

Pier to Pier 16th May 2010

Having for once managed to get up in good time I arrived at the finish in Sunderland, at about 8.45, to get the bus to the start in South Shields.

Sitting on the bus to Shields it feels you're travelling a lot further than the 7 miles the race is! When we arrived there was still over an hour until the start of the race and not much to do other than hang around the car park looking out for familiar faces. No sign of either Julian or Andrew at this point but plenty of other friends to pass the time away with.

On the way to the start met Julian and we made our way to the beach. Thankfully the tide was well out so there was plenty of hard sand to run on. Although in some places it was heavily ridged and I was wary of turning my ankle again. Julian headed away from the sea with me going in the opposite direction. It was a bit of a relief to get off the beach onto the coastal path but the bit in between can be leg sapping because of the incline and soft sand.

The run then meanders along the Leas towards Marsden Grotto then onto Souter Lighthouse and the water station. By this time it was quite warm and sunny so the water was very welcome. After passing the back of Whitburn shooting range, the route crosses a couple of fields, taking you onto the promenade at Seaburn. At this point I was beginning to tire slightly but was happy that there was no niggle from the dodgy hamstring (the hours sports massage on Wednesday must have worked!).

Rounding the lighthouse at the end of the promenade, the finish line is in sight across another expanse of beach. I crossed the line in 59.57 (my watch time) with Julian, who had an ankle mishap on the Leas, finishing in 63.45 (my adjusted time). He'll tell you he finished in 55 minutes but as he didn't start his watch until after the first beach this is slightly misleading!! ☺

David Reed