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Did you know that Stevie Nicks once turned down a marriage proposal from William Shatner she didn't want to be known as Stevie Shatner Nicks

Run No. 2144
Date: Sunday 2nd March 2025
Venue: The Rising Sun
Location: Berkhamstead
Beers/Cider: Chiltern Anniversary Red Ale, Doooombaaar
Hare/s: Mother & Lemming
Runners: 13
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 1
Hash Hounds: 0
Total: 14
Membership: Finishing backward on a half marathon!

It's that time of year when you get to see lots of runners out & about jogging along, clocking up the miles as the London Marathon approaches (Sunday 27th April '25) however, unlike previous weeks, on the way to Berkhamsted from Hemel Hempstead the numbers trotting along were far more than you'd expect to be out. Then, approaching into Berko (As the locals called it) Marshalls in Hi-vis were spotted, as well as roadside signage declaring that there were 'Runners in the Road'! The RA thought that the Hares had gone to the extremes for this week's Trail?

Meanwhile, others coming in from opposite directions would also find that many of the smaller B roads out the east had been closed due to the Berkhamsted Half Marathon being on this day.

Upon his Arrival, Mr X found that one Hare, with the bright sunshine gleaming off of his head, was very quick to get in that the venue was chosen by Mr X, in support of the Rising Sun, & it was also the RA who chose the date!

Mr X welcomed the few who had arrived by 11:00Hrs, then it was over the Hares. Now with 'buck passed' as to who planned the venue etc, Lemming would have to stop his Chalk-talk & recap as Diamond Geezer, then Des Res both popped up, after having to go back from their original route in & come around another way.

Lemming advised the Pack with warnings of icy, treacherous patches that may be hidden, there was also plenty of Shiggy in stretches. Then there were llamas & horses to be aware of, an electric fence of two, a couple of Held CHKs with sweet stops & then the final mention went to the fact that the Tail would involve the daunting prospect of the Hash mixing with the Half Marathon Runners!

With Milf & Kylie absent this week, Mr X stood in to take some pictures for the Farcebook page, though this would hinder his progress at times, having to stop to take a snap, but the excellent panoramas would make up for the hold-ups.

Now, My Lil' was none too happy to find that there was a CHK just up the passage to the end house that backs on to the rear of the Pub, in his opinion it may have just as well have been outside the front of the Pub. However, the CHK was pretty redundant, for those who had managed to bag a space on George Street & squeeze in to a vacant gap, had spotted the next CHK up where George Street joins the Ravens Lane/Garvel Path junction.

The Trail began moving up a street of quaint, small terraced homes that were built after the Rising Sun, the current incarnation being constructed at the same time as the Grand Union Canal, it is also home to a NIMBY who has put in loads of complaints recently about noise, allegedly, emanating from the Historic Pub. They probably object to the ringing of Church Bells as well?

Anyhow, Happy Feet, Parson's Nose & Doormat reached the T junction & all turned away from the back of the Boat Pub,located down the Ravens Lane route to the southwest. Climbing the steady climb up Gravel Path, which is actually tarmac, to the find the next CHK on next junction, where Station Road heads away to the northwest.

Happy Feet continued up over the railway bridge on Gravel Path, but she would have to come back after Parsons Nose called "On!" after he picked up more chalk arrows down toward Berkhamsted Station, opposite the Crystal Palace Pub the Trail broke off before the Station by leading through one of the very narrow road tunnels in the high brick-walled railway embankment, emerging out on to a slippery patches of ice on the shaded side of the triangular junction with New Road & White Hill on the north side of the tracks.

Both options were restricted to traffic, due to the number of the Public out & about to spectate & cheer on the Marathon runners. Trail was picked up along by the entrance to the ruins of the Castle, the grassy mound of the Motte could be seen at the other end of the Bailey, however the stonework of the later Castle is now just a few outcrops after William the Conqueror's strong hold fell out of favour, the stones were taken to be used on other local building projects over the centuries.

Arrows led the Keenies up toward the northern side of the Station, here Happy Feet & Parsons Nose went wrong as they carried on up into the car park, whereas Mr X chose to go through the cutting in the tree-line to Bridgewater Road, here there were double arrows pointing the way across to the other side & then up to a small CHK on the start of Castle Hill Avenue.

Mr X began his search of the side road, but calls of “On! On!” emanated back from Bridgewater Road so he turned back to find Mother was now at the small CHK, where she urged the RA to look again, thus leaving Happy Feet, Diamond Geezer back on Bridgewater Road to discover Falsie. On his second search Mr X managed to get far enough around the bend to pick up arrows.

If anyone wondered why this backstreet of desirable homes is called Castle Hill, they would soon find out on the long steady rise up to the second bend in the road, where the Trail would reach an even smaller CHK by the start of the old narrow drive to Castle Hill Farm. It was on the way to here that Des Res said that one set of his Grand Parents used to live up here, & it was funny a couple of weeks earlier the Trail led by his own current house.

Anyhow, back to today’s Trail & the third arm of the driveways through a small, newish estate had the Hash on the way up to the next CHK just before the Farm & the Stables belonging to the large house of Berkhamsted Place. The CHK was right by the corner of a triangular field that the aforementioned Llamas were found within.

