



**ERSEY THIRSTDAYS
HASH HOUSE HARRIERS**

Run Number 481

17th September 2021

The Farmers' Club, Ormskirk

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

Peter Pong had set a run around his home turf which, he said, was much nicer than you might think; and he turned out to be right. We gathered in the Farmers' Club, quite a grand building with a portico which had been a people's dispensary in pre-NHS days and now turned out to be a kind of private members club. A number of the members were hanging out at the bar as we arrived – no doubt an attempt to scare us off. But it then turned out that anyone could become a member on payment of a £1 subscription; and the landlady initiated a prolonged campaign to extract £1 from each of us, in which she was not entirely (possibly not even nearly) successful. On learning it was a Farmers' Club fcuk suggested we could ask if the bar stocked the horse de-wormer which Donald Trump had recently recommended as an anti-COVID drug. However as part of our bid to avoid the £1 charge we instead scurried outside pretty smartly and gathered on the steps, where fcuk rang the Compo bell. At this point Peter Pong ran up after a trip to his car, and fcuk passed on the bell as a compliment to the hare. Peter Pong swung it Town Crier style, ie overarm, but this produced an oddly muffled effect with the clapper and bell moving in unison. fcuk suggested he might take the bell on the run in case he felt like a little tinkle along the way. The hare then explained that the markings would be Cardiff style which appeared to mean that you had to stay silent until you found precisely the 4th blob.



We then had the usual team photo (with Sticky Rice using the excuse of social distancing for a quick rest)...



...and we were off with a broad hint from the hare that on was up the hill towards the town centre. Over the main road we were in a pleasant traffic-free area of old red-brick buildings, some of which had become restaurants and some of which were still quirky traditional shops like ironmongers and purveyors of horse de-wormer to the gentry. The trail then swung uphill (and indeed there were a surprising number of hills in the town) to the church where there was a regroup to admire the strange feature of a tower combined with an adjacent steeple.



We then crossed the fairly extensive graveyard...





...where there was a bit of post-modern film-within-a-film photography going on...



...and then headed down towards the swimming pool...



...where we skirted around the duckpond. Here there was an overpowering smell of weed, and not the pond variety.



