



Run Number 536

26th October 2023

The Merebrook, Bromborough

The Pack: Cleo (Hare), Overdrive (Hare), fcuk, OTT, 10secs, ET, PA, Wigan Pier

This run was billed as a "Compo Memorial Run" for reasons to be described later. Suffice to say for the present that as we assembled in the Merebrook the hares were explaining that they had been able to set the run quite quickly since they had used one of the many trails available online. There was some debate about whether we had hashed from the Merebrook before, since it must surely rank as one of the most convenient pubs for Merseyrail – in fact a little research shows that Run 295 was set from here by Carthief. fcuk had put some of his accoutrements on the table and when ET arrived he referred disparagingly to "debris". The said debris turned out to consist mostly of the Hash Shit and ET was therefore inevitably marked down as its next wearer.

The pre-hash gathering would not be the same without Wigan Pier turning up at the last minute in a discombobulated state with some traffic-related story to recount, and this was no exception – this time she had been delayed by hordes of Liverpool fans on the way to watch them play Toulouse.



Finally we were outside the pub and indeed ET was immediately invested with the sacred garment.



Then we had the usual photo opportunity and we were off.



The trail led up to the New Chester Road and across, along the edge of the fields.



Soon we were heading into the woods. By now it was raining, in despite of the weather forecast, bringing the plentiful shiggy to a fine pitch of gloopiness.



It got quite spooky... there was a spectral white glow on some of the tree trunks which looked like flour and occasionally led some of us astray...



Cleo remembers marking one check but wonders who (or what...) added the other?





...and some of us sensed the presence of a sinister cloaked figure at our backs...





The woodland seemed reluctant to let us go...

...but eventually we emerged onto the road heading down to Eastham Ferry. Across the road there was an MS marking, presumably for Memorial Stop.



Here we found ourselves outside the Mayfields Woodland Burial Ground and Remembrance Park.



and Overdrive explained why we were here. Back in 2015 Compo had set a run (Run 297) from the OC Bar (now closed) in Bromborough. He had laid the trail to pass through the Burial Ground, where he explained to the pack that he and Joan planned to buy a plot here. It seemed that later on the cost of a plot proved prohibitive, and when Compo passed away we were under the impression that his family intended his ashes to be scattered at sea. But when Joan sadly died not long afterwards, it seems there was a change of plan and Overdrive and Cleo had discovered memorial tablets to Compo and Joan in the Remembrance Park.



The grounds are now locked at night, but Cleo and Overdrive had taken a photo of the setting of the tablets earlier, showing the wide view over the Mersey.



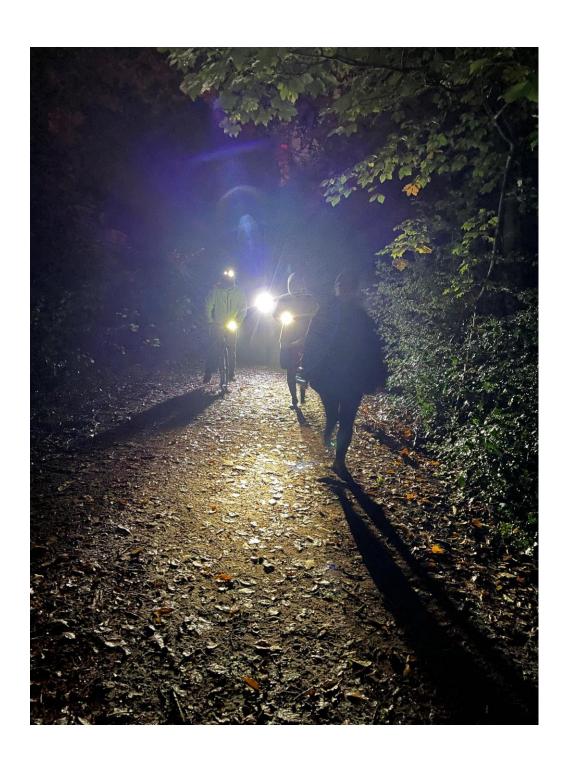
Evidently their ashes were laid to rest here last year. It's touching to note the hashing reference on Compo's tablet.

As we prepared to set off again, Wigan Pier innocently enquired whether paying for the plot gave you ownership "for life".

The trail then headed down to Eastham Ferry, where the hares had planned that we would raise a glass to Compo in The Eastham Tap. But it was not to be – the place was ominously dark and when we tried nevertheless to gain admittance, we were told that they were closing due to lack of customers. When we pointed out that now we were here, there was no longer a lack of customers, the barman said they had done something crushingly final like "cashing up". So somewhat forlornly we continued on our way; back into the woods.



Another photo taken by the hares while setting the trail, this time in the woods. This seems to be a good year for mushrooms...





Before too long were heading up past the tennis club towards the New Chester Road; we emerged almost opposite the Golden Park Chinese restaurant, where Compo had been very fond of the all-you-can-eat banquet; indeed we had once (in 2013) been there for our Christmas meal.



Over the road, a tour of a posh new housing estate brought us out on Acre Lane and soon we were on Dawpool Drive where a turn onto Greenfields Avenue brought us to the On Inn and indeed soon we were at the pub carpark.



Here Cleo and Overdrive's car disgorged a tempting array of goodies. Foremost amongst them was a couple of flasks of delicious soup – piping hot, the more so with the addition of Turkish spices and based on a medley of vegetables including (of course) pumpkin. We all had at least two mugs full before turning our attention to the other things, especially a ripe camembert, followed by an excellent home-made cake which none of us guessed was actually a grape cake, despite lots of the said fruit pressed into the sponge.

When we had finally eaten our fill, fcuk called the circle. First of all he recalled that this was the Compo Memorial Run and had been inspired by one of Compo's own historic trails. He then called for comments on the run, and of course we mentioned the lack of shiggy and rain, the excessive number of pub stops, the lack of nearby stations etc. fcuk then duly thanked the hares, especially for the "souperb" food.



He then recalled the various misdemeanours which had taken place. He reminded ET how his disparaging comments had led to his being invested with the hash shit, and drew our attention to what he called ET's bottom knot (as opposed to a top knot). This is presumably why he is casually rummaging amongst ET's nether regions in the photograph. He also singled out 10secs for his comment that he wanted to "drop off some stuff in Wigan Pier's car and have a wee" without making it clear that these would be consecutive rather than simultaneous actions. 10secs and Wigan Pier were singled out for being FRBs and Wigan Pier was accused of hiding her light under a bushel for too long. PA's booming voice calling the trail was once again commented on. But the piece de resistance was Wigan Pier's enquiry of whether one had the burial plot "for life"...

Fcuk then recalled then when we turned up for the beer stop, we found The Tap *turned off". He recalled the pack's power to call down a curse on pub landlords who crossed us, remembering how Pi in Mossley Hill had not lasted long after refusing to serve us; and he predicted dark days ahead for the Tap. Finally OTT called our attention to the fact that other founder members of MTH3, namely Bacardi Spice and Whinger, were also laid to rest in the Woodland Burial Ground. It was now getting a bit cold, so we compressed all the downdowns into a few hasty snatches of song while all the above named downed their drinks.



We then retired to the pub. There was still more than enough funds in Compo's memorial bequest to buy us all a drink, so we were finally able to raise a glass in his honour.