The Trail would now turn to Dust when it was picked up again, now on the due north footpath that drops down in to the green valley, the nice view out over this had to be foregone, for the going under foot was fairly treacherous in places, eyes had to be kept on what was underfoot, at least until the route came out in to the grassy vale.

Leaving the barbed wire fence & hawthorn hedgerow behind, there was a change direction to the northwest over the open green space on the level, here Mother was keeping an eye on the Keenies of Happy Feet & Diamond Geezer, who had gone through the next CHK & were now the 300 Yards at the other end of the south-eastern quarter of four crop fields saddled over the two opposing ridges & separated by hedges.

Mother would now be happy to see that Diamond Geezer was coming back from the rising northern (Correct) option after Happy Feet had called “On!” from the opposite southern (Falsie) climb out of the narrow valley floor & back toward Northchurch.

Happy Feet’s calling also encouraged Doormat & Moss Key Toe to veer off, away from the floor & move up the southern bank, as the RA called out “Short Cutters!” even though he had realised that they were all going astray. Meanwhile Mr X, Des Res, Tent Packer & My Lil’ benefitted from being slightly behind the other FRBs, as they began the climb up the northern ridge.

A little way back at the start of the low end of the field, Lemming was keeping an eye on Juices Flowing as the rest of the Pack made their way up along the top northern hedgerow & pass through a kissing-gate. Once on the level, they would begin to enjoy the sunny day, long shadows could be seen as they advanced some 450 Yards of the width of the flat plateau of farmland.

Diamond Geezer, Doormat, Happy Feet & Moss Key Toe easily passed by Des Res, Mr X, My Lil’, Tent Packer & Mother, they were spotted searching from the Held CHK by one of the large Oak trees that are dotted about all over this bit of great Herts landscape. They would soon be back as Mother rustled a couple of packets of Sweets, perhaps it was sound of these bags of confectionary crackling away that also inspired Fliptop to catch up here, after his detoured & late arrival to the venue?

Lemming arrived with two more bags of sweets, the Hash were being spoilt as he had the Liquorice Allsorts, he spilled the beans on the fact that while in the shop, Mother had a good old rummage through the bags on display, manipulating them to see which one had the most Aniseed Buttons within. Tent packer & Mr X were happy that she chose wisely!

This high up & the Public Address system announcements could be clearly heard, announcing various stages of the marathon coming in, way down at the Cricket Club. With no breeze this morning, the sound would not be distorted, but more importantly there was no wind-chill factor!

Lemming now offered up a really big Short Cut away to the southeast, back toward the announcements. However, there were no takers, for everyone elected to head out north-westward behind the hedgerow, where some of the Hash had already discovered Trail before the lure of sweets brought them back.

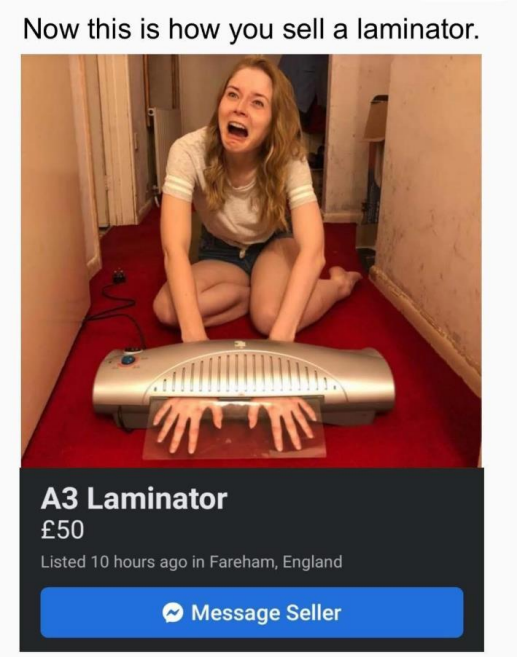
Around 160 Yards & another CHK was found, it came as no surprise to those a few paces off of the leading FRBs, that Diamond Geezer would go wrong again by turning the corner of the field & not going through the kissing-gate in the edge of the long, thin strip of woodland.

Everyone now made their way, some gingerly, on what would be the hardest section of the Trail, being downhill & dropping over some 100 feet as it runs beside a several horse paddocks, & these were lined with the electric fences mentioned by the Hare in his Chalk-talk. My Lil’ didn’t quite believe that these nylon straps were ‘live’, so he put his nah on the top one as a test & nothing happened!

It was a bit of luck that the wide nylon straps weren’t carrying any current, as the Shiggy became slipperier as the Trail headed down through the wooded edge, with the broadleaf trees causing the shade that would prevent the footpath from drying out.

There were a few stray legs going out at odd angle, a few like the RA utilised the metal wire fencing in an effort to stay upright, so much so that Parsons Nose asked the RA if he was wearing Slippers? More like ice-skates! But with no TBT OBE present today, Mr X wasn’t going to stand in for him & fall over!

