



## News release

### Barnes Green Half Marathon

Date: Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2005  
Location: Barnes Green - somewhere near Billingshurst!!

### The Ups and Downs of the Barnes Green Half Marathon

By: El Presidente

Thirteen intrepid Tone Zone Runners set off across the border into Surrey on the last Sunday in October. Rain was expected from the west. Clutching passports and a sketchy map of where Barnes Green is supposed to be, we eventually found the place and each other after making various u-turns along country roads.

Arriving in the village it seemed that the centre had become a giant car park with over 1200 runners plus family, friends and the occasional dog close by the village hall. What immediately became obvious was the very long queue for the 10 portaloos. There was also a rather flimsy looking hessian wall behind which the heads of men could be seen gazing into the distance. Being a curious, if somewhat short, person I decided to investigate!! Fantastic - a good old fashioned open air trench where one could converse with ones neighbour and passing pedestrians whilst getting rid of too much pre-race liquid!!

Wishing each other luck we lined up and it started to rain! I am a fair weather runner so my decision to wear a long top under my TZ Runners top plus three quarter longs looked justified. Maybe my golf umbrella, oil skins and wellies had looked a bit too O.T.T. so I dashed back to the car and undressed - my case comes up next month!

Michelle, Viv, Harry and I started together. Michelle, just recovered from an injury, and Harry were Half Marathon Virgins and slightly nervous about what was coming. Viv, plugged into her miniature disco mixing desk, looked full of confidence and I kept wondering if I should pop back for the umbrella!

So bang on 11am the race began and the rain stopped. Hooray! There followed a very pleasant run along closed roads up to Christ's Hospital School. The buildings were most impressive as we passed past manicured lawns. Then, turning south we came to a HILL! Well, being a coastal, flat earth runner who faints at the thought of climbing the A259 Bognor flyover, my heart rate doubled as I put on crampons and strapped an oxygen tank to my back. Halfway up we entered the snowline and some runners were setting up base camp. Hailing a passing Sherpa, I hitched a ride on a Yeti to the summit.

As you know, what goes up must (eventually) come down. And so it did. I was trying to achieve 9 minute miles so a downhill stretch got me back on track. However the sun was out, no rain and the temperature was rising. Eventually, even though I love the warmer runs, I decided to strip off whilst climbing another HILL, despite pleas from sensitive runners and the odd cowering badger. This not only enabled me to cool down, but also prevented other runners passing me! Attaching my recently purchased chest wig I set off adopting a zig zag course to make best use of any shade and to avoid enemy torpedoes.

The remaining miles got progressively harder and it seemed that around every corner came another HILL. To be fair I was by now quite paranoid. Why could I hear my shoes making strange noises? Did I dream that I passed one of our better runners? Why were the cups of water handed out only a third full? And the at 12 miles the deadly onset of CRAMP!! Perhaps if I hadn't visited the "Hessian Village" this might not be happening? I got flashbacks to the Gosport Half Marathon - not funny. Try to relax and think positive. Can't be far now surely? Where's that \*\*\*\*\* finish line?

Then I heard shouts of encouragement from Keith and Karen as the cramp "twinges" became more frequent. Just 50 metres and home. Thank goodness, and for the first time in years I am embarrassed to say I swore as I crossed the line. That was a hard,hard run. But wait a minute - my sundial stopwatch recorded my best ever Half Marathon! No wonder I was knackered!!!



So, Dear Reader, as I hobbled towards the recording studio (watch out for my Christmas C.D.) I was delighted to receive a bottle of water and a large chocolate biscuit on a ribbon. Great - I was quite hungry. A quick nibble soon confirmed that this was in fact a medal!! I noted that other runners were making similar mistakes and realised that the clever Race organisers had sold space to a portable dental practice who were, by now, inundated with clients!! I had, as Club President, to look after the health and safety of our runners. So shouting "don't eat the biscuits" I forced my way through the crowds to join the others as we waited for Dan, Viv, Harry and Michelle.

After inspecting everyone's teeth to make sure no harm done we retired triumphant, with medal and teeth intact, to the car park where Karen and Harry kindly offered hot cross buns. Most welcome. And the "noise" from my shoes? Well I found that the protective layers on each heel had come adrift. So not quite so paranoid then!

Despite my HILL aversion, it was a great Half Marathon. For those who might be tempted next year one word of advice - get over to Arundel and do some hill runs beforehand!! Oh yes - and don't try to eat your medal!

#### OFFICIAL RESULTS :

Dave Owen	1 hr 21 mins 21 secs	Brilliant 25 <sup>th</sup> place!!
James Harrison	1 hr 28 mins 02 secs	Top 100 and a Gold Biscuit
Grahame Hurren	1 hr 32 mins 27 secs	
Simon Gilbert	1 hr 38 mins 02 secs	
Jeremy Grieshober	1 hr 44 mins 54 secs	
Keith Hardwell	1 hr 46 mins 34 secs	
Karen Harrison	1 hr 46 mins 38 secs	(Keith tripped me up 50 metres from the line!)
Ian Bayley	1 hr 49 mins 50 secs	
Mike Monk	2 hrs 1 min 25 secs	
Dan Hughes	2 hrs 6 mins 19 secs	
Viv Baker	2 hrs 10 mins 45 secs	
Martin "Harry" Harrison	2 hrs 10 mins 55 secs	
Michelle Etheridge	2 hrs 16 mins 3 secs	

**El Presidente**