

Gibside 5 Fun Run - 22nd April 2012

I decided to enter all the family, that's me, Mark & Max (aged 7) in the Gibside 5, after there was a flyer in Max's school bag. It is organised by the parents of a little boy with Muscular Dystrophy who attends Broomley pre-school, raising money for The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign. <http://www.gibsidefunrun.co.uk/>

I thought it would be a nice introduction to a race for Max, with it being a 5k run & also good to support a local family. A few days before the run I realised that the run was in fact 5 miles, not 5k! Ooops!

We arrived at Gibside in plenty of time (those who know me, know I do like to be prompt!) & we met the mum & got our t-shirts to run in. She told me that if we were struggling that there was a short cut which reduced the run to 3 ½ miles. Max & I decided that we would see how we were feeling at the short cut & if we were tired we would take it. A lot of people were starting to arrive, some of whom who looked like 'proper runners', but the majority were fun runners, parent with children of all ages and many of them were in fancy dress.

We all set off down to the start (which I realised was a bad omen at Gibside). The dad gave a short safety talk and a thank you for all attending. The atmosphere around the run was great, with some running all the way and the majority of us walking up the hills. There were some pushing babies in pushchairs & others with their dogs, but everyone was encouraging each other. We ran most of the way being overtaken by Mario and also Scooby & Shaggy and then re-overtaking them! I quickly realised that, other than the beginning we were in fact following the route of the Gibside Fruit Bowl (which I'd said I'd never do again!).

Max did really well and when we got to the short cut he opted to continue and when we ran right up to the highest point of Gibside a roe deer ran alongside us! The weather was kind to us for most of the run, until we ran up from the river & the heavens opened & it absolutely poured down, so when we ran alongside the avenue to the finish line & we were soaked.

But what a sense of achievement for Max, who had completed 5 miles in 68 minutes, which I don't think was at all bad, considering he has little legs & there are some massive hills at Gibside. I also enjoyed it, as I've been struggling with my running recently – it did make me wonder if I might do the Fruit Bowl again – you never know! I would certainly do this run again and can highly recommend it to fellow Striders (with or without children!).

Also as well of the t-shirt to run in we also got a goody bag of home baking at the end - which was delicious!

Katharine Russell

