

THE NORTHBROOK

runner

editor. Jerry Murland



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The Bolton Beast. or how I ran the ADDIDAS BRITISH

Sunday 8.00 am. The idea of running the Addidas Marathon didn't seem such a bright idea

10.15 am. It was windy, cold and promising rain, the finish was muddy and we only just managed to park close to the finish in spite of a protest from the local boys in blue (more about that later).....

10.30 am. Jog to the start line...NOBBY in his Burton's Binliner and INGLE with that funny accent that made him sound like a local...FRED CADDEN looked like a flag (with KEN PUFFET as the pole?)....and me....well I wished I had kept my hair long, my ears were freezing.!!!

10.50 am. Prerace butterflies, lots of talk and Jimmy Saville posing for the cameras.

11.00 a.m. We're away....26.2 miles to go..KEN, NOBBY and INGLE for company and the first mile gone in 7½ minutes.....

11.35 am. First 5 miles gone and fairly easy...pace seemed suicidal with 21 miles still to go!

12.10 pm. 10 miles down and going steadily downhill on the A6.....with the thought that its got to start going uphill sometime at the back of my mind..KEN was still with me as paceman..and and NOBBY behind somewhere.

1.04 pm. 17 miles..been on the road for just over 2 hours and NOBBY right on our tail.....
(he's like that...sneaky. Ed.)

1.10 pm. Turn left towards Bolton and the road starts to climb...slowly at first, but it was there....still with KEN and NOBBY.....

1.21 pm. 20 miles. Dropped a minute on the last 10 (71 mins)....still well on for sub 3.30... but it's starting to be hard work now.

1.30 pm. Just over 21 miles, KEN has pushed on ahead and I begin to dig in hard, NOBBY is a bit behind by now...but not much.....

1.30 pm and beyond..... The pain, the hill and the glory

From 21 miles it became a bit of a struggle to keep the pace, PLODDER LANE was getting nearer and I was getting tireder. 23 miles, turn left...up a bit...slight swing right...then the signpost.....

PLODDER LANE

Whoever named that road was a prophet. From the start to 18 miles we thought the general downhill nature of the course made plodder lane worse than it was....we were wrong...it is just a hill, but it's 2 miles long just when you don't need it. It is about as steep as Wall Hill Road from 23 to 25 miles it never levels out but it's GREAT!! Lined from end to end with crowds both sides of the road offering everything from drinks of every description to chocolate bars to.....(this item was censored.Ed.) Mums ,Dads Kids all clapping and encouraging you to keep on going..... and you can't let them down can you? Slowly, steadily the yards go by. A drink here and a drink there as I passed body after body....(where was NOBBY? Ed.) NOBBY.... behind somewhere but close enough to keep me running. At the top the road levels for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile and you think its over..... but its not... turn into Smethurst Lane and it's STAIRCASE at nearly 26 miles !!!!!!! Not as long as PLODDER but as painful. Fields on either side and me wondering where the finish was as I couldn't see any houses..... Over the top and immediately in front are rows and rows of Coronation Streets with the finish tannoy drifting over the rooftops.... nearly there. The rest is a blur, just a clock at the end of a sea of faces..... 3.18.11

AFTERMATH 1. While we were running the police moved FRED'S van with LIN still inside! They brought it back when LIN told them she was lost.

AFTERMATH 2. On the way back we stopped at a service station, when the girl on the till got stroppy FRED asked to see the manager... she was the manager.... (what did you ask her Fred? Ed.)

COMMENTS.

INGLE(3.48.20) " I was looking around up Plodder Lane for a joint for my Sunday Tea, there was that much food and drink about"

NOBBY(3.21.58) " I almost stopped and had a sit down on Plodder but I didn't want to upset WINDSOR too much"

Gary Clarke.

Viv would like to thank Babs and Tony for the £50 raised the POP Quiz night that has been donated to the children's party fund.

A modest account from JOE of some of his achievements as one of the great Midland Vet' runners. To my way of thinking Joe is ephitome of what runniong is all about and his example is something many of us admire.

"... After being badgered by my friends i've decided to enlighten you on some of my achievements whilst being a Veteran Runner. Having retired from competition at the ripe old age of 47 I joined the Midland Veterans. It's been the best move I ever made, I've always enjoyed running since the age of 12, but never have I had such pride and pleasure as I had in winning every Midland Vet Cross Country race in every 5 year age group. At Leamington in 1972 I won the over 50s and again in 1976 I was in the first team in the Intercounties Road Race. In 1977 I was 3rd. in the National CC Championship (over 55s). In 1982 I was 2nd. in the 10k. race held in Leamington (this was in the over 60s category) and in i982 I ran in the Stone Marathon in the Over 60s with my slowest time ever, 3.48.49.

I've competed in 26 marathons, my first at Peterborough in 2.48.49. That was before becoming a Vet. Some of my other middle distance times and races. Finchley 20 2.09. the Oxford 10 55 mims, Wolverhampton to Staffs Road Race (15 miles) 1.27.30.

You youngsters in the club can achieve a lot! The club has given me hours of pleasant company and and weary bones, so thanks to all the friends that help keep me and themselves breathless and fit.



MASSEY FERGUSON

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9. October, 1985.

