



Run Number 395

14th February 2019

The Bull and Dog, St Helens

The Pack: Carthief (Hare), ET, 10secs, Cleo, Overdrive, Wigan Pier, Victim, fcuk

Oddly enough the On Inn was the same one as exactly a year ago (see Run 368) though this time it did not appear to be on fire as we approached it.



The Hare had promised a "Winter Length" run, and explained that the markings would be quite traditional, every false trail was closed off except when he couldn't be bothered, there would be an optional Compulsory

Playtime (?) and there was an unavoidable stretch along the road but it was short and traffic-free.



After the team photo the trail was found heading down Chester Lane, before heading across country...

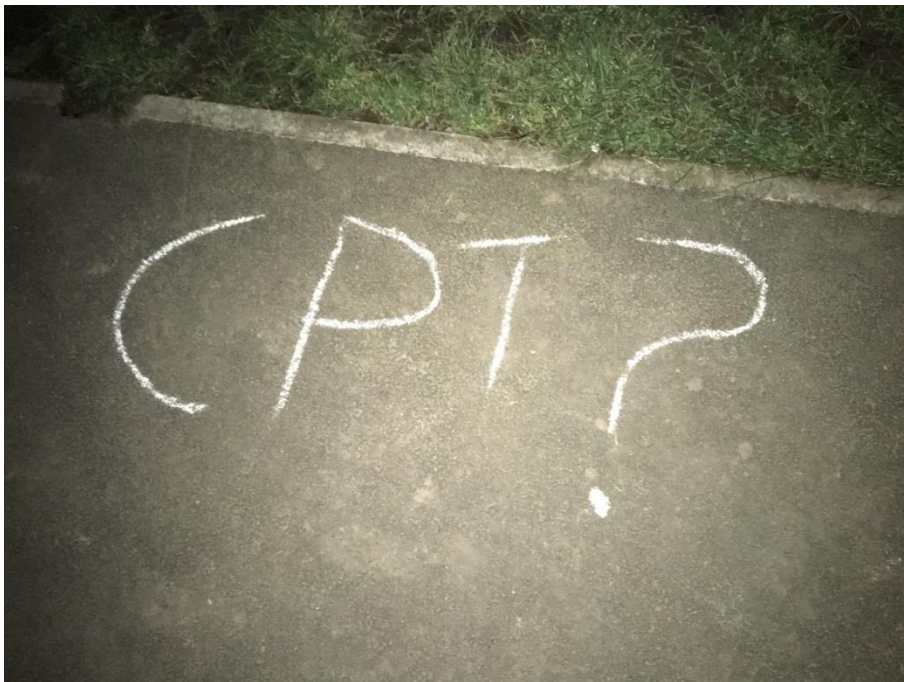


...to Lea Green Road. At this point we found ourselves on the “short, traffic free” section on the road--which actually was about half a kilometre and rather busy...



At least the hare had taken great care to make sure we didn't miss the checks...

If you are ever asked if you know The Score, one possible answer is that it is the oddly named road into Sherdley Park which we soon found ourselves following.



At this point we found ourselves at the optional compulsory playtime,

which had also featured in Run 368, q.v.



The zipwire was irresistible to some,...



as were the swings...



...while the mini-roundabout was surprisingly hard to escape from without falling over...



...and the rocking horse seemed to induce a regression into infantilism in one pack member.

Shortly after this we were heading towards Marshalls Cross Road, where there were the metal silhouettes of famous St Helenners which we had played with on Run 368. The On Inn could not be far away, but we were not out of the woods yet, literally.



