



**Run Number 474**

**9<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**The Old Harkers Arms, Chester**

**The Pack:** Auntieyclone (Hare), Snoozanne, Mad Hatter, OTT, Overdrive, 10secs, ET, Victim, Sticky Rice

Victim arrived at the Old Harkers Arms reporting a recent sighting of the Hare in Handbridge as he (Victim) came in on the bus. On the strength of this, most of the pack ordered a beer, most of which had not turned up when the Hare arrived shortly after, to Victim's consternation. All was explained when we realised that AC was accompanied by his bike. Naturally he then ordered a beer, which he was still drinking when OTT arrived... but eventually everyone had finished their drink and been to the loo and we were ready to go. We trooped up to the road for a photo in the sunlight...



...and the hare gave us our instructions...



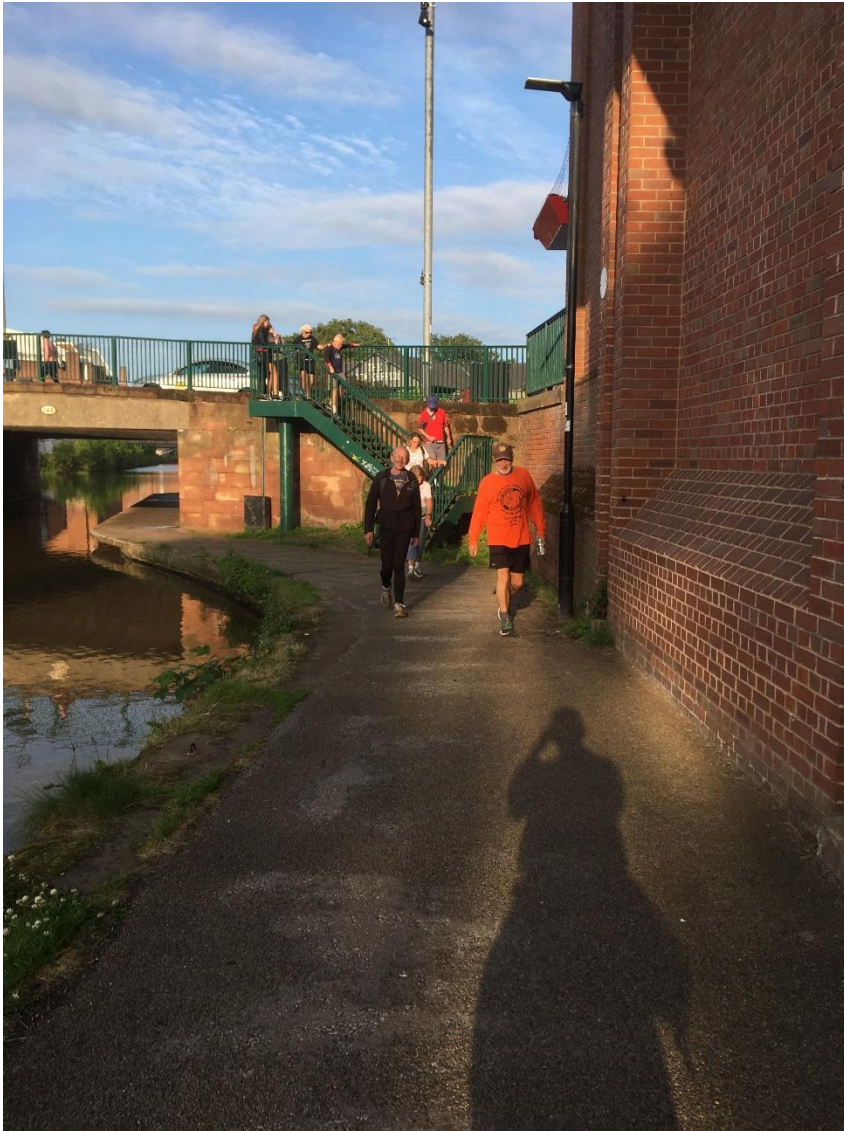
...the trail was marked in sawdust and chalk, and falsies were marked with an X, except occasionally when they weren't...and then we were off. Either we had forgotten the hare's instructions immediately, or the proximity of a bunch of winos made us reluctant to examine brown splodges on the edge of the pavement too closely...but it took a while to notice the blobs of sawdust taking us along the canal into town.