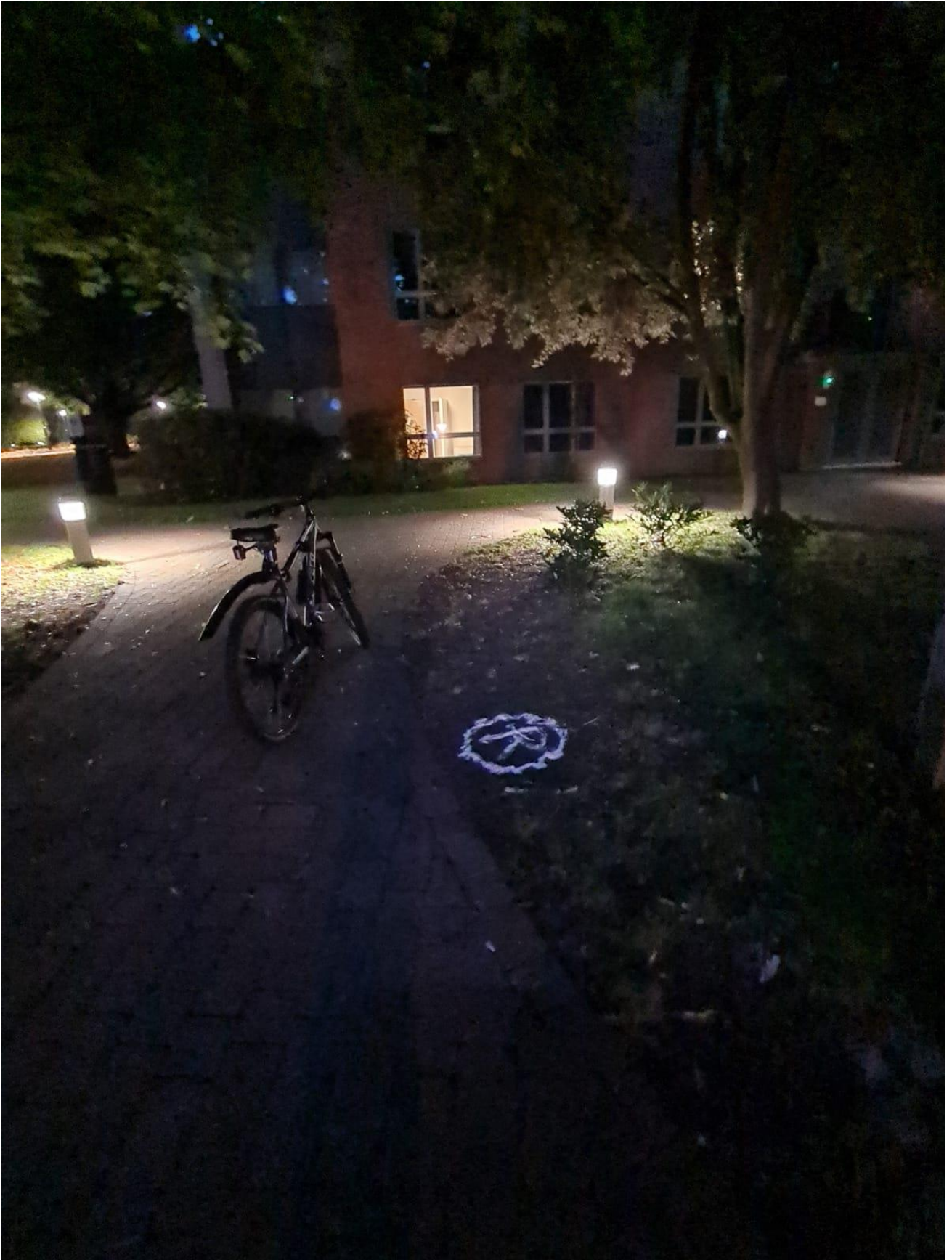
This photo was not strictly accurate since by this time we had already been running quite a while...



We then followed one of the network of small streams which seem to line many of the streets of Ormskirk.



We then emerged onto a main road which the Hare said was unavoidable. It was enlivened by a side turn to the right but the Hare spoilt the surprise by telling us it would be a checkback; some of us went down it anyway just for fun, and found ourselves in the car park for a university sports ground, just at the time there was a mass exodus of cars. It would be nice to think it was cheery cries of encouragement that were being shouted through the car windows as they found their way blocked by a mob of hashers.



Eventually there was another side turn from the road, this time into an oasis of calm where we found a regroup.



This turned out to be the entrance to the Western Campus of Edge Hill University. The trail meandered through here for some time. It seemed very pleasant – paths with lush jungly borders and the odd pond, and university buildings which we agreed were on a human scale and seemed to fit together to make a very restful environment. Of course there were no students around at this time of night...



Shortly after this we found ourselves in the grounds of the Ormskirk District General Hospital. A stray wheelchair was too tempting to resist as a photo-opportunity.



Soon after this we found ourselves on top of a substantial hill, though as Snoozanne remarked, there had been no feeling that we had been climbing. This spooky looking water tower is quite historic but very neglected and it had narrowly escaped having a house built on top of it.



A reputation as the local meeting spot for a gang of the undead might have had something to do with this.

The trail wound its way down towards the town, following woodland paths and under the railway and through a retail park to emerge on Burscough Street and the On Inn. We set up the food and drink in the nearby car park...



and Hash Chips was despatched to a chippie. He returned with three bags of chips, claiming his winning ways had also secured the accompanying large bag of prawn crackers.