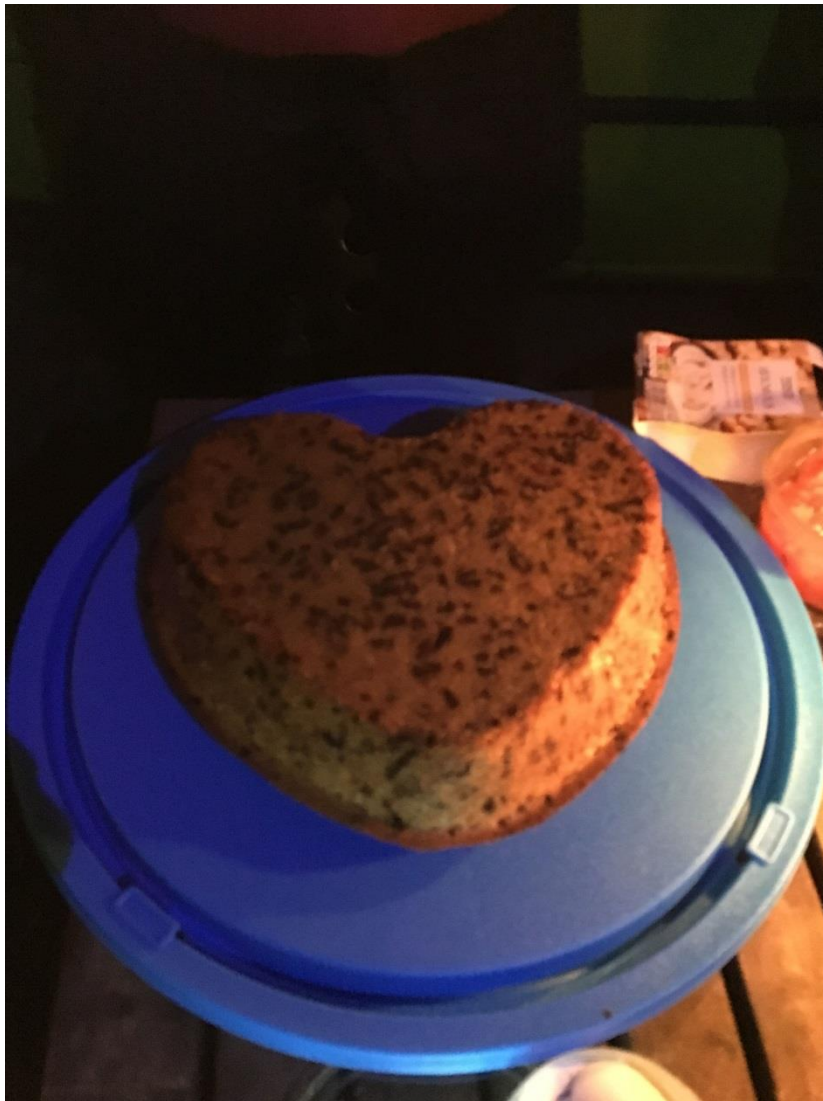
We found some splits, some of them once again marked with immense care (honesty compels me to admit that this photo was actually taken on the famous Run 368); and these led us through the woodland to emerge on Scorecross (the St Helens inhabitants seemingly obsessed with scoring). The trail then led around the edges of Sutton Park and down to Mill Lane...



...where we found the On Inn.