But now the pack was unstoppable...indeed there was no stopping half of it from sweeping off down the Walls in the wrong direction, where they picked up another section of trail which should have been saved for much later. A few frantic WhatsApp messages from the strays revealed that the other half of the pack was a kilometre or so away at the Northgate, so they headed off in that direction for a tearful reunion; all except for Victim who had wandered off and managed to find another section of trail which, lo and behold, took him to the Architect pub near the Roodee racecourse. As it happened, Overdrive had already told us that Cleo was spending the evening there with her German speaking friends; it would of course have been rude not to join them for a quick drink, so that would be the last we saw of Victim for quite some time...



**Cleo and friends at the Architect**

Meanwhile the (mostly) reunited pack found the trail heading roughly down the line of the Walls...







...and thence to the canal basin by Telford's Warehouse.



From there it was roughly along the canal...



...and up the lock staircase and then back onto the Walls and down towards the Roodee.





Here we realised that we were probably going to be passing the Architect and we made arrangements to meet Victim. Arriving at the trysting place ...



...there was no sign of Victim but anyway this seemed to be a good point to take stock of progress. It was 8.45 and apparently we were more than halfway round, but the words "only just" seemed to hang unspoken in the air as the Hare said this... We had actually booked a table at the On Inn for 9.00, and anyway the staff had been a bit vague as to when they would stop serving; missing a last beer would be a disappointing end to the evening. So we regretfully decided to save the remaining portion of the trail for a future occasion, and make pretty directly for the On Inn. Meanwhile it transpired that Victim had gone home for his bike, and would join us at the pub. So we continued around the Walls; passing the portion of wall which had collapsed shortly after being trampled over by a pack of hashers a couple of years ago. Nothing has been done about rebuilding it but it's surrounded by placards extolling the unparalleled opportunities which letting it fall down has provided to archaeologists. Shortly after this we passed the fabled Albion pub, now, it appeared, open again after the departure (or was it demise?) of the famously cantankerous former landlord. Arriving at Eastgate, we found ourselves back on trail, indeed the trail which half the pack had found much earlier. Following this down onto Eastgate Street led us before too long to the On Inn. OTT (the new Hash Food) and Mad Hatter and Snoozanne had parked nearby and we set up the food



table right by the bridge over the canal.



As Snoozanne (I think it was) commented, OTT had set the bar pretty high with her first run as Hash Food, with sandwiches (some with homemade chutney) and pizza. Overdrive then took on the mantle of RA. We tried to recall the number of the run, eventually hitting on the correct 474, whereupon Snoozanne commented that it was a jumbo run...or was it a jumbo going backwards, the jet actually being the Boeing 747. Anyway...down downs were awarded to:

The Hare: there were comments that his run was too short (of course we only ran half of it) and had too many checks and markings.

Victim: for being an anarchist and creating his own trail which conveniently led to an unscheduled beer stop with Cleo and her friends; and for breaking off halfway through and going home for his bike.

Sticky Rice: Returnee and valiantly doing the trail with a broken toe (caused by kicking a door frame). She asked for a soft drink as a Down Down and was given a CapriSun which she had some difficulty opening. Eventually the instructions to "Push Bottom Upwards" were found. Doing this seemed unlikely to help but at least might get the attention of helpful passers-by.

OTT: for an excellent first outing as Virgin Hash Food.

AuntieCyclone: for being seen on two runs in succession (and saying he might appear next week too...)

ET, Mad Hatter: Watering the trail

Snoozanne, 10secs: Shortcutting

Overdrive: voted a down-down by the rest of the pack for organising a sunny evening.

It turned out that Victim had already changed the time of our booking, and a table was reserved for us. We had just relocated to another nearby table right under a nice heater, only to be told that section of the seating area was closing; so we made do with one where by craning one's neck a bit one could take advantage of the heater over the adjacent table. We commented on what a testimony to Victim's multilingual talents it was to have joined in a conversation in German; but this reputation suffered a bit of a dent when his supposed Austrian version of "Cheers!" met with a blank look from Overdrive. Of course the way out of this is to claim that one is speaking perfectly but in some dialect only now met with in certain secluded valleys in the Tyrol... A discussion of the niceties of paying for drinks led to an exchange of currency-related incidents from across the globe, such as being marched back to an airport in Botswana to go through the formalities again, and culminating in Victim's armed robbery story; with his admirable sang-froid in finishing setting the trail after being held up at gunpoint.