

2011 Tynedale 10 Mile Jelly Tea Road Race - 4th September 2011

Eleven Striders arrived in Hexham on a bright and sunny Sunday morning more or less ready to do the Tynedale 10-mile run – the ‘Jelly Tea Race’ as it is still known to regulars. There was an assortment of pre-race excuses, among the better ones being ‘I was at a hen do last night’; ‘I feel sick’; and ‘I’m just back from holiday in Sardinia’ (I’ll spare the owners of those three examples the embarrassment of naming them). My own was that I had been at an 80th birthday party the day before, and the host had been generous with both wine and food.

I’d promised Katharine Russell that I would pace make and keep her company on her first attempt at the distance. She was keen not only to make it to Ovingham in one piece but also to do it in under two hours. Garmin’s were programmed, loo queues were negotiated, and the walk to the start line completed. We found Julie lurking in the pack about three quarters of the way back, so we joined her, leaving the faster members of the club to shoot off from nearer the front.

We discussed race tactics. We would try not to go much faster than 11 minute miles or much slower than 12 minute miles. (You see, there was a point to mental arithmetic at school after all.) We would not be put off by the fact that there were more people ahead of us than behind us. We would not be averse to walking if need be. We would keep each other going with chat and banter. And so it was.

As we reached Corbridge we cheered on Stocksfield Griffins, who were busy holding The Wheatsheaf to a draw in a 10-goal thriller (what do you think this is, The Sun? – Ed.). We were cheered on ourselves by a coachload of Belgians who presumably had nothing better to do. We then lost precious seconds when we got stuck behind a slow-moving Vauxhall Zafira. Then it was up the long hill, which we managed with less trouble than we had feared.

A welcome water station marked the half-way mark at Styford, more or less the high point of the course. Then it was downhill all the way to Bywell, where Katharine’s family and friends were out in force and where another water station was doing good business. Finally the long haul to Ovingham, a very slight reduction in pace up that steep bank and then a passable attempt at a sprint finish spurred on by some of the faster Striders, who cheered us into the grounds of the Middle School, where jelly and tea (and sandwiches) awaited.

Oh, I nearly forgot – well done to Katharine, who smashed through the two-hour target time with four minutes to spare (or five, by our timepieces) and posted a PB over the course and distance. Don’t forget that she’s doing the Great North Run on 18 September in aid of Tynedale Hospice at Home. It’s a really good cause, so if you haven’t already sponsored her there’s still time to do so by visiting <http://www.justgiving.com/Katharine-Russell10>

Julian

Results

LEAT, David	1:13:37
HINDMARSH, Philip	1:14:17
MOORE, Andrew	1:16:47
WATSON, Paul	1:16:53
REED, David	1:23:46
HOLMES, Linda	1:25:34
BROWN, Lyn	1:27:14
RICHARDSON, Lesley	1:35:06
STOVES ROBSON, Julie	1:42:14
RUSSELL, Katherine	1:56:02
BATES, Julian	1:56:02