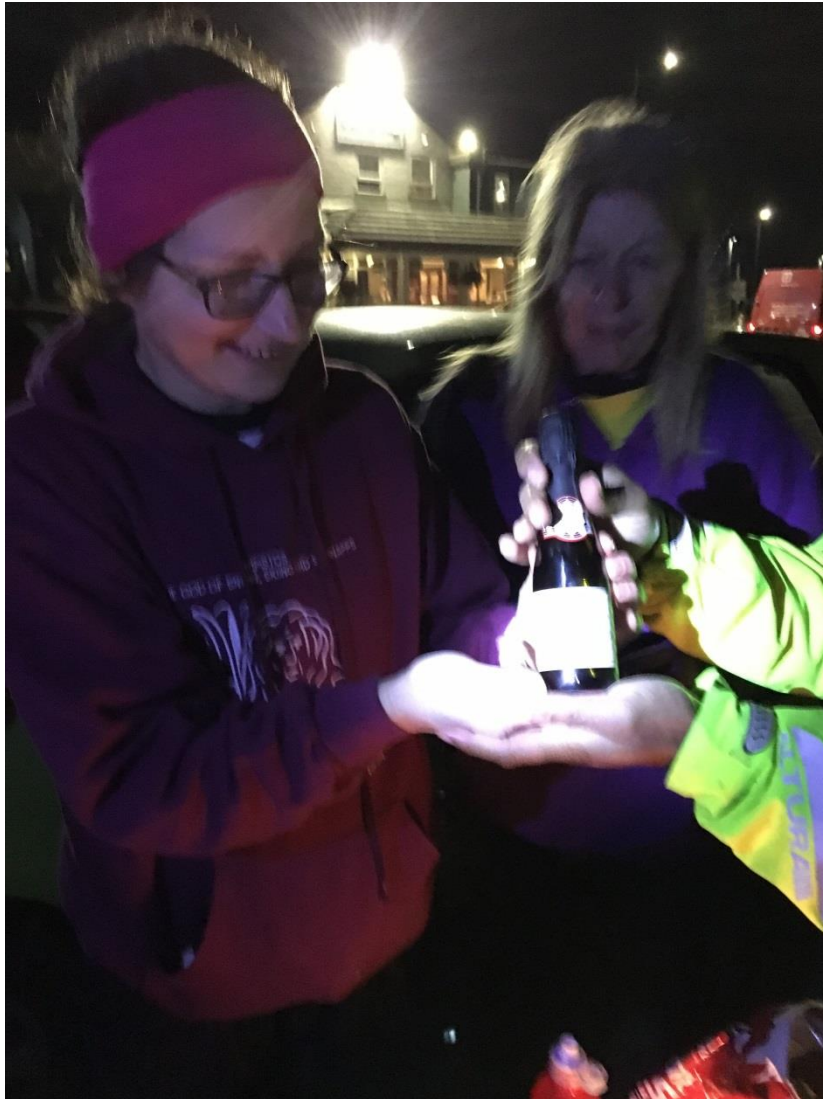
Back in the pub car park, it turned out that Cleo had done us proud, providing sandwiches including her famous egg mayonnaise and chive ones;



and also a heart-shaped Valentine's Day cake which included advocaat, rum, orange, and chocolate pieces. Debating how to cut it, she sliced it down the middle and rearranged the pieces to make, as she said, the figure 69...



...though the eye of faith was required to see the digits. In any case, this seemed to go beyond the romantic of chocolates and roses into rather more explicit territory until she clarified that it was a reference to CarThief and Victim's approaching 69th birthdays. This was the cue for fcuk to present Cleo with a bottle of something bubbly in honour of her imminent 40th.



The circle was then convened and down-downs were awarded to:

Victim: The Early Bird--the vagaries of rail travel had landed him at the On Inn an hour too soon.

Overdrive: having seen Victim on his way to the station at 5pm, he had laughed scornfully on arrival at the On Inn to find no sign of him, only to realise some minutes later that he was sitting in another room of the pub.

10 secs: he had been found by fcuk turning his mobile phone round and round trying to understand the map showing the route to ET's flat.

ET, Victim: this week's al fresco pissers.

Wigan Pier: for her local knowledge; she'd parked in the station car-park despite the pub having a large, almost-empty one.

Wigan Pier: had thought Cleo's cake was made with avocado, rather than advocaat.



fcuk: for make-do-and-mend, having brought his own (surprisingly effective) torch made by his enterprising daughter Ruth out of an l.e.d. and two batteries.

The Hare: there was some mutterings about exactly what he meant by a "Winter Length" trail.

We then repaired to the pub. Wigan Pier advised us that anything left unattended for an instant was liable to be snaffled by the nefarious inhabitants. Under close questioning she admitted that she herself technically lived in St Helens but this was only so she could get a bus pass and her spiritual home was and always would be in Wigan.