



Hash 246 - The Cross Keys, Great Bedwyn - 13th May 2007

You may remember the summer of 2007, otherwise known as the month of April. Well come 13th May we were right back in March, with weeping, lowering (that's lowering as in "describes the sky when it is very dark and it looks as if it is about to rain" not as in "reducing something" or "making something worse than it was before") skies and chilly winds. Tanfastic.

When K&I bowled up in the Škoda Elan Sprint - on time for twice - we were amazed to find no-one except Kathy and our Hare [Mad Mike Fisher] there. Were we to run round by ourselves? Fortunately no, since other more sensible people were sheltering from the hissing rain in their cars, or in the pub bogs. But it was not the largest Hash turnout that the Cross Keys had witnessed in its nigh-on 10 year history as the most Hashed-From pub in the Kennet Valley. For the first time in ages, Runners outnumbered Walkers - who did not in the event include Kathy, who retired to her car with the *Sunday Sport*, but did include most of Our Mike's Annie's family, who had come down *en masse* from Noocassel for the manifold joys of sitting in a draughty church on Saturday evening listening to MMF caterwauling, followed by a soggy walk in the Wiltshire mud on Sunday. Takes all sorts.

MMF and Annie seemed surprised to see me, since some rumour has gained credence that I do not run in the rain. However, armed with my trusty gamp, the rain did not bother me - although the other Runners kept casting what I took to be envious glances at me as I loped lightly round the familiar countryside, warm and dry beneath the broolly. Despite the fact that we have Hashed over Bedwyn Brail approx 83 times, MMF still managed to conjure up a new variation, and there were places I'm mildly confident we've never been through before. MMF was dressed for the wintry weather in nothing but his vest & pants as usual, and had the kindness to trot back along the canal to shiver at me as I plodded On Inn last as always.

The rain was fairly mild, and at times even stopped for a few mins, but nevertheless it was a chilly bunch of Hashers who huddled over their warm beer and hot tea in the Crass Quays after precisely one hour and three minutes' exposure to the elements. Speeches were made, just the one chicken was presented (can we have Bernadette back please, in time for the Ridgeway Relay, whoever has it), and Mabel held the green kecks back to be awarded to one of those fair-weather Hashers who couldn't be bothered to turn out in the rain. Disgraceful behaviour, I call that. No sense of loyalty, or appreciation of the Hare, and other sanctimonious sentiments!

Many thanks Mike for the consistent high Standard of Hash - and commiserations to your adopted family!