The hash food was also excellent, including home-made chocolate buns.

fcuk then called the circle; down downs were awarded to:

The Hare: there were comments that there was not enough shiggy. Also that it had been an educational run, and not just because it had passed through the university. Snoozanne once again raised the curious issue of the hill which went down but not up. It was a pity that some of sights had been obscured by darkness, and it was suggested there could be a rerun in high summer. The hare was also accused of frightening some hashers by his wicked laugh in the graveyard. He was also awarded a down-down for BCD (Bell clapper disorder) in holding the bell the wrong way up.

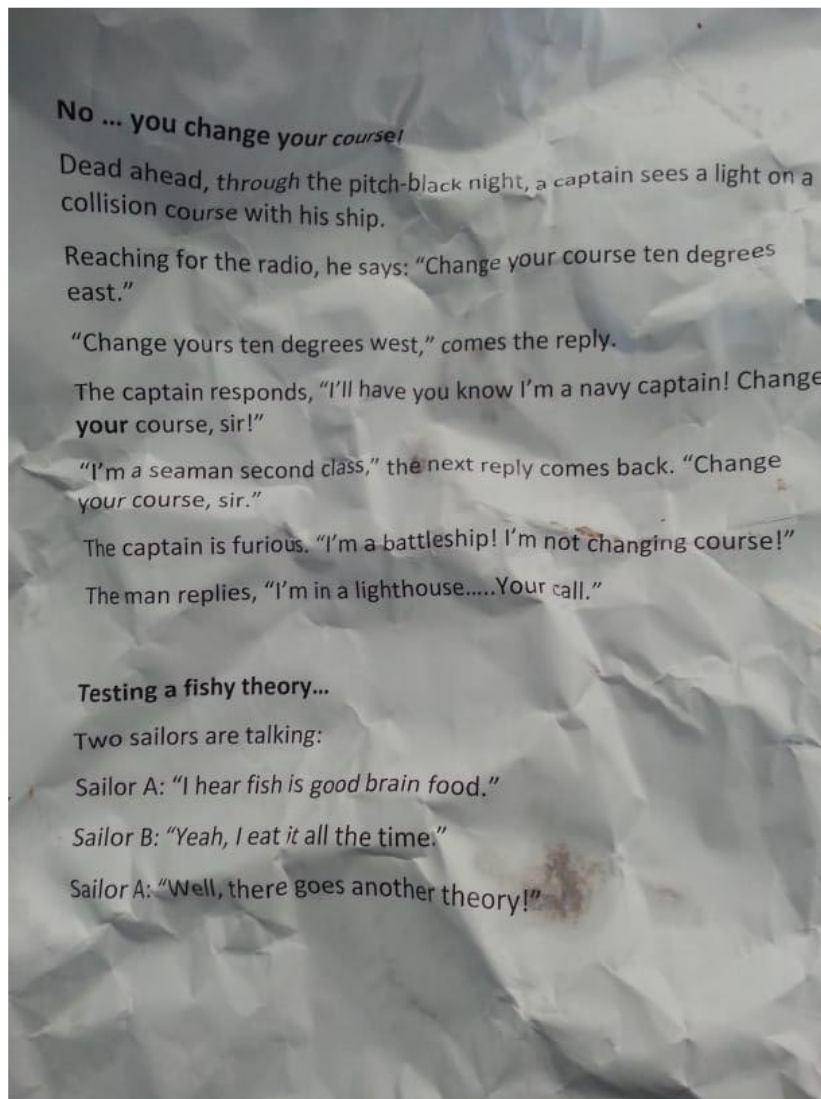
At this point Snoozanne announced there was only enough beer for three more down-downs, so these were:

OTT: for being observed to stifle a tremendous yawn during the opening ceremony

Mad Hatter: Watering the trail

ET: for informing fcuk of the previous two misdemeanours he was nominated Hash Grass (not to be confused with the pervasive smells detected by the duckpond).

fcuk then gave us a sermon; once again it was easy to hear it being related in Compo's inimitable tones.



We then retired to the club. The landlady had kindly set aside a seating area for us, but then slightly spoiled the hospitable effect by resuming her campaign of extracting £1 from each of us. We spent some time filling in the hareline and debating possibilities for the Christmas run; and then it was time to go.