about on 45 degree slopes. The cleaver is for in case you meet a bear. I think I am going to get one. I fancy seeing that on a kit check: 'Sorry mate, you can't start the race – go away and come back with something dangerously sharp.'

Geoff Read