

Kielder Marathon 2010

Lesley & I set off to Kielder very early on Sunday with honorary striders Simon & Ian (Ian masquerading as young lady named Rachel, but say no more). Arrived at Kielder dam to find a huge queue to get into the car park with double decker buses doing 3 point turns and lots of grumpy runners trying to get to the start.

The race start was delayed by 20 mins so that all the runners could get to the start, but by that time the sun was shining and Kielder was looking really beautiful ...but did we really have to run all the way round to appreciate it fully?

The route was pretty simple – from Leaplish it followed the lakeside path clockwise around the lake. The first section up to Kielder Castle was a fairly flat start – great to see Sally, Molly and Gill cheering us on from the bridge (Thanks!) Once past Kielder Castle, the path along the north side of the lake seemed very long, with lots of hills and as there is no road on that side of the lake, there were no spectators for a very long stretch. Still, the views were great and I felt really comfortable all the way along to the dam which is at around 17 miles.

Lots of supporters at the dam helped to lift spirits and after the turn back towards Leaplish it felt as though I was on the last lap. Big mistake! Around 22 miles I started suffering from cramp on every uphill section which I just couldn't run through. Someone gave me a drink and I passed on the offer of a lift back to Leaplish (tempting though it was) and struggled on through it. Managed to get it together again after about another mile and finished in reasonably good shape. My time was 4 hrs 26 and Lesley 4 hrs 59. We're both really pleased with the times given the hilly course.

Overall, a really tough race, but one which I would recommend.

Claire Collinson