Dear Jerry,

I must first apologise for the delay in replying to your letter. I have recently succeeded Terry Lawson as secretary. Terry forwarded your letter to me, and it was discussed during our recent monthly meeting. Your concept of an inter-club venture along the lines of the 'Nike Classic' Series is an interesting idea, and one which could do much to further running in Coventry. Also being a unique opportunity for the Coventry clubs to collaborate, as you describe. Obviously, the committee had a few reservations, but in general agreed we would be pleased to enter into exploratory discussions between the clubs. Recently and over the next two weeks, we shall be very involved with organising our 'Powerpart 10' 27 oct. (hope Northbrook will be participating.) Though personally I shall be running in the Dublin marathon. (another clash of dates) that week-end. We would be pleased to arrange a date to discuss these ideas after this month. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours Faithfully,

KEVIN LENEHAN
Secretary M.F.R.C.

SUBS ARE DUE
 NOW, IF YOU
 HAVE NOT PAID
 BY NOW YOU
 ARE OVERDUE
 AND KEN WILL
 BE GLARING
 AT YOU.

STOP PRESS

COVENTRY
 MARATHON.
 WELL DONE TO
 ALL CLUB
 RUNNERS
 WHO RAN, OR
 WALKED !!!

The unending road

TODAY, Britain's most durable marathon runner, Ron Hill, will re-trace history and make a little of his own. For when he runs the classic route from Marathon to Athens in company with 2,000 others, he will be completing his 100th marathon. It may take him half-an-hour longer than in 1969, when he won the European Championship on the same course, but he still has ambition. "When you stop striving for something," he says, "you start to die."

So today, with his beard freshly shaved off and his hair crew-cut, as it was in 1969; and with his wife and his parents, and Stan Bradshaw from his club, all present as they were then, he will be able to re-live his day of days. A chance at last to turn back the clock, in one sense at least. "They offered me the number 223 to wear in the race, the same as in 1969," he says. "But I chose 100 instead. It seemed more appropriate."

Fifteen years ago, when the marathon was still considered quirky and unglamorous, Hill was the world's number one. He was European and Commonwealth champion, and record-holder at 2hr 9min 28sec and the first Briton to win at Boston. His world best for 20 miles, incidentally, remains unsurpassed.

"I wish I still had those capabilities now," he says, "because I reckon I could have held my own with anybody. Probably only Carlos Lopes; if his world best of 2:7.12 proves to have been on an accurate course, would have beaten me, because I believe I was capable then of just under 2:8."

Hill's biggest disappointment was failing to win the 1972 Munich Olympic Marathon. He tried too hard to get it right, and it all went wrong; he was sixth. And when he finished one place away from selection in the 1976 Olympic trial, he knew the most-prized gold had finally gone for good.

"I can tell you exactly when that race was," he says, "leafing through his training log. 'It was May 8, 1976.' Hill is obsessed with detail. By this weekend he had run a total of 109,200 miles in training since 1956, and kept alive a record of having trained twice a day (once on Sundays) since December 20, 1964. It's all



Cliff Temple acclaims Ron Hill's 100th marathon

there in his log, written in blue for training, red for races.

So stubborn was he about not breaking the sequence, that during the 1974 Commonwealth Games, when he had a severe ankle injury, he literally hopped half a mile round the track twice a day just to say he had trained. Similarly, he has jogged around airport transit lounges all over the world.

This very compulsion is what has made him one of history's greatest marathon runners. And innovators. For in the late Sixties it was Hill who first developed the carbohydrate-loading diet for marathon runners, who first realised the

Mark Shearman



Hill-work: compulsion

cooling value of the mesh vest, who developed lightweight racing shoes and non-constricting shorts.

He gave up his career as a textile research chemist to set up Ron Hill Sports, a company which today thrives through the manufacture of innovative running gear. He admits that keeping his name in the public eye does business no harm at all, but at the same time he has a genuine desire to keep running towards yet another novel goal.

He lives with his wife and two sons in Cheshire, a rooted Northerner who nevertheless loves to travel. When he ran six marathons in six weeks earlier this year, his itinerary was Lyons, Wolverhampton, Trinidad, Stockport, London and Munich.

The fifth (London) race was his fastest this year: 2:29:27. "I revised my attitude last year, because I had become very serious about never running outside two-and-a-half hours. I realised that was crazy, and changed it to three hours." But he has still never run slower than 2:50, even in heatwaves, or when he has had to walk for a while. Only once has he failed to finish a marathon - at the 1962 European Championships, and he doesn't count that in his total.

He is 47 now, and if he completes his marathon century today, he will start to home in on his next self-imposed target: to have run in 50 foreign countries before his 50th birthday. So far the total is 34.

"But there's Barbados in December, and Malta in February," he enthuses. Then it's on towards the 200th marathon. "It may take 10 or 12 years, but it will come," he says. And it probably will.

But the continuous training sequence, without a rest day now for 21 years, and the pursuit of marathon quantity, does not help quality. When the 46-year-old Don Macgregor, the Scottish runner who finished only four seconds behind Hill at the Munich Olympics, was nearly 20 minutes in front of him in last month's Glasgow Marathon, running 2:19:36, Hill asked him how he did it.

"It's obvious," Macgregor told him. "I don't put myself around as much as you."

Sunday Times. 13.10.85.

ATHLETICS: Steve Jones, the London Marathon winner, has officially lost his world-best time for the distance to Carlos Lopes of Portugal. Jones's time of 2hr 8min 5sec in Chicago 12 months ago was overtaken by a 2:7.11 from Lopes in Rotterdam in April. Doubts were raised about the legitimacy of the Dutch course, but the Association of International Marathons officials have found it to be at least 20 metres further than the necessary distance.

Guardian 15.10.85.

Next Month.... Where to run in and around the Memorial Park plus a map and several measured routes. Join the growing number of Coventry runners that use the park for training.