



**Run Number 390**

**29<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**The Old Harkers Arms, Chester**

**The Pack:** Auntiecyclone (Hare), 10secs, Mad Hatter, Snoozanne, ET, Wigan Pier, Cleo, Hansel, OTT, Compo, Carthief, VR



The pack gathered around a welcome gas heater outside the Harkers Arms; together with a homeless chap wrapped in an old blanket who had somehow crept unnoticed into our midst.



The hare displayed the markings; there were to be check backs, beer checks and a compulsory play time.

The trail led fairly quickly under the A51 and around Grosvenor Park down to the river. Crossing by the suspension bridge,





we followed the river along to the Old Dee Bridge.



Here the eagle-eyed spotted the Compulsory Playtime sign...



...which was duly obeyed, though not without some complaints about flagrant Health and Safety issues.





VR discovers that even the best head torches fail to work with eyes closed



Heading back towards the road, our eyes were drawn to a strange apparition...



To the prosaic unimaginative mind it might just look like a tree covered in lights, but after a couple of beers followed by spinning round on the playground it caused all kinds of speculation. Was it Santa Claus riding a bike? And was he carrying a tray of beers? Had there been some terrible collision with a reindeer ? Or alternatively was it an old Welsh woman mounted on a goat? We could have debated for hours, but the trail beckoned and led us up the hill then down again to the river...





...and then a sneaky diversion up again. Eventually after going under the Grosvenor Bridge and fumbling in the undergrowth for a while, the trail led up and over the bridge. We then found ourselves on the city walls which took us back to the Old Dee Bridge. Here some among us started scenting a beer stop in the Falcon, but in fact a series of twists and turns through back alleys took us in a spiral.



The hopeful thought this might mean “Compulsory Beer”...





...but in fact it was a bit longer before the real beer check was found. Notice how the hare had taken the trouble to emboss the arrows into the pavement...



...where they were pointing the way to The Brewery Tap.







Here a convivial pint was enjoyed and it took some frenzied shouting and clapping by the hare to chivvy us all out into the cold night air again.

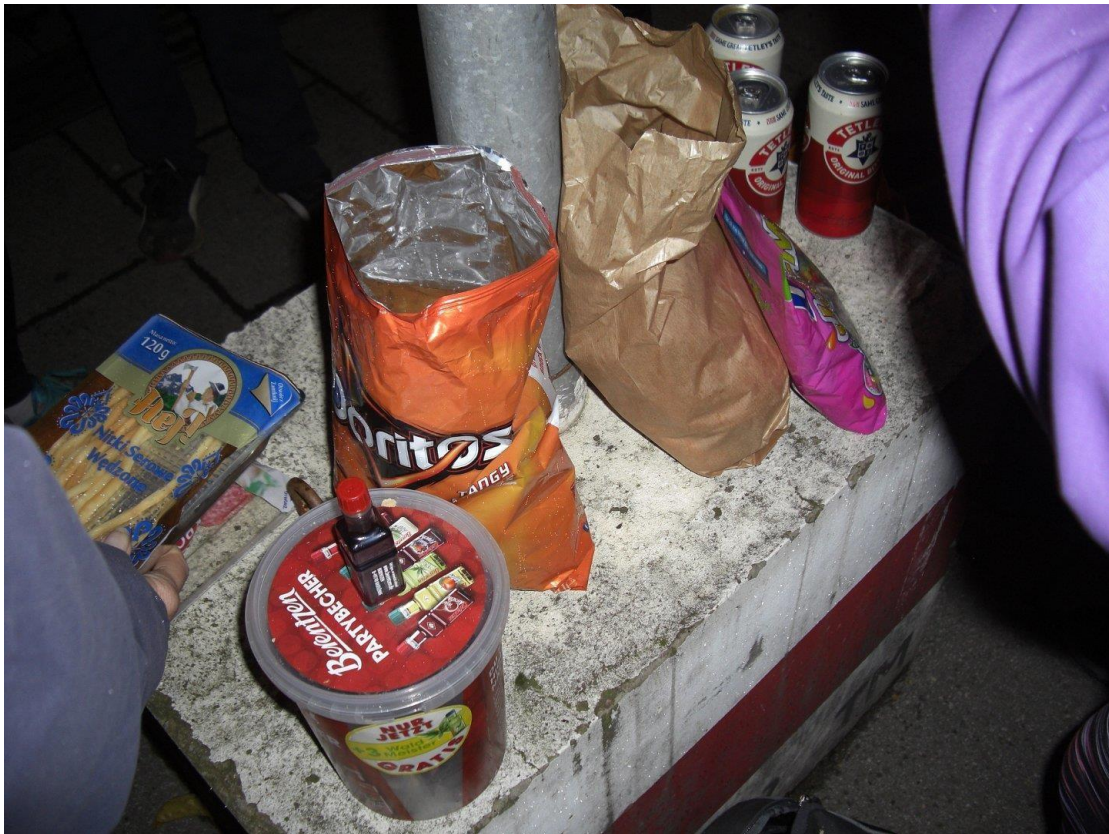


There was then some upping and downing along the Rows before we found ourselves sauntering along Eastgate Street. Here we were suddenly accosted by some official looking chaps and chapesses in hi-vis jackets (or gilets jaunes as we've learnt to call them recently). We were told that our markings had attracted adverse attention due to some big event taking place in the town centre that evening, and indeed that some of our white powder (or flour as we call it) had been sent off to the Anti-Terrorism Squad for analysis. We were advised to stick to chalk in urban settings in future. Slightly puzzled at the idea that our markings might be licked up by Chester schoolchildren or reach critical mass for an explosion, we continued on our way past the Town Hall...



...where we found our old friend the elephant hemmed in by the Christmas market stalls. Carrying on through the cathedral close and past Tesco's, it became increasingly clear that the trail was now marked by small puddles where the flour had been hosed away by over-zealous officialdom. Consequently the bulk of the pack found themselves short-cutting down Eastgate Street (or maybe long-cutting, since it turned out that the hare had reached the On-Inn ahead of them. Here we met Overdrive who had been regaling himself with a leisurely meal while we dashed around Chester.





The food was set up near the Town Crier pub. Down downs were awarded to:

The Hare

Cleo: for being a floozie (according to Hansel)

VR: for asking who she could provide breakfast for on the following day (is this also floozieish behaviour?...)

Compo: for accepting this offer

Returnees: Compo, ET