



**Run Number 508**

**6<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**The Bootle Arms, Melling**

**The Pack:** Peter Pong (Hare), Snoozanne, 10secs, fcuk, ET, OTT, Sticky Rice



The village of Melling seemed to contain nothing except the church and the pub, which nevertheless was an enormous rambling building with a huge carpark surprisingly full of cars (surprisingly full rather than surprisingly not containing e.g. wildebeest).



The Hare explained the markings which were apparently Cardiff style. In particular this involved an “LP” or “Last Person” which meant that the last person to arrive at a check was deputed to do the checking. It seemed we were lucky that the shiggy would not be Cardiff style too, as this usually involved slurry up to the armpits. fcuk recalled Snoozanne’s comment on coming back from a WCH3 hash with a bag of mud which with luck had a pair of trainers in it somewhere.

We set off and almost immediately there was a thud as Sticky Rice tripped on the uneven paving stones outside the pub. But she almost literally bounced back with impressive speed, being on her feet again almost immediately. Her padded coat sleeve had taken the brunt of the impact but nevertheless there was an alarming hole in her elbow.



The trail led down to a main road where OTT decided she would short-cut and was given instructions by the hare for an easier route to the afore-mentioned LP. The rest of the pack set off down a footpath; broad hints from the hare at checks were welcome as he had been quite parsimonious with the markings on this stretch – this being an unexpected late deviation due to a blockage on the original planned route. After crossing some large fields there was a track following the motorway, then crossing it and following it some more. Eventually as the track climbed towards another motorway bridge, the hare said this was the regroup where we expected to meet OTT and indeed a torch was observed ahead...



...and soon we were at the LP.



By this time we had forgotten what the LP meant, since we all wandered off looking for the trail despite ET being the last person to arrive. ET probably did do more exploring than anyone else, heading off some way in the wrong direction before being recalled. The trail was found heading past a potential playtime area which for some reason we all spurned, and across a field towards a belt of woodland. The hare hinted that there should be a way through the woods and told us we should look out for a bench with markings to indicate the way; but the bench he guided us towards was devoid of anything like flour or chalk despite close inspection. Mild consternation on the part of the hare ensued, until a similar bench was found some distance away, this one covered in flour; and indeed a gap in the woodland was now visible.



On the far side of the trees, we emerged onto a road and looking back we realised that the area bore the enchanting name of Balls Wood. A right turn took us towards civilisation which proved to be Maghull. We ran past the station where the surroundings started to bring back memories of Run 412, indeed we spotted the chippie where we had bought the Hash Chips on that occasion. The hare now told us that the canal might be featuring in the return to the On Inn, but there was no water in sight. But eventually a left turn did indeed bring us to a reassuring bridge and across this we were on the canal. It was the Leeds and Liverpool, and ET told us that he had once walked along it most of the way to Leeds. The Hare said that we were now almost back, and the church by the pub had been clearly visible when he had set the run; but now all that could be seen in the distance was dark woodland. Eventually though we came to a road bridge and found ourselves on Brewery Lane; and those who had been paying close attention to the satnav recognised that road as being on the approach to the On Inn by car, earlier in the evening. It really was only a short trot back to the On Inn now. Here the front-runners dashed in to order some food before the kitchen closed. Some story

about going to the cars to change had to be told in order to explain why we were going to wait for the food in the carpark, while in reality consuming drinks not bought on the premises. The RA called a quick circle but this time did manage to insist on the need for irony as we commented on the run; which was accordingly described as too bright, too urban, with too many markings, not enough motorway or canal, too much shiggy, etc etc. Down downs were awarded to:

The hare.

Sticky Rice: The Terminator Exoskeleton award for immediately bouncing back from her fall.

ET: The FRB award - on the way to Melling he had incessantly bemoaned the fact that we no longer ran on the hash, then had disappeared into the distance as soon as the run started.

We then retired to the pub, after some trivial adjustments in clothing or footwear had been made to give credence to our claims of dressing for dinner. The first item of food, a platter of spicy chicken, arrived very quickly; but then we waited and waited for the rest. Eventually we went up to ask the waitress, who appeared completely nonplussed that we were expecting more food despite being the one who had earlier taken our order. Anyway eventually the confusion was sorted out with fulsome apologies and two huge plates of nachos and dirty chips appeared. Meanwhile Peter Pong had been entertaining us with his engraved pewter mug, presented to mark some hashing event, and with a glass bottom apparently so you could not be slipped the king's shilling unawares. The dirty chips turned out to contain bits of bacon so it was slim pickings for the vegetarians amongst us (i.e. ET) but luckily we had also bought some beef flavoured crisps which apparently are the one pub snack guaranteed to contain no meat.