

A Double Header.....

With the joy of writing for fun back with me, I have participated in two races this week.

The first was quite a surreal experience, standing in Pennistone Quarry, fully decked in Santa suits, preparing to run the Bunny Run Relays. My fellow Santa's (Emma O and Paul S) eyed up the fancy dress opposition, it was looking pretty good, there were some half-hearted efforts, some random additions of face paint, but no one as co-ordinated as we three. The prize for best dressed was in the bag.

Edward twitched nervously having joined a team of Sam W and Bradley C at the last minute and worrying that he'd let his older team-mates down. We Santa's twitched nervously wondering which tussock of grass would provide adequate cover for that last minute wee – we weren't exactly dressed in stealth/camouflage gear.....

Anyway, Emma set off and Paul and I had a little sit, safe in the knowledge that Emma would beat the cave woman – our only true opposition. Several minutes later we were wondering whether our cunning plan of stationing Rudolph surreptitiously out of sight of the ferocious Dave W had backfired and he'd been carted off, quarantined forever in a Christmas no man's land – who was responsible for packing the Reindeer passport????????

Before too long Santa one appeared over the horizon and handed the egg to me, with the aim of catching the butterfly in front. Team talk before-hand had made it quite clear that under no circumstances was my customary 'little walk to compose myself' allowed. I was determined, the butterfly was in sight, I'd have her. I tried, but she was aided by wings, and the wind, and she eluded me. I handed over to Santa 3 who had been told in no uncertain terms by Emma that if he didn't catch that Dalmation he would be substituted next year by Tom Adams.

Edward came in, relieved to have had a good run and we waited, expectant. Then in the distance we heard barking. The Dalmation had done it, but I have to say, he'd done it in style, and flew through the finish without a paw out of place. We waited, chatted, waited some more and then there he was, a red silhouette of graciousness bobbing on the Horizon. All 3 Santa's were home. Egg in tact. Result.

We de-camped to the bar, enjoyed the egg throw out but left a little disappointed that our antics hadn't even made 5th fancy dress team home.....

But, never disheartened, there's the Badgerstone relays in a few weeks.....another chance for wearing inappropriate attire in the vain hope that artistic impression will triumph over technical merit and bag us a prize at last!

And so to part two.

There was a little consternation at the Bunny Runs at seeing Andrew (I'm getting faster and faster) Bennet not running but being team photographer. Now I know why.

The Esholt 5K's have become a firm favourite of Edward's as he's actually able to run with the big boys. I hate them, but have to enter to 'accompany' him.

In my role as chaperone we duly turned up this evening, a sultry night promising thunder. I dressed for thunder, everyone else dressed for sultry. On the start line Gaenor and I compared excuses/injuries, Jann said she was just having a jog about, Dave J turned up wearing a suit (?) and Edward picked his marker. I knew it wasn't going to be a good night, I just felt naked without my stripey tights and beard.....

The gun went and we set off, running through the flies and the obligatory first sprint faller. I was quite fine with the fact that I'd had a hard race (!) the day before, I had a sore foot, and couldn't be bothered. But I got to the bit where the fast boys usually pass me on their way back and they weren't there. Panic ensued. My internal pace-maker was obviously out of kilter, I'd gone off too fast, I was going to die.....I carried on, and only passed Ed on the way back about 100m from the turn. Either he was having a mare or I was running out of my skin! Then the sense returned, I slowed down, saving myself to look good when I passed the be-suited Dave J on the run in (standards have to be maintained after all.....)

A guy who is about a million years old but always beats me by a couple of places wherever I go (he's a Wharfedale Harrier and one day I'll ask his name) overtook me as I was having my 'little walk to compose myself' up the hill. I was back in my rightful position.

I hate the 3-4K bit. It takes so long. I was trotting about listening to my trusty pod when a vision entered my head.....the turn, Gaenor not too far behind, Andrew not that far behind her. Pride overtook nausea and I started my 'only 5 minutes to go mantra', just in time to pass be-suited Dave – bugger.

I actually tried then. It was hard, but there was no way I was going to let Andrew (I've been resting/pretending to be photographer) Bennett catch me, although Gaenor very early did – another 100m and she would have done.

I missed a PW by 3 secs, Gaenor got her PB, Andrew may have done I couldn't stay to chat – Waterloo Road was on apparently and we had to leave immediately.....

Just goes to show, a little competition goes a long way.

Well done to everyone, and thanks Ed for making me feel so ill.....

Sx