



Hash 136 - The White Lion, Cricklade, 20th April 2003

For once we were on time, and No 2 son Barney and I doubled the number of runners present - the other two being the former GOM and the long-lost Maurice, who only runs during the summer. Most of the regulars were either stricken down with grief upon becoming eligible for Saga Holidays, or had flown to the West Indies to not participate in Paul & Ophelia's wedding. Walkers were there in coachloads however, so Steve's efforts had not been wasted, as the 'short' course turned out to be about 90% of the 'long' course!

After the usual mumbo-jumbo about flour, runners and walkers alike set off in the general direction of Birmingham. The three slowcoaches followed me through the huge country park, past a lot of pretty flowers which Maurice grandly informed us were fritillaries (he has a degree in lettuce or something) - however, there were signs everywhere saying 'to the fritillaries' so he may have been bluffing. We eventually arrived back on the old Cirencester-Swindon line which we had puffed down a few weeks previously, and Mike supervised the rest of us as we searched for the right trail. At this point Maurice, who had been storing up energy all through the winter, strode out in front and gradually disappeared from view.....until a couple of miles later he overshot the circle by the golf course, and we met him as we all retraced our steps.

But then, to our huge surprise, in the midst of the retracing malarkey, Ian popped up as if from nowhere and sprinted away in front of us. Then beggar me backwards with a Bath bun if Laura didn't do the same thing! How did they manage this? Had they come in a taxi, come in a car? I thought Ian was in Ouagadougou or Auchtermuchty. Very strange.

Anyway, we chugged back towards Cricklade, still surprised not to have seen the parting of the ways - but right on the outskirts, there it was. We runners did a further loop round the town, then waited for our car keys and wallets to come back with the walkers. We took over the entire bar of the White Lion, and some eejit made a speech thanking Steve for his fine efforts and the splendid weather. The horn was presented to Jenny, who emulated my performance of the previous Hash by running the entire course without anyone else seeing her!

Once again, many thanks from runners and walkers to our hairless hare!