Of course, having lost the altitude, the Trail would now have the Hash clamber up the opposite ridge that is slightly shorter, being 15 Yards shorter in height, not that the Hash could tell by the time they had passed through the lower gate & made their way up slightly drier footpath into the large wooded of Berkhamsted Common.



Once on the level a CHK was found, here the Keenies would search for the Dust, while those around Mother would hear her admit that she wasn't too sure which way the Trail should go! Thankfully there was no need to test Mother's bearings, as Diamond Geezer, Moss Key Toe, Happy Feet & Doormat had found the correct way.

Trail would turn from nor-nor-east & around to southeast, there were a couple of deep patches of Shiggy, between the holly bushes & prickly gorse bushes before the Dust led through the Frithsden Beeches section of the woodland. The main Shiggy route would start to dry out as the ground underfoot through the more open sections of chalk grass land & it was on the first of these that the second Held CHK was found, more sweets could be enjoyed knowing that the climb up would have burnt off the sugars from the previous sweet stop.

Lemming told Mr X that the Trail would not be going by his favourite Historical stop, of the Training Trenches from the First World War, where Officers of the Inns of Court (The Devil's Own) learnt what Trench Warfare was about, though it couldn't have prepared the 12,000 plus Troops for the full horrors of the campaigns. Built in 1917, the location has similar soil, to those 175 Miles away & where it's hard to construct trenches. There were some 13 miles constructed.

Back to the present, the Trail moved on over the lighter, sometimes sandy loam. Diamond Geezer was found at the CHK here, he was bemoaning his returning from "Being sent the wrong way by the others!" before turning around to head off due south, where a long descent through the wooded ridge began

This section was far easier than the out Trail, for the moment anyway, the Pack now became spread out once more on the 320 Yards to the meadows at the bottom. The CHK on the southern edge of the woodland was soon dispatched, for the direct route along the fields was the most promising, & so it proved.

There would be tracts of Shiggy on the farm track that leads up to Well Farm & the next CHK where there were three options. Again the south by southwest route was the most favoured, & it was still the correct one, as the noise of the public announcements could be heard that way.

The footpath had to run on the side of the hedgerow that the horses were, the equines didn't seemed bothered by the presence of the Hash, as two of them laid down to roll about on the grass, leaving the Hashers to trudge through the muddy, churned up Shiggy section by the gate!!

So, on the way through the field became drier & grassy, but that was a false lure as there would be one final wide stretch of Shiggy on the way through Kitchener's Filed by the Cricket Club. This was named after Lord Kitchener, as the Troops were camped here while not digging World War I Trenches.

Here the crowds of civilians were swelling [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed], forcing Hashers to run the wrong way into the last few of the Marathon runners who were coming head on [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] Of course, some thought it was good to get some adulation from the masses as they passed through the winning line, they certainly wouldn't get it back at the On Inn!

In to the throng the Trail went, where it was taking a battering under all of the feet! The pace dropped to slow jog, but enough to impress those not out for a R*n this morning. Weaving between the bunches of pedestrians didn't last too long as they path over by the castle moat wasn't that busy, so there could be a trot back to finish this 820 Yard stretch from Well Farm.

At least crossing the roads was a doddle, due to them being gridlocked in all directions, so once through the nearest tunnel to the Railway Station, the Trail headed back up toward the Crystal Palace, but before getting to the Pub, the arrows now faced backwards & off a few degrees to direct the Hash down & away from the old boozer. Joining the tow path via a down ramp-ramp, Dust then twisted the Trail again, turning another 180 Degrees to head south-eastward along the towpath through 'Port Berkhamsted', where supplies were & still can be bought.

It was another 60 yards to run by the Crystal Palace, then a further 340 to pass under Ravens Road by the Boat Pub, which was far noisier with the crowds outside than the Rising Sun, which was finally reached after the last 460 yards! Here Diamond Geezer, Happy Feet & Mrs, Mallett where found sitting out by the Rising Sun Lock 55, enjoying the sunshine, that a bronzed Diamond Geezer seems to have brought back with him from his Holidays.

With the event coming to an end & the tail of the Pack arriving, a steady que of customers had formed on the steps leading up to the front door of the Riser, thankfully for My Lil' Mr X had already got him a Pint, however he didn't let on what it was. Mr X wanted to see My Lil's face when he supped on the Chiltern Ruby Anniversary Ale at 7.2%

The Circle was called outside by the lock, just after a narrow boat had passed through, so the Pack got to see it in action. The Hares were rewarded for their excellent Trail,

After the Circle, Mrs Mallet was went back to searching the towpath for her missing pearl earring, the RA was glad that Pebbledash wasn't here! Mr X went on to say that it was probably in Tent Packers ~~Boat~~, Mercedes, & guess where it was found? Yes, in the car! Mr X also wondered why Tent Packer hadn't moored his vessel up outside of the canal lock?

Lemming got a round in, with the Ales being handed out, Mr X had the odd one & was told that they had run out of the Golden Ale & he had to have another of the 7.2% Ruby, it would be a long afternoon! Sadly, there wasn't time to hear the woman & her guitar who was playing inside the Pub later, when she arrived, the RA said he couldn't believe that she would get complaints over noise.