

'Sun' day indeed: the long hot summer continued and many 'shiggy' tracks were bone dry.

We chosen few, only 30 or so of WH3, assembled and circled. The Long was thataway, the Mini/Short was the opposite way. Yours truly longed along with just seven or so diehards. Tom, aka Grocer, was the official hare; he and Chas. kept the back of the trail intact. K9 was the secret hare and he guided the FRBs. Speaking of FRBs, where were the usual suspects, Ram, Banger, Slurry etc? The 'yoof' vote was in the person of Richard, 'Golden Rain' [GR? don't ask, just check the signing in sheets]. GR was the sole fit bastard who was able to lead the trail, take falsies and then return to the front – well done 'im!

Grocer likes to economise, and he does, on the dust. We were pointed out and orf we jolly well went, across the road, quick march, direction of hell, handcarts to be supplied. Dust was a scarce commodity. Driving in, we went under a railway bridge; running out, we went under the same bridge: game on, this bridge was a good couple of miles from the pub. Despite the dry weather, there was a bridge over some revolting scummy stuff; fortunately K9 forgot his usual sense of humour and we passed unscathed/unshowered, which here meant clean. For much of this run the 'local yokels', Tall Paul and Firsty Ferret, advised re the shiggy: normally this area is at least ankle-deep in squidgy mud; today, the dry terra firma meant that we ran fast and dry, well our feet stayed dry. One or two suggested that our upper bits might be mildly sweaty/ moist, but all good stuff.

A bit into the run and suddenly Grocer and Chas disappear backwards. We, the magnificent five, are on our own. Oh, there's a check. Slowish people are guided by the secret hare, K9. We go right; GR goes left and does a long long run, two blobs and a missed bar mean that he is way back and takes a mile or so to catch up. Oh yes, and the fish-hook: '4' was the magic number and well done GR, FF and K9 for observing it; Tall Paul, TP, you were fourth; you may be the Religious Advisor, but that does not exempt you. Give yourself a spiritual Down Down!

Another stream: 'You've crossed a bar' squawked K9; the dogs bathing in the beck then shaking themselves dry had cleared out any dust. Again, K9 let us ordinary mortals cross without his usual shower. Qué? Is he getting soft in his old age?

Another check; diagonally right this time. More fields and a slow hill; good news was going under another railway bridge. At least we were now on the right side of the tracks and therefore on our way back.

Now things did amuse: Oxfam and Navigator suddenly appeared on the main, and going the wrong way. FF did the gentlemanly thing and guided both to safely, albeit at the cost of his place amongst the FRBs.

Sudden separation/ divorce; K9 and GR opted for the optional extra mile; the remaining three, DeathMarch, TP and Bumhugger took the direct route. TP knew the way back and on we went. We arrived, 6m later, with/ ahead of the Mini: clearly a very well planned route. K9, GR, FF and the waifs and strays returned safe and well, eventually.

So, sunny day, good run, no casualties, I enjoyed it, hope the others did. And, to compare with the other bloke, we did c.100ft climb, maybe 100m descent, heart rate was >100bpm, temperature was <100°, distance was <100 miles and can anyone think of any other silly numbers?

And finally, will Shitzoo find true love with the dwarf Irishman serving behind the bar? Que sera, sera. Watch this space for the rumours.